



NORWICH
City Council

Council
19 March 2019
Questions to cabinet members or chairs of committees

Question 1

Councillor Carlo to ask the cabinet member for resources the following question:

“I am concerned about the lack of action which often follows after motions are passed and agreed by this council. Examples of where motions have not been followed through include: an Access Charter for Norwich (no further progress on this and no action tabled in service plans for 2018/19); ending the provision of single –use plastic cups from council buildings (still provided in the council chamber and committee rooms, more than two years after the motion was passed in September 2016); divesting from fossil fuel and investing ethically (agreed over three years ago); to include biodiversity in the corporate plan under Safe, Clean and Low Carbon City and to ensure that it is consistently addressed in maintenance programmes and contract specifications. (Biodiversity was added as a bullet point in the corporate plan, then dropped and there are numerous examples of council maintenance giving nil priority to biodiversity.) When this council passes a motion, will the cabinet member responsible for taking forward the agreed action ensure that the will of the council is carried out and also provide regular progress reports to councillors?”

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources’ response:

The motions tracker document is updated after each council meeting to include new motions and work on follow up actions takes place throughout the civic year. The relevant service area will be told about any motions that they need to work on and this is recorded on the motions tracker document. Each motion is given a RAG (Red, Amber and Green) status to show progress and comments are recorded as necessary.

The motions tracker for this civic year is on the home screen of e-councillor so is always accessible to members. I have asked for the last two years of motions trackers to be included on e-councillor for members to reference.

With regard to the Access Charter as per a previous response given to a public question at the July 2018 council meeting any such charter is contingent on an impact assessment having been completed by Norfolk County Council as the highways authority. This assessment has yet to be completed and therefore we are unable to work on the access charter as this

must be done in conjunction with county council. I've been assured by county council officers that work is progressing on this.

In terms of single use plastics, we have only used Vegware cups for the council chamber and committee rooms since the motion was passed. Vegware cups are plant based and are biodegradable. They can also be composted with the other compostable waste at City Hall. Obviously it would be preferable if people bring in their own and this message is on the water dispensers.

The council's new Corporate Plan was put through the scrutiny committee, cabinet and council with members able to make comments on the draft. There is a reference to access issues within this new Corporate Plan."

Question 2

Councillor Price to ask the cabinet member for safe, city environment the following question:

"The cabinet member will remember my question of a year ago, when I asked whether he would support the introduction of 'pollution exclusion zones' outside schools in the city. This measure has now been recommended nationwide by Public Health England. As it does not appear to have been possible for air quality outside schools in Norwich to have yet been improved in this way, I am asking, today, if the cabinet member will agree to the council testing air quality outside schools in the city, beginning with the Lionwood infant and junior schools. Like me, parents of children at these schools are concerned about the effect that polluted air is having on the development of their children's lungs, so will the cabinet member commit to the first step in improving air quality, which is to test it?

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

"The recent Review of interventions to improve outdoor air quality and public health by Public Health England (PHE) notes the particular vulnerability of children to poor air quality. PHE therefore argue for a focused approach to reducing the impact of air pollution on children. They recommend that local authorities consider a range of interventions including working with children and their parents to implement no-idling zones outside schools, making it easy for children to walk or cycle to school and increase public awareness in relation to air pollution and children. I am mindful that such an approach requires Norfolk County Council as education and highway authority to play its part and I look forward to working with them to develop these recommendations.

As any scientist would tell us, we must base our actions on evidence: there is no use having a solution for a problem that may or may not exist. So Cllr Price is right in suggesting that, key to taking forward the recommendations, is understanding air quality in the vicinity of schools or on the routes most used to walk or cycle along. Already the council monitors air quality at over 30

locations – selected through a combination of scientific understanding which is now combined with the experience of having monitored air quality over many years. The data from this monitoring shows that air quality by those schools close to such monitoring sites is less than statutory limit values. For example air quality is monitored on Bull Close Road opposite Magdalen Gates Primary School and here annual mean nitrogen dioxide was 29.9 micrograms per cubic metre which is well below the 40.0 micrograms per cubic metre limit value.

Officers review the siting of air quality monitoring regularly. However in light of the PHE's recommendations they are giving particular consideration to further monitoring in the vicinity of schools. This may lead to a re-disposition of sites or additional sites. However, as I am sure Cllr Price understands such sites need to be chosen based on the knowledge we already have and the science that underlies this, so that we can obtain the best possible information with the limited resources available."

Question 3

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

"I'm sure the cabinet member will agree with me that all new developments in Norwich should give far greater attention to biodiversity as we don't want to create a world which is largely devoid of wildlife. New council housing at Goldsmith Street has minimal greenery. There are no verges, no areas of grass, no hedges; instead, plots are divided by concrete, wooden or metal fencing down to ground level. This breaks up the habitat of hedgehogs, birds, insects and other natural and essential wildlife, all of whose numbers have crashed. There also appears to be minimal provision for drainage of surface water which will become an increasing issue of concern, as most of the landscape comprises hard paving, very narrow insignificant shrub beds and lollipop trees in hard pits, plus the odd patch of grass. The main design principle appears to be minimal maintenance, little interest in the environment, both visual and ecological, whilst helping to create a hotter, more harmful, urban environment. In the light of this, will the cabinet member join me in aspiring to better designs for biodiversity in the future?"

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

"Whilst I do agree with the general need for greater attention being given to biodiversity in new development and would point to our own policies such as DM6 which seek to encourage this insofar as possible, I certainly don't agree that the multi-award winning Goldsmith Street development is deficient in how it addresses biodiversity. Indeed I think examples such as this could be used to illustrate good practice in relation to promoting biodiversity in high density urban developments.

The development site had been cleared in 2009 with enclosures erected for safety and security reasons. In ecological terms this site had a very low baseline of and potential to support protected and other species with limited evidence of species being present other than nesting birds and a low possibility of bats within some of the buildings surrounding the site.

Best practice during construction was undertaken as a precaution to protect bird and bat species. This included timed clearance works, or clearance works conducted in the presence of an ecologist. If any mature trees were to be felled these were to be first be assessed for bat roosting potential by a suitably qualified ecologist [amend after we know whether any trees were felled]. Mitigation took place for birds and other species in the form of suitable new landscape planting including introduction of native species, nesting boxes and detail to include small mammal access through boundary fences. The Indian bean trees (*Catalpa Bignonioides*) were retained to form a focus to the site. As many of the healthy mature trees were retained as possible in order to add value as a mature element to the landscape scheme. New planting will augment this and will grow in time to create a unified and improved urban space.

The scheme aimed at balancing the need for new housing and the provision of a suitable environment for the benefit of the area. Site analysis was extended to include the area of grass and trees which is next to the route through to Dereham Road. Improvements were made to this green space in the form of new play and planting and better links through this previously underused space. The introduction of additional planted areas and trees within the site provide planted links across a wider area. The development also provides for additional play areas and links through to St Barnabas Church and beyond where other mature planting still exists.

In terms of site drainage the possible use of a surface water drainage system using localised soakaways concentrating water drainage to ground was discounted due to the risk of solution features within the sites geology of sand over chalk. The use of permeable paving areas and landscape spaces, giving a wider area of dispersal, was chosen instead and to cater for extreme weather events attenuation storage is provided within an oversized below ground pipe system. Drainage rates from these are controlled to prevent other off-site flood issues within the wider area. The use of permeable surfaces and soft landscaping and effective on-site water storage provides significant improvement within the area and provides a drainage system in compliance with Local Plan policy.

The buildings are built to achieve PassivHaus certification. This standard was developed for residential buildings as a means of minimising the heating demand of the building, primarily achieved through considered orientation, internal arrangement and envelope design. This has fed into the specific layout design of the development. Heating requirement in the development is reduced to the point where traditional extensive heating systems are no longer considered essential. The high standard for construction should also have built in efficiencies for water conservation.

Goldsmith Street is a genuine example of high quality urban development not only addressing local housing needs but also delivering excellence in environmental performance across the board.”

Question 4

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

“Given the importance of electric vehicles in the transition to a decarbonised society, I am surprised that Norwich has so few electric charging points, and that there are no rapid charging points in council-owned car parks. With ultra-rapid charging points now being rolled out, our city and the council need to catch up! Green councillors have been told that rapid charging is not possible in the city centre, due to sub-station limitations in the electricity grid. If this is the case, what is the council doing to ensure Norwich will be able to provide the charging points drivers will need in the present and the future?”

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

“I’m afraid Cllr Raby is mistaken in his belief that there are no rapid charging points in council owned car parks; there is one at Earlham Park car park. It was funded by Highways England due to its proximity to the trunk road network.

If you compare Norwich to the likes of Cambridge and Peterborough you will see that we are similar with regard to numbers of charging points. In Norwich there are currently a total of 59 publically available electric charging points; this is the same as Cambridge and 2 less than Peterborough. In terms of the rapid charging points we have 11 compared to Cambridge’s 13 and Peterborough’s 7. Notably Norwich has a much greater number of fast and/or rapid charges compared to these two cities. These numbers are increasing and through the planning process we look to ensure that all car parks associated with new development include charging points.

The point about rapid charging is well made; the restriction on these points is largely due to limitations in the UK Power Networks grid, which cannot cope with spikes in the demand. This certainly is not an issue confined to Norwich, it is one many urban areas are struggling with and it needs a nationwide solution. I understand that there are already initiatives under consideration such as ‘Smart Electric Urban Logistics (SEUL)’. A key part of this initiative is the use of onsite energy storage batteries. Together with the smart-grid, this will pave the way toward a EV infrastructure that can dynamically make use of a conventional power, a smart grid, onsite storage, and in many cases, local power generation including solar and other alternative sources.

Electric charging is a rapidly changing technology and we do need to be mindful that we don’t want to adopt something that quickly becomes obsolete.

This is something that the Transforming cities team will be looking at to see what would suit Norwich best for the long term future”

Question 5

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

“As a regular user and great supporter of our fabulous Norwich Market I was particularly pleased that it was announced as the best large outdoor market in the country earlier this year. Building on the success of our strategy to promote and develop our treasured market, will the cabinet member for Health and Wellbeing congratulate traders, staff and all groups who have done so much to develop this great Norwich icon and discuss how it will be still further improved?”

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

“The award of Britain’s Best Large Outdoor Market awarded in January this year at the Great British Market Awards was well deserved. It follows our market being named a finalist in the Britain’s Favourite Market category of these awards in January 2018 and the award won in September 2017 at the EDP Norfolk Food and Drinks Awards when Norwich Market food traders were named independent food and drink retailers of the year.

As many members will be aware, a huge amount of work has been undertaken in the background to get to this stage. The council’s markets team started working towards this success back in 2016 when a 10-year plan was developed to rejuvenate the market. A significant part of that has been developing the way the council works with the market traders themselves. The new Norwich Market Traders Association (NMTA) meets with the council every two months and this has been key to working together to drive the market forwards. Now that we are in year three of our 10-year plan, not only have awards been won and working practices improved, but the market itself has changed.

An important milestone was when a public survey was carried out to ask people what they wanted Norwich Market to offer them. The regard for the market was clearly demonstrated with one of the biggest survey responses this council has seen with more than 1,000 people providing comments and the resounding response was that they wanted more street food and more local produce. The market services team listened to that feedback and have put what customers want at the heart of everything they do. We have retained the 14 original hot food offer selling much-loved dishes including fish and chips and homemade hot dogs but they have built upon that and doubled the street food offering. There are now 28 street food businesses and they are thriving. In fact over the last year, six of them have expanded their businesses on the market, taking on more stalls to support the demand.

The other notable success I’d like to mention is the pop-up stalls project which has been very popular. Having increased the street food offering, the markets

team was keen to ensure the market remained a mixed market so introduced a scheme by which small local businesses including for example illustrators and other mostly non-food-related micro businesses could come and trade on the market for a few days a week or up to a month. This has allowed people to try out a business idea and many have taken the opportunity to rent a pop-up each week for several months. More than 100 different small businesses have used the pop-ups since the project was launched in June 2017 and provides an invaluable testing ground for new business ideas.

The other great opportunity of the pop-ups has been working in collaboration with local schools and colleges to offer young people the opportunity to come and visit and trade on a market. In this way, the market has supported the Norwich Writers Circle; Norwich Big Switch and Save; Digital First initiatives and local groups including Independence Matters; Break; NWES; Norfolk Food and Drink and is currently collaborating with other organisations across the city in relation to exciting projects for this year.

As I speak today the occupancy rate of Norwich Market is 93% which is a great achievement when you consider 47 stalls were standing empty just over two years ago. We have 88 businesses operating on the market employing around 200 local people full and part-time. Nine of these businesses are new start-ups this financial year, with a further eight business expansions this year. Investment has been made in a new seating area, new signage, a new bin compound, and the phased replacement of cross aisle awnings in 30 locations across the market.

The market is a fantastic asset, not only as a great place to shop for local people but as an attraction and an icon in its own right and a veritable hub for small businesses and business start-ups and a place to make a living for dozens of local people.

We are committed to its continued success and sustainability.”

Question 6

Councillor Maxwell to ask the cabinet member for safe city environment the following question:

“I was pleased to read of the drop in rough sleeping numbers in the Evening News, earlier this year. Recent reports on the success of the innovative Pathways scheme and efforts to support rough sleepers from the streets into housing solutions show the importance and outcomes of this strategy. Given the ongoing pressures of austerity helping to drive homelessness up, can the cabinet member for safe city environment comment on the difference our initiative has made so far?”

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

“Yes, we have seen a drop in numbers of rough sleepers in Norwich. At the Government sponsored annual rough sleeping count in November, 21 people

were found rough sleeping. This is a 30% drop compared to the previous year when 30 were found. This reduction in numbers compares favourably to the East of England average where there was a 21% drop overall.

Since July 2018 which was the time the service became fully staffed, the Pathways team have been identifying some of the most chaotic rough sleepers in Norwich many of whom have multiple and complex needs.

During the period June to September and October to December, 55 people were given intensive support to help them find and access accommodation. However, the need and service provided by Pathways is not just about finding accommodation: with their slogan of "No wrong door" the team provide rough sleepers with wraparound support to help them access statutory services and health appointments. This support helps people engage back into society.

From April to 30 September 2018, 257 people who were either rough sleepers or at risk were found suitable accommodation. Between October and December 2018, 15 of the 30 most chaotic individuals were helped to access accommodation. The service continues to work intensively with the rough sleepers to help get them off the street. Each rough sleeper will have a named worker within the Pathways team who will support them.

Since December 2018 the Council with partners has helped co-ordinate the provision of a winter shelter, to complement the SWEP provision, working closely with volunteers in the faith and voluntary sector. This has helped 51 people, 25 of which have now found suitable accommodation."

Question 7

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

"Like most councillors on this council, access to housing remains a critical issue for many of my constituents. Given this huge pressure the LetNCC scheme has proved to be an innovative means to free up empty homes or properties landlords wish to rent privately. Since 2006 this has helped over 1,200 households from becoming homeless and I have supported families living in my ward who have benefited from it. Given the importance of this scheme I hope it will continue. Can the cabinet member for safer, stronger neighbourhoods comment on how this will develop further?"

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

"The council's private sector leasing scheme (LetNCC) was launched in May 2006 with the aim of utilising the private rented sector to provide a decent, affordable housing alternative to those facing homelessness. The scheme runs alongside the housing options team to reduce the demand on temporary accommodation and the council's housing stock.

Since its inception, the scheme has helped relieve or prevent 1280 households from becoming homeless and we currently have a portfolio of 275 properties. These are properties that are privately owned and leased to the scheme for a 4 year term, subject to a one year minimum term.

Landlords receive a guaranteed monthly rental payment even during void periods, and at the end of the agreement period we guarantee to hand the property back in same condition in which it was first let, less fair wear and tear. The council will also repair any damage made by the tenants.

For a small charge we also offer to manage any day to day repairs and the annual gas safety inspection if landlords do not wish to do this themselves

As part of the Rough Sleeping Strategy the ministry of housing, communities and local government invited authorities to bid for part of a £20 million Private Rented Sector Access Fund with the purpose of the fund to enable better access and sustainment of tenancies for those who are, or at risk of becoming homeless or rough sleeping.

A submission was made by the council which has been successful and the award includes funds to provide additional support to LetNCC. Part of the award is to fund an additional officer within the LetNCC team to increase the number of properties taken on including providing incentives to landlords to join the scheme. The new role will concentrate on marketing and establishing how the additional funding can be best used to expand the council's housing portfolio, such as boosting landlords monthly rent levels or awarding one off payments to enable them to carry out work required to the property before they can sign up. This also brings opportunities to work with our private sector housing team to identify empty homes which we may be brought back in to use via LetNCC. We also intend to use the funding to carry out some direct marketing such as those people whose homes we know to be empty and unfurnished.

Council will know that the LetNCC provides homes for the Syrian Vulnerable Peoples Refugee Resettlement Programme and we have a number of landlords specifically interested in renting their properties to refugees. At the time of endorsing the second phase of this programme, it was noted that demand on the housing market in Norwich had increased making the identification of properties challenging but not insurmountable. This new initiative not only supports the council's contribution to this scheme, but provides increased housing options to people who are at risk or are homeless by increasing the number of properties held by the scheme.

The award will also fund a number of tenants to complete training with St Martins Housing Trust with a view to them moving onto council housing, if appropriate. This fits in with our tenants move-on scheme we are currently trialling whereby LetNCC tenants who meet a criteria will be awarded an increased banding enabling them the chance to move to council housing. This will ensure a turnover of LetNCC tenancies to enable more appropriate people to be housed within the scheme.

Question 8

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

“Representing Mancroft I was pleased to see Councillor Harris hand over the keys for a new council property on Goldsmith Street to a new tenant. Given the continued positive development of this site and significance it represents to our city, can the cabinet member for social housing update us on progress including the recent awards which it has achieved?”

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

“Thank you for your question.

I was delighted to recently meet prospective tenants at viewings of properties on the award winning development at Goldsmith Street and be able to hand over the keys to another tenant.

Development is continuing to progress well on site and we have taken handover of a further 6 homes this morning, with viewings arranged for tomorrow. This takes the number of new homes handed over at Goldsmith Street to 43 with the remaining 50 due to be handed over in phases over the next 2 months.

Last week I attended the LGC awards where we were shortlisted for the housing initiative category for our overall strategy, for having a bold and ambitious approach to building low-energy homes for the future, as demonstrated by our Goldsmith Street and Rayne Park developments, but unfortunately was pipped to the post by Blaby District Council.

Goldsmith Street itself has won a number of awards including ‘project winner’ at the housing design awards 2016, and the CPRE Norfolk ‘green build’ award 2018.

We have also recently been notified that the site is in consideration for further awards having been shortlisted in the RIBA East awards, the RICS East of England awards (in both the regeneration and residential categories) and is also up for a Considerate Constructors site award having achieved a fantastic score of 44 out of a maximum 50.

In addition to this Goldsmith Street has been recognised as the Best New (World) Architecture of 2018 by The Times, and has been featured in the Guardian and in the latest edition of the Architects Journal.

Following on from the completion of our first Passivhaus scheme at Hansard Close last year and the continuing development on Rayne Park I am incredibly proud that we are leading the way in development of homes.

These awards not only show the quality of housing the council are building but the important thing is that we are providing good quality homes for our residents. In some cases children will be able to play in their very own garden for the first time in their lives.

I look forward to celebrating the completion and further awards in the coming months.”

Question 9

Councillor Fullman to ask the cabinet member for safer, stronger neighbourhoods the following question:

“As a councillor who assisted several constituents who have experienced domestic abuse I am continually aware of the reduction in funding for services across Norwich since 2010. I am therefore pleased that this council has launched a new programme providing support services for families and individuals experiencing this abuse. Norwich Connect will pilot innovative partnerships with individuals and develop a better, more holistic response. Given the significance of this service can the cabinet member for safer stronger neighborhoods comment on the benefits it will offer to our constituents who experience this abuse?”

Councillor Jones, cabinet member for safer, stronger neighbourhoods’ response:

“Norwich Connect launched in Norwich in mid-November 2018 with clear objectives to help fill identified gaps in service provision for people experiencing domestic abuse and to identify system changes across the County that could contribute to reducing risk of harm.

Norwich Connect is a partnership between national domestic abuse charity SafeLives, and local funding partners from the Norfolk community safety partnership.

As Cllr Fullman identifies, the program is piloting innovative approaches to tackling domestic abuse via the following five service strands:

- Community Independent domestic violence advisor (IDVA) - this service assesses the risk level of harm to victims and works with the individual to develop a safety plan to manage that risk for all members of the family. This might include referral to other Norwich Connect services, or to services provided by other partners. The Community IDVA advocates on behalf of the victim, to reduce the requirement of victims to keep repeating their story to other support providers, which re-traumatises victims. Before Norwich Connect was established, only those victims assessed as being high risk of harm were assigned an IDVA, via Leeway domestic abuse services. The Norwich Connect Community IDVAs work with victims assessed as both medium and standard risk. Norwich Connect works

closely with Leeway to ensure that individuals assessed as high risk receive the appropriate service from Leeway.

- Complex needs – this service works with a number of partners including those providing services for mental health, substance misuse, learning disabilities; to enable domestic abuse victims with complex needs to be appropriately supported.
- Children & young people – this area provides a range of support services to address emotional and physical harm via one to one and group work for children and young people that have witnessed domestic abuse, experienced it directly or have been abusive to family members. This includes a course specifically on adolescent to parent violence.
- Staying together – this service works with the abuser within a family unit that wants to change their behaviours, where it is safe to do so and the victim(s) wish the same. While controversial in its approach, evidence suggests that if abusers are not supported to change their behaviours, they go on to further abusive relationships, thereby increasing the number of adult and child victims. On this basis, it's incredibly important to address the problem and not just deal with the effects of the problem.
- Step down and recovery – We know that, on average, victims of domestic abuse are persuaded to return to their abuser 14 times before they leave for good. In starting a new life, victims often lack confidence and knowledge on how to develop a fulfilling life outside of their abusive relationship, as they have been controlled for so long – on average almost three years, but often far longer. This service provides regular support for people having left abusive relationships and explores volunteering, community activity and employment and training options with victims. This helps them recover from the abuse and identify a sustainable pathway, free from abuse, ahead.

Norwich Connect officers attend the Norwich early help hub each day, to link with other local support providers and promote their work to other professionals. This forms part of the countywide approach to provide support services earlier, to help reduce harm and increase the chances of positive outcomes for people.

SafeLives uses the voice of victims and evidenced research to develop trauma informed group and one to one services as part of its 'Beacon Sites' programme; of which Norfolk is one and West Sussex. Part of the Beacon Sites work looks at accessibility to services for victims of domestic abuse. SafeLives is currently working with partners in Norfolk's multi agency safeguarding hub (MASH) to improve the victims experience and accessibility to services.

As a SafeLives Beacon Site, the Norwich Connect programme also benefits from a full, independent evaluation, undertaken by the University of Lancaster. This will mean that at the end of the three year programme, commissioners of domestic abuse services will be able to make informed choices on what works for victims and what has greater impact in the long term. Also identified through the evaluation will be recommendations for Norfolk partners on system change, in terms of structures, services and processes – to help

improve the experience of individuals and families receiving support for domestic abuse.

Norwich Connect has already received 93 referrals from partners requesting support for 224 individuals from Norwich. 111 of these are children and young people and 19 are perpetrators of domestic abuse.

It's important that we make people aware of Norwich Connect if they disclose abuse to us; as Norwich residents can self-refer to the service and receive support sooner.

Question 10

Councillor Button to ask the cabinet member for safe city environment the following question:

“Like most councillors I have seen the dramatic consequence of austerity upon reducing the level of community safety in the ward I represent. Rising crime and the fear of crime preys heavily upon the quality of life of many of my constituents, often particularly upon those with least resources to respond to it. I was therefore particularly pleased that last month's budget and the cabinet report approved last week sees a significant increase in funding for CCTV, alley-gates and other safety protective measures. Given this investment can the cabinet member for safe city environment comment on the desired differences this policy will deliver?”

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

“Whilst Norwich is generally regarded as a safe city to live in, work and visit and overall levels of crime have remained generally static compared to national changes, councillors are receiving concerns on the doorstep from residents

Norwich like the rest of the country has experienced continued issues of county lines “gang” related activity including properties, some of whom are council tenancies, being cuckooed. Residents are also reporting overt drug dealing becoming more visible.

The council has always worked very closely with the Norfolk Constabulary where joint working is required including establishing the joint and co-located Norwich operational partnership team (OPT), based at Bethel Street police station.

Whilst enforcement activity is one element required to counter issues of crime and disorder, either directly by the Constabulary or through joint working in Norwich with the council, prevention activity is also required to help reduce the risk and harm to vulnerable people.

To support enforcement action across the city, this administration is investing over £520,000 in a new state of the art CCTV system focussing on the city

centre as well as a number of communal areas in some of the council's high rise properties.

As part of this investment, our neighbourhoods are not being ignored but a fixed camera system is neither practical, affordable nor desirable across the whole of Norwich.

To this end, four demountable CCTV cameras are being purchased to complement three held by the Norwich operational partnership team which will be deployed for short periods of time in the most problematical areas which will be identified using pooled council and police crime and disorder data.

These will be used to monitor and capture criminal activity and be used to support enforcement activity.

£50,000 has also been identified in next year's budget to pump-prime actions based on evidence of the local issue and needs of the community but may help fund such practical measures as estate improvements, the gating of alleyways or the provision of additional district lighting.

An important element of this initiative is to ensure that as far as possible, the interventions and positive change brought about is sustainable.

Through Get Involved, our community enabling model we will concentrate our work with residents in neighbourhood 'hot spots' so they can be involved in any interventions. The objective would be to help support communities to take control of where they live and their local communal and open spaces and make a positive statement that Norwich will not tolerate county lines."

Question 11

Councillor Stutley to ask the cabinet member for social inclusion the following question:

"Digital poverty, through the lack of access to the internet or improving digital skills, remains a significant problem for some of my constituents. Given that government 'services' such as Universal Credit depend on online accounts and access to the internet, improving the ability for my constituents to access the full range of opportunities on offer is increasingly paramount. In promoting this, I was pleased that groups can now apply for the 'Get Digital' money to install infrastructure, cover training, workshops, provide software and equipment related to supporting residents to become more digitally included. With this in mind, can the cabinet member for social inclusion comment on the scheme including the anticipated differences it will offer to groups in this city?"

Councillor Davis, cabinet member for social inclusion's response:

"The Get Digital small grants scheme has been operating in 2018/19 and will continue in 2019/20. It has joined the other community enabling team small grants and is funded by the Norwich Digital Inclusion project.

Over the course of this year we have distributed 5 grants (with one still to assess for the 2018/19 period). The following grants were awarded this year:

Sorrel & Campion House Residents Association	Awarded: September 2018 Received: £500 A grant to pay for two new (refurbished) PCs in the communal room, additional cabling, etc, and a small budget for a party to launch the new provision. Sorrel & Campion House is a Broadland Housing scheme based in Bowthorpe.
New Routes	Awarded: October 2018 Received: £498.01 A grant to buy a new laptop to be used at the IT classes and informal IT groups at the centre, for their client group – refugees, asylum seekers and migrants.
Russel Street Community Centre	Awarded: October 2018 Received: £500 A grant to pay for broadband for the hall for a year, and some equipment to start a weekly digital café. Digital café sessions due to launch in March 2019, one session a month will be work-themed.
Bridge Plus	Awarded: December 2018 Received: £499 A grant to pay for a laptop to be used by clients at Bridge Plus (BAME population) to go online particularly to apply for jobs and Universal Credit. The grant will also cover the costs of two community lunches to introduce the new laptop to the client group and explain how and when it can be accessed and used.
MAP	Awarded: December 2018 Received: £500 A grant to buy a new PC to join the suite of PCs in the Risebrow Centre. MAP is a countywide organisation and experienced a hike in demand for internet access amongst their client group (young people) in Great Yarmouth due to the introduction of Universal Credit. They applied for this grant in anticipation of a similar high demand in Norwich.

As you can see above, the last two grants that were given specifically had a focus on government digital services (UC).

Over the past 4 years, Norwich City Council has been leading on the Norwich Digital Inclusion project, aiming to reduce digital exclusion in the city, raising people's digital skills, and access to free internet access points in the city. We have nearly 20 Digital Hubs in the city, with more organisations joining all the time.

We recognised that for some people, particularly the most vulnerable of our residents, it made sense that digital provision was provided from an organisation they already visit and trust and have built up a working relationship with, rather than signposting them to a Digital Hub. Thus the Get Digital grant scheme allows non-profit groups the opportunity to apply for up to £500 to buy equipment (including broadband), train staff and volunteers, or cover any other costs that may be incurred to support people to raise their digital confidence.

For an organisation this small seed funding is useful to assist their service users to be able to access the internet on site with support. The offer of up to £500 for the grant is in addition to a free offer of volunteer support provided by our partner Voluntary Norfolk – they have around 35 trained volunteers active in the community who can support individuals to gain the skills and confidence they need, out of any agreeable venue (including Digital Hubs, community venues, and from people's homes). In addition, the Digital Inclusion project can lend some equipment to organisations and individuals on a short-term basis, which is also negotiable alongside a grant.

Although we are aware there is a lot of support available throughout the city, we are always keen to hear from other groups seeking to partner with the project and support more Norwich residents to be digital included. ”