



### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**4.30pm – 7.45pm**

**3 November 2011**

Present: Councillors Stephenson (Chair), Bradford, Driver, Galvin, Gayton, Gee, Grahame, Grenville, Jeraj, Lubbock, Sands (M) and Storie

Apologies: Councillor Fisher

#### **1. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2011

#### **2. CALL-IN OF THE CABINET DECISION TO APPROVE THE NEW ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY 2011-14**

The chair outlined the call-in procedure.

Councillor Bremner, portfolio holder for planning and transportation, responded to the call-in and said that any issues could have been raised at the sustainable development panel.

The head of strategy and programme management responded to each of the grounds set out in the call-in. He explained that the Norwich independent climate change commission (NICCC) report was not included as a background paper because it was already available as a public document. The links between the NICCC report and the environmental strategy 2011-2014 were set out within section 9.0 of the strategy as part of the action programme. The NICCC report was used to inform the development of the council's environmental strategy, however other recommendations within the report were relevant to other organisations within the city.

With reference to the council motion in 2006, the head of strategy and programme management explained that the reporting of total carbon emissions from council buildings and services formed part of the council's performance monitoring to cabinet and scrutiny; the environmental statement; the debt statement to relevant government offices; and to the sustainable development panel (and previously the climate change panel). The progress made on reducing the carbon emissions would be included as part of the budget report to council in future. He also confirmed that the amendments that had been made to the joint core strategy would not affect the delivery of the environmental strategy as this was completed after the amendments.

(At this point in the meeting, it was moved and seconded to move to next business. With six voting for and six voting against, the chair took a casting vote which resulted in the amendment not carried and consideration of the item continued).

In response to members' questions, the head of strategy and programme management said that the focus of the council's small environmental strategy team was carbon reduction rather than running complex carbon budgeting systems (which required a large volume of resource and was a tool generally used by larger organisations).

He also explained that the environmental strategy was broader than just climate change. The NICCC did influence the development of the strategy, however other sources were also used including officer experience, previous strategies and resource availability. He said that once agreed, it was the intention to send a summary of the environmental strategy to those that took part in the NICCC consultation.. Members received confirmation that no further background documents were used.

During discussion, members suggested that actions within the action programme could be linked to their origin, to provide an audit trail, as well as clarity and transparency to the strategy. It was considered that this could create a large document so members suggested a copy of the environmental strategy be sent to the NICCC for comment.

Councillor Carlo raised concern that the Joint Core Strategy had enabled planning permission to be granted by Broadland District Council to the Broadland Gate development at Postwick Hub and that the council may therefore not achieve the carbon emission reductions set out in the environmental strategy. In response, the head of planning confirmed that this would not impact on the adoption of the environmental strategy.

**RESOLVED to:-**

- (1) suggest that a copy of the environmental strategy be sent to the Norwich independent climate change commission (NICCC) for comment;
- (2) send a copy of the scrutiny minutes to cabinet members for information; and
- (3) request training for scrutiny members regarding the call-in procedure.

### **3. FUTURE PRIORITIES AND SHAPE OF THE COUNCIL**

The head of strategy and programme management presented the report and answered members' questions. The draft priorities were based on the mean scoring, as advised by the consultation company. The information collected would also be used to guide future proposals and resource prioritisation. Members said that caution should be used because the categories were broad; that even though the public might consider something as a lower priority, it would not necessarily mean that too much money was spent on it; and that removal of a small sum of money, for example as currently provided to the yacht station, could have a wider impact on the city. The head of strategy and programme management explained that all five draft priorities would form the basis for the new corporate plan.

Officers answered members' questions about specific savings proposals. The chief executive said that a series of events and activities had involved employees in the development of the efficiency savings, including various lean process reviews. She explained that proposals affecting individual posts were subject to a formal staff consultation process.

Following discussion, it was

**RESOLVED** to make the following recommendations to cabinet:

- (a) that if cabinet approve proposal number 60 within annex E, charging for replacement bins, it should be publicised that a charge would not be made if there was a theft and the individual reported the theft to the police and received a crime number;
- (b) that consideration be given to proposal number 59 within annex E, increasing burial prices, and the potential impact on the poorer sector of the community;
- (c) that consideration be given to including edible and bee friendly planting where appropriate, in relation to proposal number 62 within annex E, for sustainable planting; and
- (d) that in light of the public opposition and differential impact on areas of the city, amend proposal number 56 within annex E to 'partially' suspend tree planting;

(The remainder of the item included exempt information and was discussed following the exclusion of the public)

#### **4. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of item 5 and 6 below on the grounds contained in the relevant paragraphs of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

#### **\*5. FUTURE PRIORITIES AND SHAPE OF THE COUNCIL (PARAGRAPH 3)**

Following discussion it was

**RESOLVED** to:

- (1) make the following recommendations to cabinet:
  - (a) that, due to the high value of the saving, plenty of attention should be provided to proposal number seven within annex C;
  - (b) that consideration be given to the safety implications of proposal number two within annex C;
  - (c) that any staffing savings identified as a result of the lean process review outlined at proposal 40 within annex C, be carefully monitored in light of changes to national policy;
- (2) consider the affects of the welfare reform on proposal number four within annex C, at a future scrutiny committee;

- (3) consider the affects of the welfare reform on proposal number 43 within annex D, at a future scrutiny committee; and
- (4) consider the outcome of further work and targeted consultation on potential savings identified within annex G at a future scrutiny committee, specifically in relation to neighbourhood offices.

**\*6. DELIVERING JOBS AND HOMES – REGENERATION OF TWO SITES IN THE CITY (PARAGRAPH 3)**

(Maps of the two sites were circulated at the meeting)

The city growth and development manager presented the report and answered members' questions. Tenants would be consulted and a wider consultation would be completed if necessary. The consultation would help to identify requirements of the tenants and sites. The regeneration of the sites would result in the relocation of employment, however employment levels should be retained overall and would be monitored.

**RESOLVED** to recommend to cabinet, that residents are kept informed.

(Members of the public were readmitted to the meeting)

**7. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

**RESOLVED** to delegate the completion of a PICK analysis on the following topics for inclusion on the scrutiny work programme, to a task and finish group:

- Asset management strategy;
- Review of community centres;
- Police strategy and potential impact on wards within Norwich;
- Windows replacement service contract.

CHAIR