



COUNCIL

19:30 to 21:30

27 November 2018

Present: Councillors Schmierer (Lord Mayor), Bradford, Brociek-Coulton, Button, Carlo, Driver, Fullman, Fulton-McAlister (M) (from item 10 below), Harris, Henderson, Huntley, Jones, Kendrick, Lubbock, Manning, Maguire, Maxwell, Packer, Peek, Price, Raby, Sands (M), Sands (S), Stonard, Stewart, Thomas (Va), Thomas (Vi), Trevor, Waters and Wright

Apologies: Councillors Ackroyd, Coleshill, Davis, Fulton-McAlister (E), Hampton, Malik, Ryan, Smith and Stutely

1. Lord Mayor's Announcements

The Lord Mayor said that he had attended the civic events to mark the 100th anniversary of the Armistice and the switching on of the Christmas lights in Norwich. It was not always acknowledged that these events required a lot of hard work from the events team and he thanked the officers and people who had worked on these events.

The Lord Mayor said it was with regret that he had to announce the recent deaths of two former councillors: Baroness Patricia Hollis and John Walker.

Councillor Waters paid tribute to Baroness Patricia Hollis as a member of the council 1969 to 1991, leader of the council and as member of the House of Lords, and her influence on the city which included Bowthorpe, sheltered housing schemes within communities, and the preservation of many Victorian terraces in the city, and her life-long commitment to fight poverty and inequality, including parity for women's pension rights.

Councillor Fullman paid tribute to John Walker who had been a member of the council from 1963 to 1990 and served as a ward councillor for Earlham, on the parks subcommittee and was chair of the amenities and then personnel committees, and rising to deputy leader of the council. He had been committed to the extension of the riverside walk and the introduction of pitch and putt. During his period of office he had been very active in the community and was chair of the children's centre, Treehouse.

The Lord Mayor led the meeting in a moment's silence for quiet reflection on Baroness Patricia Hollis and John Walker.

2. Agenda order

The Lord Mayor said that because of the public interest in the agenda item 9(a) – Motion Brexit, there had been a suggestion that this item be brought forward for consideration earlier in the meeting.

Councillor Wright moved and Councillor Harris seconded the proposal and it was:

RESOLVED to consider Motion –Brexit after public questions/petitions.

The Lord Mayor announced that Councillor Jones had exercised her right to withdraw her motion on “Protecting Tenants in the Private Rented Sector” from consideration at this meeting and that the motion would be deferred to the next meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Waters declared an other interest in item 11, Motion – Renewable Energy in New Developments in Greater Norwich to 2036, as chair of the Greater Norwich Growth Board and the council’s representative on the board.

(During consideration of item 9 (below), Housing Development at Bullard Road, Councillors Stonard and Kendrick declared an other interest in that they were both directors of Norwich Regeneration Ltd).

4. Public Questions/Petitions

The Lord Mayor said that four public questions had received.

(No notice had been received of any petitions.)

Question 1 – Climate Change

Dr Jo-anne Veltman, Climate Hope Action in Norfolk, asked the cabinet member for safe city environment the following question:

“The new 1.5°C Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report is in the words of UN secretary general Antonio Guterres, ‘an ear-splitting wake up call to the world.’

The report details that: climate change is already affecting people, ecosystems and livelihoods all around the world, some changes are occurring faster than predicted, limiting warming to 1.5°C is possible within the realms of physics and chemistry but requires unprecedented transitions in all aspects of society and is critically dependent on political will and every fraction of a degree matters.

We also know that Norwich and Norfolk face specific impacts, including but not limited to: flooding, land loss, impacts on the Broads, water scarcity, agriculture and public health.

We are currently on a pathway to for temperatures to increase 3-4 °C within my teenage daughter's lifetime and we are risking catastrophic, unstoppable climate change.

We know from medical authorities around the world, including The Lancet Commission in the UK, that climate change is the greatest threat to public health this century. These authorities also tell us that climate action offers potentially, the greatest opportunities to tackling successfully, public health issues we are dealing with today, including within our own city.

In that context, Bristol City Council earlier this month passed unanimously, a motion declaring a climate emergency and committed to Bristol being zero-carbon by 2030. Manchester has also this month committed, following advice from the Tyndall Centre, to urgent comprehensive planning & action for a zero carbon city by 2038.

Will the cabinet member for safe city environment commit to supporting Norwich declaring a climate emergency: prioritising climate mitigation and adaptation across all departments within the council's remit and implementing actions to support Norwich achieving carbon neutrality in a timeframe that is compliant with the IPCC scientific recommendations and the goals and commitments the UK is signed up to in the Paris Agreement?

Councillor Maguire, the cabinet member for safe city environment's replied as follows:

"Thank you for your question, Dr Veltman. The council is very much aware of the impact that climate change can have at global, regional and local levels. This is why, in 2008, we took the initiative to work with the Energy Saving Trust to benchmark the council's carbon footprint. Following this exercise, we have been working hard year-on-year to reduce the council's own carbon footprint. To date we have achieved an impressive carbon emissions reduction of 57.1 per cent, which far exceeds our target of a 40 per cent reduction by 2018. In fact, to set some context, the government's national 5th carbon budget target of 57 per cent carbon emissions reduction is due to be delivered by 2030, so Norwich city council have achieved this national target 12 years ahead of that date, within their own carbon footprint.

In the wider Norwich area per capita emissions have also been falling over time from 6.9 tonnes of carbon emissions per capita in 2005 to 3.8 tonnes of carbon emissions per capita in 2016, the most recent dataset available at this time. It is interesting to note that both Norwich and Bristol City have achieved a per capita carbon emissions reduction of 44.3 per cent to date.

Some of the reductions achieved to date will be directly attributable to projects implemented by the council: For example, we have been increasing the energy efficiency of our own housing stock as well as working with private sector landlords and homeowners to increase the energy efficiency of their own houses. In addition, we have implemented a great many initiatives around increasing sustainable transport options, including but not limited to, the introduction of bus priority around the city and a comprehensive network of new cycleways and walking routes. More details of the council's

environmental work can be found in the current environmental strategy document. Progress made against the objectives set in the strategy is reported upon biennially in the council's environmental statement.

Only last week we launched the City Vision 2040 document. Over the past year we have engaged with focus groups, conducted public and stakeholder interviews and organised two conferences in order to bring together the views of the city of Norwich into one document, the purpose of which is to detail how the people of Norwich want their city to be as a place to live and work in the future. Sustainability was identified as a top priority for those we engaged with and accordingly, "A liveable city" is one of the key themes in the City Vision 2040 document. Most specifically the document states that we are "committed to shifting to clean energy by 2040 and becoming carbon-neutral by 2050".

Sustainable living, defined as a need to ensure that *'today's citizens meet the needs of the present without compromising future generations'*, is a common thread which runs throughout the work of the council and is not a new concept for this Labour led city council. Now that the City Vision document is finalised, the council will seek to complete the council's Corporate Plan and correspondingly work to produce the new Environmental Strategy, which will be launched next year.

We are engaging with colleagues at the Tyndall Centre UEA to help us shape the next update of the council's Environmental Strategy: this will include consideration of the need to provide focus on climate mitigation and adaptation. I will feed your views into the process. Questions such whether Norwich should join Bristol and Manchester in committing to become carbon neutral by a particular date, or declaring a climate emergency, will no doubt form part of the discussion within the councillor workshops and the outcomes will be reflected in the new environmental strategy.

Finally, in 2019 we will also update the council's Carbon Management Plan and increase the council's carbon emissions reduction target in the light of our 57.1 per cent reduction well ahead of time."

By way of a supplementary question, Dr Veltman said that the measures that the council was taking were all very well but no-where the level required as evidenced by scientific research into Climate Change. She asked how the council would discuss and be transparent about its actions which she considered were not adequate. In reply, Councillor Maguire referred to the council's measures to reduce carbon emissions being transparent and documents were published on the council's website. He would be having a meeting at the Tyndall Centre to consider the council's Environmental Strategy. The council would not make empty promises which could not be backed up. He pointed out that Bristol City Council had received external funding to become carbon neutral. The city council had been successful in making incremental changes to reduce its carbon emissions and would continue to do so. Collection of foodwaste for recycling had exceeded the council's targets. The council was transparent about its measures to reduce carbon emissions and was doing plenty. Dr Veltman's comments would be incorporated into these discussions.

Question 2 – Bus stop, Theatre Street

Mr Graham Innes asked the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth the following question:

“Bus users are concerned about the lack of accessibility in Norwich city centre for those using certain routes. For example, there are over 3,000ft between two stops on the 25 route in the city centre, but only 1000ft between stops along Unthank Road.

These distances may not seem much, but for those with mobility issues they really matter.

Will the council therefore commit to supporting the installation of a bus stop on Theatre Street near the Theatre Royal?”

Councillor Stonard, the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth’s response:

“Thank you for your question. This issue was considered in some detail when Chapel Field North was made two-way and the bus stop located alongside Chapelfield Gardens was removed. At that time a replacement stop outside the Theatre was considered but concerns were raised about the conflict between large numbers of people exiting the Theatre, particularly matinee performances, and people waiting for a bus. There were similar concerns around an emergency evacuation of the Theatre should it ever happen.

Norwich is one of 12 cities across the county that is in line for a share of the £1.2 billion transforming cities fund which is aimed at reducing congestion and promoting access to jobs. One of the key things the local authorities are seeking to improve is public transport and one of the early pieces of work will be to identify where there can be new bus stops in the city centre because the existing ones are at capacity; if we are going to be successful in encouraging more people to use public transport then we need those additional stops.

I cannot give a firm commitment to install a bus stop on Theatre Street at this time. However this will certainly be one of the areas where we will look to see if additional bus stops can be provided.”

Mr Innes did not have a supplementary question but commented that for 98 per cent of the time there were no buses or coaches parked in the waiting bays on Theatre Street and that he had raised the same question at the Norfolk Bus Forum and suggested that officers attended the forum in the future and that a number of bus services served Theatre Street.

Question 3 - Brexit

Ms Evelyn Gash asked the leader of the council the following question:

“What is the council doing, either on its own or with partners, to prepare for any form of Brexit? Especially in relation to Norwich's businesses and the supply of medicines for its people that usually come from Europe.”

Councillor Waters, leader of the council, replied as follows:

“Well may you ask Ms Gash: the best part of two years has been frittered away by Theresa May's minority Conservative Government failing to enter into meaningful negotiations with our European Union partners. Only when it became necessary to face the prospect of a no-deal Brexit have minds been belatedly concentrated in Government about how to minimise the multiple potential disruptions that are the inevitable consequence of the United Kingdom being deeply embedded in the structures and institutions of the European Union for close to 50 years. That is a relationship a majority of the citizens of Norwich wished to maintain when in the referendum they voted by a clear margin to remain part of the European Union.

Frankly local councils and the communities they represent have been kept in the dark about the impact of Brexit. Earlier in the year I wrote to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and for Local Government to ask, using powers under the 2007 Sustainable Communities Act, for information held by the Government about the specific impact of Brexit on Norwich. In a reply received from James Brokenshire on 14 November the Secretary of State refused to release any information specific to Norwich because ‘it would have the potential to negatively impact Brexit negotiations and the government's planning for Brexit.’

Throughout negotiation of the Brexit deal has been conducted at a national level with little information on the detail of this being available until the recent publication of the draft withdrawal agreement and the political declaration. Many questions and points of detail still remain to be determined and it is uncertain as to the fate of that draft agreement. We are looking through a glass darkly.

I can tell you is that belatedly ‘The Norfolk Resilience Forum’ (one of a number of Resilience Forums set up across England by the Government) have arranged a teleconference the day after this council meeting to discuss EU exit preparedness and council officers are taking part to try to glean any information on steps we can take now.

Council officers are also attending a regional EU exit preparedness event run by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government in December. Gov.uk has also issued various technical notices in various areas regarding a “no deal” scenario.

However, there is little information available to us to conduct any sort of meaningful planning or preparation. Proper planning can only take place when we know what we are planning for.

The simple truth is that as a council, we have little influence over any form of Brexit and can only truly prepare once we know what the Brexit deal is and

therefore how we, as a council, can then act in the best interests of our residents, businesses and all who enjoy our fine city.”

At a political level, now that we know about the draft agreement signed off (more in sorrow by our European partners) by Theresa May on Sunday, we are clearer, for the first time about the realities of what Brexit means. There are going to be many twists and turns in the next few weeks and months. But there really should be an opportunity for citizens of this city and across the United Kingdom to have their say through a public vote on a final deal that includes an option of retaining full EU membership.”

Ms Gash said that it was very encouraging to hear of the discussions were taking place between national government and local government and that she would welcome any information that was not sensitive and could be made public.

Question 4 – Council acquisitions of commercial property outside the city

Mr Peter Kemp asked the cabinet member for resources of the council growth the following question:

“Does the city council consider it a legitimate and appropriate use of public money, drawn from council tax and business rates, to purchase out of county properties such as:

- (1) A cold store in Corby (Cambridgeshire) at a cost of £1.2 million;
- (2) A gym in the Isle of Thanet (Kent);
- (3) And any other under consideration?

Would it not be more reasonable, a better use of locally levied council tax and business rates to purchase local properties?

Will there be a risk of financial loss to the detriment of Norwich residents if losses are incurred in the transactions mentioned earlier, which will include, presumably; legal fees, surveys and so forth?”

Councillor Kendrick, the cabinet member for resource, replied as follows::

“The council invests in commercial property in order to generate a new net income stream and thereby help protect services that would be at risk of being cut or reduced.

Like all local authorities, Norwich City Council is facing further cuts to the money it gets from the government. The council has to make £10m of savings in the next four financial years from a total gross budget of £57m - this is in addition to £33m of savings already made in the last 5 years.

We know the government's revenue support grant is disappearing and further austerity is likely to continue for district councils. Therefore we must ensure that we are a forward-thinking council with a proactive and ambitious appetite for income generation so that we can help maintain the services that matter most to local people – that is the basis for us investing in commercial property.

This commercial approach means the council will be able to lessen the required cuts to council spending and help protect services that would otherwise be at risk.

The council does not purchase commercial properties using funds drawn down from Council Tax or Business Rates. Instead the investments are ultimately funded by borrowing money. The investment is only pursued if the new rental income stream demonstrates a clear profit margin that exceeds the cost of borrowing. In addition, the council can borrow money cheaply, mainly from the Public Works Loans Board.

To date, the council's recent commercial property acquisitions total £33m generating a net initial return of 2.9 per cent. By value, 60 per cent of the property acquired has been within the city council's boundaries. In addition we also have 200 other commercial properties (valued at £43m) within the city council's area that we have owned for decades. The majority of our commercial property portfolio therefore is located with the city council's boundaries.

The council approaches the process of purchasing property prudently using external advisors and also has a policy of setting aside part of the net income to provide funding for future costs that may need to be incurred, such as lost income from vacancies.

From a risk management perspective it makes sense to diversify the portfolio by acquiring some property in other locations so that the income generated is not dependent on one economic locality. The council's approach in this regard is similar to many other local authorities. During the last financial year, 2017/18, 28 per cent of the £2.5 billion of property purchased by local authorities was invested outside the local authority's area in question. Saville's, one of the UK's largest property agents, reported on their website (UK Commercial Market in minutes – 20 August 2018) that "...while the proportion of investments by local authorities that are outside their operational area has risen to 39 per cent this year (i.e. 2018/19), we believe that this is justifiable in the context of spreading investment risk."

By way of a supplementary question, Mr Kemp asked if the council understood the saying "Neither a lender nor a borrower be" and said rather than invest outside the city the city council could put money into children's centres, education and social services. Councillor Kendrick explained that the city council was investing to protect its services. The services that Mr Kemp had referred to were county council services and the county council was not in the favourable situation that the city council was in.

5. Motion - Brexit

(Notice of the following motion had been received in accordance with Appendix 1 of the council's constitution. Members had taken the decision to move consideration of this motion forward on the agenda.)

Councillor Wright moved and Councillor Carlo seconded the motion below:

"The government has now published the text of the draft deal on the UK's exit from the European Union. The People's Vote campaign seeks to ensure that the government's Brexit deal is put before the country in a public vote, so that

we can decide if a decision that will affect our lives for generations makes the country better or worse off.

Council therefore

RESOLVES to:

- (1) join other councils in endorsing the cross-party People's Vote campaign.
- (2) ask group leaders to write to our two MPs, expressing this council's strong desire for a popular vote on the final deal, including the option to maintain full EU membership."

The Lord Mayor said that notice had been received in advance of an amendment to the motion from Councillor Waters, seconded by Councillor Manning which would introduce a new proposal.

Councillor Waters moved and Councillor Manning seconded a procedural motion to suspend standing orders to suspend rule 60 of Appendix 1 of the council's constitution relating to amendments to motions. On being put to the vote the procedural motion was carried unanimously.

Councillor Wright indicated that he was willing to accept the amendment and as no other member of the council objected, the amendment became part of the substantive motion.

Following debate it was:

RESOLVED, unanimously, that:

"The government has now published the text of the draft deal on the UK's exit from the European Union.

The People's Vote campaign seeks to ensure the government's Brexit deal is put before the country in as public vote, so that we can decide if a decision that will affect our lives for generations makes the country better or worse off.

Council therefore **RESOLVES** to:

- (1) welcome other councils' endorsement of a public vote on whether to accept the final Brexit deal negotiated by government;
- (2) acknowledge that the diverse environment created by Brexit can only be addressed by tackling the issues of inequality and lack of opportunities that led so many people to support to leave the EU;
- (3) ask group leaders to write to Norwich's two MPs, expressing this council's strong desire that, in the event that Parliament rejects the final deal, a public vote be held upon it with retaining full EU membership an option."

6. Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2018, subject to the following amendment, to item 1, Lord Mayor's Announcements, second paragraph, second sentence, by deleting "100" and replacing with "78th" to accurately record that the Battle of Britain took place in 1940, so that the sentence now reads:

"The recent Battle of Britain commemoration had been particularly poignant coming on the 78th year of the anniversary of the battle."

7. Questions to Cabinet Members/Committee Chairs

The Lord Mayor said that eight questions had been received from members of the council to cabinet members/committee chairs for which notice had been given in accordance with the provisions of appendix 1 of the council's constitution.

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|-------------------|---|
| Question 1 | Councillor Carlo to the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth on the council's response to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report. |
| Question 2 | Councillor Raby to the chair of licensing committee on the progress of updating the council's gambling policy. |
| Question 3 | Councillor Henderson to the cabinet member for health and wellbeing on the use of main foyer for displays of work by local artists and community groups. |
| Question 4 | Councillor Wright to the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth about income generation by investing in a project similar to South Somerset District Council's investment in a battery storage facility. |
| Question 5 | Councillor Ackroyd to the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth about demarcation of shared space for pedestrians and cyclists. |
| Question 6 | Councillor Manning to the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth about the benefits to the city in terms of further reduction of pollution emitted from vehicles. |
| Question 7 | Councillor Button to the deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing on the award winning housing development at Goldsmith Street and shortlisting for a Local Government Chronicle (LGC) award. |
| Question 8 | Councillor Sands (M) to the cabinet member for safe city environment on CCTV provision. |

(Details of the questions and responses were circulated at the meeting, and are attached to these minutes at Appendix A, together with a minute of any supplementary questions and responses.)

8. Introduction of Community Infrastructure Levy Exceptional Circumstances Relief Policy

(An extract from the minutes of the scrutiny committee meeting on 22 November 2018 relating to the call-in of the cabinet decision made on 14 November 2018 was circulated at the meeting.)

Councillor Waters moved and Councillor Stonard seconded the recommendations as set out in the report.

Following debate, it was:

RESOLVED, with 24 members voting in favour, 4 members against and 1 member abstaining to:

- :
- (1) approve the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy Exceptional Circumstances Relief Policy, as set out in appendix 1 of this report;
 - (2) amend appendix 4 to the constitution to include the “Power to determine applications for Exceptional Circumstances Relief from the Community Infrastructure Levy. Approval of such applications is not to be delegated to officers” within the list of powers available to planning applications committee.

9. Housing Development at Bullard Road

(Councillor Kendrick and Stonard declared an other interest in this item as directors of Norwich Regeneration Ltd.)

Councillor Harris moved and Councillor Driver seconded the recommendations as set out in the report.

Following debate it was:

RESOLVED, unanimously, to allocate a total of £1,100,000 in the housing revenue account capital programme for the proposed works, by increasing the 2018/19 housing revenue account capital programme by £300,000 with the remaining £800,000 to be spent in 2019/20.

10. Appointment of Deputy Monitoring Officer

(The directors attending the meeting and who were affected by the proposal to appoint deputy monitoring officers left the meeting at this point.)

Councillor Kendrick moved and Councillor Manning seconded the recommendations as set out in the report.

Following debate it was:

RESOLVED, with 26 members voting in favour and 4 members voting against, to appoint Anton Bull, Bob Cronk, Dave Moorcroft and Nikki Rotsos as a deputy monitoring officers.

(The directors were readmitted to the meeting at this point.)

(Two hours having passed since the start of the meeting the Lord Mayor invited members to consider any unopposed business. Members agreed to take Item 11- Motions as set out in agenda items 9(b) to 9(d) as unopposed business. Councillor Carlo and Councillor Raby had indicated that they would accept the amendments to the motions on Renewable Energy in New Developments in Greater Norwich to 2036 and Local Business that had been circulated at the meeting. The following items were taken as unopposed business.)

11. Motions

(Notice of the following motions 9(b) to 9(d) as set out on the agenda had been received in accordance with Appendix 1 of the council's constitution and were taken as unopposed business.)

Motion – Dignity for Fast Food and Service Industry Workers in Norwich – Unopposed Business

Councillor Fulton-McAlister (M) moved and Councillor Waters seconded the motion as set out in the agenda papers.

RESOLVED

“Like most cities Norwich has seen an increase in low paid, often zero hour contract forms of work, with a significant rise in global and multinational corporate fast food outlets in recent years.

Currently many of their staff are paid below the rate recommended by the Living Wage Commission as the minimum necessary to enable a decent standard of living.

Furthermore, promises to allow workers the opportunity to move off zero-hours contracts of employment have thus far yet to be delivered; no trade union recognition agreement is in place and cases of bullying and harassment by managers widespread.

Council RESOLVES to:

- (1) Applaud and support the courageous actions last month of fast food and service industry workers across the country, in particular the workers of global giants McDonald's, Deliveroo, Uber, TGI Fridays, fighting to better the lives of thousands of underpaid, overworked people.

- (2) Note with encouragement the role young people are playing in these successful actions and the difference these actions can make to the whole trade union/labour market.
- (3) Express support to their unions (including the BFAWU, Unite, GMB and the IWGB) who are demanding better pay and conditions, union recognition and an end to exploitative, precarious contracts.
- (4) Ask the Leader to write to Norwich Members of Parliament and the Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Secretary of State for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy requesting that workers should be protected through:
 - (a) cracking down on exploitative work practices and make tackling poverty the priority it should be, ending zero-hour contracts, equalising the minimum wage to ensure its the same rate regardless of age, introducing a minimum wage of at least £10 per hour giving a pay rise to over five and a half million workers.
 - (b) giving all workers equal rights from day one, including sick pay, paid holiday, and protection from unfair dismissal.
 - (c) strengthen the enforcement of those rights by properly resourcing HMRC and imposing fines on employers who breach labour market rights and regulations.
 - (d) make it illegal for employers to make deductions from tips, so staff get to keep 100%, and customers know who their money is going to.
 - (e) banning businesses from taking a cut of any tips paid via card, as well as charging waiters to work and keeping "optional" service charges.
 - (f) preventing employers from using contractual clauses (Non-Disclosure Agreements) which stop disclosure of future discrimination, harassment or victimisation
 - (g) doubling the time-frame within which employment tribunals can be taken, and require employers to publish their sexual harassment policy publicly, alongside the steps they are taking to implement it.
 - (h) ensuring all employment rights begin from day one rather than having to wait two years to be free from fear of dismissal.

Motion - Renewable Energy in New Developments in Greater Norwich to 2036 – Unopposed Business

(Councillor Waters had declared an interest in this motion.)

Councillor Carlo moved and Councillor Raby seconded the motion as set out in the agenda papers.

“Increasing the amount of renewable and sustainable energy generation in new development is essential if Norwich is to play its part in reducing carbon emissions. However, the Greater Norwich Local Plan Regulation Consultation states that it is not possible to require more than 10% renewable energy as “there is no current evidence that this is achievable”. This statement lacks ambition in relation to what is technically possible and to local authority renewable targets elsewhere.

This council RESOLVES to ask the council’s representatives on the Greater Norwich Development Partnership to encourage the partnership to adopt a much higher target for achieving renewable or sustainable energy on new sites in the Greater Norwich Local Plan”

An amendment had been received from Councillor Maguire which had been circulated. Councillor Carlo had indicated that she was willing to accept the amendment and with no other member objecting it became part of the substantive motion.

RESOLVED that:

“Increasing the amount of renewable and sustainable energy generation in new development is essential if Norwich is to play its part in reducing carbon emissions. However, the Greater Norwich Local Plan Regulation Consultation states that it is not possible to require more than 10% renewable energy as “there is no current evidence that this is achievable”. This statement lacks ambition in relation to what is technically possible and to local authority renewable targets elsewhere.”

This council RESOLVES to ask the council’s representatives on the Greater Norwich Development Partnership to consider the further evidence being produced on sustainable energy generation and seek to promote a police encouraging challenging targets for achieving renewable or low carbon energy generation in new development sites proposed in the Greater Norwich Local Plan.”

Motion - Local Business

Councillor Raby moved and Councillor Carlo seconded the motion as set out in the agenda papers.

“Many retailers on British high streets are struggling. This year alone House of Fraser, Maplin and Toys R Us have all gone into administration while household names like Marks & Spencer, Carpetright and Mothercare have together announced hundreds of store closures. This has had a considerable impact on Norwich. This council therefore RESOLVES to:

- (1) ask cabinet to:
 - a) Work more closely with councils outside Norwich to ensure that out of town shopping centres do not draw people away from the shops in the centre of Norwich.

- b) Be more active in promoting start-ups in the centre of Norwich by offering free short term hot desking and office/retail space in unoccupied properties owned by the council.
 - c) Further promote the services and expertise that organisations like the Norwich Business Improvement District, Norfolk and Waveney Enterprise Services and the council's own staff can provide in particular to start-up businesses and other small and medium-sized businesses on our high streets.
- (2) ask the leader of the council to write to the secretary of state to:
- a) unilaterally implement a fairer taxation system which ensures that online traders pay their fair proportion of tax, within the next two years
 - b) note that 100% business rate retention proposals for local authorities are likely to lead to significant divergences in English councils' funding without benefitting their residents and that this policy needs to be shelved until its implications are fully understood
 - c) Provide tax relief for shops that wish to renovate their existing premises rather than close them in favour of newly built units.

(An amendment had been received from Councillor Wright and Councillor Stonard which had been circulated. Councillor Raby had indicated that he was willing to accept the amendments and with no other member objecting it became part of the substantive motion.)

RESOLVED:

“Many retailers on British high streets are struggling. This year alone House of Fraser, Maplin and Toys R Us have all gone into administration while household names like Marks & Spencer, Carpetright and Mothercare have together announced hundreds of store closures. This has had a considerable impact on Norwich.

This council therefore RESOLVES to:

- (1) ask cabinet to:
 - (a) Continue to work more closely with councils outside Norwich to ensure that out of town shopping centres do not draw people away from the shops in the centre of Norwich.
 - (b) Continue to be active in promoting start-ups in the centre of Norwich by offering free short term hot desking and office/retail space in unoccupied properties owned by the council.
 - (c) Continue to promote the services and expertise that organisations like the Norwich Business Improvement District, Norfolk and Waveney Enterprise Services and the council's own

staff can provide in particular to start-up businesses and other small and medium-sized businesses on our high streets.

- (2) ask the leader of the council to write to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy Industrial Strategy:
 - (a) implement a fairer taxation system which ensures that online traders pay their fair proportion of tax, within the next two years
 - (b) note that 100% business rate retention proposals for local authorities are likely to lead to significant divergences in English councils' funding without benefitting their residents and that this policy needs to be shelved until its implications are fully understood
 - (c) Provide tax relief for shops that wish to renovate their existing premises rather than close them in favour of newly built units.

LORD MAYOR

Appendix A

Council 27 November 2018 Questions to Cabinet Members or Chairs of Committees

Question 1

Councillor Carlo to ask the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth the following question:

“As the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth has previously indicated, per capita carbon emissions for Norwich fell between 2011 and 2016. However, per capita figures are measured by Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) for three categories: industry/commercial, domestic, and transport. They exclude significant sources, notably consumption (e.g. overseas manufacturing of goods and services) and from residents’ air flights and shipping. Can the cabinet member give the true per capita emission figures for Norwich and explain what action the city council is planning to take in the light of the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report which urges the need for radical cuts by 2030 if human civilisation is to survive in its current form?”

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth’s response:

“Thank you for your question, which I need to break down into two parts. Firstly, the use of the per capita carbon emissions data produced by DEFRA is an extremely efficient way for the council to measure its progress which is independently verified by an external source. The DEFRA dataset also allows us to compare ourselves against other local authority areas, which helps to identify if our policies are effective.

The DEFRA dataset follows the internationally agreed standard for reporting greenhouse gas emissions to the UN. However DEFRA acknowledge that this is not a perfect indicator of “the true” per capita emissions consumption of the UK and have been working on consumption-based emissions reporting for a number of years. Consumption-based emissions do not have to be reported officially by any country, but in the UK these figures are reported by DEFRA. The latest data for the UK is 2015 but this data does not report down to a Local Authority (LA) level. Therefore until DEFRA produce a robust and statistically reliable dataset for the UK which goes down to LA level the council will continue to report emissions using the internationally agreed standard methodology. In this respect per capita emissions have fallen over time from 6.9 tonnes of carbon emissions per capita in 2005 to 3.8 tonnes of carbon emissions per capita in 2016, the most recent and statically certain dataset available at this time.

The second part of your question asks what action the city council is planning to take in light of the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report.

The reports you reference make it clear that we do need to dramatically improve our use of resources and ensure our future services are sustainable in the long term. If we are to minimise the risks highlighted by the IPCC then it would not be about maintaining civilisation in its “current form” or “business as usual”. It would be something more.

The council is very much aware of the impact that climate change can have at global, regional and local levels. This is why, in 2008, we took the initiative to work with the Energy Saving Trust and Carbon Trust to benchmark the council’s carbon footprint. Following this exercise, we have been working hard year-on-year to reduce the council’s own carbon footprint. To date we have achieved an impressive carbon emissions reduction of 57.1 per cent, which far exceeds our target of a 40 per cent reduction by 2018. In fact, to set some context, the government’s national 5th carbon budget target of 57 per cent carbon emissions reduction is due to be delivered by 2030, so Norwich City Council has achieved this national target 12 years ahead of that date. This is one of the reasons the council has been nominated for a UK-wide sustainability leader’s award.

As noted above Norwich area per capita emissions have also been falling over time from 6.9 tonnes of carbon emissions per capita in 2005 to 3.8 tonnes of carbon emissions per capita in 2016. It is interesting to note that both Norwich and Bristol City have achieved a per capita carbon emissions reduction of 44.3 per cent to date. More details of the council’s environmental work can be found in the current environmental strategy document. Progress made against the objectives set in the strategy is reported upon biennially in the council’s environmental statement.

Last week we launched the City Vision 2040 document. Over the past year the council have engaged with focus groups, conducted public and stakeholder interviews and organised two conferences in order to bring together the views of the city of Norwich into one document, the purpose of which is to detail how the people of Norwich want their city to be as a place to live and work in the future.

Sustainability was identified as a top priority for those we engaged with and accordingly, “A liveable city” is one of the key themes in the City Vision 2040 document. Most specifically the document states that we are “committed to shifting to clean energy by 2040 and becoming carbon-neutral by 2050”. Sustainable living, defined as a need to ensure that “today’s citizens meet the needs of the present without compromising future generations”, is a common thread which runs throughout the work of the council and is not a new concept for us. Now that the City Vision document is finalised, the council will seek to complete the council’s Corporate Plan and correspondingly work to produce the new Environmental Strategy, which will be launched next year. You will be aware of the UK Committee on Climate Change which is an independent, statutory body established under the Climate Change Act. Their purpose is to advise the UK Government and Devolved Administrations on

emissions targets and report to Parliament on progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for climate change.

To meet the targets set under the Climate Change Act, the government has set five-yearly carbon budgets which currently run until 2032. They restrict the amount of greenhouse gas the UK can legally emit in a five year period. The UK is currently in the third carbon budget period (2018 to 2022).

Norwich City Council will therefore support the UK's Committee on Climate Change report 'Reducing UK emissions, 2018 Progress Report to Parliament' which draws attention to government inaction in a host of areas as well as not providing the correct levels of finance to allow councils to properly engage with citizens on sustainability and climate change."

Supplementary question:

Councillor Carlo referred to Councillor Maguire's response to the public question earlier in the meeting and said that Councillor Stonard had repeated the statistics. Then as a supplementary question referred to the comment that the City Vision was "committed to shifting to clean energy by 2040 and becoming carbon-neutral by 2050" and said that this was not a sound scientific response to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change which was calling on radical cuts to emissions by 2030 and that the council should reset its targets. Councillor Stonard said both he and Councillor Maguire were using the same statistics and would not say anything different to what they believed. The target date for the city to be carbon neutral was part of the City Vision. Councillor Maguire would be having further discussion with the Tyndall Centre and others to refine the council's response. He said that he was very proud of the council's achievements to date which had exceeded targets.

Question 2

Councillor Raby to ask the chair of the licensing committee the following question:

"At November's full council meeting last year, I asked the chair of the licensing committee when the council's out of date gambling statement of policies would be updated. May I remind the chair that Norwich City Council's gambling statement of principles was last updated in 2007, even though the Gambling Commission expressly tells councils that it should be 'reviewed at least every three years.'

I am disappointed that over the last year there seems to have been no progress made on this important policy statement which could allow councillors to limit the proliferation of gambling premises across the city, especially in some of the most deprived communities. In answer to my question in November 2017, the chair of licensing expressly said that she had asked that 'the council's gambling statement of principles be updated as a priority.' 'A timetable for when the new statement of principles will be completed during 2018' was also requested by the chair of licensing. Given that we are now a year on from when I originally raised this question, could I

urgently ask the chair what the progress on this very important matter is, and why this does not seem to have been prioritised as originally promised?"

Councillor Malik, chair of the licensing committee's response:

"I cannot understand why Councillor Raby is so disappointed since we are only one month behind the original timetable.

I am pleased to be able to tell council that progress has indeed been made not only with the gambling policy but also with the revision of other important licensing policies namely the Sexual Entertainment Venue policy, the cumulative Impact Policy, and the Local Area Profile: these all require revision.

The draft policies will all be presented to licensing committee on the 18 December 2018 for members to review.

If licensing committee endorses the draft policies, this will allow the council to undertake consultation during January and February with the comments and final policies being presented to the first meeting of licensing committee after the May elections."

Supplementary question:

Councillor Raby by way of a supplementary question pointed out that licensing committee's had not been convened and asked the cabinet member for reassurance that a licencing committee would take place on 18 December 2018 for the committee to consider the draft policies. Councillor Maguire answered in the absence of Councillor Malik, referred to the quasi-judicial status of the licensing committee and said that he could not issue an edict as to when policies would be considered but pointed out that the next licensing committee would be a very full one and held at the appointed time.

Question 3

Councillor Henderson to ask the cabinet member for health and wellbeing the following question:

"The welcome renovation of the customer centre has left other parts of City Hall, such as the main foyer, looking a little dull in comparison. I was pleased that a portrait of Mary Seacole was recently displayed in the main foyer to City Hall. I note that the foyer is sometimes used for other displays, such as the results of elections and I wonder whether the cabinet member would agree to it being used for displays of work by local artists and community groups?"

Councillor Packer, cabinet member for health and wellbeing's response:

"Thank you for your question. The Mary Seacole painting was on display as part of Black History month and it is our intention to occasionally display, one off pieces, as part of other events. For example, you will probably have seen

that we most recently hosted one piece from the White Ribbon Window Display trail, organised in partnership with Leeway.

The main foyer is really not suitable for larger art exhibitions as it is a main exit and entrance, so we are constrained in what we can do in that space.

However, we have the very successful arts space, the Undercroft, situated at the back of the Market, which is already extremely well used by individual artists and groups. Exhibitions in that space can also include works for sale, which City Hall cannot. Information about how to hire the Undercroft is on our website.”

Supplementary question:

Councillor Henderson said that the Undercroft was not suitable for displaying art work as it had a leaking roof, art work could not be attached to the walls and was subject to occasional flooding. She asked the cabinet member whether the council could investigate whether there were any other council premises that could be used to display works by local artists and community groups. Councillor Packer replied “absolutely.”

Question 4

Councillor Wright to ask the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth the following question:

“As part of its income generation strategy, South Somerset District Council has recently partnered to build a 25MW Battery Storage facility that will provide essential power management assistance to the National Grid. It will be one of the largest and most-advanced in the UK.

The batteries store excess energy production at low usage periods, that would otherwise be wasted, and resupply it to the grid when needed at peak times.

Could the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth advise if this council is considering going forward with such a project?”

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth’s response:

“Thank you for your question.

The UK is facing potential energy shortages as the gap between supply and demand narrows ever closer, mainly due to the closure of coal power stations and the intermittent nature of renewables. It is therefore common knowledge in the industry that levelling the grid is key and batteries of commercial and domestic scale present some exciting new investment opportunities.

As part of our balanced investment portfolio the council is continually horizon scanning for new investments. Renewable energy and other energy services

including the “capacity market” or “balancing services” present some potentially rewarding returns.

However these are not without risk. As the battery storage market in the UK develops and more projects are completed it is increasingly important to track the types of projects being built, by who and which revenues they are accessing. This allows us to see which projects are being proposed and who is active in the different segments to identify future market gaps, trends and their associated investment associated opportunities

For example only very recently the investment landscape has been altered by the capacity market being suspended due to state aid rules (European General Court) and the UK balancing market changing the rules on battery storage by asking for longer grid enforcement (usually 1-2 hours) which can be beyond most facilities capacity.

I can confirm that we have already had discussions with ENGIE and the DNO in regards to our investment aspirations and plan to have further discussions in the future with a number of other significant local and national stakeholders.”

Supplementary question:

There was no supplementary question.

Question 5

Councillor Ackroyd to ask the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth the following question:

“Cycling is both a means of fitness and a way of reducing our carbon footprint, and the implementation of the pedalways across the city is therefore welcome.

But walking is equally important.

Currently on some stretches of the pedalway, shared use is in place – acceptable for cyclists and pedestrians to mix, but with apparently insufficient width to allow for clear demarcation between them. This leaves many pedestrians feeling nervous about cyclists who suddenly head towards them or appear behind them with no warning.

Could the cabinet member advise if this situation could be improved - perhaps by a change to the rules that prevent white lines being painted or clearer signage as seen for example in Winchester?”

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth’s response:

“When we are delivering new cycling infrastructure, wherever possible we look to provide facilities for cyclists that are separated from both pedestrians

and vehicles. However this is not always possible and sometimes we have to provide shared use footpath cycleways. This can either be segregated or unsegregated. In order for a path to be segregated there needs to have a minimum width of 4m; this is national policy and we have no scope to change that.

Members may have noticed that in recent weeks 'share with care' signs have been erected at the entrances to the pedestrianised areas in the city centre; these are not officially authorised traffic signs but are part of a publicity campaign to encourage safe cycling in the city centre. Officers advise me that it would be possible to provide similar temporary signs at other locations across the city where there are shared use footpath cycleways. They are currently making arrangements to provide such signing on the Bluebell Road facility which I understand is the path you have raised concerns with them about."

Supplementary question:

Councillor Ackroyd was not present and therefore there was no supplementary question.

Question 6

Councillor Manning to ask the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth the following question:

"Reducing air pollution is a significant issue for many of my constituents particularly those living near busy roads. Reducing the level of pollution emitted by cars vehicles while parked can make a real difference. I was therefore pleased to see the city council take a bold step in asking enforcement officers to request drivers turn off their engines when parked. Can the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth comment on the benefits this can offer the city in terms of reducing pollution still further?"

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth's response:

"Enforcing stationary vehicle idling is a small but significant step in reducing engine emissions in the city centre areas where pollution levels are greatest. As these are busy areas with high footfall and where many businesses have their doors open, the benefits here can be quickly realised.

An idling engine can produce up to twice as many exhaust emissions as an engine in motion. Reducing the time that vehicles spend idling will therefore directly reduce Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) emissions from vehicles which are known to be detrimental to health. This is an issue that the council and all drivers in the city can really get hold of and together make a difference.

Since enforcement began in October, our enforcement officers have given eight verbal warnings. We publicised the initiative beforehand and we are pleased that the majority of drivers are already switching their engines off

when stationary. It is clear that a large proportion of the bus and taxi drivers have been briefed by their companies, read the signs, or had some knowledge of the change via published articles etc., which is very positive. So far no fixed penalty notices have needed to be issued as the drivers had complied with the request.

Our enforcement officers' patrols are a key part of making this work but this is also about winning hearts and minds to get people to change their habits. A combination of the signs, posters, web information, press releases and media coverage has got this off to a good start.

The council continues to be committed to providing a range of transport alternatives to enable people to make healthy and low emission trips."

Supplementary question:

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Manning asked for further clarity on the council's position. Councillor Stonard said that enforcing stationary vehicle idling could apply to any vehicle but had been targeted at public transport, taxis and buses, and particularly diesel vehicles. The bus companies had been very supportive but had not been able to ensure that all drivers switched off engines. The issue of fixed penalty notice of £20 would change driver behaviour. Warnings had been given and the drivers had complied. The council wanted to change public behaviour so that drivers would turn off engines when queueing or at waiting at traffic lights.

Question 7

Councillor Button to ask the deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing the following question:

"As a council tenant who knows the value of decent, well maintained and democratically accountable social housing I was further impressed to learn that our award-winning housing development on Goldsmith Street has been further shortlisted for a top accolade in next year's prestigious Local Government Chronicle (LGC) awards. Will the cabinet member for social housing comment on this exciting news?"

Councillor Harris, the deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing's response:

"Thank you for your question. We welcome Goldsmith Street being shortlisted for the housing initiative award by the LGC. As we said in our submission, in recent years we've purposely stepped away from adopting a typical local authority approach as a housing provider at Norwich City Council. We felt we had a choice: go for safe, standard housing or be bold and ambitious. We choose the latter. As a result, we can proudly boast that we're now delivering what will be the country's largest Passivhaus scheme for social rent in Norwich.

Thanks to Passivhaus technology, our residents should see up to 70 per cent savings on their energy bills due to the technology in use – a big help to a significant proportion of residents in Norwich who we know are in fuel poverty. As a result of the council's commitment to developing Passivhaus homes it has also significantly upskilled the local workforce, allowing them to create a niche in the construction market. Goldsmith Street will see the city council deliver the largest Passivhaus scheme for social rent in the country and was recently presented as an exemplar case study to the UK Passivhaus Conference.

The shortlisting for the LGC awards also follows the recent success for Goldsmith Street at the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) Norfolk awards where the scheme won the Green Build Award.

We have a particularly proud history of seeking higher environmental standards for affordable housing by working in partnership with local registered providers and wanted to ensure our own development projects set that standard even higher and help to address fuel poverty for our residents. All in all, as a council housing provider, we're taking bold steps to provide energy efficient, high quality homes to meet housing demand for the people of Norwich and surrounding areas. And that's something we're deeply proud of."

Supplementary question:

As a supplementary question Councillor Button asked if there was any news on the council's nomination for the LGC award for Goldsmith Street. Councillor Harris said that the outcome would not be available until March 2019 and that she would keep members informed. The Campaign to Protect Rural England had awarded the scheme its Green Build Award.

Question 8

Councillor Mike Sands to ask the cabinet member for safe city environment the following question:

"As crime continues to rocket and the full effects of 'county lines' are felt within our city, many residents have commented on the positive impact of CCTV, particularly around reassurance and the prevention of crime. Despite huge cuts to our council budgets since 2010, I was pleased to see the cabinet report which will see the procurement of new CCTV for our city. Given the opportunities this will give can the cabinet member for safe, city environment comment on the benefits which will be secured through this policy?"

Councillor Maguire, cabinet member for safe city environment's response:

"The current CCTV equipment is now out of date and requires an upgrade to continue to support the Norfolk Constabulary in managing public order and responding to emerging crime and anti-social behaviour issues in the city.

The council is investing in the region of £500,000 in a cutting edge CCTV system with its own wireless collection points, which will provide improved

imaging for evidential support and reduced maintenance costs on an ongoing basis.

The new CCTV suite will be based at City Hall, which will make it easier for colleagues and partners to liaise directly with the council's CCTV monitoring operators particularly during city centre events and demonstrations, for improved visibility and coordination of community safety response.

The new system has been developed and designed in conjunction with police and other stakeholders to ensure evidence based high priority areas are covered. The new CCTV system will retain a comparable number of CCTV cameras to what the council currently holds, although some of the new cameras will be re-sited to improve visibility of key locations.

The council will retain the policy of recording CCTV footage 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days of the year and retain that footage for 28 days. In addition, live monitoring of the CCTV system by trained and licensed council officers will continue on a Friday and Saturday evening from 6pm until 6am the following morning, as well as on Bank holidays, all council events and one off events and demonstrations that give the police cause for concern.

Cameras will still be live and be able to be monitored by the Norfolk Constabulary outside of these periods.

In line with the national surveillance camera commissioner's code of practice, all of the council's CCTV camera locations are published on the CCTV pages of the council's website and individuals can request access to footage recorded of them via the website, as well as via traditional routes if required.

In addition to the static CCTV cameras, the council jointly owns with local police, a set of re-deployable CCTV cameras, which can be moved to locations for specified periods of time, to help address evidenced high level or prevalence crime and antisocial behaviour.

With the new CCTV system, the council's data sharing agreement with the police will be retained, to enable the police to access and review the council's CCTV footage, either retrospectively or in almost real time, from one of its 27 remote access sites across Norfolk.

This clearly identifies the importance that the council affords community safety and how CCTV contributes to all of the current council objectives."

Supplementary question:

Councillor Sands asked a supplementary question about who had access to the CCTV footage. Councillor Maguire replied that information about access to CCTV footage was available on the council's website¹. Footage was subject to the Data Protection Act.

¹ https://www.norwich.gov.uk/info/20328/cctv/2030/access_to_cctv_records

Question 9

Councillor Sue Sands to ask the deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing the following question:

“Like all councillors in this chamber, access to housing remains a key concern for my constituents. I was therefore pleased that the city council announced plans to re-develop the former Bullard Road Housing Office into new social housing. Can the cabinet member for social housing comment on the scheme and the great opportunities this development will offer people in Norwich?”

Councillor Harris, deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing’s response:

“The national housing crisis and continued shortage of homes for people to live in is of great concern to this council. The local picture shows that:

- there are over 4000 households on the council’s housing waiting list which shows the considerable demand for the council’s own housing
- between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2018, 662 properties were purchased under the right to buy scheme
- The most recent strategic housing area assessment from 2017, which looks at all housing need in Norwich, highlighted that an additional 278 ‘affordable’ housing units are required each year.

This illustrates the demand for housing in Norwich and the importance of the council looking at all options and opportunities to build new council homes.

The new scheme on Bullard Road, along with other new developments across the city, will assist in meeting the demand for affordable and sustainable homes in thriving communities.

At the recent awards ceremony where the city council won the prestigious award for the “Green Build Award,” from the Norfolk Campaign for Protecting Rural England, it was pointed out on more than one occasion, how exciting it was to see a housing stock retaining council building and creating new homes.

The Bullard Road project proposes to convert numbers 1 to 23 Bullard Road from offices to a number of residential properties, which will meet ‘lifetime homes’ principles and the construction of an additional single bungalow which will be adapted for disabled used. The precise details are subject to planning approval and to be specified by housing needs. However, the project will deliver much needed housing provision.

When deciding on how best to meet the housing need, consideration will be given to ensure that the new development compliments the existing environment.

Cabinet agreed that the work will be undertaken by Norwich Regeneration Limited (NRL) and will demonstrate how NRL, as a wholly owned company of

the council, can deliver projects of this type and maximise returns which will directly benefit the council as well as the residents.

As cabinet member I know much more is needed and the Bullard Road development is one further example, where this administration is making a positive difference to the lives of families in Norwich.”

Supplementary question:

There was no supplementary question.

Question 10

Councillor Trevor to ask the cabinet member for safe city environment the following question:

“As a councillor who represents a ward which contains high levels of constituents experiencing both poverty, but particularly fuel poverty, I am acutely aware of the impact this has. Positive policies such as Big Switch and Save and our wider affordable warmth strategy have made significant differences to thousands of people within Norwich. I was therefore particularly excited by the launch of the new Energy White Label and decision to award this at cabinet earlier in the month. Can the cabinet member for safe city environment comment on the opportunities and benefits this policy will offer?”

Councillor Maguire, cabinet member for safe city environment’s response:

“Thank you for your question on the new Energy White Label. The programme will particularly support efforts to reduce fuel poverty and health inequalities in Norwich via working with and supporting vulnerable customers in areas of high fuel poverty whilst also offering access to affordable renewable energy to all.

Firstly I would like to take this opportunity to highlight that in Norwich 12.3 per cent of households, or 7,804 homes, are experiencing fuel poverty. This means our elderly citizens are at greater risk of catching the flu or developing other chest infections and/or other respiratory problems, all of which can be fatal or put extra pressures on our overstretched NHS. Sadly the UK has a high rate of excess winter deaths, with over 3,000 people dying every year solely due to cold homes.

Regretfully the numbers of fuel poor are expected to rise due to the increasing cost of utilities. In 2017 alone electricity prices increased by 6 per cent which disproportionately affected fuel poor households, and households who are often only just above the fuel poverty line with incomes which are either static or being decreased by the implementation of universal credit.

The vision of the new energy supply service will be to create an attractive local energy brand offering a long term ‘fair deal’ to our consumers, so they are encouraged to stay and not shop around. This means people will be able to take advantage of long-term affordable tariffs. We are also hoping to invest

any potential profits into a fund to help fight fuel poverty which can offer highly targeted support, which may include discounted tariffs, to our most vulnerable residents helping them to heat their homes.

Aside from helping people access fairly priced energy all tariffs will be 100 per cent renewable (gas and electricity) at no extra cost. Therefore future customers of the scheme will be able to save on average 3 tonnes of CO₂ (approximately the equivalent of 45 trees growing 30 years) per year as well as getting a fair deal when compared to other companies offering green energy at a premium. In addition to also being cheaper than many of the standard energy deals available.

This project therefore one more step towards delivering our city vision aspiration to be shifting the city to clean energy by 2040 and helping our citizens to take practical steps to lowering their CO₂ emissions whilst making the city more liveable and fair.”

Supplementary question:

There was no supplementary question.

Question 11

Councillor Lubbock to the deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing:

“Please can the portfolio holders for housing or property comment on why the council does not comment on planning applications in their capacity as a landlord or land owner, when an application has an impact on tenants and their environment?”

Other departments of the council do comment and these comments are on the website for all to see and prove to be helpful to residents; for example the tree officer’s comments.

In terms of openness and transparency I think this would be extremely helpful.”

Councillor Harris, deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing’s response:

“Whilst I cannot comment on particular applications, Councillor Lubbock makes an interesting point. The housing service is not a statutory consultee on planning applications unlike the tree officer and in most circumstances would not have a view that was distinct from council policy in relation to planning matters or applications.

However, where applications that it was considered would have a detrimental impact on land held within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), council estates and tenants enjoyment of a council property, or group of council properties, and were brought to the attention of officers via tenants or others

as part of the statutory consultation process, then tenants, officers and indeed, councillors, would be encouraged to comment accordingly. Officers will identify the best way of ensuring this happens.”

Supplementary question:

Councillor Lubbock said that she was referring to a planning application adjacent to a sheltered housing scheme and that the residents wanted the council as landlord to support their comments. Housing services was responsible for its tenants and it would be a simple procedure for the head of housing to respond to planning applications which would be published on the planning portal for everyone to see. Councillor Harris said that she was aware of the background to the question and would ask the head of housing to contact Councillor Lubbock. Housing services was not a statutory consultee and the response from the service had to be appropriate. Residents could make comments to planning applications and have the support of their ward councillors. Sometimes housing officers were contacted by developers at an early stage. She would take up Councillor Lubbock’s concerns with the head of housing.

Question 12

Councillor Carlo to ask the cabinet member for resources the following question:

“Can I ask the cabinet member for resources whether the city council will adopt ethical and sustainability criteria in deciding whether to purchase commercial properties? This follows from Norwich City Council’s purchase of The Gym for £2.3 million at the Westwood Cross Shopping Centre near Ramsgate.

I recently visited the Isle of Thanet and the towns of Ramsgate and Margate. The high streets of these two towns have been gutted by the Westwood Cross Shopping Centre which I was forced to visit because all the shops have relocated from the town centres to a vast shopping centre in open countryside several miles equi-distant from three towns on the Kent peninsular. In my view, it is one of the worst planning decisions I have seen. The impacts on the local economies and community facilities are apparent. Access is mainly by car and if people can’t afford to use the dedicated buses, they either have to walk many miles or go without. The environmental impact is heavy – the shopping centre is reliant on high fossil fuel energy usage.

It is regrettable that Norwich city council has purchased a commercial property in a retail development which on the sustainability scale is at the lowest end?”

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources’ response:

“I thank the councillor for her views on the Westwood Cross shopping centre in Kent. The property, which has an A rating Energy Performance Certificate, makes a net initial return to the council’s general fund of 2.1 per cent. This is used to fund council services as previously explained and discussed.

Whilst we are planning to introduce some ethical considerations into the commercial property investment strategy which comes to cabinet for approval in December, this would not include automatically excluding investments located in out-of-town shopping centres. Westwood Cross would have received planning consent taking into account comments such as those raised by Councillor Carlo. The development has been subsequently constructed and as regards this building there were other parties who submitted bids. Had the council not been successful, the building would still have been completed but sold to a different party.

I lived in Margate between 1992 and 1997 and even then the town centres of Margate and Ramsgate were in serious decline. The reason was the collapse of the holiday trade in the towns. Instead of the towns being full of hotels with tourists with money in their pockets, those hotels had become Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) mainly filled with those living on social security benefits.

At that time I attended a local gym, there were no gyms in the high streets of Margate or Ramsgate. So the Gym in Thanet, Councillor Carlo mentions has in no way diminished the town centres in Thanet. Instead a good gym provides a useful resource to the community to improve health and fitness.

The Green Party has opposed the commercial purchases of this council. Yet it is the income from those properties that have allowed this council to protect front line services, unlike many other councils, which instead have had to cut front line services, often dramatically. Norwich City Council remains one of the few councils, left in England that still provides 100 per cent council tax rebates to its poorest citizens.

It is about time that the Green Party had the honesty to tell the people of Norwich what front line services they would cut if the council were not to have this income stream from commercial properties.”

Supplementary question:

Councillor Carlo said that she would prefer a sustainable model of income generation such as the Preston Model. Councillor Kendrick said that the 60 per cent of the council’s commercial properties were in the city and that it was good practice to have a diverse property portfolio to ensure that the council could protect its services.