

Committee name: Cabinet

Committee date: 17/01/2024

Report title: Greater Norwich Draft Joint Five-Year Infrastructure Investment Plan 2024-2029.

Portfolio: Councillor Stonard, Leader of the council

Report from: Executive director of development and city services

Wards: All Wards

OPEN PUBLIC ITEM

KEY DECISION

Purpose

To consider the draft Greater Norwich Joint Five-Year Infrastructure Investment Plan 2024-2029.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Cabinet agree:

- (i) The approval of a new programme management fee within the draft Five Year Infrastructure Investment Plan, to be funded from the Infrastructure Investment Fund (pooled community infrastructure levy). This will supplement the cost of the Greater Norwich Project Team who are instrumental in driving forward the provision of infrastructure across the full Greater Norwich area. The fee for 24/25 will be in the region of £115,000 and the amount for future years will be confirmed within each subsequent version of this Plan. (More details within paragraphs 10-21 of this report).
- (ii) The signing of a deed of variation to the agreement entitled 'Partner Draw down and Borrowing Authorisations' that was originally signed by all partners on 21 October 2015. This is required to progress the establishment of the already agreed City Deal Borrowing Loans Fund. (More details within paragraphs 22-32 and Appendix A of this report).

Subject to agreement of (i)and (ii)

(iii) The approval of the draft Five Year Infrastructure Investment Plan 2024-29

(see appendix B) which includes the proposed 2024/25 Annual Growth Programme (AGP) and note that approval to allocate funding for the Eaton Park project (in the 2024/25 AGP) and Sloughbottom Park (in the 2023/24 AGP) is subject to the approval of the Council's capital programme in the February budget papers. (More details within paragraphs 33-40 of this report).

Policy framework

The council has five corporate priorities, which are:

- People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.
- Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city.
- Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.
- The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish.
- Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.

This report serves the first four priorities and especially to provide the infrastructure and housing Norwich needs to be a successful city.

This report helps to meet the strategic planning policies in the Joint Core Strategy and the draft Greater Norwich Local Plan.

This report helps to meet objectives of the COVID-19 Recovery Plan that relate to:

- Business and the local economy
- Housing, regeneration and development
- Arts, culture and heritage

Report details

Background

- In 2013 the Greater Norwich authorities (Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council, South Norfolk Council and Norfolk County Council) together with the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, signed a City Deal with Government. The City Deal agreed a strategic infrastructure programme which would be supported by access to reduced cost borrowing, and the local authorities made a commitment to pool a significant proportion of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) income to form an Infrastructure Investment Fund (IIF).
- 2 The Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB) has responsibility for managing the IIF and assembling the Annual Growth Programme from the Joint Five-Year Infrastructure Investment Plan (the Plan).
- 3 The development of the Plan is informed by the updated Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan 2023, which <u>was published in a new digital format on the</u> <u>GNGB website here</u>.
- 4 The GNGB agreed at its meeting on 24 March 2016 to produce an annual Joint Five Year Infrastructure Investment Plan (the Plan), which is attached as Appendix B. The Plan is prepared to provide a longer term, more strategic context for infrastructure decision making as well as eliminating the need to approve individual projects at partner Cabinets more than once a year (subject to the GNGB not recommending any substantial changes to the programme).
- 5 The projects identified within the Plan are those currently considered to be a priority for delivery to assist in achieving the economic growth targets as set out in the Joint Core Strategy and the Greater Norwich City Deal. One of the key strands of the City Deal was the delivery of an infrastructure programme facilitated by a pooled funding arrangement between the authorities.
- 6 Income received from CIL is pooled within the IIF and allocated to infrastructure projects forming the Greater Norwich Growth Programme, which is administered by the GNGB.
- 7 The new projects which have been recommended to receive IIF funding during the forthcoming financial year (the first of the planned five years) are proposed to be adopted as the 2024/25 Annual Growth Programme (AGP).
- 8 The Plan provides an update of the financial status of the IIF and therefore is an important evidence base to support decision making for new allocations. It also includes information which each charging authority is legally required to report annually on CIL spend.
- 9 As the IIF has matured, the scope of how the fund supports the delivery of infrastructure within the Plan has broadened. There are now a variety of ways in which funding can be allocated to projects, some of which require pre-approval (recommendations i and ii).

The approval of a new programme management fee within the Five-Year Infrastructure Investment Plan.

- 10 The Greater Norwich Project Team (GNPT) have provided a dedicated partnership resource, working to deliver all workstreams as directed by the GNGB since their establishment in 2014. During this time, the team's work has become well established and respected on both a local and national scale, with central government and other local authorities seeking to learn from Greater Norwich's partnership working practices.
- 11 In more recent years, the scope of the team's work has broadened, developing beyond the management of a programme of projects which have been funded by the IIF. The team now develop and manage a programme of interdependent financial streams that need to be monitored with skill and knowledge to mitigate the financial risk to all partners, whilst ensuring all workstreams align with CIL legislation.
- 12 To date the team has been funded by annual contributions from the four partner authorities. A contribution of £40,000 was received from each partner for 23/24. This contribution will continue to be required and is adjusted each year in line with inflationary budget increases.
- 13 The Greater Norwich Infrastructure Delivery Board (IDB) reviewed the team workplan in March 2023 and agreed that the team is no longer suitably resourced to complete everything requested of it. They instructed a further review of the workplan and for options for securing additional resource to be explored. Having undertaken this work they proposed a change to the way the GNPT is funded which will enable the team to increase in size and deliver the extended scope of works.
- 14 At the meeting on 27 September 2023, the GNGB reviewed a proposal to increase the team resource from 3.2FTEs to 5.4FTEs, and for the annual contribution received from each partner to be supplemented by CIL. The additional staff resource will be utilised to bring forward the delivery of the Greater Norwich Growth Programme (IIF funded projects) and will free up the senior officer's time to progress new and emerging workstreams.
- 15 Section 59 of the CIL regulations states that CIL can be applied to the "provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure to support the development of its area".
- 16 The GNPT are instrumental in the provision of infrastructure. Together, they drive forward the delivery of the 100+ infrastructure projects that have been allocated funding from the IIF.
- 17 A summary of the team's roles include:
 - Preparing and publishing the evidence base which supports all partnership decision making to allocate funding to projects from the IIF.
 - Providing dedicated support to all projects funded by the IIF.
 - Supporting all applicants through the process of applying for IIF.

- Processing, monitoring, and reporting all IIF funding drawdowns.
- Developing and progressing all project change requests.
- Reporting quarterly programme updates to the IDB.
- Managing the IIF call for projects and application appraisal process.
- Publishing annual programme delivery updates.
- 18 It is accepted and common practice for individual projects to claim costs from the IIF to cover the project management related to the delivery. This proposal introduces a new 'programme management' fee, to cover the work that is undertaken to support the overall programme of funded projects.
- 19 For clarity, this proposal is not recommending the use of the 5% administration fee that is detailed under Section 61 of the CIL regulations and retained by the City Council from CIL that it collects from developers.
- 20 Using IIF to partly fund the team marks a change to previous partnership funding arrangements. The Greater Norwich partnership working arrangements requires all new allocations from the IIF to be agreed by the three CIL receipting authorities (Norwich City Council, Broadland District Council and South Norfolk Council). The Five Year Infrastructure Investment Plan provides the evidence against which new funding decisions can be agreed, so the decision to use IIF to partly fund is included within the Plan.
- 21 The GNGB are recommending that a new programme management fee be introduced to the Plan, to supplement the cost of the Greater Norwich Project Team who are instrumental in driving forward the provision of infrastructure across the Greater Norwich area. The fee for 24/25 will be £115,000 and the amount for future years will be confirmed within each subsequent version of the Plan.

Signing a deed of variation to progress the establishment of the already agreed City Deal Borrowing Loans Fund

- As part of the Greater Norwich City Deal agreement signed with Government in 2013, the GNGB were afforded the opportunity to access lower-cost loan funding from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB).
- 23 The borrowing is allocated in two specific ways:
 - £60 million for strategic infrastructure projects:
 - £40m for the Broadland Northway
 - £10m for the Long Stratton Bypass
 - £10m for Central Norwich Road network schemes
 - £20m to establish a local infrastructure fund

- 24 To date, only the £40m for the Broadland Northway has been drawn down. A further £10m for the Long Stratton Bypass has been agreed by all partners but is yet to be drawn down.
- 25 In 2021 the GNGB agreed in principle to repurpose the £20m borrowing capacity allocated to a local infrastructure fund, to a new City Deal Borrowing Loans (CDBL) Fund. This facility will provide the partners upfront loan funding to support the delivery of key infrastructure in the Greater Norwich area. Monies repaid will in turn establish a new cyclical fund called the Strategic Investment Fund (SIF).
- 26 Initial work to develop the CDBL Fund progressed during 2022, draft terms of reference were agreed and the GNGB was granted delegated authority from all four partner Cabinets in summer 2022 to manage the allocation of the £20m City Deal borrowing to individual projects. Further details on the operation of the fund can be found <u>here</u> in the City Council's Cabinet report of 6 July 2022.
- 27 Due to a lack of resource within the GNPT, work was put on hold for a while until 27 June 2023 when the GNGB committed to accelerating the development of the CDBL Fund.
- 28 Work to develop the monitoring and administrative processes of the CDBL Fund was progressed and later agreed by the GNGB on 27 September 2023, triggering the opening of the fund. At the same meeting, the first application to the CDBL Fund was reviewed and agreed, allocating £4.5m of borrowing to forward fund the developer contribution for the Long Stratton Bypass and bring forward its delivery.
- In order for this £4.5m borrowing and any future agreed borrowing to be progressed, an amendment is required to be made to an existing legal agreement that was originally signed by all Greater Norwich partners in 2015. The legal agreement entitled 'Partner draw-down and borrowing authorisations' currently caps the total amount of City Deal borrowing to be drawn at £60m, because initially only the first £60m (as detailed in paragraph 23) was intended to be repaid by the IIF. All partners have already agreed for the £20m allocated to establish a local infrastructure fund to be repurposed to be used to establish the CDBL Fund and ultimately a new SIF (see paragraph 25 and 26), and in doing so agreed for the total of up to £80m borrowing drawn down from PWLB to be repaid by the IIF. Prior to the first CDBL Fund loan being drawn, the original 2015 legal agreement needs to be amended, increasing the cap on borrowing from £60m to £80m to accommodate this decision.
- 30 The deed of variation requires a minor administrative change to be made to the 2015 agreement, but any change to a legal agreement requires specific agreement from all signatories before it can be actioned.
- 31 The full Deed of Variation is provided in appendix A.
- 32 The GNGB are recommending that each partner agrees to the signing of this deed.

Draft Five Year Infrastructure Investment Plan 2024-29

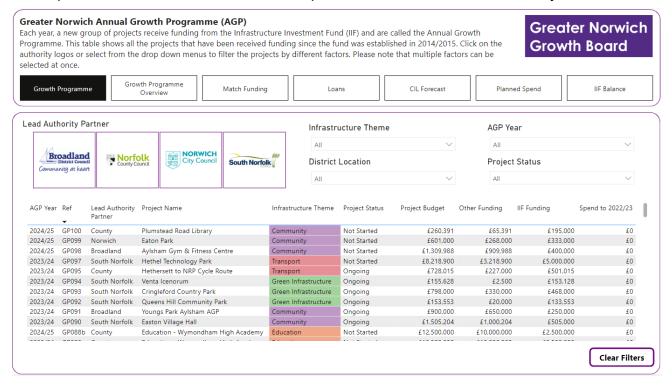
- 33 The Plan (see appendix B) was considered by the GNGB at their public meeting on 30 November 2023 and is now being recommended for approval to each partner district council. The Plan along with the confirmed Annual Growth Programme (AGP) 24/25 will then return to the GNGB at their meeting on 19 March 2024 for final confirmation of the commitment of funds.
- 34 The Plan incorporates the updated position on infrastructure delivery, includes revised CIL income forecasts and provides updates on projects accepted within previous AGPs. The plan is split into five chapters.
- 35 Chapter 1 (Context and introduction to the work of the GNGB) details how the Plan is developed and provides information around the long-term strategic planning for Greater Norwich.
- 36 Chapter 2 (The Infrastructure Investment Fund) provides an overview of what the IIF is, its eligibility criteria, and the different mechanisms the GNGB use to fund and deliver infrastructure using the IIF.
- 37 Chapter 3 (New Allocations) details the projects which are being proposed within the 2024/25 AGP which, if agreed, will receive IIF funding to support their delivery in the forthcoming financial year. The AGP includes a £333,000 contribution from the IIF to the City Council's project in Eaton Park. The improvements will include renovations to the changing rooms in the central pavilion to install four player changing rooms and two changing rooms for officials, the installation of green technologies (including solar panels, heat pump, PIR system, LED lighting), improved park signage at all entrances and ten cycle storage racks located at several locations throughout the park. This project will make the facilities compliant with Football Association regulations and accessible by all, as well as improving the energy efficiency of the building. The installation of cycle racks will help encourage active travel in and around the park.
- 38 Chapter 3 also presents the match funding and City Deal Borrowing Loans Fund allocations which have been agreed by the GNGB this year under their delegated powers.
- 39 Chapter 4 (Previous Allocations) provides a financial overview and drawdown timeframe of each project which has been allocated funding from the IIF since its establishment. This is referred to as the Full Growth Programme with all projects listed by their Growth Programme (GP) number. Legislation requires this information to be reported annually. It includes the allocation of £850,000 for the regeneration of Sloughbottom Park, which was agreed last year and acts as match funding for the City Council's successful application for Levelling Up Funding that was confirmed by the government on 30 November 2023. This project will deliver a linked set of community facilities including a new 3G football pitch, league standard changing rooms, multi-purpose pavilion and café, upgraded play park, refurbished and upgraded BMX track, storage facilities, an

upgrade to the Dolphin Path and other park infrastructure (car park and path resurfacing, lighting and signage).

40 Chapter 5 (Delivery Updates) provides updates for projects that have received funding in previous years and are currently underway.

Data Dashboard

41 A new <u>digital dashboard</u> has been developed, presenting the financial information contained in the Plan. It provides an interactive and more accessible platform for readers to be able to explore the financial data more easily.



Consultation

42 There has been no consultation on the content of the Plan itself. Project sponsors are responsible for ensuring consultation takes place on individual projects.

Implications

Financial and resources

Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its Corporate Plan 2022-26 and budget.

- 43 The financial status of the IIF is explained within the Plan.
- 44 The establishment of the programme management fee for the GNPT, which supplements the existing annual City Council revenue funding commitment, will be funded through CIL funds that the districts pool into the IIF.
- 45 The Greater Norwich Growth Programme requires continuous monitoring and reporting which will be undertaken by the existing resource of the Greater Norwich Projects Team.
- 46 Resources for the delivery of each project within the programme are the responsibility for the individual project manager and sponsor.

Legal

- 47 The IIF pooling arrangements and the designation of an Accountable Body are set out in the Joint Working Agreement which was signed on 21 October 2015 and is supported by the Infrastructure Investment Fund Programme Governance which is agreed by all partners.
- 48 The proposed deed of variation is in relation to the existing 2015 signed agreement. Signing this deed will allow previously agreed decisions to proceed. No new risks are identified.
- 49 There is an anticipated change from the current scheme of CIL to the proposed Infrastructure Levy scheme. The full details of this change are not yet known but will need to be considered by the GNGB given the significant implications it could have for the operation of the IIF in the long term. Norfolk County Council will work with the GNGB to assess any risk, but this will not be a risk to the Board because Norfolk County Council is the constituent body for all borrowing.
- 50 The Long Stratton Bypass loan is yet to be drawn from the Public Works Loan Board by Norfolk County Council as the Accountable Body. This has already been agreed by the partners and no new risks are identified. The loan will be underwritten by a legal agreement which will need to be signed by all partners. This mirrors the agreement that has already been signed when borrowing for the Broadland Northway.

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and diversity	No specific issues arising from the funding of the Growth Programme. Individual project issues are the responsibility of the project manager and sponsor. In the case of the City Council, this relates to the Eaton Park project. The project addresses an inequality allowing the facilities to be used simultaneously by males and females.
Health, social and economic impact	The funding of the Growth Programme is intended to contribute to the provision of infrastructure that support the development identified in the Joint Core Strategy. Individual project issues are the responsibility of the project manager and sponsor. In the case of the City Council, this relates to the Eaton Park project. The facilities will be more accessible improving residents' ability to live a healthy lifestyle. The anticipated increased use of the pitches will provide revenue to the council.
Crime and disorder	No specific issues arise from the funding of the Growth Programme. Individual project issues are the responsibility of the project manager and sponsor. In the case of the City Council, this relates to the Eaton Park project, but no crime and disorder impacts have been identified.
Children and adults safeguarding	No specific issues arise from the funding of the Growth Programme. Individual project issues are the responsibility of the project manager and sponsor. In the case of the City Council, this relates to the Eaton Park project, but no safeguarding impacts have be identified.
Environmental impact	Project managers and sponsors will be required to meet their own environmental obligations. In the case of the City Council, this relates to the Eaton Park project. The project will reduce carbon emissions from the building with the addition of solar PV panels and a heat pump.

Risk Management				
Risk	Consequence	Controls required		
Overrunning project cost and programme	Additional cost or lengthier programmes only carry a risk for the City Council in relation to those projects within the City Council's capital programme. The Council would be obliged to either curtail the scope of the projects or obtain additional funds.	The risks related to project cost and delivery remain with the project manager and sponsor and for City Council projects would be covered by existing thorough governance and programme management arrangements. New projects in the IIF are asked to sign an IIF funding offer letter to cover any additional project specific risks subject to specific conditions. Funding is also drawn in arears from the IIF.		
Lack of funds within the IIF to make interest and loan repayments in the medium to long term	If the mitigating measures were insufficient the City Council would be obliged to provide a share of the funds to repay the borrowing on the Long Stratton Bypass as it is already obliged to do in relation to the Broadland Northway.	This risk is alleviated by the agreed monitoring and reporting processes that the GNGB adheres to. The Plan provides an annual financial update, any new allocations are only agreed when all existing commitments are considered. It was agreed by each partner s151 officer that a reserve equal to one annual loan repayment was required to be kept in reserves as a safeguard. A £2m cash reserve to support the repayments for the Broadland Northway was allocated in 20/21 and £345,000 was allocated in 22/23 in readiness for the repayments of the borrowing for Long Stratton Bypass. Any required increase to the reserve amount for Long Stratton Bypass will be allocated in next year's version of the Plan, when the final loan repayment amount is known.		

Reasons for the decision/recommendation

51 Cabinet is invited to approve the recommendations to ensure that the programme of infrastructure investments that are needed to support development in the Greater Norwich area can be provided using the funds that have been collected from developers through the CIL.

Background papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix A – Deed of variation to the agreement entitled 'Partner Draw down and Borrowing Authorisations' that was originally signed by all partners on 21st October 2015.

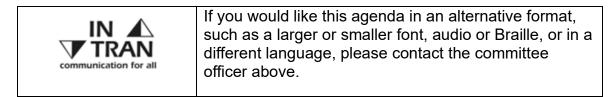
Appendix B – Draft Joint Five Year Infrastructure Investment Plan 2024-29

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Appendix A

DATED

Deed of variation of contract between

BROADLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

NORWICH CITY COUNCIL

SOUTH NORFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

and

NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

This deed is dated [DATE]

Parties

- (1) BROADLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL of South Norfolk Council, The Horizon Centre, Broadland Business Park, Peachman Way, Norwich, NR7 0WF ("Broadland");
- (2) NORWICH CITY COUNCIL of City Hall, St Peter Street, Norwich, NR2 1NH ("Norwich");
- (3) SOUTH NORFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL of South Norfolk Council, The Horizon Centre, Broadland Business Park, Peachman Way, Norwich, NR7 0WF ("South Norfolk"); and
- (4) NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL of County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DH ("County Council")
- (5) (together "the Parties" and each one "a Party"; Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk together the "District Councils")

BACKGROUND

- (A) The Parties are party to an agreement relating to funding under the Greater Norwich Growth Board Partner Draw-down and Borrowing Authorisations dated 21 October 2015 as amended from time to time ("Agreement").
- (B) Pursuant to the Agreement, the County Council borrows fund to assist with the delivery of the Greater Norwich Growth Programme, up to a maximum of £60m, undertaken at the equivalent of the prevailing Public Works Loan Board ("PWLB") project rate discount as set out in the City Deal dated 12 December 2013.
- (C) The City Deal also contained provisions for an additional amount of borrowing, at the Public Works Loan Board project rate discount, of up to £20m in order to establish a local infrastructure fund intended to provide upfront funding for onsite infrastructure delivery to small and medium-sized local developers. The facility was available for four years but the rate and level of take up was lower than expected. All the agreed loans were financed directly by Norfolk County Council without the need to draw down the £20m through the City Deal.
- (D) Pursuant to a review of the LIF facility, on 17th March 2020 the Greater Norwich Growth Board ("GNGB") made the decision to bring it to a close and instructed the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Delivery Board ("IDB") to prepare an updated City Deal Borrowing schedule, proposing a reassignment of the £20m previously allocated to LIF. On 17 June 2021 the GNGB endorsed the 'in principle' draw down of £20m City Deal borrowing to create a new cyclical programme of funding to bring forward the delivery of major community infrastructure projects.
- (E) In accordance with the meetings of each of the Parties, as set out in Schedule 1, the maximum amount of borrowing permitted pursuant to this agreement shall be increased by £20m.

- (F) Pursuant to each of the Party's agreement it has been determined that the costs of the £20m additional borrowing will be underwritten by the CIL-funded Infrastructure Investment Fund, and as a result an additional £20m borrowing capacity needs to be added to the Agreement. Consequently, the parties wish to amend the Agreement as set out in this deed with effect from the date of this deed (Variation Date).
- (G) This Deed of Variation ("Deed") is supplemental to the Agreement

Agreed terms

1. Terms defined in the Agreement

In this deed, expressions defined in the Agreement and used in this deed have the meaning set out in the Agreement unless otherwise defined. The rules of interpretation set out in the Agreement apply to this deed.

2. Variation

2.1 With effect from the Variation Date, the parties agree the following amendments to the Agreement:

a)	Recitals (iii) limitation on "borrowing" amended	The words "(up to £60m)" to be deleted and replaced with the words "(up to £80m)"
b)	Clause 1.1 Definition of "Loan" amended	The words "up to £60m" to be deleted and replaced with the words "up to £80m".

- 2.2 Except as set out in clause 2.1, the Agreement will continue in full force and effect.
- 2.3 To the extent of any conflict between the terms of the Agreement and this deed, the terms of this deed will prevail.

3. Governing law

This Deed and any dispute or claim (including non-contractual disputes or claims) arising out of or in connection with it or its subject matter or formation is be governed by and will be interpreted in accordance with the law of England and Wales.

4. Jurisdiction

4.1 Each party irrevocably agrees that the courts of England and Wales will have exclusive jurisdiction to settle any dispute or claim (including non-contractual disputes or claims) arising out of or in connection with this deed or its subject matter or formation.

ANNEX A SCHEDULE 1 Dates of meetings of each Party approving increase in amount of borrowing permitted under the Agreement.

Norfolk County Council	06 June 2022
Norwich City Council	06 July 2022
South Norfolk District Council	11 July 2022
Broadland District Council	19 July 2022