



Cabinet

16.30 – 18:00

12 January 2022

Present: Councillors Waters (chair), Harris (vice chair), Hampton, Kendrick, Oliver and Stonard

Apologies: Councillors Davis, Jones and Packer

Also present: Councillor Galvin

1. Declarations of interest

Councillor Harris declared an other interest in item 9 below as a member of the Norwich Norse Building Limited board.

Councillor Stonard declared a conflict of interest in items 11 and *13 below, Norwich Regeneration Ltd business plan, as he was chair of the NRL board and would leave the meeting for the discussion and vote on these items.

Councillor Oliver declared a conflict of interest in item 9 below, NCSL commissioning report as a Non-executive Director of NCSL and would leave the meeting for the discussion and vote on these items.

Councillor Kendrick declared an other interest in item 9 below as a NPS board member.

2. Public Questions/Petitions

There were no public questions or petitions.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED to agree the accuracy of the minutes of meeting held on 8 December 2021.

4. Transport for Norwich Strategy

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for inclusive and sustainable growth, presented the report. The council recognised the need for a radical and sustainable solution to transport. The city was very different to the surrounding rural areas which relied more heavily on car use. The strategy showed that there was no restoration of the

city voice in transport planning due to the withdrawal of the NHAC agreement in March 2019.

He highlighted paragraph eleven of the report which set out the evidence that the council required to be able to support the Western Link road. None of these criteria for had been met within the strategy so the council was unable to endorse the strategy.

Councillor Galvin commented that she fully supported the report and asked whether Councillor Stonard would write to the Minister of State for Transport to oppose the planning application for the Western Link. Councillor Stonard said that there would be discussions about next steps and that would be one of the options considered.

RESOLVED :

- 1) to acknowledge the progress made towards introducing a set of transport policies in 2021 that improve the prospects of a more sustainable approach to transport across the Norwich area;
- 2) that the strategy as adopted by the County Council is not sufficiently ambitious in moving the city toward a sustainable future for transport in the absence of an agreed action plan or approved Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and with a capital investment programme that devotes a higher proportion of funds to road building by comparison with schemes that support sustainable transport; and therefore the City Council cannot currently endorse the strategy or support the proposal for the Norwich Western Link that is contained within it; and
- 3) to continue the productive working relationship with Norfolk County Council on the development of the Transport for Norwich Strategy and its Action Plan with a view to increasing the ambition shown regarding sustainable transport options for Norwich.

5. Equality Information report

Councillor Waters, leader of the council, presented the report. The report was considered annually at cabinet and it had also been considered by the scrutiny committee.

The revised format, which was made up of a series of infographics, made the report more accessible to a wider audience. It was a living document and the 2021 census data would be a key data source. Social and economic data were included alongside the statutory elements. Norwich City Council was committed to equality for all residents in Norwich along with being a good employer, contractor and celebrating the diversity of the city. The council was leading by example and working constantly to remove barriers to participation and access. There was a need to understand, respect and celebrate the communities that made up the city.

He highlighted page 34 of the agenda pack which outlined the objectives going forward and the timetable for these. The organisation was redesigning and shaping

services to meet the needs of users. Workforce diversity had increased by 3.4% in December with work being undertaken on unconscious bias and training on equality and diversity.

He highlighted the recommendations of the scrutiny committee and said that the cabinet was happy to accept those recommendations

Officers were commended for their work on the report which was an ambitious living document very central to the work of the administration.

Councillor Galvin highlighted the references to apprenticeships and said that most of those opportunities seemed to be given to people that already have advantages. She asked to share some information on social mobility with relevant officers. The strategy officer said that there were lots of work strands around equality and she would welcome sight of the data.

RESOLVED to approve the publication of the annual Equality Information Report 2022.

6. Scrutiny committee recommendations

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources introduced the report as Councillor Wright, chair of the scrutiny committee had given apologies for the meeting.

He highlighted the list of recommendations at page 82 of the agenda. The executive director of community services said that there was a range of good recommendations, however, some of these would have budget and resource implications so there was a need for a high level appraisal of them following the budget setting process.

Councillor Galvin noted that recommendation (e) should read 'implement' and not 'ensure'.

RESOLVED to agree the recommendations in principle but it was recognised that there was a need to further consider resources before agreeing and implementing these.

7. Managing assets (non housing)

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources presented the report. He noted that although the council would not receive a capital receipt, there would be no maintenance liability.

RESOLVED to approve the disposal of land as outlined in the report.

8. Award of contract for retro-fitting works

The chair confirmed that the report for award of contract for retrofitting works would be taken to the next meeting of cabinet.

9. Project Place phase 2 – Commissioning the repairs and maintenance contract with NCSL - supplementary agenda item

(The chair referred to the supplementary agenda which had been circulated).

(Councillor Oliver left the meeting for the discussion and vote on this item).

Councillor Harris, deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing, presented the report. She thanked officers for their work to this point. The council was determined to improve the repairs and maintenance service but it would take time. The contract would be awarded for three years initially with a two year performance related extension and then an additional five year extension.

Awarding the contract in this way would give the company stability to improve the service and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) would be included in the contract with a focus on quality of service. These would take time to deliver but the NCSL Improvement Plan would be imbedded into the NCSL Business Plan.

She outlined the financial elements of the contract within the report and referred to the detailed risk register. An open book arrangement was in place for full transparency between NCSL and the council. The report had also been considered at a meeting of the cross part Joint Ventures Insourcing members working party.

It was a complex process but the decision to transfer services back to the council was the right decision to take.

Councillor Galvin asked why the services were being restricted to existing services for three years when other work, such as retrofitting, may have to be contracted out and wondered if the terms of the contract could be more flexible to allow NCSL to take on proactive work. The executive director of community services said that the scope of the services was the same as provided through the joint venture. There was a need for significant improvement of the service and the board and the company were committed to focussing on getting the service up to standard. The council had made a commitment to retrofitting and it needed to be assessed how best to deliver that programme. It was not the best time for the company to take on that work.

RESOLVED to:

- 1) note the contract principles as set out in Section 5 of this report.
- 2) delegate to the executive director of community services, in consultation with the executive director of development and city services and the cabinet portfolio holders for social housing and resources, to agree the contract with Norwich City Services Limited for the provision of the repairs and

maintenance service, in line with the principles and term as set out in this report and to the projected value of £133 million.

(Councillor Oliver was readmitted to the meeting at this point).

10. The award of contracts for the Threescore development

(The chair took this item next).

Councillor Harris, deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing presented the report. The Threescore development continued the excellence of previous builds. The pre-build work had been contracted to RG Carter and had been completed.

The design of the development had evolved throughout the process with additional 'Passivhaus' features which would help to reduce fuel consumption for tenants who may already be struggling with energy bills. People were using their homes in different ways now and the homes on the development were in excess of building standards regarding the amount of space within them.

There had been an uplift in build costs since April due to inflation in construction costs which had been seen across the industry. The preferred option was for a fixed term contract with RG Carter delivering the work as a local firm that the council had already worked successfully with.

Councillor Waters, leader of the council, added that the scrutiny committee had considered the report and had made the following recommendation:

To ask cabinet to investigate whether it is feasible to include detailed carbon lifecycle assessments in the design of future building plans.

The executive director of development and city services said that the recommendation was to evolve to approach of the council to assessing carbon. The models to give figures for how close the developments were to net zero carbon were not yet available but officers were happy to take the recommendation on board and adapt how this was assessed. He clarified that the scrutiny committee had intended the recommendation to apply to future builds, not just in relation to the Threescore development.

Councillor Galvin commented that it was disappointing that the houses did not have as many carbon reducing features as possible, such as solar panels, to avoid retrofitting early in the life of the building. The managing director of Norwich Regeneration Ltd (NRL) said that everything had to be done on balance within the construction industry. The company would investigate the recommendation from the scrutiny committee and would look into new technologies balanced against affordability.

The chair confirmed that there were no questions on the exempt appendix to the report.

RESOLVED to:

- 1) Award the contract for the development of council homes at Three Score Phase 3 to RG Carter Ltd, subject to the details in the exempt appendix to this report; and
- 2) Delegate all matters incidental to the development of social housing at Three Score phase 3, including the use of the contingency and subject to the limits set out in the exempt appendix, to the executive director of development & city services, in consultation with the executive director of corporate & commercial services, the cabinet member for social housing and the cabinet member for resources; and
- 3) Note the recommendation of the scrutiny committee to investigate whether it is feasible to include detailed carbon lifecycle assessments in the design of future building plans;

11. Norwich Regeneration Ltd Business Plan 2022-23

(Councillor Stonard left the meeting at this point).

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources presented the report. He thanked the managing director of NRL and his team for their work on the business plan. He added that it would be beneficial for councillors to have site visits in the summers to see the work being undertaken by NRL.

12. Exclusion of the public

RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of item *13 (below) on the grounds contained in the relevant paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

***13 Norwich Regeneration Ltd Business Plan 2022-23 – exempt appendix (para 3)**

(An exempt minute exists for this item)

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources, presented the exempt appendix. Recommendations from the scrutiny committee were discussed and noted.

(The public were readmitted to the meeting at this point).

RESOLVED to:

- 1) note the recommendations of the scrutiny committee
- 2) To endorse the NRL business for 2022/23 on behalf of Norwich City Council as the shareholder;

- 3) To agree that provision for the necessary additional loan finance of £6m to deliver the business plan, is incorporated with the capital programme being proposed to Council as part of the budget for 2022/23;
- 4) Invite NRL to undertake work on the design, feasibility and phasing of a possible fourth phase of development for NRL on the Threescore site, the provision for which is identified in the approved budget for the company within section 6.6 of the business plan.
- 5) That further work be undertaken to identify possible further sites for residential development that may form part of the company's pipeline in future years.

CHAIR