



CABINET

5.30pm to 6.40pm

14 March 2012

Present: Councillors Arthur (Chair), Waters, Bremner, Brociek-Coulton, Gihawi and MacDonald

Also present: Councillor Stephenson

Apologies Councillor Westmacott

1. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Arthur declared a prejudicial interest and Councillor Brociek-Coulton declared a personal interest in item 9, the voluntary and community sector commissioning programme - grant awards 2012-13.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2012.

3. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2011/12

Councillor Waters, deputy leader of the council and cabinet member for resources, introduced the report.

Councillor Stephenson raised concerns about the risk of rental income falling particularly commercial rents. The chief executive officer clarified that the budgeting process included risk assessment and the economic climate had been accounted for in the medium term financial strategy.

RESOLVED to note the current financial position as at 31 December 2011.

4. QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT

Councillor Arthur, leader of the council, introduced the report.

In reply to questions the current position with the backlog of benefit assessment, the head of strategy and programme management explained that actions plans had been put in place to address this and the backlog had been reduced. The deputy chief executive officer agreed to provide details of the longest period of time an individual currently had to wait.

RESOLVED to note progress against the corporate plan priorities

5. EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2012-2016

Councillor Brociek-Coulton, cabinet member for customer services, introduced the report and thanked the officers involved in producing the objectives.

RESOLVED to approve the draft equality objectives in Appendix A of the report.

6. LOCALISM ACT 2011

Councillor Waters, deputy leader of the council and cabinet member for resources introduced the report and said that the community right to challenge was one of the most significant pieces of the localism act which could have a major impact on local government services.

RESOLVED to approve the decision and notification timetables required under sections 82 to 84 of the Localism Act 2011 as relating to Community Right to Challenge:-

- (1) to accept expressions of interest under the Community Right to Challenge duties annually only between 1st March and 30th April, commencing 2013
- (2) determination of those expressions will under normal circumstances take no more than seven months and be reported to Cabinet each September for ratification and follow generally the process outlined in Appendix 2
- (3) the procurement process resulting following the acceptance of any expression will start no sooner than three months and no later than six months following acceptance

7. VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMISSIONING PROGRAMME - GRANT AWARDS 2012-13

Councillor Arthur and Councillor Brociek-Coulton having both declared an interest in this item, left the room for this item.

Councillor Waters, deputy leader and cabinet member for resources, introduced the report.

RESOLVED to approve the following grant allocations, as part of the wider voluntary and community sector commissioning programme 2012-13

Outcome: City of Character and culture

Britten Sinfonia	£10,000
Cultureworks East	£5000
Community Music East	£5000
Creative Communities Consortium	£5000
Interface Learning	£4000
Norwich and Norfolk Community Arts (NORCA)	£5000

Norfolk Dance	£7000
Norwich Puppet Theatre	£10,000
The Garage Trust	£10,000
Norwich MIND	£4260

Outcome Safe and Clean

Norwich in Bloom	£10,000
Sexual Violence Alliance	£6000

Outcome: Prosperous City

Norwich Door to Door	£32,000
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Outcome: Building capacity of Voluntary sector

Voluntary Norfolk	£42,000
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TOTAL	£155,260
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(Councillor Arthur and Councillor Brociek-Coulton both rejoined the meeting).

8. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK FOR WORKING IN PARTNERSHIPS : ANNUAL REVIEW OF PARTNERSHIPS REGISTER

Councillor Arthur, leader of the council, introduced the report.

Councillor Stephenson expressed concern that there was no council representation on the Norfolk climate partnership. The head of strategy and programme management said that the environmental strategy manager was involved with this body.

RESOLVED to endorse the partnerships register for 2011-12.

9. TENANCY POLICY - HOUSING

Councillor Macdonald, cabinet member for housing, introduced the report and pointed out that Norwich City Council would not offer fixed term tenancies. She explained that work would continue on this policy and succession rights involving partners would become more explicit in the future.

RESOLVED to agree the council's tenancy policy as detailed in annex A of the report.

10. NORWICH CITY COUNCIL SOCIAL HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY

Councillor Macdonald, cabinet member, for housing introduced the report.

Councillor Stephenson asked if disabled tenants could be re-housed to properties that met their needs and it was confirmed that this already happened within the existing policies.

Councillor Arthur said that the home options system offered and would continue to provide a bespoke service for the people of Norwich.

RESOLVED:

- (1) to note the outcome of the consultation on changes to the social housing allocations policy for Norwich
- (2) to approve an amended social housing allocations policy, attached as detailed in appendix B of this report.

11. AWARD OF THE CONTRACT FOR HOUSING IMPROVEMENTS AND UPGRADES

Councillor Macdonald cabinet member for housing introduced the report.

Councillor Stephenson asked why this had not been to the contracts working party. The head of property services said that a decision had been made by the contracts working party to enter into a consortium.

Councillor Waters said that consideration should be given to the need for the contracts working party to review contracts in the consortium.

RESOLVED:

- (1) to award a contract to Foster Property Maintenance Limited under the EPC framework for housing improvements and upgrades for an initial four year period with an option to extend for a further two years
- (2) to commit to spend up to £14.5m for 2012/13 through this contract to be financed from the approved Housing Capital Programme.

12. OPTIONS FOR THE FUNDING AND DELIVERY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON COUNCIL OWNED LAND

Councillor Bremner, cabinet member for planning and transport, introduced the report.

Councillor Stephenson asked if any sites had been identified and why commuted sums are more prevalent and said she was not happy that capital should be accepted in lieu of affordable housing. She also asked if there were any restrictions in spending commuted sums.

Cllr Bremner said that the Wherry Road site had been a good example of where commuted sums would enable affordable housing to be delivered elsewhere in the area.

The senior housing development officer explained that developers must adhere to policy in terms of providing affordable homes on site and if not must go through an independent viability assessment. The council would only then accept commuted sums where no registered providers would manage affordable homes and when there is no other option.

There was a list of potential sites which would be presented to planners for guidance and support. These would then be consulted upon before being presented to cabinet for decisions to be made in June 2012.

RESOLVED:

- (1) to approve the use of a range of funding options, detailed in the report, for the delivery of affordable housing schemes on council owned land;
- (2) to approve that the mechanism to enable the development of affordable housing on council owned land will be the disposal of packages of sites to registered providers supplemented by the option for the council to build its own new stock;
- (3) to note that cabinet will consider the development sites at a future meeting following local consultation.

13. AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR AGENCY WORKERS

Councillor Waters, deputy leader and cabinet member for resources, introduced the report. He said that the contract would be for a 4 year term not a three year term as stated in the report and that there would not be an option to extend the contract at the end of the 4 year term.

Councillor Stephenson asked if it was possible to create a staff bank rather than use agencies. The human resources services manager said that that this option had been explored but the amount of resource needed to manage the recruitment and management required made it unviable.

RESOLVED to delegate to the director of corporate resources, in consultation with portfolio holders, authority to award contracts to establish an agency framework.

14. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2012/13

Councillor Waters, deputy leader of the council and cabinet member for resources, introduced the report

RESOLVED:

- (1) to confirm the pay policy statement in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011
- (2) to recommend council to approve the pay policy statement.

15. AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR CITY HALL REFURBISHMENT PHASE 1

Councillor Waters, deputy leader of the council and cabinet member for resources, introduced the report.

An amendment to the plan was presented to the meeting which included a political room on the third floor as requested by Councillor Stephenson who extended her thanks for the amendment.

RESOLVED:

- (1) to approve the plan layout for the reconfiguration of the office accommodation on the top floor of City Hall (attached as appendix A of the report);
- (2) to approve the use of the Norfolk County Council partnering framework for construction works to select a contractor for this work; and
- (3) to delegate to the director of regeneration and development, in consultation with portfolio holder, authority to award the contract subject to a satisfactory evaluation process and the successful tender prices being within the capital programme forecasts.

16. AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR RENEWAL OF THE COUNCIL'S POOL CAR FLEET

Councillor Waters, deputy leader of the council and cabinet member for resources, introduced the report.

RESOLVED:

- 1) to approve the commitment to spend an estimated £421,000 from various Council budgets over three year term of the contract hire for pool cars; and
- 2) to delegate to the director of regeneration and development, in consultation with portfolio holder for resources, performance, and shared services, authority to award the contract subject to a satisfactory evaluation process and the successful tender price being within budget forecasts.

17. EXTENSION OF CONTRACT FOR CORPORATE (NON-HOUSING) REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Councillor Waters, deputy leader of the council and cabinet member for resources, introduced the report.

RESOLVED to approve the:

- (1) extension of the Corporate Repairs and Maintenance Contract for a period of three years commencing 1 April 2013; and
- (2) commitment to spend an anticipated £3.3 million from the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account over the extended 3 year term of the contract.

18. QUEEN ELIZABETH II FIELDS CHALLENGE

Councillor Gihawi, cabinet member for play, parks and open spaces introduced the report.

Councillor Brociek-Coulton added that this is also the 25th anniversary of Britain and Anglia in bloom.

RESOLVED:

- (1) to nominate Eaton Park, Harford Park, Sloughbottom Park and Woodrow Pilling Park as Queen Elizabeth II Fields
- (2) to delegate authority to the Director of Regeneration and Development in consultation with the portfolio holder for Parks and Open Spaces to agree a Deed of Dedication to be placed on the land, for the sites which are selected as being appropriate for Queen Elizabeth II Field status by the Fields in Trust.

19.IMPROVING THE DELIVERY OF THE PROPERTY SERVICES FUNCTION

Councillor Macdonald, cabinet member for housing, introduced the report.

RESOLVED to agree to establish three trainee building surveyor/engineer posts in the property services section.

CHAIR