

**Council**  
**21 March 2017**

**Questions to cabinet members or chairs of committees**

**Question 1**

**Councillor Schmierer to ask the cabinet member for customer care and leisure the following question:**

Parks, green areas, communal open sporting facilities and recreation spaces offer considerable public health benefits that are important given the strains being placed on the NHS at the moment. Does the cabinet member agree that, given the cuts to park facilities and play areas passed in last month's budget, the council should call for public health funds to be spent on our cash-strapped parks around the city, in a similar way to the proposals Newcastle City Council is looking into for the next three years?

**Councillor Ryan, cabinet member for customer care and leisure's response:**

The city is quite rightly proud of its parks and open spaces with public satisfaction currently standing at 87.5%. As facilities for play, leisure recreation or sport, Norwich's parks are second to none.

However, with the budget constraints faced by the council, different and innovative approaches need to be considered, including accessing external sources of funding and developing new partnerships so that these spaces can still be enjoyed by Norwich residents in the future.

I am aware of what Newcastle is proposing and officers are monitoring developments and the feedback Newcastle city Council is receiving. When looking at the proposals in Newcastle, there are some actions this Council is already delivering or considering. For example:

The success in securing external funding to deliver artificial cricket wickets, football pitch surface improvements and tennis courts at Eaton Park all of which have achieved improved quality of provision and a reduction in maintenance costs.

By working with friends of or and residents groups the Council has been able to install outdoor table tennis tables and established a Run England route at Eaton Park in conjunction with Friends of Eaton Park, with funding accessed by the group; installed benches in various parks; installed a new boardwalk at Marston Marshes Local Nature Reserve in conjunction with Eaton Residents Association to improve access and developed an outdoor classroom at this site, to improve the educational benefits at this important site.

Volunteer involvement in parks and open spaces increases year on year. In 2012 when the council first started recording volunteer hours the total for the year was 6,428. The figure for 2016 was an incredible 11,040 hours of time residents and park users are contributing to helping to maintain our open spaces.

The Norwich Fringe Project, which the council hosts in conjunction with our neighbouring councils, is scoping a project based on “volunteering on prescription” to enable volunteer work to take place on natural areas and other spaces in the Norwich fringe, which will also bring health and well-being benefits to the volunteers.

Officers are developing a blueprint for residents wanting to be involved in parks and open spaces as part of the council’s community enabling programme “*Get Involved.*” This will provide information, support and guidance for setting up a group, arranging insurance and fund raising and the learning and skills required, so that groups can work as independently as possible.

The council is also exploring further investment in tennis at four sites across the city in conjunction with the LTA that will also improve facilities, help reduce costs and widen accessibility.

Through the Norwich healthy city programme the council already has strong a strong partnership with Norfolk public health and the Norwich CCG and will continue to use this partnership to support investment and use of parks and open spaces as an important resource to reduce health inequality.

However, council must be mindful that NHS budgets are also increasingly under pressure and whilst opportunities will continue to be explored through the healthy city programme, other avenues are and will continue to be considered so that the parks and open spaces remain a vital part of the city for all residents to enjoy for years to come.

## **Question 2**

### **Councillor Raby to ask the leader of the council the following question:**

In the climate of toxic xenophobia created by the Brexit campaign and surreptitiously encouraged by the Government, the status of immigrants from all parts of the world has suddenly been thrown into doubt.

In particular, there have been administrative decisions implemented in recent months which contravene all norms of equity and justice and our country’s obligations under international conventions on human rights. I refer to the imposition on hospitals, schools, universities and charitable organisations of a requirement to check the immigration status of those using their services, thus obliging dedicated professionals providing essential services to act as border police.

In this context the Home Office has recently been responsible for a number of appalling and arbitrary decisions: the intended deportation of a Sri Lankan woman refugee who arrived as a twelve-year-old-child and who has almost finished an engineering degree at Bangor University, and whose deportation was only prevented (for the time being) by a petition with over 168,000 signatures; and the actual deportation of a woman from Singapore, married to a British man for 27 years, with British children and a British grandchild. Unfortunately these are far from being the only such cases.

Will the Leader of the Council make a public statement making clear our complete condemnation of such decisions and reaffirming this city's belief in equality and human rights, and write to the Home Office to express our repudiation of such arbitrary and inhumane actions and our belief in the legitimate right to remain of those who have come from around the world to enrich our culture and community life and who have done nothing to deserve such unjust treatment?

**Councillor Waters, leader of the council's response:**

I would first like to say that I am proud to serve as a Councillor for a City like Norwich that has, over the many years it has stood, been a safe haven for those persecuted throughout history. They have brought their skills, customs and ideas to enrich the City and we are better because of it.

Further, we have become a home for a wide number of people from around the world who work here and contribute to the community as a whole. Norwich has a long history of welcoming people seeking refuge from conflict

From 2007-2011 the council took part in the Gateway Protection programme; a government scheme run in partnership with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) offering a legal route for refugees designated as particularly vulnerable by the UNHCR to be resettled in the UK.

Norwich City Council was one of 18 local authorities in the country to participate in the Gateway programme (and one of the few in an area of high demand for housing). The council provided housing and housing support to over 250 victims of the civil conflict in Democratic Republic of Congo who had been evacuated from refugee camps to the UK. The council continues to provide housing and support to many of these households.

The council's home options team works with the UK Border Agency (UKBA) and its contractors to provide housing assistance to successful asylum seekers, including Syrians, through Norwich being one of only 3 asylum dispersal hubs in East Anglia.

Norwich residents and community groups take an active role in showing that Norwich is an inclusive city. There are an increasing number of groups established in the city that as well as representing minority communities, also wish to play an active role in integrating communities and community cohesion, often supported with small community grants from the council.

In February, the first Syrian refugees accommodated through the Syrian vulnerable people re-settlement programme arrived in Norwich. A number of faith and community groups have come forward to provide help and support as the programme was being developed.

There have also been a number of recent examples where residents have taken a more pro-active approach when issues or perceived issues of hate or extremist views have arisen and where they wish to show that these will not be tolerated in Norwich.

Recent examples include:

- A protest held outside City Hall following the result of the EU referendum

- A public appeal following a possible arson attack on an eastern European food shop which raised £28,000
- A march against the EDL who demonstrated in the city following the council banning a faith organisation from using council properties who were promoting extremist views.
- Joint statements by all party leaders on the council asserting our pride in Norwich's diverse and multi-racial heritage and zero tolerance of all forms of racism and most recently calling on the Government to honour the Dubs amendment on child refugees.

I share councillor Raby's grave concern about recent decisions by the Home Office and I will be happy to write to the Home Secretary in those terms. I would add that I am still waiting for a reply from the Home Office about the Dubs amendment. I will also have more to say on the issues raised in this question when we debate councillor Bogelein's motion on the rights of EU citizens.

### **Question 3**

**Councillor Jones to ask the cabinet member for customer care and leisure the following question:**

The council has chosen to submit a planning application to replace the grass tennis courts at Heigham Park with floodlit hard courts without consulting residents over the park's future. This comes shortly after a series of planning applications for building on car parks where residents were not consulted on the principle of development.

Could the cabinet member explain how, in his opinion, these actions are compatible with the democratic principles of openness, transparency and accountability and with the council's new strategy for 'Enabling Neighbourhoods', aimed at encouraging citizens to take greater responsibility for looking after their communities?

**Councillor Ryan, cabinet member for customer care and leisure's response:**

Councillor Jones is quite correct that the council has submitted a planning application at Heigham Park to replace the current grass tennis courts with floodlit courts. Planning applications are also being submitted at three other parks to make improvements to tennis facilities.

If successful, this project will be part of an existing programme supported by the LTA to improve tennis provision across the city. This would bring further investment into the city, something that the party opposite regularly champions at Council, improve tennis facilities at four sites in the city, help reduce costs and widen accessibility.

Council will know that the council's parks and open spaces are a considerable asset that can help reduce health inequality and bring real public health benefits – this is the topic of an earlier question to me this evening - and this project, is a further example of how this administration is maximising the benefits that parks and open spaces provides residents using external funds.

I disagree with Councillor Jones that this decision is incompatible with the democratic principles of openness, transparency and accountability and with the council's approach to 'Enabling Neighbourhoods.'

The project was approved by Council in February as part of the policy and budget setting process and planning applications will be submitted for proposed works at each of the four sites at Waterloo Park, Harford Park, Lakenham Recreation Ground and Heigham Park.

Residents, user groups, tennis clubs and sports bodies will have an opportunity to comment on the detail of these proposals as part of the planning process.

For activities such as sport provision in parks be that football, cricket or tennis, provision is planned on a city wide basis and it is important that this Council is able to plan and make decisions on a city wide basis as long as there are mechanisms in place for residents to be able to contribute their views. This is the case at Heigham Park, Waterloo Park, Harford Park and Lakenham Recreation ground.

However, it is also important that the views of users, clubs and sporting bodies are sought as part of this process.

A similar approach may also be taken where changes are being considered at our major parks - Eaton, Waterloo, Earlham, Heigham and Wensum – as these sites are spaces that are a resource and asset for the city as a whole and have to meet a range of council objectives.

Residents already play a considerable role in supporting in parks and I can refer Council to my reply to question 1 which gives some examples of where this is happening and the plans to develop this further.

#### **Question 4**

**Councillor Carlo to ask the cabinet member for customer care and leisure the following question:**

The Council proposes to save £42,000 in 2018/19 by closing Heigham Park grass tennis courts. The Council says that the cost savings are estimates based on the current contractual costs for maintaining the grass courts that include grass cutting, maintenance of the turf to a specific standard, pitch marking, collecting the fees, provision of nets etc. I asked by email in February for a breakdown of costs, but this has not been forthcoming.

Will the cabinet member please provide a breakdown of the £42,000 figure stating the costs for each aspect of maintenance, and separately itemise firstly the groundsman/other staff costs and secondly the cost of Norse profit for each category?

**Councillor Ryan, cabinet member for customer care and leisure's response:**

The proposal for improved tennis provision within Heigham Park brings a real opportunity to attract inward investment into our parks at a time when a recent report – *the state of public*

*parks 2016* – indicates that parks across the country are at risk of decline due to cuts to local government budgets from the Government's austerity programme. The council will be able to offer improved tennis provision which is more efficient and cost effective than the current seasonal grass play offered and the current pay-to-play fee collection system.

The Norwich Parks Tennis programme has already resulted in £127,000 of external investment funding to the city from the LTA and its proposed expansion would, if successful, bring in tens of thousands more.

A further advantage of the proposals is that a significant reduction in costs for the running of tennis will be achieved. The savings figure is an estimate and is yet to be finalised since it is very much linked with the development of the out-line proposals for new tennis facilities within Heigham Park. Once the full details of the scheme are known and its impact on the maintenance required for the rest of the park, talks will be held with our joint venture partner Norwich Norse Environment Ltd to establish a management scheme ensuring the provision of quality maintenance to the rest of the park.

With regard to the profit element for Norse, the service is delivered by our joint venture partner Norwich Norse (Environmental) Ltd which is part owned by the Council. The profit element is not based on individual items but rather on the total turnover of the company of approximately £6million and of which the City Council receives 50%. For this financial year the total profit is estimated to be £200,000 meaning the council will receive £100,000 profit share which is used to support the general fund and thereby reinvested back in the services offered by the council.

## **Question 5**

**Councillor Haynes to ask the cabinet member for environment and sustainable development the following question:**

Can the cabinet member comment on the possibility of affordable housing in the Anglia Square redevelopment, given that the policy guidance note states both that affordable housing is desirable and that it is likely to render the scheme unviable?

**Councillor Bremner, cabinet member for environment and sustainable development's response:**

The policy guidance note for Anglia Square approved by Cabinet last week made clear the Council's policies towards the provision of affordable housing that will be applied to any future planning application for the residential led redevelopment of Anglia Square.

It did not state that affordable housing "is likely to render the scheme unviable". What it did do was to acknowledge that due to

- a) the significant demolition and clearance, infrastructure and build costs that will be faced by the developer before any residential properties can be sold; and
- b) that the scale of works remaining possibly serving to suppress values that are obtained in the early phases of the development.

That the full range of Community Infrastructure Levy payments and planning policy requirements applicable in this case may render the scheme unviable.

Therefore the note went onto to describe the process that would need to be followed in order to address this in a robust and open manner. This process effectively places considerable weight on the importance of delivering some element of affordable housing when viability is under pressure, and to ensure the provision of affordable housing the Council is considering whether to allow exceptional relief from the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Assuming a planning application is submitted for the redevelopment of Anglia Square this matter will come before our planning applications committee to determine. So the judgement about whether sufficient affordable housing is provided to allow the development to proceed will need to be taken by them alongside their consideration of other material planning considerations.

This Council is committed to maximising the delivery of affordable housing as our actions consistently show. We do this through the use of our own land and resources and through the planning system.

#### **Question 6**

**Councillor Grahame to ask the leader of the council the following question:**

The number of electric vehicles in the staff pool has recently been reduced, with low staff take-up given as one reason. Ahead of the council switching to 100% electric vehicles for its fleet, as it has pledged to aim for by 2020, can the cabinet member comment on the possibility of removing barriers to staff using electric vehicles, for example by offering appropriate training or incentives?

**Councillor Waters, leader of the council's response:**

Thank you for your question Councillor Grahame. However I think you are labouring under a misapprehension. Council has not pledged to aim to switch to 100% electric vehicles for its fleet by 2020. This was made clear in the minutes following consideration of a motion on this topic at the council meeting 24 January 2017.

These clearly state:

Council **RESOLVES** to ask cabinet to:-

- (1) consider using 100% electric vehicles for the staff pool by 2020;

These minutes were agreed unanimously at the budget Council meeting on 21 February 2017 where Councillor Grahame was present and was part of the unanimous agreement that these minutes were correct.

So no pledge has been made and Cabinet has not yet considered the motion from Council.

The pool car fleet has been reduced by 16 vehicles of which two were electric. The use of the fleet is still being monitored to see whether there are usage changes as a result of the

reduced fleet i.e. that the electric vehicles become more used as there is less choice and capacity in the fleet.

Until the utilisation of the electric vehicles within the reduced fleet is known it is premature to be talking about training or incentives.

#### **Question 7**

**Councillor Button to ask the cabinet member for neighbourhoods and community safety the following question:**

Can the cabinet member for neighbourhoods and community safety comment on the effect of charging for the replacement of refuse bins has been in reducing the number of bins needing to be replaced and the financial saving to this local authority?

**Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for neighbourhoods and community safety's response:**

In the 3 months before charging came into effect in July 2016, the city council received 732 requests to replace household refuse and recycling bins, which was an average of 244 per month.

In comparison, in the 3 months since charging came into effect, the council received just 172 requests for the whole three month period, which is an average of 57 per month, and a decrease of over 76%.

This means that over this period, the council has saved £10,388 for not replacing bins, achieved income of £6,880 over the same period giving an overall saving to the council of £17,268.

For the full year the saving to the council is expected to be approximately £50,000.

#### **Question 8**

**Councillor Coleshill to ask the cabinet member for environment and sustainable development the following question:**

Earlier this month the Rose Lane car park won a national award for the 'Best New Car Park'. Can the cabinet member for environment and sustainable development comment on the achievements of the city council officers, designers and builders who have achieved such a positive improvement for the city?

**Councillor Bremner, cabinet member for environment and sustainable development's response:**

The new Rose Lane car park has indeed won the British Parking Association's national award for 'Best New Car Park' which was announced in London on 10 March. The car park beat entries from Birmingham, Darlington, Leeds and Solihull.



This is a tremendous accolade for the city of Norwich and represents the culmination of several years of meticulous planning and guidance by council officers to achieve this.

The award also positively reflects on the excellent working relationship between council officers, our project and contract administration partners NPS Norwich and the design and build constructors Huber.

The project has not only massively improved an important gateway to the city with its high level of design, but has also delivered an important new facility for visitors to Norwich and provided the impetus to kick-start wider redevelopment in the Mountergate West area.

I would like to say well done to all those involved in the project for achieving this award.

### **Question 9**

#### **Councillor Brociek-Coulton to ask the cabinet member for environment and sustainable development the following question:**

Like most councillors I share a passionate interest in the preservation, protection and promotion of our city's historic built up environment. It helps to make Norwich the special place it is. The recent City Council publication 'Norwich's nooks and crannies', is particularly positive in illustrating so much of Norwich's hidden history and will encourage residents to explore our fine city. Can the cabinet member for environment and sustainable development give his opinion on the walk which has been designed for this and the funding secured by the council as part of the Pushing Ahead programme from the Department for Transport?

#### **Councillor Bremner, cabinet member for environment and sustainable development's response:**

The nooks and crannies walk is a brilliant way to get to know the rich history of the city. The walk has proved really popular. More than 2000 copies have been collected from City Hall or the tourist information centre.

In most cities it would be impossible to devise a walk that is nearly 6 miles long, stays within 700 metres of the market place and never revisiting the same place. The intimate grain of Norwich's streets and alleys makes this possible. Doing the walk is like examining the facets of a jewel from many different angles.

It's not just for tourists. Local people who are familiar with the main streets and spaces in the city will discover surprising ways to short circuit the street network and tune into the stories of people who have lived and worked in these hidden places.

Devising the walk and the producing the booklet was paid for by the department for transport because it helps to get people fit through walking. It is part of the Pushing Ahead programme that funds initiatives to boost cycling and walking in the city. This will ensure people make maximum use of our infrastructure – whether that's the built inheritance from our ancestors or a new cycle path. We supported the County's application Pushing Ahead programme and are helping to implement it. It started last summer and will continue until 2020.

## **Question 10**

**Councillor Mike Sands to ask the cabinet member for fairness and equality the following question:**

Many residents have been affected by social security cuts, changes in employment contracts and a general reduction in disposable income since 2010. The recent 'Ready for Work' event, held at St Andrews Hall on Wednesday 8 February, was a useful opportunity for people to benefit from an array of employment opportunities, advice and support. I was pleased too that digital support was available throughout the day, with practical help on hand in creating a CV, tackling online job applications and securing future technical support if needed. Can the cabinet member for fairness and equality update council with his opinion on the success of the event?

**Councillor Thomas, cabinet member for fairness and equality's response:**

I too visited the event in The Halls and was pleased to see so many employers and supporting agencies there. Over 500 people by the end of the day had attended and sought help and assistance in job searching and getting ready for work. The 'Digital Zone' was very busy and Council staff were on hand to support people who needed help in applying for work or just getting used to using new technology.

The event was successful because it was not just about jobs and work. It was about ensuring that people who went into work, stayed in work and others were helped onto the path that ultimately would lead them into worthwhile employment.

The event although organised by the City Council was a partnership event involving the Job Centre and the Apprenticeship's Team from Norfolk County Council.

We also had an 'Enterprise Zone' for those people who wished to set up in business for themselves. Overall a very successful day for all attendees.

Work is currently underway to evaluate the event and learn from it about what went well and what we can do for the next event. Feedback forms from both those seeking work and those exhibitors uniformly found the event very helpful and exhibitors liked the access to candidates that it afforded.

## **Question 11**

**Councillor Driver to ask the cabinet member for environment and sustainable development the following question:**

The One Planet Norwich Festival will return on Saturday 6th and Sunday 7 May from 10am to 4pm, helping to illustrate how we can make our city and world more sustainable. Can the cabinet member for environment and sustainable development give his opinion on the opportunities and activities which will be on offer and how residents can get involved?

**Councillor Bremner, cabinet member for environment and sustainable development's response:**

Thank you Councillor Driver for your question regarding the One Planet Norwich festival which, as you say, is taking place on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May at the Forum.

In 2015 we introduced the One Planet Norwich work-stream. The aim of One Planet Norwich is for the council to look further afield than the council's own estate and to actively engage with Norwich residents about the ways in which they can make small changes to their lifestyles to reduce their carbon emissions through a variety of ways. To date, two One Planet festivals have been held, engaging with a total of 18,000 visitors in a wide range of ways.

Now in its third year, the One Planet Norwich festival looks set to be even bigger and better! The festival aims to be engaging, educational and fun. It seeks to gently challenge visitors to take a look at their own lifestyles and to consider what they might do to reduce their personal or family carbon footprint.

This year sees a wide range of activities including seed planting, a variety of locally-sourced food traders, electric vehicles, cycle rides, guided walks, a new eco-games area, pedal-powered smoothie-bike, children's colouring area, and a plethora of interesting environmentally-themed stalls to visit and enjoy. There will be an eco-trail where participants can collect the stamps and be in a draw for an eco-prize.

We are also excited to be able to present the iconic 'Whole Earth' exhibition in partnership with the University of East Anglia. The Whole Earth exhibition is described as a 'modern-day Bayeaux tapestry' and presents striking images and supporting text regarding a range of global environmental issues, which aims to inspire environmental action at a global scale.

As if all that wasn't enough, for the first time there will be the 'Unplugged' acoustic performance space at the front of the Forum where local musicians can showcase what they can do and add to the festival vibe. Alongside the performance area we will be challenging food waste, racing pedal-powered Scalextric cars and younger children can enjoy the balance-bike obstacle course.

Another first for the festival is the Cycle-cinema being held in the Gallery space on the afternoon of Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May. Participants are invited to come along and enjoy the antics of Wallace and Gromit's 'Cracking Contraptions' whilst pedalling to provide the power to produce the cinema experience! Attendees will first know they aren't pedalling hard enough when they lose the sound!

The Cycle-Cinema provides tangible evidence of the amount of energy that needs to be expended in order to power everyday household items, such as televisions and challenges the ease of energy provided at the flick of a switch. Behind the fun is the serious message of energy-use reduction and, having discovered how much energy appliances use, participants will be encouraged to turn off electrical items at home when they are not in use.

The weekend promises to be a fun, fresh look at the cost of excessive consumption, and we hope visitors will leave the event having discovered a few new things and full of ideas of how they can make small changes to reduce their own carbon footprint.

I'm certainly looking forward to attending!

## **Question 12**

**Councillor Peek to ask the cabinet member for neighbourhoods and community safety the following question:**

The new textiles and small electrical doorstep recycling service launched at the end of 2016 has now been running for several weeks. Can the cabinet member for neighbourhoods and community safety comment on its success and how residents can assist in further reducing items which will needlessly end up in landfill?

**Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for neighbourhoods and community safety's response:**

Residents have been able to leave small electricals and textiles for kerbside collection since the beginning of December 2016. In that short time, we have collected 7.29 tonnes of electrical items and 5.76 tonnes of textiles, which have then gone on for reuse or recycling.

As well as the new kerbside collections, residents continue to have several options for small electrical and textile items they no longer need, depending on the items' condition and circumstances. Residents can:

- List item/s for sale online
- Offer item/s for free online on sites such as Norfolk Freegle
- Give item/s to charity shops
- Take textiles to local bring bank collection points
- Take items to one of Norfolk's recycling centres

The above can also be used for other items such toys, furniture and audio/visual items.

Using all of these routes will help to increase reuse of unwanted items and therefore reducing the amount of waste sent for disposal. By using the right method to get rid of unwanted items will reduce the amount of contamination found in the recycling collections thereby increasing the efficiency of the sorting plant and the value of materials sent for recycling.

Both officers and councillors, can help residents throw away less, by encouraging them to offer as many of their unwanted items as possible for reuse and recycling.

## **Question 13**

**Councillor Beth Jones to ask the cabinet member for environment and sustainable development the following question:**

Representing a city council ward which contains many students, I am aware of the enormous positive benefits the University of East Anglia makes to create a vibrant and mixed community within Norwich. On occasion, issues and concerns arise between students, landlords and the established community. Having taken an active role in the

establishment of the UEA community liaison group, I am pleased to have been involved in the development of the UEA Student Union's new 'Good Neighbour Scheme'. Designed by students themselves, with fantastic support from both city council officers and the University's Student Support Services, the scheme aims to foster positive relationships between all members of our shared community. Can the cabinet member for environment and sustainable development comment on the new scheme and how residents can find out more about it?

**Councillor Bremner, cabinet member for environment and sustainable development's response:**

The new Good Neighbour Scheme is an excellent example of how both our organisations are working to support community cohesion. The 10 principles of the scheme compliment the work of the private sector housing team and the council's own Property Registration Scheme, aiming to drive up standards across the private rented sector.

The initiative has been presented to the council's Private Rented Sector Working Group which is in full support of the scheme, with the Eastern Landlords Association and the National Landlords Association agreeing to publicise the scheme to their members. We will also promote the scheme to letting agents across the city as well as offering the UEA an opportunity to talk about the scheme at the council's forthcoming landlord forum in May.

Information will be made available on the council's website such that residents, as well as tenants and landlords can learn more about the scheme, and how to feedback on properties signed up to it.

This is a positive move to encourage student tenants to be a responsible, active part of the local community, helping to make Norwich to a great place to live, study and work.

**Question 14**

**Councillor Fullman to ask the cabinet member for council housing the following question:**

I was pleased to see both the Leader and Deputy Leader breaking ground on the new Goldsmith Street re-development, as part of the official start of the project, in my ward. Can the cabinet member for council housing give her opinion on the benefits and opportunities which this major new scheme will offer both the local community, but also the wider city too?

**Councillor Harris, cabinet member for council housing's response:**

Thank you, the start on site ceremony marked a major milestone in the development of this award winning scheme and will help towards realising our ambitions to deliver 250 new council homes and to make Norwich a low carbon city with good housing for all.

The 105 new homes, which are due for completion in summer 2018, include a mix of one, two, three and four bedroomed properties, helping to meet the identified housing need in the city

The dwellings will all be let at social rent levels meaning they are affordable for the residents of Norwich and are designed to achieve the Passivhaus standard. The homes will be offered to applicants on the HOMEOPTIONS website and will include a number for existing social housing tenants to be able to transfer into, enabling some to downsize or reduce over-crowding in their existing properties.

The development at Goldsmith Street will be one of the largest Passivhaus developments in the UK, which along with the soon to be completed 10 dwellings at Hansard Close and the development of Three Score phase 2 due to commence in the near future will mark Norwich out as a centre for Passivhaus in the UK.

Passivhaus requires building to the highest certifiable standard of energy efficiency, resulting in ultra-low energy buildings that need very little fuel for heating or cooling. The properties will feature extra thick insulation, triple glazed windows and doors, and a mechanical vent heat recovery system. This allows clean filtered air into the home, whilst ensuring that heat generated through day-to-day activities does not escape.

This will result in large savings on fuel bills for our tenants thereby helping to address fuel poverty. Passivhaus has also been shown to have high levels of comfort for residents and proven health benefits in reducing condensation and indoor air pollutants.

The design of the development has already won the Housing Design Award for Mikhail Riches architects and seeks to recreate the terraced streets of Norwich, regenerating an area that has been vacant for a number of years and is otherwise dominated by post war blocks of flats.

As part of the wider development of the area improvement works have already been carried out to the Midland Street green space. These include new paths for walking and cycling, new seating, planting and the installation of wooden play equipment.

There will also be further landscaping within the site to create pedestrian and cycle links and the creation of additional child play space.

Further wider improvements to local transport will be carried out through the introduction of traffic calming measures, the provision of a car club space and vehicle, and electric car charging points.

The construction contract with R G Carter is expected to both safeguard and provide a number of additional job opportunities in the local economy both directly and with sub-contractors and their supply chain. This will include apprenticeships, and further training opportunities.

The council has provided some funding to support the fabric first institute, led by Whole House Energy and R G Carter, which is a bespoke training course on Passivhaus and other energy efficient methods of construction. This is open to all construction companies and will help to up-skill the local workforce in these methods of construction enabling them to compete for similar projects in the city and elsewhere.

## Question 15

**Councillor Malik to ask the leader of the council the following question:**

'The Great Get Together', to be held on 17 and 18 June, will see thousands engage in street parties, picnics and baking competitions in memory of murdered Labour Member of Parliament Jo Cox. Several charities are helping to publicise the event. Can the leader comment on how the council might encourage residents and community groups to use the event to bring people together in the spirit that we have "far more in common with each other than things that divide us"?

**Councillor Waters, leader of the council's response:**

Norwich people have a strong history of coming together to mark and celebrate important moments in time. The city council has a reputation for supporting people who wish to both celebrate and commemorate in their communities.

Jo Cox's murder at the hands of a right wing extremist was a moment which sent shockwaves through this country and the world, it deprived the labour party and parliament of a talented and committed MP. But more importantly it ripped a young family apart.

Jo's husband Brendan has initiated 'the Great Get Together', an event designed to bring people together within communities. Brendan Cox, has said there could be no more fitting tribute to his wife and that Jo loved a party and she would have been thrilled by the idea of The Great Get Together.

Rest assured that this council will be promoting how to put on your own street party for this event through its website, social media and press opportunities. There is an easy guide and application for street parties on our website which we encourage the public to go to.

Let's celebrate Jo Cox's life as she lived it with passion and optimism.

**Question 16**

**Councillor Lubbock to ask the cabinet member for environment and sustainable development the following question:**

At the annual conference of '20's Plenty' in Birmingham called '20: Slower is safer', I was pleased to see an officer from the city council. We both listened to presentations illustrating the benefits to communities of 20 mph speed limits.

Birmingham City Council's commitment to lower speeds was underpinned by involvement from partner agencies such as the Police and Fire services. Their opportunities to promote and educate the public on slower speeds play a vital part in the council's strategy. This was done through attendance at community events and schools (which they currently do in Norwich) helping the community - and especially children - buy in to the 20's plenty message.

The Police even helped school children set up a 'court' to deal with drivers who the children found speeding outside their school. They made a video of the scheme and drivers were contrite as the children spoke to them about the effects of their speeding.

Norwich City Council are committed to introduce 20 mph restrictions in all residential areas and a target was introduced in 2015 into the corporate plan to increase the number of households living in a street that was subject to a 20 restriction.

Can I ask what the target was and how we are doing against that target?

**Councillor Bremner, cabinet member for environment and sustainable development's response:**

The target in the corporate plan for the percentage of homes in a street which is subject to a 20mph restriction was 36% for the year ending December 2016. I am delighted to say that the target has been exceeded and currently 39.4 % of homes in Norwich enjoy a 20mph restriction in their street.

As many of you are aware using the cycle ambition grant funding we are looking to ensure that all residential roads within 400m of the blue and yellow pedalways will have a 20mph restriction. This includes all of Cllr Lubbock's ward, Eaton, and large parts of Lakenham, Town Close, Sewell, Catton Grove and Mile Cross

I am optimistic that by this time next year over half of Norwich's homes will be in a 20mph street.