



## Minutes

### COUNCIL

18:05 to 21:20

21 July 2020

Present: Councillor Thomas (Va) (Lord Mayor), Ackroyd, Bogelein, Brociek-Coulton, Button, Carlo, Davis, Driver, Fulton-McAlister (E), Fulton-McAlister (M), Giles, Grahame, Harris, Huntley, Jones, Kendrick, Lubbock, Maguire, Manning, Maxwell, McCartney-Gray, Neale, Oliver, Osborn, Packer, Peek, Price, Sands (M), Sands (S), Sarmezey, Schmierer, Stonard, Stutely, Thomas (Vi), Waters, Wright and Youssef

Apologies: Councillors Ryan and Utton,

#### 1. Lord Mayor's Announcements

The Lord Mayor introduced the meeting.

The Lord Mayor announced that he had attended the virtual Norwich Pride.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Harris, Kendrick and Maguire declared that they had a conflict of interest in item 6 below and would leave the meeting for the discussion and vote on that item.

Councillors Button and Price declared an other interest in item 10b, motion on food poverty.

#### 3. Public Questions/Petitions

No public questions or petitions had been received.

#### 4. Minutes

**RESOLVED** to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2020.

#### 5. Questions to Cabinet Members/Committee Chairs

The Lord Mayor said that six 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.

The questions are summarised as follows:

Question 1	Councillor Osborn to the leader of the council on the New Anglia LEP
Question 2	Councillor Price to the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth on Car Free Day 2020
Question 3	Councillor Neale to the leader of the council on the Norwich Regeneration Limited board
Question 4	Councillor Button to the deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing on housing conditions.
Question 5	Councillor Matthew Fulton-McAlister to the leader of the council on local government funding
Question 6	Councillor Button to the cabinet member for safe and sustainable city environment on the 'get everyone in' strategy.

(Details of the questions and responses were made available on the council's website prior to the meeting, and are attached to these minutes at Appendix A, together with a minute of any supplementary questions and responses.)

## 6. Adjustment to the General Fund capital programme

(Councillors Harris, Kendrick and Maguire, having declared a conflict of interest in this item, left the meeting for the discussion and vote on this item.)

Councillor Waters moved and Councillor Stonard seconded, the recommendations in the report.

Following debate, it was:

**RESOLVED**, with a majority voting in favour, to:-

- 1) To approve the following amendments to increase the General Fund capital programme by £2.780m to provide a:
  - a) £1.140m, 20 year loan to the wholly owned company to create a depot facility at a rate of 3%. The loan will be funded through prudential borrowing;
  - b) £0.370m, equity investment to support the creation of the depot facility and establish an equity:loan ratio of 25%:75%. The equity investment will be funded from capital receipts;
  - c) £1.270m budget for IT, tools and equipment to be funded through borrowing and then recharged to the wholly owned company over the useful life of the assets.

(Councillors Harris, Kendrick and Maguire were readmitted to the meeting.)

## 7. Transforming Cities fund update and match funding

Councillor Stonard moved and Councillor Stutely seconded, the recommendations in the report.

Following debate, it was:

**RESOLVED**, with a majority voting in favour, to approve: -

- 1) An increase of £162K in the General Fund Capital programme for 20/21 and £368K for 21/22; and
- 2) The allocation of the Norwich City Council held funds detailed in appendix 1 as matched funding for the Transforming Cities Fund programme.

## **8. Annual scrutiny committee review 2019-20**

Councillor Wright moved and Councillor McCartney-Gray seconded the recommendations in the report.

**RESOLVED**, unanimously, to receive the annual review of the scrutiny committee 2019-20

## **9. Annual report of the audit committee 2019-20**

Councillor Price moved and Councillor Driver seconded the recommendations in the report.

**RESOLVED**, unanimously, to receive the annual report of the audit committee 2019-20

## **10. Motions**

(Notice of the following motions, 10a to 10d as set out on the agenda, had been received in accordance with appendix 1 of the council's constitution.)

### **10(a) Motion: Car free city centre**

Councillor Lubbock moved and Councillor Price seconded the motion.

"In January 2019, this council acknowledged the existence of a Climate Emergency and pledged to take measures as soon as possible to make Norwich carbon neutral.

In September 2019, Norwich marked Car Free Day, and will continue this on an annual basis.

Car journeys currently have an important part to play in our transport mix, but there is evidence that car use impacts on health through high levels of air pollution.

Building on existing policies, and as part of the council's desire to make Norwich carbon neutral, this council should consider further steps to reduce carbon emissions and increase the attraction and uptake of sustainable transport options, such as cycling and public transport.

Council **RESOLVES** to ask cabinet to:

- 1) Build on work already undertaken as a response to Covid-19,

- 2) Identify options following consultation, and in conjunction with the County Council, residents, businesses and groups such as Car-Free Norwich, to significantly reduce or remove non-essential motor vehicle journeys from 'within the city walls' on a longer term basis, considering all financial, regulatory and legal factors;
- 3) work closely with disability advocacy groups and Blue Badge Holders to identify options to ensure that access to the city centre is maintained and improved for people with mobility difficulties or who are otherwise unable to use public transport;
- 4) explore opportunities to significantly reduce or restrict all non-essential motor vehicles from accessing the roads immediately adjacent to the city's primary schools at drop-off and pick-up times; and
- 5) work constructively with traders in any options to ensure deliveries continue and businesses are not negatively impacted by any changes to city centre access."

Councillor Stonard moved and Councillor Waters seconded, a motion under part 52(k) of appendix 1 of the council's constitution, to defer debate on the motion until the work around the 'Liveable City' as part of the 2040 City Vision work had taken place.

**RESOLVED** With a majority voting in favour of deferral, debate on the motion was deferred until the work around the Liveable City as part of the 2040 City Vision work takes place.

#### **10(b) motion: Food poverty**

Councillor Davis moved and Councillor Jones seconded the motion.

Following debate, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously that:

"Norwich has experienced the profound multiple impacts of Covid-19 since the onset of the pandemic. Evidence shows that this impact has not been shared evenly, with those in the city's most deprived communities suffering hardest. One very visible example of this has been the rocketing use of foodbanks which have multiplied and provided critical support to those facing the difficulties of food crisis. As the city now begins to emerge from the pandemic special focus to provide support for those most at risk from food hunger should be considered.

Council **RESOLVES** to:

(1) Ask the leader of the council to:

- a) publicly thank the volunteers, groups, organisations and partners who have worked so tirelessly to provide emergency food, support of other provisions across the city, acknowledging the vital difference this has made.
- b) write to the Secretary of State at the Department for Work and Pensions and both the Norwich Members of Parliament to request, with specific reference to alleviating child poverty, that child benefit is immediately raised by £15.00 per week, per child as an alternative to parents using the current inefficient, ineffective and often inaccessible voucher service.
- c) write to the Secretary of State at the Department for Work and Pensions and Norwich Members of Parliament to request that the Norwich City Council

administrative area becomes a pilot area for Universal Basic Income within the next 6 months.

- (2) acknowledge the impact of a decade of deliberate structural austerity in driving people into food hunger through the weakening of social security and other systemic measures which have fuelled poverty across Norwich,
- (3) use the powers available to ensure that the recovery of the city economy must address the root drivers of poverty with special reference to creating new, inclusive and sustainable growth, tackling endemic low pay and working with the newly formed Good Economy Commission; and
- (4) Consider and implement the agreed Recovery Plan, working with partners, to enhance and develop strong and sustainable food networks to better provide support to those most at risk of food hunger.”

Councillor Waters proposed and Councillor Harris seconded the following motion moved without notice:

‘Under part 52e of appendix one of the council’s constitution, to suspend procedure rule 16 in relation to agenda item 10c only, that the item be discussed after two hours had passed without opposing the business.”

With a majority voting in favour, item 10c was debated following a ten minute break.

### **10(c) motion: Black Lives Matter**

Councillor Youssef moved and Councillor Davis seconded the motion.

“In July 2020, Varsity magazine said “Systemic racism in the UK goes beyond policing and the criminal justice system. It is deeply embedded into our education, our housing, our medical care, our immigration policy.” Furthermore, the Human Rights Campaign Foundation reported that trans women of colour are disproportionately affected by fatal violence.

A black American man, George Floyd, was killed on 25th May 2020, in Minneapolis after a policeman knelt on his neck for almost nine minutes. The website ProPublica has found that young black men aged 15 to 19 are 21 times more likely to be killed by police.

This council **RESOLVES** to:

- 1) note that the response of the President of the United States of America and his administration has been to use extreme force to crush and repel protesters;
- 2) note that a report by the British government has shown a disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on black, Asian and minority ethnic people and that it is of vital importance that action is taken as a result to alleviate the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on black, Asian and minority ethnic people;
- 3) reaffirm that all forms of hate crime are abhorrent;
- 4) continue to condemn all forms of discrimination based on personal characteristics;

- 5) provide all our members with the training and support needed to eradicate discrimination and champion diversity, including by providing training on unconscious bias;
- 6) continue to welcome and support people from underrepresented groups to stand as councillors, because more inclusive councils bringing more diverse perspectives are better equipped to represent the interests of their communities;
- 7) reaffirm that members will work actively with each other to encourage a safe and fair working environment for all members and officers, by advocating robustly and actively for minority groups and by condemning incidences of discrimination in their role as a councillor, whether in the chamber or out in their communities;
- 8) continue supporting members and officers in speaking out against and condemning any form of discrimination based on personal characteristics, whether this be racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, misogyny, maternity, paternity or faith based discrimination, or any other form of discrimination;
- 9) encourage greater diversity within our council by working to understand and break down barriers for underrepresented people wanting to stand for election;
- 10) reaffirm that those charged with providing pastoral care to members (including group leaders and senior officers) to be sensitive to diverse members' needs and ready to signpost to sources of help and support;
- 11) ensure that robust processes are used to deal appropriately with incidents of harassment or discrimination in any form; and
- 12) continue to work with the community and the police in Norwich to ensure that policing across the city is proportionate and fair to all residents.

(More than two hours having passed since the beginning of the meeting, the following item was taken as unopposed business.)

#### **10(d) motion: Universal Basic Income**

Councillor Osborn moved and Councillor Grahame seconded the motion.

“A Universal Basic Income is a non-means-tested sum paid by the state to cover the basic cost of living, which is paid to all citizens individually, regardless of employment status, wealth, or marital status, which has been widely debated in recent months. Advocates argue it is the fairest, most effective way to mitigate the effects of coronavirus on people's incomes. A network of Universal Basic Income Labs has been set up and works with local authorities across the UK developing UBI proposals to address problems such as poverty, inequality, discrimination and environmental damage, long-term and immediately, in relation to coronavirus.

This Council **RESOLVES** to ask the leaders of political groups on the council to write to the Good Economy Commission for Norwich, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the leader of the party in Government, their counterparts in all opposition political parties in parliament, all Norwich MPs, and to Norfolk County Council to express the following:

- 1) That the current benefit system is failing citizens, with Universal Credit causing hardship to many communities in Norwich;
- 2) There is a danger of increasing numbers of people facing poverty as a result of the coronavirus crisis;
- 3) Testing a UBI is needed, as a UBI has the potential to help address key challenges such as inequality, poverty, precarious employment, loss of community, and breach of planetary boundaries through:
  - i) Giving employers a more flexible workforce whilst giving employees greater freedom to change their jobs;
  - ii) Valuing unpaid work, such as caring for family members and voluntary work;
  - iii) Removing the negative impacts of benefit sanctions and conditionality; and
  - iv) Giving people more equal resources within the family, workplace and society;
  - v) Breaking the link between work and consumption, thus helping reduce strain on the environment;
  - vi) Enabling greater opportunities for people to work in community and cultural activities or to train or reskill in areas that will be needed to transition to a lower-carbon economy.
- 4) The success of a UBI pilot should not be measured only by impact upon take-up of paid work, but also the impact upon communities and what the people within them do, how they feel, and how they relate to others and the environment around them; and
- 5) Given its history of social innovation, wealth of expertise, and active networks across community, business and public services, Norwich is ideally placed to pilot a UBI.

(The Lord Mayor closed the meeting.)

LORD MAYOR





## **Appendix A**



**Council  
21 July 2020**

### **Questions to cabinet members or chairs of committees**

#### **Question 1**

**Councillor Osborn to ask the leader of the council the following question:**

“At Cabinet on 8 July, the leader of the council stated that he was “very pleased” with the work of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP) in responding to the climate emergency. Is he also pleased with the NALEP’s Local Industrial Strategy, which forms the underlying foundation for the NALEP’s Covid recovery plan? The Local Industrial Strategy celebrates the “significant benefits” of the government’s Road Investment Strategy – that is, the country’s largest ever road building programme and currently the subject of a legal challenge on the basis that it breaches climate laws and the Paris Agreement targets. The Local Industrial Strategy also commits to protecting the Bacton gas terminal until at least 2045 – that is, 15 years after the 2030 date that the national Labour Party committed to having a carbon neutral energy system during the last general election campaign, to say nothing of the many local councils that have committed to becoming entirely carbon neutral by 2030.”

**Councillor Waters, the leader of the council’s response:**

“For your information, Councillor Osborn, I was referring to the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP) Climate Change Adaptation and Carbon Reduction Action Plan commissioned from the Tyndall Centre at UEA.

The Tyndall report covers a number of sectors: domestic; transport, agriculture, food processing and energy. It’s a trenchant report, doesn’t pull any punches and is a necessary benchmark against which NALEP and the public, private and third sector partners, including all local authorities, must work with urgency to deliver on tight carbon reduction targets. That includes the industrial strategy which is framed around ‘good’(inclusive) economy principles.

To pick up one of the other points in your question. Yes, it’s a shame that the outcome of the general election did not return a Labour government. Norfolk and Suffolk are leading the way in delivering sustainable and low carbon energy solutions to help low carbon economic growth across the UK.

We already have 986 offshore wind turbines generating 3.75GW of renewable power directly off the region’s coast, with an additional 1,000+ turbines generating some 14GW of offshore wind power to be installed over the next decade.

These numbers would have been much higher with a Labour government. This would have been welcome in the current economic circumstances. The energy sector within Norfolk and Suffolk has a current workforce of 7,800

which under Labour's plans would have been greatly increased. Your question fails to acknowledge the crucial role played by central government in how quickly we are able to make significant advances in tackling climate change. One illustration is the underwhelming announcement by the Chancellor, Rishi Sunak to spend only £3bn to fund its new energy efficiency plan. According to an Institute for Public Policy Research report, it requires triple that sum each year up to 2030 to meet the UK's target to reduce carbon emissions. With a further £7bn a year, between 2030 to 2050, to meet the UK's legally binding commitment to create a net zero carbon economy by 2050. Labour's manifesto planned for major investment to deliver on these targets and would have created over a quarter of a million jobs in England alone. The new leadership of the Labour Party in Westminster is committed to tackling climate change on an ambitious scale. Through our own policies – most notably the recently published Environment Strategy and the citywide Norwich 2040 Vision partnership we are seeking to match that ambition at the local level.”

### **Supplementary question**

Councillor Osborn asked whether the leader of the council supported the Local Enterprise Partnership's Local Industry Strategy as a basis for post Covid Recovery, considering its support of road building and fossil fuels.

The leader of the council said that the points raised in the supplementary question had already been covered in the initial answer. Any economic activity undertaken by the LEP had to be informed by data set out in the climate change strategy.

## **Question 2**

### **Councillor Price to ask the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth the following question:**

“Last September in an article in the Eastern Daily Press, the cabinet member for sustainable development stated the city council’s intention to see roads closed for Car Free Day 2020 and to work with other groups on making Car Free Day bigger and with more family friendly activities. In the intervening months, covid-19 has seen an increase in people experiencing traffic-free streets and many other councils have committed to extending the benefits of that. Has the cabinet member asked the county council to implement road closures for Car Free Day 2020 in order to fulfil the commitment he made last year?”

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

Norwich has a proud pioneering record in creating space for people to walk and cycle in comfort, which puts us ahead of other cities. We have always argued that rather than simply close roads on Car Free Day, we should put on events on those closed roads to engage the public and explain what we have done and why we have done it. Without events it becomes an empty gesture that risks alienating the public who would not understand why they are being inconvenienced.

Due to the Covid-19 lockdown events run by this council have been cancelled, all the way to and including Halloween. We have not been alone in cancelling events; independent event organisers have also cancelled indoor and outdoor events throughout the autumn. Our events team has been redeployed throughout the lockdown to essential front line duties to help with the city’s Covid-19 response. Events need planning and in the middle of lockdown it was not clear – and it still is not clear – whether the type of events we had in mind could be held safely given the requirements for social distancing.

We have therefore concentrated our response to the virus on working with the county council to partially or completely close some roads, widen pavements and make provision for outside eating and drinking. This will be followed by other schemes to help cycling and walking using money from the Transforming Cities Fund. We will keep working with the county council to identify and deliver further enhancements for walking and cycling through the forthcoming review of the transport for Norwich strategy. This will be much more beneficial for the public and businesses than any single-day gesture.”

### **Supplementary question**

Councillor Price said that he acknowledged the pandemic had made holding events difficult, but the public should not be underestimated. He asked the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth what work had been undertaken with Norfolk County Council to prepare for Car free Day 2020.

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth said that it was a disingenuous question. All city council events up to Halloween had been cancelled and may be beyond this date. There was no reason that Car Free Day should be any exception. The actions asked for in the motion to council in March 2019 had been carried out.

### **Question 3**

#### **Councillor Neale to ask the leader of the council the following question:**

“At the council meeting last November, when we discussed Norwich Regeneration Limited, the Green group asked questions on the governance of that company. We felt that there was a conflict of interest in having two board members who were asking the council for financial support when they were also cabinet members. We were told there was no conflict of interest.

In June the topic was again on the council agenda and although the board had now been restructured to include independent non-executive members, as we had suggested, the cabinet did not agree to the removal of cabinet members from the board as we had called for. We again called for them to resign but they refused to.

A recent proposal was to create another wholly-owned council company to facilitate some of the council’s operations. We note that it has been proposed to have a board consisting of independent non-executive directors and chair and no cabinet members on the board.

In light of this, I ask again: will the two cabinet members on the board of Norwich Regeneration Limited either resign from the board or resign as cabinet members?”

#### **Councillor Waters, the leader of the council’s response:**

“Councillor Neale, I am pleased to see you and the Green Group have abandoned the misleading line that there was and is a lack of transparency around the operation of the company. That was inevitable following the detailed chronology I provided at the June full council meeting and the June cabinet, describing how the Norwich Regeneration Limited (NRL) was discussed over 50 times by either council, cabinet, audit and scrutiny between 2017 and 2020. So, now let me deal with the misleading suggestion about conflict of interest.

Councillors Stonard and Kendrick have always declared their interest as a director of NRL whenever reports relating to NRL have been heard at cabinet or council or any other committee.

As directors of NRL, Councillors Stonard and Kendrick do not receive any remuneration and fulfil the role of director of NRL on a voluntary basis and this helps to reduce the likelihood of any conflict of interest.

Norwich City Council as the sole shareholder in NRL is effectively a parent company and the interests of the council and NRL are aligned which in most cases will mean that, although directors of NRL who are also cabinet members will have an “other” interest to declare, they are unlikely to have any conflict of interest.

At the June cabinet and council meetings this year Councillors Stonard and Kendrick did identify a conflict of interest and as required, they both declared this interest and removed themselves from the meeting while the cabinet and then council debated and voted on the paper with its recommendations.

Councillors Stonard and Kendrick have always done the right thing declaring their interests and balancing their roles as cabinet members and directors of NRL.”

## **Supplementary question**

Councillor Neale asked why there was an instance on having cabinet members on the NRL board but it was felt appropriate to exclude cabinet members from the board of the council's new wholly owned company.

The leader of the council said that the value of having an elected cabinet member on the board had already been outlined and there was a healthy set of sales at Rayne Park.

## **Question 4**

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

"The local press has twice covered the plight of a council tenant who was moved into a council flat suffering a damp and mould problem in February. The tenant was informed by the council that the flat would be repaired before she moved in. However, the work was not carried out in time and the lockdown has delayed it further. The tenant has chronic asthma and reports that her lung condition has worsened as a result of the damp and mould and she is having to take extra medication. Asthma is a life-threatening condition which is exacerbated if not triggered by damp and mould. As someone who is a lifelong asthmatic with many allergies, damp, mould and the spores produced are a major trigger for me. Asthma UK advises carrying out quick treatment of damp and mould in homes before problems get worse.

Will the portfolio holder ensure that all council homes, from now on, are fully fit for purpose before allowing tenants to move in, and, specifically, ensure that no-one moves into council accommodation showing unacceptable levels of damp and mould, let alone someone who has a respiratory condition, is elderly or has children?"

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

"Thank you for your question and comments and I am sure you will understand that I am not able to comment on any one particular case in a meeting of council.

Our tried and tested lettings approach ensures that we let properties quickly, in good condition and at good value to the tenants of the city. Our performance to let a vacant property of around 16 days is one of the best in the country and tenant satisfaction with their new property also remain high. But we can always do better.

The condition of a newly available council home is referred to as the 'lettable standard' and this is summarised in a leaflet called "Safe, Secure, Warm Home - Your new council home" published in February 2018. This details the minimum standard that we seek to achieve with all our lettings. All properties that are let will have been subject to an inspection firstly before a property is vacated by the previous tenants; again when the property becomes empty and a final time when any work required to bring the property to the lettable standard is completed.

Not all of our properties will require any works aside from a thorough clean. Inspections are undertaken by housing officers and surveyors from NPS Norwich, who act as our client and who manage the contractor, Norwich Norse Building Ltd (NNBL), on our behalf.

The council operates a choice-based lettings policy which aims to give as much choice, in terms of location and property type, for tenants at, or near the top of, the waiting list. Tenants 'bid' on properties and in normal circumstances the top three prospective tenants are invited to view a property, usually when work, if any is required is still being undertaken. If the successful tenant is happy with the quality of the offer, then we will arrange sign up to start the tenancy.

Any defects identified that fall outside of the work required to get the property to a lettable standard, such as a kitchen or heating upgrades, would not normally be done before the property is let. In these cases, we will advise the incoming tenant what we will do and generally these repairs are completed in a timely manner. In some cases, this may include structural works like installing a damp proof course which may then be completed as part of a wider programme. Any visible or significant evidence of the effects of damp, for example, mould growth will be dealt with prior to letting.

The overwhelming reports of damp are not caused by any structural defects. Inspections invariably establish the cause to be a lack of air circulation causing the build-up of humidity. In most cases, a fungicidal wash will remove the condensation, and in others the council will install additional ventilation. In these situations, the condition will reoccur unless there is proper ventilation and/or activities such as drying clothes indoors is modified. It is essential that tenants work with us to get the required results.

When we let a property, we confidently expect the property repairs to have been completed in accordance with the lettable standard and this will include work to wash down and treat any signs of condensation. The lettings team have reported that when they view properties awaiting sign up, all meet the lettable standard and there have been very few, if any recent examples where there is visible evidence of damp or condensation. In the recent example highlighted in the local press it is very unfortunate that the reported 'damp' was identified and highlighted after the property had been let. On the rare occasions this happens we will work with tenants to rectify the issue and provide ongoing support and advice through our housing officers as well as undertaking any works should any be required. New tenants will have the phone number of their housing officer and can call at any time. Housing officers will normally visit new tenants within four weeks of them moving into their new home and again will pick up any outstanding repairs and other issues. Housing staff and our contractors have been working tirelessly during the lockdown making sure basic and emergency services are delivered in challenging and changing conditions. They will redouble their efforts as we start on the road to recovery.

It is also worth noting that we are revising our lettable standard recognising that many tenants may need help with making their house their home for example by making it easier to decorate by plastering the walls, fitting curtain rails, renewing the flooring. This may include some damp proof and other works which do not form part of a programme and where the disruption caused by having this work done when the tenant is in occupation would be significant. A checklist which guarantees the new 'Norwich standard' for letting will be issued to each tenant. Assurance that the property is free from damp forms part of the existing and this new standard.

Our pilot was due to start before Covid-19 and will start now at the end of the summer."

### **Supplementary question**

Councillor Carlo asked whether the results of the pilots would be shared with other councillors.

Councillor Harris, deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing, said that she would be delighted to share feedback once the pilots had started.

## Question 5

**Councillor Matthew Fulton-McAlister to ask the leader of the council the following question:**

“Following the Chancellor’s Summer Financial Statement earlier in the month and additional announcement of £500m toward local government, can the leader comment on whether this will indeed provide the much needed and publicly promised support to this council and assist in the crucial recovery of our city?”

**Councillor Waters, the leader of the council’s response:**

“Thank you for your timely question Councillor Matthew Fulton-McAlister. The latest tranche of government funding was £301,970 which takes the total for Norwich up to £1,818,177.

Last week we received a little more information giving the broad principles of how the income reimbursement scheme will work. From what we do know it doesn’t look like it will cover lost rental income or any other commercial income. The qualifying losses will be based on the net loss position and therefore things like losses from events may not result in compensation as we also didn’t incur the costs of running the event. The table below shows the Covid-19 impacts as previously discussed but I have now incorporated the additional £300k of grant funding and a very preliminary estimate of the income compensation. The latter being predominantly based on estimated lost car park income which in itself is an estimate. When combined with the £2.7m of in year savings identified this stills results in a budgetary shortfall that we would need to look to reserves to fill. An improved position from last week but still not fully funded and with the caveat of a high degree of uncertainty as there has to be a lot of estimates in the figures.

Covid-19 expenditure	982
Income losses	7,296
Funding	- 1,818
Income compensation	- 2,500
Identified in year savings	- 2,700
<b>Estimated 2021 GF budget shortfall</b>	<b>1,260</b>

The figures above do not incorporate the impact of Covid-19 on our business rates and council tax collection - the impact of any shortfalls from these will be seen in coming financial years so we need to be mindful of the longer term budget implications.

The guidance on Friday made no mention of lost income reimbursement for the HRA so it remains unclear if the government will be providing any assistance in this regard.

The calculations surrounding income are very complicated and we still do not know either the full impact of the pandemic or the full details of the government’s scheme so all numbers are provisional and subject to change.

This answer should be read in the context of the question I answered at June council from Councillor Sally Button (page 13 of the July council agenda). The points about local government being not fully recognised for its vital role during the Pandemic (not over by a long way) and the funding model for local government being broken remain the facts on the ground. Despite this we have an ambitious plans to help the city move into a recovery phase. A summary can be found in the Citizen Covid-19 special



edition that has gone to every household in Norwich.”

## Question 6

**Councillor Button to ask the cabinet member for safe and sustainable city environment the following question:**

“I am proud of this council’s record in tackling homelessness and rough sleeping over many decades. With special reference to the significant and ongoing work since 27 March to ‘get everyone in’ can the cabinet member for safe and sustainable city environment comment on the achievement delivered so far to house rough sleepers and provide them sustainable routes out of homelessness? ”

**Councillor Maguire, the cabinet member for safe and sustainable city environment’s response:**

“The Covid-19 outbreak and the requirement for us to accommodate all rough sleepers as part of the public health emergency, has brought about unprecedented challenges for this council.

We realised at an early stage that this wouldn’t be a static situation and provision of temporary accommodation alone wouldn’t, in itself, be a satisfactory solution. The key to maintaining capacity and ensuring positive, life-changing outcomes for rough sleepers was to ensure an onward route into settled accommodation. Our housing options team have been working hard with our partners to put this into practice.

Our approach has been successful. Since 23 March, 106 existing and newly arrived rough sleepers have been accommodated, with the vast majority already moved into settled accommodation so that they will not have to return to the streets. Services are continuing to support the small number remaining in emergency accommodation and any new rough sleepers presenting in Norwich. Of the remaining cohort, an accommodation plan exists for each client, with a key worker assigned to them to deliver tailored support.

Experience has shown that homelessness is rarely just a housing need and this is reflected in the strong infrastructure which we have developed in Norwich over the years to deal with rough sleeping. We were able to draw on this strong network of partners in dealing with the crisis, for example through the Pathways Norwich service, hostel providers and support agencies.

Increased cross-sector working has also been vital in order that we seek to address each client’s individual issues and we have worked in partnership with multiple agencies, voluntary groups and statutory services to support this complex and sometimes challenging client group into accommodation to keep them safe during the pandemic.

We are proud of our accomplishments and grateful to our valued partners. All have worked at phenomenal speed to get everyone accommodated, support those clients and develop sustainable plans to make sure those helped do not return to the streets. What we have seen is the best possible evidence of our ongoing commitment to delivering the best possible services to vulnerable clients in the city.”