



Cabinet

17:30 to 19:30

8 February 2023

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

Also present: Councillors Galvin, Green Group Leader, Wright, Liberal Democrat Group Leader

1. Declarations of interest

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for inclusive and sustainable growth, declared an interest in relation to items 3, 11 and *12 (below) in that he was a director of Norwich Regeneration Limited. He would not take part in the vote on item 3 and would not take part in the vote and leave the room for items 11 and *12.

2. Public questions/ petitions

One public question had been received from Mr James Hawkett.

Mr Hawkett asked the leader of the council the following question:

“I attempted to attend Cabinet as a member of the public last month but found the public entrance locked upon my arrival. It remained locked after the start time of the meeting, and I only managed to get in by calling up a friend of mine, Cllr Lubbock, who recommended waving frantically at the employee entrance until security came to investigate. I have also discovered that closing the public door 30 minutes before cabinet begins has been common policy for a while. There is no mention of any of this on the council’s website.

Is the leader aware of this occurrence from last time, and may I please seek assurances that changes have been made, or will soon be made to address such a fundamental error of judgement? Public oversight and accountability of power are cornerstones of democracy that, contrary to the evidence, I would hope this council takes seriously.”

Councillor Waters responded:

“Thank you for your question.

This was an unfortunate incident and I apologise for any inconvenience that this caused you. I can ensure you that the city council is committed to open

and transparent governance as demonstrated by the fact that many of our meetings are livestreamed to ensure people can watch at their convenience.

The standard procedure is for the front doors to be open 15 minutes before a public meeting starts and to remain open for 30 minutes with a telephone number to contact staff to gain entry outside of these times. On this occasion, just as the meeting started, we became aware of the issue and immediately requested that the doors be re-opened and an outside check done to ensure anyone waiting was given access to the meeting.

I have reviewed the process to make certain that all relevant staff members are aware to ensure this error does not occur again.

Thank you for bringing the matter to my attention.”

In response to Mr Hawkett’s supplementary question, Councillor Waters leader of the council noted that it did not adhere to the rules of the constitution because it did not relate to his initial question nor did it follow the response he received. However, he assured Mr Hawkett that whilst he did not support the new voter ID legislation the council were making every effort to ensure those that were entitled to vote were able to.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2023.

4. Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2023/24

Councillor Jones, cabinet member for safe, strong and inclusive neighbourhoods, presented the report. She emphasised that the council’s sound financial management enabled it to continue to offer a 100% Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) which helped to assist the most financially vulnerable. The Head of Revenues and Benefits advised that 13,000 individuals received the LCTRS with 77.6% receiving a 100% reduction.

In response to Councillor Galvin’s question the Head of Revenues and Benefits advised that claimants with support needs were signposted to the Financial Inclusion Consortium or the Norfolk Community Advice Network. She noted that benefit letters were being reviewed to ensure information on support agencies was provided.

RESOLVED to recommend:

- 1) That Council retains a maximum 100 per cent LCTRS for working age recipients.
- 2) That Council make the following changes to the LCTRS for 2023/24 by continuing with the 2022/23 scheme with the following annual modifications:
 - a) include provision for future central and local government financial support payments (such as energy rebates/council tax support funding) to be disregarded from the scheme;

- b) to increase the working age applicable amounts for allowances and premiums by the September 2022 Consumer Price Index (CPI) rate of 10.1 per cent;
- c) to increase the level of income brackets used to decide non-dependant deductions and level of non-dependant deductions by the September 2022 Consumer Price Index (CPI) rate of 10.1 per cent;
- d) to increase the level of income brackets used to decide entitlement to second adult reduction by the September 2022 Consumer Price Index (CPI) rate of 10.1 per cent;
- e) to retain the maximum household capital limit of £16,000;
- f) to amend the wording of the LCTRS to use self-employed earnings figures for Universal Credit (UC) claimants as determined by the Secretary of State from 1 April 2023;
- g) to amend the wording of the LCTRS to take into account the prescribed regulations as notified by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

5. The council's 2023/24 budget and medium-term financial strategy

The leader of the council introduced the item and noted that the report had the benefit of being considered at scrutiny committee and would go on to full council. Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources, presented the report. He commented that the recent local government spending settlement had meant a 4.7% rise in the council's core budget which was far below the level of inflation. Despite this, the 2023/24 budget was balanced without the use of financial reserves and enabled the provision of vital services. The recent peer review which had been conducted commended the council's financial management.

Councillor Harris, deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing referred to the Housing Revenue Account 30 year business plan which illustrated income and investment levels were sustainable. She emphasised that significant progress was being made in relation to historic compliance issues in council homes and noted that the council's zero carbon ambitions presented funding challenges.

New house building had been affected by the nutrient neutrality (NN) issue but new homes were still being built at Bowthorpe having received planning permission prior to NN. The aspiration was to build 234 new homes over the next five years whilst significantly investing in current housing stock with a programme of bathroom, kitchen and electrical upgrades.

Councillor Hampton, cabinet member for climate change and digital inclusion thanked scrutiny committee for their consideration of the budget and the recommendation made to cabinet as below:

"Pilot a whole house approach to decarbonisation of our council homes. Use data, information and practice gathered from the pilot, alongside stock condition data and

thermography surveys to support the development of the Housing Revenue Account Decarbonisation Plan.”

She agreed that a whole house approach was ideal but noted that it was not always feasible due to the nature of grant funding the council received but she supported the recommendation. She also supported a data led approach as noted in the recommendation and highlighted that work had started in this area already and would be reported on at the Climate and Environment Emergency Executive Panel (CEEEP) on 14 February 2023.

Councillor Waters, leader of the council, invited Councillor Wright in his role as chair of scrutiny to feedback from the meeting of scrutiny committee that considered the budget. Councillor Wright advised that members praised officers for their work and recognised the robust financial management which had achieved a balanced budget. Suggestions were made by members as below which were noted for consideration by the interim Section 151 Officer.

Concern was raised regarding the use of electronic advertising hoardings on council land. Members wanted to see the cost implications of the council's net zero carbon aspirations represented in the budget, how would this be funded and what external sources of funding could be leveraged. The 7% increase in the council's housing rents was discussed with some members concerned that this would affect the most vulnerable.

Members discussed updates to council housing stock in terms of bathrooms and kitchens and adopting a whole house approach to works including retrofitting. A recommendation was discussed in relation to a whole house approach to the decarbonisation of housing stock and its cost implications.

Members discussed table 4.1 the council's proposed capital investments which related to the corporate plan objectives and asked if a strand on carbon reduction and biodiversity could be added. Lastly, a member raised a concern regarding the council's bank and its lack of ethical credentials.

Councillor Waters, leader of the council commended scrutiny for raising the issue of the council's bank. He confirmed that the contract ended in 2024 at which time hopefully there would be greater choice in the market place and the ethical credentials of possible banks could be considered.

Councillor Galvin referred to the cabinet report from December 2022 which noted that £53m was allocated to improve energy efficiency and carbon reduction measures in the council's housing stock for the period 2023-2028 and asked why there was no spend assigned for 2023/24. In response the Executive Director of Communities advised that the allocation would go into the next year and that during 2023/24 stock condition and thermography works would be conducted. Councillor Giles, the cabinet member for wellbeing highlighted that £500,000 was allocated every year for the following four years for solar thermal/ photovoltaic works within the council's housing stock.

Councillor Oliver, cabinet member for environmental services referred to the high public response to the budget consultation and noted that common themes arising were the cost of living crisis, housing waste and recycling; and parks and open

spaces. Environmental services was highlighted by 28% of respondents (nearly 600 people) as an area where they would like to focus additional funding. Communities and Neighbourhoods also featured highly in response to several questions. In response to this public feedback she proposed an amendment to the budget papers being recommended to full council to provide for an additional capital scheme to be included in the 2023/24 programme.

She proposed the creation of the “Love Norwich” fund of £100k in order to support key local ward priorities and to respond to those priorities effectively; she advised that the council’s section 151 officer had confirmed that this could be funded through a £50,000 contribution from HRA capital receipts and £50,000 from general fund capital receipts. Councillor Harris, the deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing considered this was a good use of funds and would improve people’s quality of life.

The chief executive officer commented that at the July 2022 meeting of cabinet he was honest about the financial challenge facing the council. He noted that setting a balanced budget for the financial year 2023/24 and coming in within budget this year had been one of the hardest challenges the council had faced financially in over a decade of severe funding constraints. The challenge was made significantly worse by inflation running at over 10% and more like 20% for capital infrastructure projects. The impact of inflation meant the forecast budget gap for the next financial year increased from £4m to £6m for day to day services.

Given the context he was pleased that the recommendations before cabinet presented a balanced budget for the year 2023/24 and over the medium term to 2027. Importantly this was without the use of reserves which could therefore be used as a safety net to deal with unforeseen financial shocks and pressures. The budget proposals provided resources to deliver the council’s priorities and avoided significant cuts to frontline services and investment in a number of key service areas. The proposals provided for nearly £50m of investment over the next five years and nearly £30m next year in important infrastructure projects such as investment in skills, redesigning areas of the city and supporting economic development.

Finally, the budget proposals provided for investment of £36m in 2023/24 and a total investment of £182m over five years in council housing. He noted that the recent LGA peer review was positive about the council’s approach to financial management. He considered that the proposals presented put the council in a strong position to meet the challenges of the next few years and importantly to realise the opportunities ahead for the city.

Councillor Waters, leader of the council emphasised the achievement of balancing the budget was a whole council effort and involved the council’s 2040 city vision partners too.

RESOLVED to:

- a) Note the 2023/24 budget proposals and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- b) Note the budget consultation process that was followed and consider, as part of finalising the 2023/24 budget proposals for Council, the feedback as outlined in Section 2, Appendix 2 (I).

- c) Note the Section 7 report of the chief finance officer on the robustness of the budget estimates, the adequacy of reserves, and the key financial risks to the council.
- d) Note that the Council Tax resolution for 2023/24, prepared in accordance with Sections 32-36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011, will be calculated, and presented to Council for approval once Norfolk County Council and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk have agreed the precepts for the next financial year.

Recommend to Council to approve:

General Fund

- i. The council's net revenue budget requirement as £19.041m for the financial year 2023/24 including the budget allocations to services shown in Section 2, Appendix 2 (C) and the savings and growth proposals set out in Section 2, appendices 2 (F) and 2 (G).
- ii. An increase to Norwich City Council's element of the council tax of 2.99%, meaning that the Band D council tax will be set at £288.59 (Section 2, paragraph 2.17) with the impact of the increase for all bands shown in Section 2, Appendix 2 (E).
- iii. The prudent minimum level of reserves for the council as £5.400m (Section 2, paragraph 2.38).
- iv. Delegation to the chief finance officer (S151 Officer), in consultation with the portfolio holder for resources and the portfolio holder for safe, strong and inclusive neighbourhoods, the award of any new business rates reliefs announced by government using discretionary relief powers.
- v. The following additional Council Tax premiums be determined from 1 April 2024 (Section 2, paragraphs 22-26), or as soon as possible thereafter, subject to the required legislation being in place:
 - 100% premium for second homes;
 - 100% premium for properties which have been empty and unfurnished for a period of between 1 and 5 years.
- vi. Delegation to the chief finance officer (S151 Officer) in consultation with the portfolio holder for resources inclusion of any minor changes consequent on the publication of the final local government settlement or subsequent additional grant allocations.
- vii. Delegate to the chief finance officer (S151 Officer) the approval of technical virements for general fund, housing revenue account and capital budgets, to make budget transfers where there is no underlying change in the budget intention.
- viii. Delegate to the chief finance officer (S151 Officer) the approval of adjustments to the 2023/24 revenue and capital budgets to reflect the inclusion of expenditure in line with the UK Shared Prosperity Fund grant.

Housing Revenue Account

- ix. The proposed Housing Revenue Account gross expenditure budget of £71.540m and gross income budgets of £77.070m for 2023/24 (Section 3, paragraph 3.25).
- x. The use of the estimated surplus of £5.530m along with a further £1.210m of HRA general reserves to make a revenue budget contribution of £6.740m towards funding the 2023/24 HRA capital programme (Section 3, paragraph 3.25).
- xi. A 7.0% increase in dwelling rents for 2023/24, in accordance with the government cap. This will result in an average weekly rent increase of £5.85 for Norwich social housing tenants (Section 3, paragraphs 3.30 to 3.36).
- xii. That garage rents increase by 10.1%, based on CPI in September 2022 (Section 3, paragraph 3.37).
- xiii. That the setting of tenants' service charges is delegated to the executive director of community services in consultation with the portfolio holder for Social Housing after engagement with tenant representatives (Section 3, paragraph 3.38)
- xiv. The prudent minimum level of Housing Revenue Account reserves as £5.848m (Section 3, paragraph 3.55 and table 3.4).
- xv. The use of £0.500m of the HRA underspend in 2022/23, to increase an existing earmarked reserve formed to fund costs associated with HRA service transformation linked to a programme of review and improvement, with the release of funds being approved in accordance with paragraph 26 of the Council's Financial Regulations.

Capital and Commercial Strategy

- xvi. The proposed general fund capital programme 2023/24 to 2027/28 (2023/24: £28.545m; 5 years: £48.543m) and its method of funding as set out in Section 4, table 4.2, table 4.4 and Appendix 4 (B).
- xvii. The proposed HRA capital programme 2023/24 to 2027/28 (2023/24: £35.606m; 5 years: £182.181m) and its method of funding as set out in Section 4, table 4.2, table 4.5 and Appendix 4 (B).
- xviii. The capital strategy, as required by CIPFA's Prudential Code.
- xix. Delegating to Cabinet, approval to include in the capital programme, additional capital schemes funded wholly by grant where it meets the Council's aims.
- xx. Delegating to the chief finance officer in consultation with the executive director of development and city services and executive director of community services, approval of adjustments to the 2023/24 and future capital programmes to reflect the funding requirements of projects funded from the Towns' Deal and UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

Treasury Management Strategy

- xxi. The borrowing strategy 2023/24 through to 2027/28 (Section 5, paragraphs 5.25 to 5.29).

- xxii. The capital and treasury prudential indicators and limits for 2023/24 through to 2027/28 contained within Section 5, paragraphs 5.29 to 5.59 and table 5.3, including the Authorised Borrowing Limit for the council.
- xxiii. The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy statement described in paragraphs 5.38 to 5.42 and contained in Appendix 5 (Section 5)
- xxiv. The (financial) Investment Strategy 2023/24 including changes to counterparty limits (Section 5, paragraphs 5.69 to 5.104).

Summary of key financial indicators

- xxv. Additional indicators for 2023/24 through to 2027/28 as contained in section 6.
- xxvi. Pilot a whole house approach to decarbonisation of our council homes. Use data, information and practice gathered from the pilot, alongside stock condition data and thermography surveys to support the development of the Housing Revenue Account Decarbonisation Plan
- xxvii. Increase the general fund and HRA capital programmes to create a “Love Norwich” fund of £0.100m in order to support key local ward priorities and respond to those priorities effectively; funded through a £0.050m contribution from HRA capital receipts and £0.050m from general fund capital receipts.

6. Q3 22/23 Corporate Performance Assurance Report

Councillor Waters, leader of the council presented the report. He commended the quality of the report, noting it was accessible and clear, highlighting areas of successful performance and areas for improvement within each council directorate and illustrated with case studies.

Within the community services directorate he highlighted the progress made towards domestic abuse accreditation from the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance, the introduction of a new IT service operating model and a reduction in the annual rough sleeper count. In terms of challenges the cost of living crisis was impacting residents with an increase in referrals to food banks and numbers of people in a negative budget position were rising. The council was reviewing its processes in terms of damp and mould complaints after the tragic death of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale.

Within the corporate and commercial services directorate, successes included the balancing of the council's budget in a time of financial uncertainty particularly in relation to central government funding. The council had successfully taken part in the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Contract Management Pioneer Programme securing placements for several officers to receive contract management qualifications; and a new agreement had been brokered with npLaw which allowed for greater flexibility and increased focus on measuring performance outcomes.

In relation to challenges, the reduction in Discretionary Housing Payments from government meant that funding had run out due to levels of demand. Work was ongoing to intervene earlier with residents who were struggling financially to ensure income was maximised and debt prevented where possible.

In the development and city services directorate, successes were highlighted as the compulsory purchase order of the Kings Arms site with residents now installed in five

new homes built on the site. The retail monitoring report conducted by the council highlighted that shops in Norwich outperformed the national picture on the high street. In relation to the issue of Nutrient Neutrality (NN) (which remained a blockage in terms of development), progress had been made with the creation of headroom to free up some development on an interim basis whilst a longer term solution was sought.

In relation to challenges, rising capital costs were affecting Town Deal funded projects within an increase in costings since bids were made.

Councillor Harris, deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing highlighted in relation to damp and mould inspections a robust system had been put in place with a dedicated team and new staff recruited. She noted in relation to capital variances within the HRA that some contracts had been renegotiated saving funds.

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources commented that there had been a slight decrease in performance for council tax and business rates collection but considered this inevitable due to the current financial climate. He highlighted the successful balancing of the budget for the year 2023/24 and over the medium term to 2027.

In response to Councillor Wright's question, the interim head of housing and community safety advised that data on voids had previously been held by Norse and was now captured by the council's IT systems and more accurate data helped to drive improved performance.

Councillor Galvin referred to corporate risk 21, equality impacts due to climate change, and asked what factors impacted upon the target. Councillor Waters highlighted that the council's retrofitting work impacted positively on environmental benefits and resident's finances. The executive director of community services noted that the council was investing £290m over 30 years on its housing stock to move to a carbon neutral position and funding had been committed to achieving an EPC rate of C by 2030. The senior strategy officer advised that CEEEP's Environment Programme drove this work and that retrofitting was a key part of tackling fuel poverty in tandem with wider work to boost household income.

With no members indicating that they wished to discuss the exempt appendix accompanying the report, it was:-

RESOLVED to note:

- 1) progress on the key performance indicators for this quarter and the corporate risk register
- 2) the financial position for quarter 3 2022/23 for the general fund, HRA and capital programme.

7. Equality Information Report 2023

Councillor Waters, leader of the council presented the report. He advised that the council had a statutory duty to publish an annual Equality Information Report. He referred to the joint work the council was doing with communities and organisations

to tackle inequalities within the city. This year's report was in a new format and section three highlighted celebrations in the city from Black History Month to St. Martin's housing being granted the Freedom of the City.

Section four, changing how we do things, highlighted the work conducted during the covid-19 pandemic with the development of a covid recovery plan and now the work in reaction to the cost of living crisis. Work had also been undertaken to enhance the diversity of the council's workforce. Section five, information about our people, customers and employees involved understanding what success looked like. This included the State of Norwich report which was updated in line with census data.

The senior strategy officer referred to the progress of developing an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy which formed part of the basis of engagement work with communities, looking to understand how to align resources. In terms of the Reducing Inequalities Target Areas (RITAs) work was underway with the county council to review data sets. The State of Norwich report gave a wider picture of the city and an updated report would be published in April 2023 and shared with members of the council.

The head of HR and organisational development referred to the diversity of the council's workforce. A report had been presented to cabinet in March 2021 following the Black Lives Matter movement. The report highlighted that the workforce was not reflective of the local community and an action plan was devised to improve this. In March 2021, 3.4% of the council's workforce was from an ethnic minority and as at January 2023 this had risen to 9.56%. The chief executive officer commented that he was pleased to see this improvement as it was important that the council reflected the city it served, and diversity brought a richness of different views to the work of the council.

In response to Councillor Galvin's question the head of strategy, engagement and culture advised a Citizen Participation Strategy was being developed which would assist in improving two way dialogue with the council. Various pilots would provide evidence on what was effective and how to develop this area. The strategy was planned to be a living document that would develop as views were incorporated.

Councillor Waters, leader of the council invited Councillor Wright in his role as chair of scrutiny to feedback from the meeting of scrutiny committee that considered the Equality Information report. Councillor Wright advised that committee had highlighted the trend based reporting and whether this could be included in order to make year on year comparisons. Members of the committee had also asked if the social economic background of employees could be included. Members were keen to see that weight was given to lived experience during recruitment rather than just qualifications.

Members discussed the Reducing Inequality Target Areas (RITAs) and Community Conversations and asked how success was measured. She also requested further information on data detailing the objectives of the RITAs and the progress made on meeting them. Finally, as customer flags indicating vulnerability, she asked whether a strand could be included in the next Equality Information report on flags and what they denoted in terms of equalities data.

The senior strategy officer advised that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy would help inform the Equality Information report going forward along with census data which should pick up on these key points.

RESOLVED to approve the publication of the annual Equality Information Report for 2023.

8. Greater Norwich Joint Five-Year Infrastructure Investment Plan

Councillor Waters, leader of the council presented the report. He advised that all members of the Greater Norwich partnership; Broadland and South Norfolk district councils and Norfolk County Council had to sign off the plan and each had veto powers. The partnership provided a unique opportunity to pool Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) income to form an Infrastructure Investment Fund (IIF).

Under current procedures projects could only be allocated IIF funding if they were 'shovel ready' and therefore major schemes which ran over several years were difficult to secure funding for. It was proposed that two new categories to the fund be added; Major Infrastructure Projects and Match Funding to enable some large strategic projects to have IIF earmarked to their delivery in the medium and long term.

A change to the allocations for education projects was also being proposed with funding being ringfenced to schools within the Greater Norwich partnership. The report also detailed the partnership's commitment to fund the Long Stratton Bypass and the costings associated with this.

Councillor Waters referred to two unsuccessful levelling up fund bids the city council had made; one to regenerate two city centre spaces and the other for the regeneration of Sloughbottom Park. However, he noted the projects had received match funding via the partnership with the rationale being that other forms of funding maybe able to be accessed.

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for inclusive and sustainable growth, welcomed the scheme outlined in the report and highlighted that the River Wensum walk was a high priority. The scheme was on hold due to rising costs and he urged the county council to complete the works.

RESOLVED to agree:

- (i) the introduction of two new categories to the Infrastructure Investment Fund - Match Funding and Major Infrastructure Projects (see paras 9-11 and appendix A)
- (ii) that education funding allocations from the Infrastructure Investment Fund be used in whole or in part to repay Norfolk County Council's borrowing, on condition that it is used to support the delivery of a Schools Capital Programme that is ringfenced to the Greater Norwich area, and that annual programme delivery and budget updates are reported to the Greater Norwich Growth Board. (see paras 12-13 and appendix A)
- (iii) in relation to borrowing for the Long Stratton bypass

- a. to the signing of a deed of variation to the agreement entitled “Partner Draw down and Borrowing Authorisations”, that was originally signed by all Greater Norwich Growth Board partners on 21st October 2015. (see paras 14-19 and appendix A).
- b. to enter into a draft loan agreement for the draw-down of £10m through the Greater Norwich City Deal with authority for the s151 officer, in consultation with the portfolio holder for resources, to agree the terms of the agreement on behalf of the Council.
- c. to agree (subject to recommendation iii(a&b) for the Greater Norwich Growth Board to be granted delegated authority to sign the final loan agreement together with their s151 officers, under the direction of Norfolk County Council as the Accountable Body (see appendix A)
- (iv) (Subject to agreement of recommendations (i)-(iii)) the Draft Five Year Infrastructure Investment Plan 2023-28 (see appendix B), which includes the proposed 2023/24 Annual Growth Programme and note that approval to allocate funding for the following two projects in Norwich is subject to the approval of a future amendment to the Council’s capital programme:
 - Sloughbottom Park Regeneration
 - Guildhall Hill and Exchange Street Regeneration

9. Procurement of Leaseholder Insurance

Councillor Harris, the deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing, presented the report. The current provider had withdrawn from the market which was why this report was being brought to cabinet. Leaseholders bore the cost of the insurance but the council was obliged to find the provider. There were only two current public sector leaseholder providers in the market and it was hoped that private providers might be encouraged to tender for the contract in order to increase competitiveness. Due to the short notice to retender there was no opportunity to conduct consultation with leaseholders.

RESOLVED to

- 1) enter a contract for the provision of leaseholder insurance; and
- 2) delegate authority to the Executive Director for Communities, in consultation with the deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing, to award the contract to the most economically advantageous tenderer or, if no tender is received, to utilise an emergency procurement route to award the contract on an emergency basis.

10. The award of a contract for door entry and access controls systems for new site installations

(This item was contained within the supplementary agenda).

Councillor Harris, the deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing, presented the report. A single supplier was being sought to install new door entry and access controls at 207 sites, which had been identified to be in need of

additional security due to anti-social behaviour. The previous five year programme of installations had ended in August 2022 and the contract was due to commence on 1 April 2023.

The interim head of asset management commented that specifications and the value and quality of the installations had been carefully considered, to ensure they were fit for purpose within each individual block.

In response to Councillor Galvin's question, the interim head of asset management advised the biggest lesson learnt from the previous five year programme was in communicating and consulting with residents and providing individual solutions for individual sites. In the wider context how to manage the displacement of anti-social behaviour was being considered too.

RESOLVED to award a contract for the Door Entry and Access Control Systems installation programme to Alphatrack Systems Limited, subject to annual budget setting and satisfactory performance and quality being met.

11. Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities funding opportunities for housing

(Councillor Stonard left the meeting at this point).

(This item was contained within the supplementary agenda).

Councillor Harris, the deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing, presented the report. She advised that the council was recently contacted by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) regarding two funding opportunities. The first was through the Norfolk Devolution Deal where up to £2m had been provisionally allocated to deliver new affordable housing and the second via the Local Housing Authority Housing Fund with £1.466m provisionally allocated towards providing accommodation for Ukrainian and Afghan refugees.

Councillor Galvin asked if accepting the funding was an endorsement of the Norfolk Devolution Deal by the City Council. Councillor Waters, leader of the council agreed consultation on potential devolution should come first but a submission would be made in due course and he would seek cross party agreement on any response. However, he did not consider accepting the funding to build much needed affordable homes constrained the council in terms of its view of the devolution deal.

With no members indicating that they wished to discuss the exempt appendix accompanying the report, it was:-

RESOLVED to:

- 1) Delegate authority to the executive director of communities, in consultation with the council's Section 151 officer and the cabinet member for social housing, to acquire 24 properties for the council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
- 2) Delegate authority to the executive director of communities, in consultation with the council's Section 151 officer and the cabinet member for social housing, to determine the appropriate rent level subject to any approval

required by the Secretary of State or the Regulator of Social Housing.

- 3) Delegate authority to the executive director of communities, subject to business case and in consultation with the council's Section 151 officer and the cabinet member for social housing, to approve the acceptance of funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).
- 4) Recommend to Council, the adjustment of the 2022-25 HRA capital programme, to fund the acquisition of the dwellings as set out in the report; and
- 5) Note the exempt appendix.

***12. Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities funding opportunities for housing – exempt appendix (para 3)**

This item was noted under item 11 above.

***13. Q3 22/23 Corporate Performance Assurance Report – exempt appendix (para 3)**

This item was noted under item 6 above.

CHAIR