Motion 9C – Accepted amendment

Motion to: Council

26 September 2023

Subject: Motion for the Ocean

Proposer: Councillor Champion

Seconder: Councillor Francis

An amendment has been received from **Councillor Hampton**

Councillor Hampton is amending the motion as follows:-

Replacing the word "**twelve**" with the word "**eighteen**" in resolution 1a)

Inserting the words "**and biodiversity enhancements**" after the words "**'floating vegetation platforms**" in resolution 1a)

Inserting the word "**River**" before the words "**Wensum Strategy**" in resolution 1a)

Replacing the words "**lead to**" with the word "**on**" in resolution 1a)

Replacing the word "**Embedding**" with the words "**Continuing to embed**" in resolution 1b)

Inserting the word "**relevant**" before the words "**strategic decisions**" in resolution 1b)

Inserting the word "**and**" between the words "**budgets**" and **"procurement**" in resolution 1b)

Replacing the words "**and decisions by establishing clearer links between this and Norwich's**" with the words "**including by continuing to implement the**" in resolution 1b)

Inserting the words "**work to meet our**" before the words "**Climate Change**" in resolution 1b)

Replacing the words "**Within 12 months, give evidence of**" with the words "**Continuing to update on the work**" in resolution 1c)

Inserting the words "**and sectors**" after the word "**industries**" in resolution 1c)

Inserting the words "**help**" after the words "**this would**" in resolution 1c)

Replacing the words “**Revised planning guidance and swift enforcement**” with the words “**Continuing to use available planning and enforcement**” in resolution 1d)

Inserting the word “**help**” after the words “**enforcement powers that**” in resolution 1d)

Inserting the words “**and to support national planning reform which will strengthen such powers**” after the words “**waterways and oceans**” in resolution 1d)

Replace the word “**work**” with the words “**continue working**” in resolution 1d)

Replacing the words “**and with neighbouring districts to embed strong links with**” with the words “**neighbouring districts and other partners named in**” in resolution 1d)

Replacing the word “**Growing**” with the words “**Working with partners, including Norfolk County Council as the education authority to help grow**” in resolution 1e)

Removing the word “**all**” before “**pupils**” in resolution 1e)

Replacing the words “**All residents should have**” with the words “**This should include continuing to work with organisations such as Norwich Fringe Project and Norfolk Wildlife Trust to give residents**” in resolution 1e)

Replacing the words “**Creating an online portal on the Council website**” with the words “**Consider working with partners to create an online portal**” in resolution 1f)

Replacing the words “**This portal could also allow residents**” with the words “**Continue to signpost residents to the Environment Agency, as the responsible authority, if they need to**” in resolution 1f)

Replacing the word “**Apply**” with “**Support any viable applications**” in resolution 1g)

Inserting the words “**through the provisions in the Environment Act 2021**” after the words “**single-use plastics**” in resolution 2a)

Inserting the words “**such as Anglian Water**” after the words “**water companies**” in resolution 2b)

Inserting the words “**and should aim to consider factors such as levelling up, marine conservation, energy, flood and coastal erosion risk management and climate adaptation holistically, rather than as competing interests**” at the end of resolution 2e)

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So that the revised motion becomes:-

Norfolk's wildlife, habitats and ecosystems are vitally important to us and future generations, enhancing our lives, from the insects that pollinate our food crops to our residents' health and wellbeing. The important economic benefits that all of Norfolk's interconnected waterways bring to local communities via recreational use and through tourism, are at risk of being lost.
Norwich City is at the heart of a significant geographical area of ecological importance, the majority of which is built up of designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and therefore has a direct impact on the sustainability of this environment, other councils downstream and on the Norfolk coast. A similar Motion for the Ocean has been adopted by other councils nationally, both coastal and inland, highlighting the interconnectivity of our waterways.

Recognising the critical importance of biodiversity, and the urgent need to address its decline, makes it imperative that we declare our commitment to conserving and restoring biodiversity within Norwich. The Government's Environment Bill has required a Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Nature Recovery Network and Norwich City Council will need to play its part.

Having adopted a Biodiversity Emergency Declaration, we need to demonstrate our commitment to protecting and enhancing biodiversity within our jurisdiction and setting a precedent for outside partners and businesses. One of the key themes of the current Corporate Plan, is to deliver on the environment. This motion would enable and augment our existing Wensum Strategy by giving clear targets towards the objectives stated in the strategy vision, such as 'enhancing the natural environment, including water quality, biodiversity, and green infrastructure'.

As a Council that has adopted a Biodiversity Emergency Declaration, we must therefore pledge to incorporate collaborative environmental governance, to recognise the interconnected human and biological systems, and build collaboration between actors across multiple scales.

We recognise the harm to the coastal ecosystem caused by the dumping of sewage in our sea, effluent from rivers and that ocean recovery is a key part of our commitment to tackling climate change and ensuring our waters are a safe place for local people to enjoy.

Council **RESOLVES** to:

1) Ask cabinet to consider:

    a) Production of a report to Cabinet within eighteen months on the implementation of possible actions and projects that would improve local waterways, such as the 'floating vegetation platforms' and biodiversity enhancements planned in the River Wensum Strategy. This report would need to reflect the impact that decisions about water quality in Norwich City have on sea water quality and therefore on ocean recovery in Norfolk and its coastal communities.

b) Continuing to embed the recovery of waterways connected to Norwich City in all relevant strategic decisions, plans, budgets and procurement including by continuing to implement the Biodiversity Strategy and work to meet our Climate Change commitments.

c) Continuing to update on the work with partners locally to deliver increased environmental sustainability in industries and sectors that have a direct impact on the waterways that radiate out from Norwich City. This would help ensure a sustainable and equitable 'blue economy' for our Norfolk neighbours, that delivers ocean recovery and local prosperity, including the local tourist industry.

d) Continuing to use available planning and enforcement powers that help ensure new development doesn't jeopardise our waterways and oceans, and to support national planning reform which will strengthen such powers. In accordance with our Corporate Plan, we need to continue working closely with others, such as the Environment Agency, the Broads Authority, the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Anglian Water, with neighbouring districts and other partners named in The Biodiversity Strategy.

e) Working with partners, including Norfolk County Council as the education authority, to help grow 'ecological literacy' by ensuring pupils are given the opportunity to have educational experience of our complex network of wetlands and waterways and the impact humans have on their journey to the ocean. This should include continuing to work with organisations such as the Norwich Fringe Project and Norfolk Wildlife Trust to give residents first-hand experience of, and equitable access to, these natural habitats through physical experiences that promote their preservation.

f) Consider working with partners to create an online portal to update residents on water quality, enabling them to make informed decisions based on updated information, before they use local sites for water-based activities, such as swimming. Continue to signpost residents to the Environment Agency, as the responsible authority, if they need to report sites of hazardous waste; and

g) Support any viable applications for areas already popularly used by river swimmers to be designated bathing waters.

2) Write to the Government asking it to:

a) Stop plastic pollution at source - strengthening the regulations around single-use plastics, through provisions in the Environment Act 2021, and set standards for microfibre-catching filters to ensure that all new domestic and commercial washing machines are fitted with a filter that captures a high percentage of microfibres produced in the wash cycle.

b) Increasing the financial penalties on water companies, such as Anglian Water, found to be dumping sewage into our sea and setting legally binding targets for them to substantially reduce the use of combined sewage overflows (CSOs) in future.

c) Increase funding to the Environment Agency to carry out enforcement of these higher penalties.

d) Ensure the burden of any new investment in infrastructure is carried by shareholders first and to prevent the senior management of water companies found to have broken the law from serving elsewhere in the industry.

e) Appoint a dedicated Minister for Coastal Communities, utilize marine and social scientific advice to update the Marine Policy Statement and produce a national Ocean Recovery Strategy which will enable the recovery of marine ecosystems, rather than managing degraded or altered habitats in their reduced state, and should aim to consider factors such as levelling up, marine conservation, energy, flood and coastal erosion risk management and climate adaptation holistically, rather than as competing interests.

Glossary

- A ‘blue economy’ is one which uses ocean resources sustainably, whilst improving community wellbeing and social equity.
- ‘Ecological literacy’ is the ability to understand the natural systems that make life on Earth possible.