



Cabinet

17.30 – 19:05

13 October 2021

Present: Councillors Waters (chair), Harris (vice chair), Davis, Hampton, Jones, Kendrick, Oliver and Stonard

Apologies: Councillor Packer

Also present: Councillors Bogelein and Lubbock

1. Public Questions/Petitions

There were no public questions or petitions.

2. Declarations of interest

Councillor Harris declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6 below as the council's appointee to the Broads Authority which had already considered the item.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2021.

4. Covid-19 Recovery Plan progress update

Councillor Waters, leader of the council presented the report. Norwich was one of the first cities in the country to publish a forward looking recovery plan and had worked alongside central government to ensure that its citizens and the most vulnerable within the city stayed safe and had access to the support they needed.

The changes brought about by the pandemic would have longevity and the council needed to adapt to those changes. The Recovery Plan was a testimony to work undertaken by several organisations, all political groups on the council and council staff which were all adapting to new ways of working and difficult circumstances.

The chief executive officer said that the council had been focussed on responding to the challenges of the pandemic in the first instance but was looking now at putting together a framework for moving forward.

The council continued to provide rapid support to its most vulnerable residents and local businesses. This support included topping up funding for self isolation

payments, continuation of the council tax reduction scheme, reforming debt advice services and pushing for more businesses to pay the living wage. The council, and its wholly owned companies, were also looking at taking on more apprentice roles to grow skills and employment opportunities within the city.

A challenging budget position framed all of the council's work but it was taking the initiative to balance the budget. There were still opportunities to invest in priorities whilst working on how the council used assets to generate income as well as unlocking land for development.

Councillor Davis, cabinet member for social inclusion, referred to paragraph 16 of the report which reported that levels of Universal Credit claims had increased, and clarified that these were claims for the Norwich Job Centre Plus area.

Councillor Bogelein commented that an all councillor briefing on the recovery plan would be useful and asked whether it would be possible to introduce a theme of reducing anti-social behaviour and violence in the city, including tackling addiction.

Councillor Waters, leader of the council, said that concerns around that topic were woven throughout the recovery plan and there was a cabinet member with responsibility for anti-social behaviour within their portfolio.

Councillor Lubbock commented that the recovery plan highlighted a range of different issues but it was nice to see what the council had been able to do successfully.

RESOLVED to note the progress made in the delivery of the COVID-19 recovery plan and the main actions contained within it.

5. Climate and environmental update

Councillor Hampton, cabinet member for climate change and digital inclusion, introduced the report. She highlighted the award winning carbon management plan, the retrofitting of council housing and the examples of collaborative working. There was a specific recommendation around area wide emissions being reduced to 0% by 2045 which was a renewal of the council's ambition and reflected the increasing urgency of the situation.

Councillor Lubbock referred to paragraph 25 of the report and said that she was not keen on some of the Transport for Norwich Strategy. She would like to see restrictions around vehicle movement within the city, including reviewing single occupancy vehicle, and improvements to the Park and Ride services.

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for inclusive and sustainable growth, said that a paper had been put to the county council in December 2020 which was ambitious and included Councillor Lubbock's points. These were included in the strategy which was out for public consultation so the council had already pushed Norfolk County Council to be more ambitious.

Councillor Bogelein commented that although it was good to have a document showing what the council was doing, it did not acknowledge the scale of the issue or

how Norwich City Council contributed to climate change as Oxford University estimated 7 tonnes of carbon being produced which was higher than the estimate in the report. She asked whether the next phase would acknowledge increased CO2 emissions and the pathway to 0% emissions.

The environmental services manager said that although the base data did exclude emissions from some sources, it was the national data set and was a helpful tool for monitoring purposes. The council used other tools such as Tyndall Pathways and Catapult. A place-based calculator showed that Norwich was below the national average.

Councillor Lubbock commented that she hoped that the council would engage in a meaningful way with residents.

Councillor Waters, leader of the council said that there was a narrative going back for fifteen years on carbon reduction in the city and this dynamism would need to be recognised in the work of the 2040 vision and the Good Economy Commission to tackle climate change issues.

RESOLVED to note the report, the appended climate and environment update, note planned further work as set out in this cover report and endorse the revised city vision target regarding areawide emissions.

6. Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance Strategy

Councillor Oliver, cabinet member for environmental services presented the report. She said that the strategy had been formed as a countywide response to flooding risks. The aims were to reduce flood risk and increase water management strategy.

Norfolk County Council was the lead authority for the strategy but had a duty to co-operate with other local authorities. Norwich City Council had a statutory responsibility however, to ensure that adequate precautions were in place.

Councillor Harris, deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing said that she was please to see the work happening between different authorities and the strategy was a good example of partnership working.

Councillor Bogelein said that although it was an evidence based document, it did not identify the work around increased risk due to climate change. The executive director of development and city services said that although it was not specifically mentioned, the Environment Agency was part of the group and provided data for modelling and responding to risk.

RESOLVED to endorse the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance Strategy.

7. Medium Term Financial Strategy Corporate Overview

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources presented the report. Assumptions were updated as information came through from central government

but there was still a need to save £10.6m over the next four years. There would need to be a draw down on reserves to balance the budget.

Themes had been identified within the report which would be put to public consultation later in the year.

The executive director of corporate and commercial services said that the council had been given an opportunity to go into a business rates pool with other Norfolk local authorities. This was a positive step forwards and meant that the council would receive additional revenue.

Councillor Bogelein asked for an indication of confidence in decreasing the gap between incoming and outgoing funds. The executive director of corporate and commercial services said that it was not possible to give an answer as the council did not yet know what its settlement figure was. The senior leadership team were looking at all opportunities for efficiencies and income increases.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) note the current MTFS projections and approach to updating key assumptions; and
- (2) endorse the approach and timetable for setting the 2022/23 budgets.

8. Risk Management Policy and Strategy

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources presented the report. The report had already been considered by the council's audit committee and formed a fundamental element of the risk management framework. He highlighted the updated document at appendix one to the report which guided officers through the process of identifying risks.

Councillor Bogelein asked if there was an update on including climate change as a risk. The chief executive said that if specific risks were linked to climate change, they would be included in the register in the usual way. There was already a programme of work on issues such as flooding and carbon management.

RESOLVED to approve the council's risk management policy and strategy.

9. Award of contract for the installation of a New District Heating System at Barnards Yard, Norwich

Councillor Harris, deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing presented the report.

Work had been undertaken to replace the gas pump and instead install a pump that used wastewater which was more efficient than ground or air source pumps. Eighty-five dwellings would benefit from the installation.

She highlighted paragraphs 9-14 of the report which gave details of the new system.

The installation would involve an extensive amount of work which would also rationalise the car park and improve the aesthetic of the yard. A resident liaison officer would also be on site.

The project was at phase two which was due for completion by 31 March 2022.

RESOLVED to approve the award of a contract for the installation of a new district heating system at Barnards Yard, Norwich to J Tomlinson Limited. The contract is valued at £1,829,505.02.

10. The award of contract for leaseholder insurance

Councillor Harris, deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing presented the report.

The contract was aligned with other policies so should be up for renewal in April 2022. The broker was withdrawing from the field, so the policy needed to be re-tendered. The tender process would be managed by Cambridgeshire County Council with full leaseholder consultation which would happen in December 2021.

The award of contract was time critical which was the reason for seeking a delegation.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) approve the delegation of the decision to award the contract for leaseholder insurance to the Director of Community Services, in consultation with the portfolio holder for Social Housing; and
- (2) award the contract for the period commencing 1 April 2022 for a term of three years with an option to extend for an additional two.

11. Carrow House refurbishment – supplementary agenda item

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth presented the supplementary report. He said that it was an urgent item which needed to be considered by cabinet which had been agreed by the chair of the scrutiny committee.

The contractor was unable to carry out works within the original costs due to increases in materials.

12. Exclusion of the public

RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the exempt appendix to item 11 on the grounds contained in the relevant paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

***13. Carrow House refurbishment – supplementary agenda item exempt appendix (para 3)**

The executive director of development and city services presented the exempt appendix.

(an exempt minute exists for this item).

14. Carrow House refurbishment – supplementary agenda item

Having considered the report and the exempt appendix, it was:-

RESOLVED to approve the award of a contract for the refurbishment of Carrow House as described in the exempt appendix.

15. Exclusion of the public

RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the items *16 and *17 (below) on the grounds contained in the relevant paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

***16 Managing Assets (Non-Housing)**

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources presented the report.

RESOLVED to approve the disposal of the land as outlined in the report

***17. Managing Assets (Housing)**

Councillor Harris, deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing presented the report.

RESOLVED to approve the disposal of land from the Housing Revenue Account as described in the report.

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CHAIR