

Council

Members of the council are hereby summoned to attend the
meeting of the council to be held in the
council chamber, City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich, NR2 1NH

on

Tuesday, 26 January 2016

19:30

Agenda

Page nos

1 Lord Mayor's announcements

2 Declarations of interest

(Please note that it is the responsibility of individual
members to declare an interest prior to the item if they arrive
late for the meeting)

3 Questions from the public

4 Petitions

5 Minutes

7 - 36

Purpose - to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 24
November 2015.

6 Questions to cabinet members / committee chairs

(A printed copy of the questions and replies will be available
at the meeting)

7 Council tax reduction scheme 2016-17

37 - 46

Purpose - To consider a council tax reduction scheme for
2016 - 17 and to propose that council tax discounts and
exemptions are not amended.

8 Motion - Housing and planning bill

Proposed by Councillor Harris and seconded by Councillor Woollard

Council **RESOLVES** to write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to voice its strong objection to the following provisions in the Housing and Planning Bill that will have serious implications for our council tenants and the ability of the city council to meet the housing needs of Norwich:

1) The proposed end of secure tenancies and replacement with fixed term tenancies of between 2 and 5 years

2) Mandatory Rents for 'high-income' social tenants ('Pay to Stay'). Affecting any household with an income of more than £30,000 (outside of London), this will require those households to pay up to full market rents. This extra charge to be paid as weekly contribution to central government (Chapter 4 of the Bill)

9 Motion - Human rights act

Proposed by Councillor Waters and seconded by Councillor Manning

The Human Rights Act was introduced by the labour government in 1998 – however, it received widespread cross-party support.

Council **RESOLVES** :-

1) to reaffirm its commitment to the Human Rights Act 1998

2) ,if there are proposals to erode the act in any way, to ask cabinet to work with organisations and individuals who support the provisions enshrined within it, to lobby to retain the Human Rights Act 1998 in its present form.

10 Motion - Freedom of Information Act

Proposed by Councillor Wright and seconded by Councillor Ackroyd

Many believe The Freedom of Information Act is a vital tool for building trust and maintaining transparency of public

bodies. In its 2012 review, the Justice Committee concluded that Freedom of Information provides “a significant enhancement of our democracy”.

A Freedom of Information Commission has been established. Its panel of members include some who have publicly stated their reservations with Freedom of Information. The commission’s Terms of Reference and its public call for evidence focused mainly on measures that would restrict Freedom of Information.

Council **RESOLVES** to:

1) support the principle and practice of Freedom of Information and transparent governance

2) believe that Freedom of Information has delivered many improvements at local and national level over the 11 years it has been in effect

3) ask the leader of the council to write to the Prime Minister and local MPs, asking them to:-

a) protect the Freedom of Information Act from any attempt to restrict its function,

b) recognise that imposing charges for requests and fees of up to £600 for appeals, would also significantly undermine citizens’ right to know.

11 Motion - Improving urban biodiversity

Proposed by Councillor Carlo and seconded by Councillor Price

A study has found that a rapid decline in biodiversity threatens UK ecosystems vital for food production and human well-being.

Urban green infrastructure that fosters biodiversity has other benefits including reducing flood risk.

The Greater Norwich Growth Board’s Green Infrastructure Strategy includes the aim of maximising “opportunities to enhance green infrastructure to meet the needs of people and biodiversity”.

While much important conservation work takes place in established habitats in Norwich, many believe biodiversity in managing the public realm is equally vital.

Council **RESOLVES** to:

1) ask cabinet to ensure that biodiversity is consistently addressed in Norwich City Council maintenance programmes and contract specifications relating to open spaces, parks, cemeteries, street trees, verges and allotments and in new landscaping proposals for the public realm.

2) ask Cabinet to include the following in the draft Corporate Plan for 2015 - 2020 :-

a) Under the heading *A safe, clean and low carbon city*, include the sixth bullet point from the previous plan, adding “including biodiversity” so that it would read as follows:

“To mitigate and reduce the impact of climate change wherever possible and protect and enhance the local environment **including biodiversity**.”

b) Under the heading *A prosperous and vibrant city*, include the third bullet point from the previous plan, adding: “and its green heritage”, so that it would read as follows:

“To maintain the historic character of the city **and its green heritage** through effective planning and conservation management.”

3) **give consideration, when the 2016/17 budget is decided, to reducing the grass cutting budget** and spending the money saved on setting up a scheme for managing some intensively managed grass areas under conservation cuts as proposed in point 2.26 of the Environment Strategy for 2015/16.



Anton Bull

Executive head of business relationship management and democracy

For further information please contact:

Andy Emms, democratic services manager
t: (01603) 212459
e: andyemms@norwich.gov.uk

Democratic services
City Hall, Norwich, NR2 1NH
www.norwich.gov.uk

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Information for members of the public

Members of the public and the media have the right to attend meetings of full council, the cabinet and committees except where confidential information or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, and the meeting is therefore held in private.

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