



**Sustainable Development Panel**

**16:00 to 17:05**

**15 November 2022**

Present: Councillors Hampton (vice chair in the chair), Carlo, Giles, Lubbock, Oliver, Schmierer (substitute for Councillor Osborn), Padda and Stutely (substitute for Councillor Stonard)

Apologies: Councillors Stonard (chair) and Osborn

**1. Declarations of Interest**

None.

**2. Minutes**

**RESOLVED** to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meetings held on 14 June 2022, subject to amending the list present and item 2 to accurately record that Councillor Hampton was appointed as vice chair.

**3. 2020/21 Annual Monitoring Report**

The planner presented the covering report and explained that the publication of the Greater Norwich Development Partnership Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2020/21 was later than usual due to staff resources being focused on the preparation of and involvement in the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) and due to the impact of the pandemic. The full AMR was available on the Greater Norwich Development Partnership's website. The AMR was usually published in the autumn following the year end the previous March. Due to the delay and preparation for the GNLP, the 2021/22 AMR had also been delayed. Policies adopted under the GNLP would be subject to monitoring and gaps in data collection would be addressed.

Discussion ensued on the ability to demonstrate the five-year land supply, noting that this was subject to change year on year and was based on the information at the time. Members commented on the provision of 184 affordable housing units and were advised by officers that this was a historic low. In reply to a member's question the planning policy team leader advised members that the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) would provide more detail on assessment for affordable housing viability and methodology used.

Members commented on the data and made suggestions where they considered it could be improved. Members were advised that data was collated from a variety of sources, and in partnership with South Norfolk, Broadland and Norfolk County Council. A member suggested that it would be more useful to measure black bin waste (refuse) to monitor whether it was being reduced as a percentage of all waste collected rather than as tonnage. Councillor Oliver, cabinet member for

environment, said that there had been campaigns to ensure that residents knew which bin to use to reduce waste. A member expressed her view that the transport performance indicators were not adequate and referred to new road infrastructure.

Discussion ensued on the monitoring of water quality and that figure had remained static at 4 per cent for a couple of years. It was considered that the Environment Agency might not have provided figures for that period. A member expressed her regret that better monitoring of river water quality could have avoided the current situation where local planning authorities were unable to determine new planning applications for development due to Nutrient Neutrality. The council worked in partnership with other authorities on the Broadland Futures Initiative, Water Resource East and the River Wensum Strategy and this would inform the use of indicators. Members considered that the indicator for the state of the rivers, as set out in Table 3.28 should continue to be strengthened and monitored but there should be greater responsibility on developers, to monitor the impact of development on rivers through their environmental impact assessments. Officers advised the panel that the GNLP partner authorities were responsible for monitoring of the local planning policies for the AMR and assured members monitoring of river water quality would be improved. The AMR noted the performance of the local plans in place at a moment in time. Members would be briefed on proposals to address Nutrient Neutrality before cabinet met in December 2022<sup>1</sup>.

In reply to a member's question, the planner said that the 2021 Census data had not been available from the Office of National Statistics in time for the 2020/21 AMR but would be used in the future years'.

During discussion members were reminded of the terms of reference of this panel and that this was a report for information. The cabinet members and officers would feedback concerns that members had expressed about the data and information, if considered appropriate, to inform indicators for the monitoring of the GNLP policies going forward.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (1) note the contents of the 2020/21 Greater Norwich Development Partnership Annual Monitoring Report;
- (2) ask the committee officer to share slides from the informal planning applications committee meeting on 10 November 2022 on Affordable Housing with members of the panel.

**4. Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights for the conversion of offices to residential**

The planning policy team leader presented the report on behalf of the planner (report author). She explained the background to the report and the work undertaken. The revised Article 4 Direction was more targeted. Anglia Square and Capitol House, on Heigham Street, remain outside the proposed Article 4 Direction area.”

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<sup>1</sup> The session on Nutrient Neutrality was subsequently postponed to January to consider a proposal for a long term solution in advance of the January meeting of cabinet.

Anglia Square and Capitol House, near Barn Road were now outside the scope of the proposal. She answered questions on the protection of office floor space as set out in paragraph 16. A modification to the GNLP had been proposed to take into account that the Article 4 Direction would be targeted and include a clause permitting a change of use where it could be demonstrated that the loss of the office accommodation was not detrimental to the local economy.

Members welcomed the proposal and praised the officers, consultants and Councillor Davis, for their work in bringing forward this proposal. Members had been concerned about unregulated office conversions, resulting in poor standard accommodation.

**RESOLVED** to recommend to cabinet on 14 December 2022 that the council formally asks the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to modify the proposed non-immediate Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights for the conversion of offices to residential within Norwich city centre.

CHAIR