

**Cabinet****16:30 to 18:45****08 July 2020**

Present: Councillors Waters (chair), Harris (vice chair), Davis, Jones, Kendrick, Maguire, Packer and Stonard.

Also present: Councillors Osborn and Wright

**1. Public Questions/Petitions**

There were no public questions or petitions.

**2. Declarations of interest**

Councillor Harris declared an other interest in item \*13 (below) as a director of Norwich Norse Building Limited.

Councillor Kendrick declared an other interest in item \*13 (below) as a director of NPS Norwich Limited and a board member of nplaw.

Councillor Maguire declared an other interest in item \*13 (below) as a director of Norwich Norse Environmental Limited and Norse Environmental Waste Services Limited.

(It was noted that nplaw considered they had a conflict of interest and LGSS Law were providing legal advice regarding the joint ventures insourcing.)

**3. Minutes**

**RESOLVED** to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2020.

**4. Environmental strategy 2020 – 2025**

Councillor Maguire, cabinet member for safe and sustainable city environment presented the report. He thanked officers for their hard work on the strategy which was forward looking and tackled how the council would approach climate change and environmental policy over the next five years. It was the council's fourth strategy, integrated to the corporate plan, the Covid recovery plan and the 2040 city vision evidencing the importance of the environment across all council functions.

Norwich City Council had an impressive track record for reducing its carbon footprint and was the only district council in Norfolk which had done so. In 2007 a target to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 40% was set and last year, a closer to 60% reduction was achieved and it was hoped that a net zero target would be achieved by 2030. The council's third carbon management plan was to be published next

year. The council had an ambitious programme in place and had been recognised by external bodies such as Friends of the Earth which rated the council as 15th out of all local authorities in the country.

It was a comprehensive strategy which acknowledged the existence of a climate emergency and linked this to its societal and economic impacts. The strategy had been considered at the climate and environment emergency executive panel (CEEEP) and a number of recommendations made by the panel which Councillor Maguire presented.

In response to a member question the director of place said that that the environmental strategy was a corporate document which set a target for carbon neutrality for the city council by 2030. It was integrated with the 2040 city vision and a wider climate change group and strategy was led by the business community for Norwich.

The leader of the council highlighted that a key means by which the council lobbied government was the use of full council motions, he highlighted that it was a motion which acknowledged the climate emergency and established CEEEP as a panel.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (1) adopt the environmental strategy 2020 – 2025 subject to an amendment to the chair's foreword to contextualise the development of the strategic document within the events of the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting behavioural changes leading to an increase in walking and cycling; and
- (2) note the following recommendations from CEEEP:
  - a) request that cabinet when conducting environmental assessments, the council applies SCATTER tools or other environmental assessment tools as appropriate to quantify the environmental impact of decision making;
  - b) request cabinet that if and when the council's commercial property investment strategy is revised that CEEEP is involved in its preparation to ensure that opportunities to stimulate the green economy are maximised;
  - c) note that in accordance with the terms of reference of this panel, request that reports on the environmental strategy action plan are considered regularly, note the governance arrangements in place to monitor the effectiveness of the strategy and to reaffirm that the council is committed to lobby the government for funding to achieve the carbon neutrality as soon as possible.

**5. Finance and business planning process for 2021/22 and in year budget position**

The chair noted that a late appendix to this item had been circulated to all members; appendix 2: Norfolk Strategic Fund Contribution which asked for a council contribution to the fund aimed at helping the county to recover from the pandemic. He said the report highlighted the impact of Covid 19 on the council's budget and the

significant range of work the council was involved with in relation to recovery from Covid.

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources presented the report. It was a challenge to develop and maintain high quality services during a sustained period of austerity and latterly with the impact of Covid to consider. Senior managers had undertaken a budget review to identify in house savings to address the budget position. Service delivery had to be balanced against financial stability.

The government had announced funding for local authorities in relation to Covid and lost income streams, when greater detail was known the budget would be refined. The leader noted that NCC along with other urban authorities was pressing government to maintain its promise to reimburse local authorities for funds they had spent during the pandemic.

The chief finance officer, advised in response to a member question that it was unclear how the government's recent announcement on emergency funding would be distributed to local authorities, the expectation was that it would be directly. Any funds in relation to homelessness and rough sleeping would be received by the county council and distributed on and funding in relation to lost income streams would be direct to the council.

In relation to keeping members updated on the budget the standard finance reports would include updated detail.

In response to Councillor Osborn's question, the leader said that the council had been lobbying government in relation to the reduction of the revenue based support grant for local authorities. It was fortunate the council had made prudent investments into commercial properties and assets as this had assisted with service delivery. The cabinet member for resources emphasised that car parks and commercial investments protected the delivery of front line services.

**RESOLVED to:**

- (1) note the latest in-year budget positions and to endorse the approach and timetable for setting the 2021/22 budgets; and
- (2) approve a general fund revenue contribution of £150k into the Norfolk Strategic Fund to support the economic recovery of Norfolk post the COVID-19 pandemic.

**6. Quarter Four Corporate Performance Report for 2019-20**

Councillor Waters, leader of the council presented the report. The format was in the process of being updated and the current presentation was an interim format, due to Covid some data was unable to be gathered. He highlighted a number of significant achievements; the number of volunteer hours across the parks and open spaces service had exceeded its target; customers reported increased skills and confidence as a result of taking part in the council digital inclusion project and engagement had increased during the pandemic with increased applications for Universal Credit; the council carbon emissions were reducing; and council homes were achieving good energy efficiency ratings.

Councillor Packer, cabinet member for health and wellbeing, thanked the public for volunteering over 16,000 hours of their time to work across the council's parks and open spaces in the last year and in particular highlighted the significant partnerships which existed with community and friends groups. Members also noted that it was great to see the market open, occupied and the public accessing it responsibly.

In response to a member question the director of people and neighbourhoods said work in relation to anti social behaviour had paused as staff responded to Covid but the importance of this work was recognised, there were staff shortages and it was planned to recruit to these vacancies.

The chief executive officer said targets would be refined this year in light of Covid.

**RESOLVED** to note progress against the corporate plan priorities for quarter four of 2019-20.

## **7. Budget Monitoring Final Outturn 2019/20**

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources presented the report.

Members discussed budget underspends and the various reasons these occurred.

**RESOLVED** to:

- 1) note the financial outturn for 2019/20 for the General Fund, HRA and capital programme (unaudited);
- 2) note the consequential balance of the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account balances; as detailed in paragraphs 21 & 22;
- 3) note the transfers to earmarked reserves and the subsequent impact on balances; as detailed in paragraphs 17,18 & 20; and
- 4) delegate to the chief finance officer, director of place and director of people and neighbourhoods, in consultation with the cabinet member for resources, approval of carry-forward of unspent 2019/20 capital budgets still required, to the 2020/21 capital programme.

## **8. Transforming Cities Fund update and match funding – Key Decision**

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth presented the report. A successful bid for tranche one funding resulted in improvements to the transport network in Norwich and the council in partnership made an ambitious bid for round two of the funding. The second bid had been resubmitted and the outcome was awaited. It was noted that highways had moved from the city council to county council.

Members discussed if the funding in round 2 would be enough to implement a suitable transport network in Norwich. Councillor Stonard noted that the original funding which was had been available would have achieved this. However, with the move of highways to the county council transformative change had to come from county. The design conservation and landscape manager said they would input and

influence the county council's transport strategy as best as they could. The leader of the council said it was disappointing that the funding available had been reduced but it still represented a significant sum of money and the best would be made of any funds received.

**RESOLVED** to recommend to council -:

- 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 City Council held funds detailed in appendix 1 as matched funding for the Transforming Cities Fund programme.

## **9. Landscape services agreement with County highways**

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth presented the report. He said that after the termination of the Highways Agreement on 31 March 2020, the county council asked Norwich City Council to continue with landscaping works and an agreement had been drawn up.

In response to member questions the design conservation and landscape manager said the city council were not obliged to accept design work from the county council. In terms of biodiversity, the transport for Norwich manager at county hall was the client and efforts to maintain biodiversity would be encouraged.

**RESOLVED** to approve entering into a five-year agreement with the County Council to provide fee-earning landscape services on highways projects.

## **10. The award of contract for the procurement of the printing services framework – Key Decision**

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources presented the report. The printing bill was reducing year on year but it was important to remember that not all residents were able to access services online.

**RESOLVED** to delegate authority to the director of strategy, communications and culture in consultation with the portfolio holder for resources to award a contract/s for the printing services framework for a period of four years.

## **11. To award a new contract for the existing Northgate Revenues and Benefits system**

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources presented the report.

The director of strategy, communications and culture said the contract provided for an online portal for customers which would enable those who could self serve to do so and staff could provide greater assistance to other customers.

**RESOLVED** to delegate authority to the director of strategy, communications and culture in consultation with the cabinet member for resources to award a contract for the ongoing support and maintenance of the revenues and benefits software and associated services

## **12. Exclusion of the Public**

**RESOLVED** to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of item \*13 (below) on the grounds contained in the relevant paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

(Councillors Harris, Kendrick and Maguire having declared a conflict of interest in this item withdrew from the meeting for the discussion and vote. The monitoring officer withdrew from the meeting at this point too.)

### **\*13. Environmental, repairs and maintenance and asset and estate management services provision – Key decision (paras 3 and 4)**

Councillor Waters, leader of the council presented the report. The leader said that the joint ventures members insourcing working party had met and reviewed the report and recommended it to cabinet. It was noted that a discussion around environmental standards for any new depot was discussed and members considered the opportunities presented.

**RESOLVED** to approve the recommendations as detailed in the report.

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**CHAIR**