



Budget Council

19:30 to 21:20

26 February 2019

Present: Councillors Schmierer (Lord Mayor), Ackroyd, Bradford, Brociek-Coulton, Button, Carlo, Davis, Driver, Fullman, Fulton-McAlister (E), Fulton-McAlister (M), Hampton, Harris, Huntley, Jones, Kendrick, Maguire, Malik, Manning, Maxwell, Packer, Peek, Price, Raby, Sands (M), Sands (S), Smith, Stewart, Stutely, Thomas (Va), Thomas (Vi), Waters and Wright

Apologies: Councillors Coleshill, Henderson, Lubbock, Ryan, Stonard and Trevor

1. Lord Mayor's Announcements

The Lord Mayor announced that he had attended the Chinese New Year celebrations which had raised £5,000 for the civic charity, The Feed. The charity worked with homeless people in the city. He thanked everyone involved in this event.

The Lord Mayor had had the pleasure in welcoming the Nicaraguan ambassador to Norwich and had learned a lot about Nicaragua at this fantastic event.

The Lord Mayor encouraged everyone to attend *Viking – Rediscover the Legend* exhibition at Norwich Castle. He had had the pleasure in viewing this wonderful display.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Brociek-Coulton, Button, Driver, Harris, Kendrick, Peek and Waters declared pecuniary interests in item 6 (below), 2019-20 Budgets, Medium Term Financial Strategy and had received full dispensations from the deputy monitoring officer.

Councillors Fullman and Price had declared a pecuniary interest in item 6 (below) 2019-20 Budgets, Medium Term Financial Strategy, in that they rented garages from the council and had received a dispensation from the monitoring officer to remain in the room during discussion but would be required to leave the room during the determination of that element of the budget.

Councillor Kendrick declared an other interest in item 6 (below), 2019-20 Budgets, Medium Term Financial Strategy, as a director of Norwich Regeneration Ltd.

Councillors Button and Driver declared a pecuniary interest in item 7 (below), Council Tax Reduction Scheme and would be required to leave the room during the determination of that item.

3. Questions from the public

The Lord Mayor said that one question had been received from a member of the public.

Question 1 - CCTV

Mr Simon Crawford of Russell Street Community Area Residents' Association asked the cabinet member for safe city environment the following question:

"My name is Simon Crawford and I live in Clifton Close and I am a committee member of the Russell Street Community Area Residents' Association (to be referred as RSCARA).

I would like to ask the council if whilst they are planning the budget for the next financial year, whether they would consider installing either CCTV or vehicle number recognition cameras in the MA3 area (MA1 from March 2019) which is the area covered by our association.

I have had, in conjunction with RSCARA, contact with Norfolk police numerous times during the last eighteen months and I am fully aware of their positive view on the idea of CCTV in our and other areas, mainly due to the increase of anti-social behaviour, general crime and County Lines drug dealing.

It has proven very successful elsewhere including the centre of our fine city. Whilst this has been successful in the very centre of the city where all the big rate paying businesses are located, it is a fact that the drug crime and associated anti-social behaviour has been pushed out into the suburbs and into residential areas such as ours.

My fellow committee members of RSCARA and additional residents in the area while being involved in our by monthly litter picks have seen first-hand open drug dealing, bags of human excrement, used condoms, business waste dumped under low lying ground cover, increased fly-tipping and general mess and detritus that go with the less than desirable side of life in the community. I am aware that the current CCTV system held by the council is out of date and is generally only monitored on a Friday and Saturday. Shouldn't we be looking to further increase not just the area covered by existing CCTV but also a new and updated system, and have it manned 24:7 to actually protect the tax paying residents of our city, and not just have it protect the high rate paying businesses in the immediate city centre.

With a rise in anti-social behaviour, general and drug crime in the city, including stabbings and the well-publicised shooting in the park off Adelaide

Street last year, surely the good and tax paying people of Norwich have the right to feel protected from the less than decent members of society who reside among us on a daily basis.”

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

“I would like to thank Mr Crawford for his question regarding CCTV which I know he has discussed with officers.

The original CCTV service was previously funded some years ago through a partnership with Norfolk County Council and the Norfolk Constabulary. The public space CCTV system in Norwich is now wholly financed by the city council and whilst it is not a service the council has to provide as it is discretionary, I recognise that it is one that does play a part in helping to keep Norwich a safe city.

The service was recently reviewed which led to a decision by cabinet to invest in a new state of the art system including new cameras which is currently being implemented. The cost of this new system is £529,548.44 which I hope you will agree in these times of austerity is a significant commitment by this labour administration to provide a CCTV monitoring service. The location of the new CCTV cameras was undertaken jointly with the Norfolk Constabulary and other stakeholders to ensure they are located in the most appropriate locations for crime and disorder purposes, with the focus being the city centre where the greatest risk is considered to be, as well as a number of communal areas in some of the council’s high rise properties.

I am sure you will not be surprised that the council receives many requests from residents for additional CCTV cameras, as well as suggestions from front line police officers which the council cannot meet as sadly we have finite resources: the tory government’s austerity programme once again affects local service provision. There are also additional constraints placed on the council, and with other public realm CCTV providers by the surveillance camera commissioner’s code of practice. The commissioner’s code of practice, introduced following the Freedom of Information Act 2012, stipulates that a CCTV system must strike a balance between public protection and individual privacy and thereby achieve overt surveillance by consent. In addition the code of practice says that the deployment of CCTV must be consistent with a legitimate aim and a pressing need and purpose. The council therefore has to balance public protection from having overt CCTV monitoring and public/personal intrusion.

The police and council do have a number of re-deployable cameras which are located for temporary periods where there are high levels of crime and disorder, so it is important that Mr Crawford and the members of RSCARA, report all such incidents either to the police or council so that these re-deployable cameras when they become available from their current locations, are placed in the most problematic locations. The Russell Street area may be one which will be considered, if the reports evidence a regularly occurring and significant problem.

Due to some of the serious levels of crime affecting certain parts of the city, I will be bringing forward a package of proposals to cabinet in March highlighting how the council and other agencies will respond to these issues and to help keep Norwich a safe city.

However, I can announce, that contained within the budget papers for consideration by council this evening is a proposal to purchase four re-deployable CCTV cameras which will be used in neighbourhoods to help tackle high incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour, particularly those areas experiencing problems relating to county lines.

Finally, Mr Crawford also refers to automatic number plate recognition cameras (ANPR) which is a request which he should refer to the Norfolk Constabulary who operate a very successful system."

By way of a supplementary question, Mr Crawford referred to the significant problems of drug dealing and antisocial behaviour in MA3 and said that the police, county and city councils working together would provide a "slam dunk" approach which would show drug dealers and users that their behaviour would not be tolerated. He said that the use of CCTV made better use of police resources. Councillor Maguire referred to the investment in a new CCTV system and said that the council would continue to work closely with the police and other authorities. He pointed out that the city council was exceeding what was required of it.

4. Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2018 and 29 January 2019.

5. Corporate Plan 2019-2022

The Lord Mayor said that an amendment had been received from Councillor Wright, which had been circulated at the meeting, and as set out below:

"To amend the statement on page 11 of the Corporate Plan under the heading, '*Ensure our services mitigate against any adverse effects of climate change and are efficient to reduce carbon emissions*':

We will ensure our services are planned with an awareness of the latest UK climate impact projections to ensure they adapt as necessary to the effects of climate change.

to become:

We will ensure our services are planned with an awareness of the latest UK climate impact projections to ensure they adapt as necessary to the effects of climate change *and will establish a climate and environment scrutiny committee to oversee this work.*"

Councillor Waters had indicated that he would accept the amendment and as no other member objected it became part of the substantive motion

Councillor Waters moved and Councillor Harris seconded the proposals as set out in the report and as amended above.

Following further debate it was:

RESOLVED, with 29 members voting in favour and 4 members abstaining from voting:

To:

- (1) agree the Corporate Plan 2019-2022, subject to the insertion of “*and will establish a climate and environment scrutiny committee to oversee this work*” (in accordance with the amendment, as set out above);
- (2) authorise cabinet to agree final performance measures and targets 2019-20 based on corporate priorities.

6. 2019-20 Budgets, Medium Term Financial Strategy

(Councillors Brociek-Coulton, Button, Driver, Fullman, Harris, Kendrick, Peek, Price and Waters had declared interests in this item.)

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

Councillor Wright moved and Councillor Ackroyd seconded the following amendment:

“To reduce the spend to save budget by up to £50,000 using the funds to undertake a feasibility study to scope the establishments of a battery storage facility”

On being put to the vote with 6 members voting in favour (Councillors Ackroyd, Carlo, Price, Raby, Schmierer and Wright) and 27 members voting against (Councillors Bradford, Brociek-Coulton, Button, Davis, Driver, Fullman, Fulton-McAlister (E), Fulton-McAlister (M), Hampton, Harris, Huntley, Jones, Kendrick, Maguire, Malik, Manning, Maxwell, Packer, Peek, Sands (M), Sands (S), Smith, Stewart, Stutely, Thomas (Va), Thomas (Vi), and Waters) voting against, the amendment was lost.

Debate followed.

The Lord Mayor explained that because two members had declared pecuniary interests because they rented council garages, the vote would be taken in three parts so that recommendation A 8 would be taken separately.

He then moved to the vote on the cabinet recommendations of 13 February 2019 for the council's 2019-20 budget and it was:

RESOLVED, with 29 members voting in favour ((Councillors Ackroyd, Bradford, Brociek-Coulton, Button, Davis, Driver, Fullman, Fulton-McAlister (E), Fulton-McAlister (M), Hampton, Harris, Huntley, Jones, Kendrick, Maguire, Malik, Manning, Maxwell, Packer, Peek, Sands (M), Sands (S), Smith, Stewart, Stutely, Thomas (Va), Thomas (Vi), Waters and Wright) and 4 members voting against (Councillors Carlo, Price, Raby, and Schmierer) to approve the cabinet's recommendations of 13 February 2019 for the 2019/20 financial year:

A 1-7, and 9-28

General Fund

1. The council's net revenue budget requirement as £16.772m for the financial year 2019/20 including the budget allocations to services shown in Appendix 2 (C) and the growth and savings proposals set out in appendices 2 (F) and 2 (G).
2. An increase to Norwich City Council's element of the council tax of 2.99%, meaning that that the Band D council tax will be set at £264.13 (paragraph 2.19) with the impact of the increase for all bands shown in Appendix 2 (E).
3. The planned use of £0.958m of General Fund reserves to finance the budget requirement in 2019/20 (shown in table 2.4).
4. The prudent minimum level of reserves for the council as £4.3m (paragraph 2.41).

Housing Revenue Account

5. The proposed Housing Revenue Account gross expenditure budget of £59.3m and gross income budgets of £67.4m for 2019/20 (paragraph 3.4).
6. Of the estimated surplus of £8.2m, £6m is used to make a revenue budget contribution towards funding of the 2019/20 HRA capital programme (paragraph 3.4).
7. The implementation of the minimum 1% rent reduction in accordance with legislation set down in the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 (paragraphs 3.11 to 3.12).
9. The transfer of £1m of underspend forecast to be achieved in 2018/19 to the HRA's spend-to-save earmarked reserve (paragraph 3.3).
10. The prudent minimum level of housing reserves as £5.837m (paragraph 3.33).

Capital Strategy

11. Changes to the 2018/19 approved capital budget as set out in paragraphs 4.28 to 4.30.
12. The proposed general fund capital programme 2019/20 to 2022/23 and its method of funding as set out in table 4.7, table 4.8 and Appendix 4 (B).
13. The proposed HRA capital programme 2019/20 to 2022/23 and its method of funding as set out in table 4.7, table 4.9 and Appendix 4 (B).
14. The capital strategy, as required by CIPFA's Prudential Code.
15. The recommendation to undertake a comprehensive review of the entire general fund's land and property assets with a view to identifying those assets that need further investment and those which could be surplus to requirements (paragraph 4.20).

Non-financial Investments (Commercial) Strategy

16. The placing of security and yield above liquidity when considering commercial property investments as explained in paragraphs 5.15 to 5.18.
17. Continuing to invest in commercial property outside of the city's boundaries in order to obtain the best opportunities available, diversify the portfolio, and thereby mitigate the risk of holding these investments (paragraph 1.38).
18. The setting aside of 20% of the net new income achieved from commercial property investment into the commercial property earmarked reserve as set out in paragraphs 5.19 to 5.21.
19. The council's policy and process for lending to Norwich Regeneration Limited as set out in paragraph 5.28.
20. The proposed loan facility (amount of lending) the council will make available to Norwich as set out in table 5.1, subject to the process set out in 5.28.
21. The proposed equity investment the council will make in Norwich Regeneration Limited as set out in table 5.2, subject to the process set out in 5.28.

Treasury Management Strategy

22. A change to paragraph 74 of the 2018/19 treasury management strategy to change the rating shown in that paragraph from AAA to AA- (AA minus) in order to rectify an error in the document.

23. The borrowing strategy 2019/20 through to 2021/22 (paragraphs 6.19 to 6.30).
24. The capital and treasury prudential indicators and limits for 2019/20 through to 2021/22 contained within paragraphs 6.13 to 6.18 and tables 6.2 to 6.4, including the Authorised Borrowing Limit for the council.
25. The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy statement described in paragraphs 6.31 to 6.35 and contained in Appendix 6 (A).
26. The (financial) Investment Strategy 2019/20 (paragraphs 6.36 to 6.69).

Summary of key financial indicators

27. The indicators for 2019/20 through to 2021/22 contained in section 7.
28. Not to establish self-assessed limits for the indicators in this year's budget report as explained in paragraph 7.4.

(Councillors Fullman and Price having declared a pecuniary left the meeting at this point.)

RESOLVED, unanimously, with all members present voting in favour (Councillors Ackroyd, Bradford, Brociek-Coulton, Button, Carlo, Davis, Driver, Fulton-McAlister (E), Fulton-McAlister (M), Hampton, Harris, Huntley, Jones, Kendrick, Maguire, Malik, Manning, Maxwell, Packer, Peek, Raby, Sands (M), Sands (S), Schmierer, Smith, Stewart, Stutely, Thomas (Va), Thomas (Vi), Waters and Wright) to approve:

A 8

General Fund

8. A 3.4% increase in garage rents for 2019/20 (paragraph 3.13).

(Councillors Fullman and Price and were readmitted to the meeting.)

RESOLVED, unanimously, with all members present voting in favour (Councillors Ackroyd, Bradford, Brociek-Coulton, Button, Carlo, Davis, Driver, Fullman, Fulton-McAlister(E), Fulton-McAlister (M), Hampton, Harris, Huntley, Jones, Kendrick, Maguire, Malik, Manning, Maxwell, Packer, Peek, Price, Raby, Sands (M), Sands (S), Schmierer, Smith, Stewart, Stutely, Thomas (Va), Thomas (Vi), Waters and Wright) to approve:

- (B) that the total of all the precepts of the collection fund is calculated in accordance with Sections 32-36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011(as shown in Annex B) taking into account precepts notified by Norfolk County Council and the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Norfolk.

7. Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) 2019-20

(Councillors Button and Driver, having declared an interest in this item, left the room at this point.)

Councillor Davis moved and Councillor Smith seconded the recommendations as set out in the report.

RESOLVED, unanimously, to:

- (1) make the following changes to the council tax reduction scheme (CTRS) for 2019-20 by continuing with the 2018-19 scheme with the following modifications:
 - (a) as in previous years, increase the working-age applicable amount by the 2019-2020 composite rate of council tax (excluding adult social care);
 - (b) increase the level of income brackets used to decide non-dependent deductions, and the level of non-dependent deductions, by the 2019-2020 composite rate of council tax (excluding adult social care);
 - (c) increase the level of income brackets used to decide entitlement to *second adult reduction* by the 2019-2020 composite rate of council tax (excluding adult social care);
 - (d) retain the local discount provision for care leavers;
 - (e) retain the local discount provision for liable persons absent from a main dwelling due to domestic violence events;
 - (f) create provision for a local discount of 25% for 3 months for liable persons where they give a home to an asylum seeker or refugee who has no ability to work;
 - (g) remove the previous local discount for liable persons where a property is uninhabitable or in need of major repair work or structural alteration (currently 12 months at 50 per cent);
- (2) remove the unoccupied furnished/second home discount (currently 5 per cent);
- (3) subject to the relevant regulations being enacted, increase the surcharge on empty properties and increase the empty homes premium by:
 - (a) 100 per cent for properties empty and unoccupied for 2 years or more;
 - (b) 200 per cent for properties empty and unoccupied for 5 years or more;
 - (c) 300 per cent for properties empty and unoccupied for 10 years or more.

(Councillor Button and Driver were readmitted to the meeting at this point.)

(The Lord Mayor closed the meeting.)

LORD MAYOR