



**NORWICH**  
City Council

MINUTES

**CABINET**

**17:30 to 19:25**

**10 December 2014**

**Present:** Councillors Arthur (chair), Waters (vice chair), Bremner, Driver, Harris and Stonard.

**Also present:** Councillors Boswell and Wright

**1. APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

**2. PUBLIC QUESTIONS / PETITIONS**

There were no public questions or petitions.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**4. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held 12 November 2014.

**5. TRANSATLANTIC TRADE AND INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP**

The portfolio holder for resources presented the report, adding a further two recommendations as follows:

To:

- 1) join the LGA in lobbying to have the 'enabling' element of the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill removed; and,

- 2) seek the support of Peers to remove the 'enabling' element of the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill.

These additional recommendations were accepted by all cabinet members. The portfolio holder for resources said that he would draft and circulate to all cabinet members a letter to ministers, MPs, MEPs etc. to ensure that the views of the full council were reflected.

In response to a members question, the portfolio holder for resources explained that there was no rush to legislate by the end of the current parliament, as the timeline was being driven by both the European Union timetable and the US desire to have TTIP in place before President Obama completes his term of office.

**RESOLVED to:**

- 1) seek assurance from government ministers involved in negotiating TTIP regarding the concerns around public procurement and public services, environment and food safety, the investment state dispute settlement and transparency and consultation;
- 2) seek the views of Norwich MPs and MEPs for the Eastern Region;
- 3) consider the response from government ministers at a future meeting;
- 4) join the LGA in lobbying to have the 'enabling' element of the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill removed; and,
- 5) seek the support of Peers to remove the 'enabling' element of the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill.

## **6. RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT**

The portfolio holder for resources presented the report.

**RESOLVED to:**

- 1) approve the updated corporate risk register; and,
- 2) approve the minor updates to the risk management policy.

## **7. QUARTER 2 2014-15 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The leader of the council presented the report.

The executive head of strategy, people and neighbourhoods highlighted the fact that the target for those killed and seriously injured on the roads was a 'fewer than' figure, rather than an absolute number. He added that work was taking place with partners to seek to reduce those killed and seriously injured on the roads.

He also highlighted the figure includes those who spend a night in hospital as a result of slight injury and thus represents a poor indicator.

**RESOLVED** to note progress against the corporate plan priorities.

#### **8. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2014-15 – PERIOD 06**

The portfolio holder for resources presented the report.

**RESOLVED** to note the financial position as at 30 September 2014 and the forecast outturn for 2014-15.

#### **9. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2014-15 – PERIOD 07**

The portfolio holder for resources presented the report.

**RESOLVED** to:

- 1) note the financial position as at 31 October 2014 and the forecast outturn for 2014-15; and,
- 2) approve the proposed virements set out in the report.

#### **10. CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2014-15 – QUARTER 2**

The portfolio holder for resources presented the report.

In response to a member's question, the head of finance explained that repairs on Saint Andrew's multi-storey car park had been delayed as the work itself was weather dependent.

**RESOLVED** to:

- 1) note the position of the housing and non-housing capital programmes as at 30 September 2014;
- 2) approve the proposed capital virements set out in paragraphs 14 to 18; and,
- 3) approve the addition to the capital programme of spend funded by additional section 106 and external ring fenced monies as set out in paragraphs 21 to 26.

**11. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY MID-YEAR REVIEW 2014-15**

The portfolio holder for resources presented the report.

**RESOLVED** to:

- 1) Note the report and the treasury activity; and
- 2) Approve the revised prudential indicators.

**12. WRITE OFF OF NON- RECOVERABLE NATIONAL NON DOMESTIC RATE DEBT**

The portfolio holder for resources presented the report.

**RESOLVED** to:

- 1) note the level of NNDR debt which has been written off in the year to date; and,
- 2) approve the proposed write off of £146k of NNDR debt which is now believed to be irrecoverable.

**13. COUNCIL TAX HARDSHIP RELIEF POLICY - KEY DECISION**

The portfolio holder for resources presented the report.

**RESOLVED** to approve the *Council tax hardship relief policy*.

**14. PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY – KEY DECISION**

The portfolio holder for housing presented the report, tabling the changes listed on the circulated documents (see appendix 1 to these minutes)

In response to a member's question, the housing strategy officer explained that the quality of workmanship by companies carrying out work would be monitored via the contractor framework which had been put in place with the home inspection team. This way, quality assurance would be a key element of the procurement process.

**RESOLVED** to approve the *Private sector housing financial assistance policy*.

**15. PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ACCREDITATION SCHEME AND  
ADDITIONAL LICENCING OF HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION**

The portfolio holder for housing presented the report.

In response to a member's question, the head of city development services explained that he expected a picture of numbers and quality of houses of multiple occupations to build over time.

The housing strategy officer explained that a national code of practice was to be adopted which would contain additional local clauses.

**RESOLVED to:**

- 1) approve the introduction of the new property accreditation scheme from the 1 April 2015; and,
- 2) carry out statutory consultation under the Housing Act 2004 on an additional licensing scheme for houses in multiple occupation, if the accreditation scheme is successful.

**16. MAIN TOWN CENTRE USES AND RETAIL FRONTAGES  
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT – ADOPTION**

The portfolio holder for environment, development and transport and presented the report.

**RESOLVED** to adopt the *Main town centre uses and retail frontages supplementary planning document* in accordance with regulation 14 of the Town and Country planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012.

**17. SUBMISSION OF A PROPOSAL TO GOVERNMENT UNDER THE  
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT 2007 – PROTECTION OF  
COMMUNITY PUBS.**

The portfolio holder for environment, development and transport and presented the report.

**RESOLVED to:**

- 1) approve the content of the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 proposal document; and,
- 2) to submit the document to the Secretary of State.

## **18. COMMUNAL AREA MANAGEMENT AND INSPECTIONS**

The portfolio holder for housing presented the report.

In response to a member's question, the leader of the council explained that 'hands on' work had been carried out to engage with tenants to understand different types of housing need. She added that the substance of the report was vital and wording had been carefully considered. She made it clear that there must be a set of guidelines to ensure the safety of both tenants and fire service personnel.

**RESOLVED** to agree the procedure for communal area management and inspections for homes rented by council tenants and owned by leaseholders.

## **19. AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR HOUSING PLANNED HEATING UPGRADES – KEY DECISION**

The portfolio holder for housing presented the report.

The executive head of service for strategy, people and neighbourhoods highlighted a correction to recommendation 2 on page 335 of the agenda to remove the reference to a "four year period".

**RESOLVED** to:

- 1) award a contract to Foster Property Maintenance Ltd (under the Eastern Procurement Ltd. framework) for planned heating upgrades to the 31 March 2015;
- 2) commit to spending up to £815,000 for 2014/15 under the Eastern Procurement Ltd framework for planned heating upgrades from within existing Housing Capital Programme budget forecasts; and,
- 3) delegate to the executive head of strategy, people and neighbourhoods in consultation with the portfolio holder for housing authority to approve the award of a contract or contracts under this framework for the duration of the framework contract.

## **20. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the items \*21 to \*22 below on the grounds contained in the relevant paragraphs of schedule 12a of the local government act 1972 (as amended).

**\*21 Managing assets HRA Fund (exempt from publication) - KEY DECISION**

The portfolio holder for housing presented the report.

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

**\*22 Managing Assets General Fund (exempt from publication) - KEY DECISION**

The portfolio holder for resources presented the report.

In response to a member's question, the head of city development services explained that adding clauses to any sale of the property regarding visual amenity and landscaping could be explored through the use of covenants.

**RESOLVED** to approve the disposal of a property and freehold interest in land held within the General Fund as described within the report.

CHAIR

## APPENDIX 1

**Private Sector Housing Financial Assistance Policy****Addendum****Changes to the draft policy**

Paragraph	Changes
3.17	Remove paragraph. Only two quotes are required for all works undertaken by an applicant's own choice of contractor regardless of cost.
4.6.1	<i>Footnote: the Health and Housing Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. It was introduced under the Housing Act 2004 and applies to residential properties in England and Wales.</i>  <i>The HHSRS assesses 29 categories of housing hazard. Each hazard has a weighting which will help determine whether the property is rated as having category 1 (serious) or category 2 (other).</i>
4.11	Any works will be carried out by the Home Improvement Team.
4.27	If you qualify for a repayable loan over [£2,000] we will place a legal charge on your property as security for the loan.
4.28	<i>Note: Comparative figures for assessing income and expenditure levels are based on figures used by Norwich Benefits/ Welfare Officers, and work undertaken by the Joseph Rowntree Trust into living standards. A list of the appropriate up to date figures will be appended to the Policy when it goes live, subject to adoption.</i>
4.35	Grants do not generally need to be repaid, although please see point 4.37 below.
5.3	Financial Assistance will be means tested, and you may be required to pay a contribution to the work that is required. We will ask to see your business accounts, rental agreement, current schedule of income and expenditure relating to the property, mortgage agreement where applicable, letting agency agreement if applicable, and, if your business is not a limited company, we will also ask for personal income and expenditure details.
5.6.3	Where the property has been empty for more than six [6] months, and you intend to retain the property and rent it out as a normal part of your business to people in housing need.



5.20	<i>Note: the interest rate applied to landlords who are not, or who cease to be part of the Norwich Trusted Landlord Scheme is to be agreed with Finance in line with Local Authority lending rules.</i>
5.25	<p>Insert paragraph</p> <p>5.25 If you have more than one property that requires work, a further loan for additional properties may be agreed if we are satisfied that you are able to make the required repayments. Applications of this type will need to be signed off by [the Head of City Development] and will require a report outlining the reasons supporting the application. Your Caseworker will discuss this with you if it is required.</p>
5.27.8	5.28.8 Where you have had a loan under any part of this policy, you may not restrict prospective tenants for those properties on any grounds, including race, age, religion or belief, disability, marital status, employment status, sex (including gender reassignment), sexual orientation, or to those not in receipt of benefits.

NB: where figures or other items are enclosed in square brackets [...] they are recommendations, subject to the policy being adopted.