



**Scrutiny Committee  
Informal online meeting**

**16:30 to 18:30**

**10 January 2022**

Present: Councillors Wright (chair), Matthew Fulton-McAlister (vice chair)  
Everett, Carlo, Driver, Galvin, Giles, Huntley, Osborn, Stutely,  
Thomas (Va) and Thomas (Vi)

Apologies: Councillor Manning

**1. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**2. Threescore development**

The executive director of city and development services presented the report. The council was dealing with rapidly escalating costs in construction and the principles of the contract had already been agreed. More clarity had been received around the costings and the council was keen to move forward and ensure these costs were managed by entering into the contract promptly following the cabinet meeting on 12 January 2022.

The chair invited questions from members.

A member referred to the statutory considerations at page 13 of the agenda and asked what the criteria were for considering a contractor to be a local company. He also asked with the £1.2m contingency would be used for. The executive director of city and development services said the definition of 'local' was not ringfenced to the city but meant that the contractors would draw their supply chain from the local economy as well as having an apprenticeship scheme. The leader of the council added that 90% of the contractors used by RG Carter had been taken from within a 40km radius of Norwich.

With regards to the contingency, the executive director of city and development services said that the level outlined in the report was necessary due to the rapidly changing construction market. The council was looking to negotiate a fixed contract price to minimise the risk of price increases.

A member questioned the reasons for the significant reduction in the number of social dwellings outlined at page 12 of the agenda, with a reduction from 83 to 52. He also asked how the risks were overseen and whether whole life carbon assessments were undertaken for the properties.

The executive director of city and development services said that the lot was originally a whole lot development, but it had been split which changed the numbers of social dwellings.

With regards to the risk register, the development contract was between Norwich City Council and RG Carter. This meant that it was an HRA development with properties designed to meet the standards of the HRA. The council was the end client so the council managed the risk.

The managing director of NRL commented that there was an aspiration to understand full lifecycle carbon analysis moving forward. The current development focussed on the building performance of the dwelling, but as other developments were started, the company hoped to take on board the wider lifecycle of the development. The executive director of city and development services confirmed that whole life carbon assessments were outside of the terms of the contract outlined in the report, but there were plans to adopt these for future developments.

A member commented that with the rising costs of building materials, there could be the danger of 'corners being cut' and asked if there were strong quality control measures in place. In addition, she asked if the properties would include solar panels.

The managing director of NRL replied that the strength of using the proposed contractor was the resilient supply chain that a large company has in place but also took into consideration local supply chains. He was responsible for quality control and the work of the building delivery team, which included a contracts manager to review and monitor the contract. The senior development officer (enabling) added that the cost of adding solar panels had to be taken into account. Carbon reduction measures were already being included in the build but future schemes would be reviewed on an individual basis and solar panels could be included if appropriate.

(Councillor Matthew Fulton-McAlister joined the meeting at this point)

A member referred to the previous discussion on whole life carbon assessments and asked why these had not been considered for this development. The executive director of city and development services said that the standards of the properties were genuinely exemplary and the Passivhaus elements were better than the vast majority of national builds. The process would be refined with each development undertaken.

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

### 3. Exclusion of the public

**RESOLVED** to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of item \*13 and \*4 (below) on the grounds contained in the relevant paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

**4. Norwich Regeneration Ltd Business Plan 2022-23 (para 3)**

(An exempt minute exists for this item)

Members discussed the Norwich Regeneration Ltd Business Plan 2022-23 and asked questions of officers.

**RESOLVED** to recommend to cabinet the recommendations outlined in the exempt minute.

CHAIR