



## **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, 21 July 2015**

**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**

**5 - 30**

**Purpose** - to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 23  
June 2015.

**6 Questions to cabinet members / committee chairs**

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

**7 Annual audit committee report 2014-15**

**31 - 42**

**Purpose** - to present the annual audit committee report  
2014-15 to council.

**8      Community Infrastructure Levy- Norwich Business Plan      43 - 60**  
**2016-17**

**Purpose** - to consider the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), draft annual business plan for Norwich for 2016-17.

**9      Motion – Emergency budget**

Proposed by Councillor Harris and seconded by Councillor Waters

Council **RESOLVES** to ask the Secretary of State for communities and local government to reconsider plans to make an annual 1% cut in council house rents over the lifetime of this parliament because the proposal set out in the emergency budget will have serious implications for the council's business plan; its ability to build new council homes and to sustain a major programme of house refurbishment.

**10      Motion – Proportional representation**

Proposed by Councillor Schmierer and seconded by Councillor Raby

At this year's General Election, over 5 million people voted for two parties (Green and UKIP) who won two seats between them, while fewer than 1.5 million votes gave the Scottish National Party 56 seats, and Scotland elected only one Labour MP in 59 constituencies, despite Labour receiving 24% of votes.

Labour won ten city council seats this year with 25,619 votes and 17,922 green votes equated to four seats, while the conservatives won no seats with 15,617.

Many voters are calling for a fairer electoral system to be implemented, such as the one used in Scottish local elections.

Council **RESOLVES** to write to the government, the Leader of the opposition and our local MPs stating that the council supports a system of proportional representation (PR) for local and national government elections and to suggest Norwich as a possible pilot area for PR in Local Government.



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](mailto:andyemms@norwich.gov.uk)

Democratic services

City Hall, Norwich, NR2 1NH

[www.norwich.gov.uk](http://www.norwich.gov.uk)

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**COUNCIL**

**7.30pm – 9.50pm**

**23 June 2015**

**Present:** Councillor Arthur (Lord Mayor), Beryl Blower (Sheriff), Councillors Ackroyd, Blunt, Bogelein, Bradford, Bremner, Brociek-Coulton, Carlo, Coleshill, Driver, Grahame, Harris, Haynes, Henderson, Herries, Howard, Jackson, Jones, Kendrick, Lubbock, Manning, Maxwell, Neale, Packer, Peek, Price, Raby, Ryan, Sands (M), Schmierer, Stonard, Thomas (Va ), Thomas (Vi), Waters, Woollard, Wright.

**Apologies:** Councillor Boswell, Button and Sands (S).

**1. LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Lord Mayor updated council on some of her engagements since the annual general meeting which included meeting volunteers involved in fundraising activities including cyclists who had cycled 100 miles for the British Heart Foundation; Halifax Bank staff who had organised the Big Lunch for Children in Need and Waltraud Jarrold and her team organising the 45<sup>th</sup> annual Feed the Minds book fair.

She had also attended the St Francis Assissi School; the Gardening Club and the Assist Trust open day.

She had met volunteers who help keep our community centres vibrant and along with the Sheriff had attended the Norwich Sports Awards where she had presented awards to volunteers who help many Norwich sportsmen and women to compete at a national level as well as providing activities for people to simply participate in.

Finally, she had laid a wreath as part a ceremony to commemorate D Day. It was humbling to meet a number of veterans some of whom were on the beaches in Normandy and others who served in the Falklands. It was especially poignant that following this service she had walked to the Forum to open the Norwich Peace camp where again she met volunteers working through a range of organisations for peace here and across the world.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Doctor Jo Veltman asked the portfolio holder for environment and sustainable development:

#### **Public question from Dr Jo Veltman to the portfolio holder for environment and sustainable development:**

My question relates to areas of serious public health concern which are of relevance to both the city of Norwich and the council. These are climate change, obesity and type 2 diabetes.

These areas affect adults of course, but as a paediatrician I am particularly concerned about child health.

The public health issues of obesity and climate change are interlinked, in that they share many of the same causal pathways.

In itself, a society producing high carbon emissions leads to public health issues (air pollution etc.) and links with an 'obesogenic' society – sedentary lifestyles, processed food etc. Individuals living these lifestyles also tend to be high emitters of carbon.

Climate change has been recognised as the biggest public health challenge of this century (by UCL-Lancet Commission, the World Health Organisation and others)

The current inadequate responses to climate action are causing medical professionals – including myself - very grave concern. NHS England has also prioritised childhood obesity as a major concern.

In their 2014 report, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recognised that 'transformative action' is necessary to tackle this global issue. Please can Norwich City Council outline to me what steps are being taken to ensure that we as a city take the transformative action required on climate change – which would also help address our childhood obesity crisis as a health co-benefit?

#### **Councillor Bremner, portfolio holder for environment and sustainable development's response:**

Thank you for this question Dr Veltman.

Firstly I must point out that Norwich City Council is a district council with limited responsibilities, and very limited resources, and I suggest you also raise this question with Norfolk County Council and also the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny panel.

But that said, the labour administration at Norwich City Council does believe that climate change is happening and that we should be doing what we can within the limited resources, budgets, responsibilities and powers that we have to help ameliorate that.

I hope you will see below that the city council has gone the extra mile and more, and is one of the councils leading on this, far more than some councils supposedly with so-called green credentials!

We need to ensure that Norwich remains a living, breathing city that continues to develop in character in order to support the needs of residents, visitors and organisations alike. However, it is vital that this is sustainable development, which 'meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' and, as such, it needs to be sensitively managed.

Our first environmental strategy was launched in 2008 and since then the council has gone from strength to strength in terms of its environmental achievements. The per capita carbon dioxide emissions for the city have fallen by 14 per cent, which is the largest fall in the east of England. (Source: Department of Energy and Climate Change). The council's own carbon dioxide emissions have dropped by nearly 27 per cent. During this period our authority also received a number of national and international environmental awards in recognition of its environmental achievements.

As a low lying coastal county with a growing population, Norfolk is particularly vulnerable to climate change. Higher sea levels, heat-waves, droughts and storms are more likely to take place as average global temperatures rise. Recent flooding events in Norfolk have also highlighted how real this issue is.

We aim to enable sustainable solutions working with citizens and organisations to help them to meet their needs but also to contribute to creating a low carbon economy and support thriving, vibrant communities. A good example of this is the cycling ambition grant:

The city council is one of eight cities in England that have received cycling ambition funding from central government. Our applications gained £12.1m of funding for investment in the pedalway network. One of the reasons why our applications were successful is because they target several areas of obesity and poor health in the city where inactivity is a contributory factor.

Match funding was also supplied by the county's public health service and the Norwich Clinical Commissioning Group. The projects aim to create cycle routes where younger children can ride confidently with their parents and older children can ride alone. This will result in a healthier start in life for our young people and fewer people driving round the city contributing to climate change.

The Greater Norwich local authorities are committed through their city deal to building excellent cycling infrastructure to support our ambitious plans for sustainable growth. The city's ambition is to double levels of cycling in Norwich between 2013 and 2023 and use cycling as a catalyst for a more prosperous, liveable and carbon-efficient city. Two routes, 31km in length, connecting the city with peripheral towns, employment centres and growth areas within cycle commuting distance, will be redesigned so that everyone can ride in confidence and safety

I am also pleased our council is a signatory to the Local Government Association's climate local programme. I believe that we are at a cross roads. Food, fuel, poverty, financial and climate issues have led to a 'perfect storm'.

One route is 'business as usual', which won't achieve the change that is needed. The other route is one that truly engages with the changes the world needs, where government, businesses and civil society all work together to make the far-reaching decisions that are required to ensure we keep the planet safe for future generations.

At a local level our environmental strategy aims to deliver a sustainable environment which improves or maintains the quality of life for all of us. By making sure we use our natural resources wisely, emitting less CO2 and reusing and recycling as much as possible, we can create a more sustainable city that we, our children, and grandchildren can all enjoy for the future.

In addition we will continue to work with colleagues in NHS Norwich Clinical Commissioning Group and Norfolk County Council Public Health under the Healthy Norwich banner to promote health improvements across the city. Healthy weight is one of this groups current three priorities (along with smoking cessation and affordable warmth).

Finally the council works on two other significant projects aimed at reducing health inequalities across the city. Both aimed at encouraging people to choose active travel and recreation, the British Cycling partnership and Walk Norwich are delivered in partnership with public health, the CCG and Active Norfolk.

The British Cycling partnership includes a programme of led rides and cycle training with the aim of giving people the confidence to ride in the city, particularly in light of the new cycle infrastructure being delivered through Push the Pedalways.

Walk Norwich is a DoH/DfT funded project delivered as a result of the cities' status as one of five 'walking cities'. In partnership with Living Streets, the project has a number of strands aimed at targeting people through communities, schools and workplaces. Walk Norwich also provides a personal travel planning service to workplaces in partnership with Liftshare.

Desired outcomes are for more people to choose cycling and walking for both local journeys/part of longer journeys and for active recreation. A primary aim is to tackle health inequalities by transitioning people from an inactive state (less than 30 minutes moderate physical activity a week) to meet the CMOs guidelines of undertaking at least 150 minutes moderate to physical activity per week. Achieving this will positively affect physical, mental and social wellbeing.

Dr Jo Veltman said that a UCL report identified public awareness as low and asked, as a supplementary question, if the council would take this seriously and encourage transformative action? Councillor Bremner suggested that Dr Veltman should contact Norfolk County Council which had responsibility for schools. He said that the city council did use various channels, including its



citizen magazine, to highlight related issues. Everyone needed to do things to address climate change we all needed to take the public with us

#### **4. PETITIONS**

There were no petitions.

#### **5. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2015 and the annual general meeting held on 26 May 2015 subject to the letter being amended by deleting paragraph (2) (a) from the resolution of item 9, and renumbering the remaining paragraphs accordingly.

#### **6. QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS/COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

The Lord Mayor said that 15 questions from members of the council to cabinet members had been received of which notice had been given in accordance with the provision of appendix 1 of the council's constitution.

<b>QUESTION 1</b>	Councillor Carlo to the portfolio holder for environment and sustainable development on bus provision with the city.
<b>QUESTION 2</b>	Councillor Grahame to the portfolio holder for fairness and equality on food waste.
<b>QUESTION 3</b>	Councillor Howard to the portfolio holder for neighbourhoods and community safety on the Russell Street community centre.
<b>QUESTION 4</b>	Councillor Lubbock to the portfolio holder for housing and wellbeing on overcharging leaseholders.
<b>QUESTION 5</b>	Councillor Sands (M) to the portfolio holder for housing and wellbeing on the bedroom tax.
<b>QUESTION 6</b>	Councillor Ryan to the leader of the council on the Radio 1 Big Weekend.
<b>QUESTION 7</b>	Councillor Thomas (Vi to the portfolio holder for parks, markets and open spaces on Norwich Provision Market.
<b>QUESTION 8</b>	Councillor Harris to the portfolio holder for environment and sustainable development on the Northern Distributor Road.
<b>QUESTION 9</b>	Councillor Bremner to the portfolio holder for housing and wellbeing on council support for people experiencing homelessness.

<b>QUESTION 10</b>	Councillor Maxwell to the leader of the council on resident satisfaction.
<b>QUESTION 11</b>	Councillor Woollard to the portfolio holder for housing and wellbeing on tenant satisfaction.
<b>QUESTION 12</b>	Councillor Packer to the leader of the council on the Devolution Bill.
<b>QUESTION 13</b>	Councillor Herries to the portfolio holder for housing and wellbeing on right to buy.
<b>QUESTION 14</b>	Councillor Peek to the portfolio holder for fairness and equality on the solar together Norfolk initiative.
<b>QUESTION 15</b>	Councillor Ackroyd to the portfolio holder for parks, markets and open spaces on a dog policy.

Copies of the questions and answers, together with supplementary questions and answers, are attached to appendix A to these minutes.

## **7. MOTION – QUEEN’S SPEECH**

Councillor Thomas (Va) moved and Councillor Harris seconded, the motion as set out on the agenda.

**RESOLVED**, unanimously, that –

“The Queen’s speech included plans for legislation to extend the right to buy to housing associations, freeze working age benefits for two years, lower the benefit cap and remove automatic entitlement to housing benefit for 18-21 year olds.”

Council, **RESOLVES** to ask the leader of the council to write to the Prime Minister and the interim leader of the opposition saying that -

- (1) it believes such move will:
  - (a) have a huge impact both on housing associations and on local authorities, as councils would have to sell off their most valuable homes to fund replacements;
  - (b) make it harder for people on lower incomes who are already struggling to access a decent home at a price they can afford and result in the loss of vital social and affordable homes.
- (2) freezing working age benefits for two years, lowering the benefit cap and removing automatic entitlement to housing benefit for 18-21 year olds fails to reflect the reality of the housing crisis. Britain is not building enough homes, which means the cost of housing and therefore the Housing Benefit Bill is going up.

- (3) millions of people have no choice but to rely on housing benefit to secure a roof over their heads. That includes an increasing number of people in work – a number of people in work who still have to claim housing benefit has more than doubled from around four hundred and forty five thousand to just over a million in the last five years.
- (4) cutting housing benefit for under 21s fails to take into account the reality of many young people's lives. It could have a serious impact on vulnerable young people who have left home, including those who have been rough sleeping and may be forced to return to it. It could also mean that young people would be unwilling to take risks such as moving for work because there would be no safety net for them.
- (5) the best way of helping people on lower incomes into home ownership is by increasing the supply of affordable housing.

## 8. MOTION – CO-OPERATIVES FORTNIGHT

Councillor Herries moved and Councillor Maxwell seconded the motion as set out on the agenda.

Councillor Bogelein moved and Councillor Neale seconded that the matter be now put and with four other members concurring the procedural motion was put to the vote.

**RESOLVED**, with 14 voting for, 7 against and 15 abstentions, that the matter be now put.

**RESOLVED**, unanimously, that –

“Co-operatives make a significant contribution to the Norwich and UK economy with their combined turnover of over thirty seven billion pounds. Many people believe that reciprocity and co-operation are vital for better communities and better economies.”

Council, therefore, **RESOLVES**, to –

- (1) recognise that co-operatives help narrow the gap between rich and poor through employee ownership and profit sharing and further recognises that community ownership can save local savings including village shops and pubs as well enable people to take action on housing, arts, sport, land, finance and renewable energy.
- (2) welcome co-operatives fortnight.
- (3) ask cabinet to –
  - (a) support co-operatives fortnight each year and where possible, the work of local co-operatives within the city;

- (b) continue to work closely with the co-operative councils innovation network to harness and develop the benefits of co-operation to empower local people and improve services.

## **9. MOTION – UNITED NATIONS CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE COP 21**

Councillor Bogelein moved and Councillor Henderson seconded the motion as set out on the agenda.

**RESOLVED**, unanimously, that –

In December 2015, the United Nations COP-21 faces a decision of great global importance: whether to commit to a binding legal agreement on world-wide emission reductions. Supporting pressure from the public and their local authorities will give governments strength to agree to bind commitments. In line with the council's strong commitment to a low carbon future, council-

**RESOLVES** to ask cabinet to –

- (1) include an article in the *Citizen* to raise residents' aware of Cop-21, including the options they have to influence the negotiations by organisations like the Climate Coalition and Live Earth;
- (2) update the council's website section on climate changing including information on COP-21;
- (3) lobby national government to stand up for a strong binding commitment of the COP-21 negotiations; and
- (4) support local and national groups of residents that aim to create public awareness for the COP-21 negotiations.

## **10. MOTION – BEDROOM TAX**

Councillor Haynes moved and Councillor Howard seconded the following motion –

As the government has no plans to scrap the bedroom tax, council –

**RESOLVES** to ask cabinet –

- (1) for a period of one year, to disregard the sum by which are households housing benefit payment has been reduced by under-occupancy restrictions when determining whether and when to initiate proceedings to recover a tenancy as a consequence of rent arrears;
- (2) to repeat the call to the government to withdraw the provisions of the welfare reformat relating to the so called "under-occupancy" in social housing ("the bedroom tax"), ensuring that people are

not penalised as a result of the long-term chronic under supply of social housing or changes to family circumstances; and

- (3) explore all legal acceptable ways of preventing evictions after the one year period mentioned in part (1).

Councillor Waters moved and Councillor Thomas (Va) seconded the following amendment –

“To amend resolution (3) by adding “continue to...” at the beginning and deleting everything after “...evictions” so that the new substantive resolution becomes –

- (3) continue to explore all legally acceptable ways of preventing evictions.”

With 22 voting in favour, 12 against and 2 abstentions the amendment was carried and became part of the substantive motion

A member requested a recorded vote in respect of paragraph (1) of the motion and this request was supported by at least five other members.

With 12 councillors voting in favour (Councillors Bogelein, Carlo, Grahame, Haynes, Henderson, Howard, Jackson, Jones, Neale, Price, Raby, and Schmierer), 20 voting against (Councillors Arthur, Bradford, Bremner, Brociek-Coulton, Coleshill, Driver, Harris, Herries, Kendrick, Manning, Maxwell, Packer, Peek, Ryan, Sands (M), Stonard, Thomas(Va), Thomas(Vi), Waters and Woollard) and 4 abstaining (Councillors Ackroyd, Blunt, Lubbock and Wright), paragraph (1) of the motion was declared lost.

**RESOLVED**, unanimously:-

“As the new government has no plan to scrap the bedroom tax, council -

**RESOLVES** to ask cabinet –

- (1) to repeat the call to the government to withdraw the provisions of the Welfare Reform Act relating to the so called “under-occupation” in social housing (“the bedroom tax”), ensuring that people are not penalised as a result of the long term chronic under supply of social housing or changes to family circumstances.
- (2) to continue to explore all legally acceptable ways of preventing evictions.”

CHAIR

**Question 1**

**Councillor Carlo to ask the portfolio holder for environment and sustainable development:**

“The importance of delivering a step change in public transport for Norwich based on a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network together with upgraded core bus routes and services is widely agreed. However, in their recent report on the NDR Development Consent Order, the panel of inspectors concluded that the scale of improvement to public transport services specified under the expanded NDR+NATS PT scenario may not be a realistic objective under existing regulatory structures and control in the industry and given the local financial performance in the bus market.

Bus Quality Contracts would allow the county council rather than the bus companies to set ticket prices, routes, timetables and types of bus vehicles in accordance with the city’s needs. Will the cabinet member please give his opinion on the current level of bus provision within the city and ask Norfolk County Council as the transport authority to make use of the Transport Acts of 2000 and 2008 to establish Bus Quality Contract Schemes for delivering first class public transport for Norwich?”

**Councillor Bremner, portfolio holder for environment and sustainable development response:**

“I think we can all agree that providing affordable reliable public transport in the city is key for the future growth and prosperity of Norwich. So far this has been achieved by relevant authorities and bus operators to working collaboratively together, though one of the biggest barriers to increasing the use of buses are the fares.

In the greater Norwich area we have many examples of such collaborative working; these included the recent Better Bus Area project, the joint investment plan with First group, the city centre public transport major scheme and the western corridor quality bus partnership. These initiatives have been consistently successful in delivering increased bus passenger growth, improved bus service performance and increasing standards of customer satisfaction and I think all this needs to be emphasised, and I hope Cllr Carlo appreciates all the good work to achieve this.

Clearly there is a need to continue and build upon the strong working relationship between county council and the bus operators but a bus quality contract is may not be the best way forward to achieve this. Bus quality contracts are primarily intended to be used when the deregulated bus market

can be shown to be failing to deliver the public sector's policy objectives. I has been suggested that this is not the case for the greater Norwich area.

I am pleased with the real progress so far, as I am certain Cllr Carlo is, and I am very happy therefore to ask the county council to continue search for innovative ways to improve the bus service and encouraging the bus company to make regular reviews of their fare structure to remain competitive and cheap. I will ask them to report back to me their views on the idea of Bus Quality Contract Schemes but at the same time ensure consideration is given to the use of all powers and means to further improve working with local bus operators so as to deliver value for money bus travel and more of the high quality improvements for passengers."

**Councillor Carlo** asked as a supplementary question, if the portfolio holder could explain how labour opposition to bus quality contracts "squared" with the Labour Party manifesto. **Councillor Bremner** said his answer was quite clear. There was need for improvement but there had been very good work done to ensure a more reliable bus network. He was more than happy to talk to Norfolk County Council and was therefore not opposed.

## **Question 2**

**Councillor Grahame to ask the portfolio holder for fairness and equality:**

"I welcome the fact that several national supermarkets have recently agreed to give edible food close to its sell by date to local charities for distribution. Does the cabinet member support the idea of Norwich City Council bringing together the different partners (supermarkets, charities, schools etc) to identify diverse ways of distributing the food to those who need it, for example setting up evening meal clubs in schools in addition to breakfast clubs and running three daily meals as part of school holiday activities?"

**Councillor Vaughan Thomas, portfolio holder for fairness and equality's response:**

"The range of services in the city to help people who cannot afford to feed themselves or their families is commendable and is a reflection of the very active voluntary and community sector in Norwich.

Council should reflect that in March of this year, the Norwich Foodbank issued 705 food vouchers to families who could not afford to feed themselves. This is not something that society should be proud of in our city and is one example of the impacts of the Government's welfare reform.

I therefore welcome that supermarkets and voluntary organisations are coming together to make use of food that would otherwise be wasted and go into landfill and instead is being used to feed those in need.

The services appear to be well organised by the voluntary and community organisations and Council should congratulate those organisations for taking the initiative.

I understand that there has already been a suggestion that the organisations come together to share best practice and if required, coordinate what they do. However, if the activity is already in progress and it has already been suggested that they can collaborate by working together more, I am unclear what role there is for the council that would add value.

If as this dialogue progresses the groups consider there is something specific that the Council might contribute to or help with, then I would more than pleased to hear those suggestions.

In the meantime I suggest the groups keep doing what they are doing successfully as it appears to be working and making a real difference.”

**Councillor Grahame** said she was pleased to see how much work there was going on in the community and asked, as a supplementary question, if the council would show how much it supported people doing that work by allowing them to use council premises, for example the under-croft beneath the war memorial. **Councillor Thomas (VA)** said the council would continue to encourage all community activities however it could.

### Question 3

#### **Councillor Howard to ask the portfolio holder for neighbourhoods and community safety:**

“Since the full council meeting of 27 January, Mancroft ward councillors have spoken to local residents about the re-opening of Russell Street community centre and lots said they'd like it to be reopened. Following on from that, city council officers conducted a survey of local residents in the immediate vicinity of the Russell St Community Centre and much officer time has been dedicated to deciding the building's future. Could the cabinet member for neighbourhoods and community safety please confirm all the options which are currently being considered and outline the process and timetable for moving forward on reopening the centre?”

#### **Councillor Driver, portfolio holder for neighbourhoods and community safety's response:**

“As Cllr Howard will know from her question to Council in January, the volunteer management committee of Russell Street Community Centre stood down which resulted in the closure of the centre.

Portfolio holders have agreed that the centre should be retained for community use and officers have been tasked with exploring how this can be best achieved.

The Centre itself has a number of limitations:

- It is one medium sized room, with inadequate heating and no flexibility of layout
- Whilst it has been kept clean and tidy inside like many of the council's centres it would benefit from an upgrade.



NPS Norwich indicates that expenditure of at least £22,000 is required to undertake bare minimum repair requirements and these sums are currently not allocated in the repairs and maintenance budget.

Whilst there is a commitment to retain the building for community use, the council needs to reflect that locally there are other community facilities including:

- Three council run sheltered housing schemes that have some form of community room for use, largely by the residents of the sheltered housing
- Three other Community facilities:
  - Wensum Community Centre - a Council owned centre that currently is quite busy and may not be in a position to offer extra sessions to residents from the Russell Street area
  - St. Barnabus Centre - an independently run counselling facility
  - The Belvedere Community Centre - a large and busy Council run facility that is running to near full capacity

I would also like to draw Cllr Howard's attention to my answer to her question to council in January regarding the council's financial constraints and the council being unable to invest in the fabric of all the community centres to the level it desired. The council's finances will worsen over the next five years and as well as community centres having to compete for financial resources with other council owned assets and programmes I want to be reassured that any money that is spent is well spent.

There was also a recommendation in the review of community space undertaken by Scrutiny Committee in 2012 specifically:

Working with the community associations and providers, the council sets out a clear purpose for community space and develops a more sustainable business model and performance management framework for council owned centres and associated guidance for other centres with which it works.

As portfolio holder, I want to be confident that the work officers have been asked to undertake at Russell Street produces a sustainable solution for the future. With the centre closed, there is an opportunity to do this so that the council finds the right long term solution.

Therefore although I would very much like to provide an indication of timescale, I am unable to confirm what that is at this stage other than I would like to see this completed as soon as possible so that the local residents who are keen to access a community centre can do so.

Ward councillors will be engaged in the future of the centre in due course."

**Councillor Howard** asked, as a supplementary question, when will the budget be set for community centres and was a district heating scheme available in the area that could bring down costs. **Councillor Driver** said he believed there was a district heating scheme nearby and he would check whether it could be used. He emphasised that the council was exploring all areas and he hoped the centre would be available to the public very quickly.

#### Question 4

**Councillor Lubbock to ask the portfolio holder for housing and wellbeing:**

“I understand that there has been a recent court decision in favour of leaseholders with regard to the council overcharging for caretaking and electricity in communal areas.

Please could the portfolio holder explain the decision in full?”

**Councillor Harris, portfolio holder for housing and wellbeing’s response:**

Two issues have recently been taken to First-tier tribunal – Property Chamber (Residential Property) (FFT) by a leaseholder.

One concerns mobile caretaking and whether a charge can be made where there is not specific provision in the lease.

The other is about landlords lighting maintenance and how the costs are apportioned to leaseholders.

In both cases the FTT determined the individual leaseholder was not liable to pay the charges, although the service has been provided and costs incurred by the council. Neither decision set a legal precedent.

Following the tribunal rulings the council has reimbursed the individual leaseholder in line with the rulings and taken note of the outcomes. With regard to other leaseholders refunds are being considered where appropriate for up to six years following advice from NPLaw in line with statute of limitation legislation.

**Councillor Lubbock** asked, as a supplementary question, what the council had done to communicate this. **Councillor Harris** said that a letter had been sent out in April 2015.

#### Question 5

**Councillor Mike Sands to ask the portfolio holder for housing and wellbeing:**

“Could the cabinet member for housing and wellbeing update the council once again regarding the impact upon Norwich families and individuals of the ‘bedroom tax’? What steps are being taken to support those afflicted by this vicious tax?”

**Councillor Harris, portfolio holder for housing and wellbeing response:**

“The numbers of households affected by bedroom tax remain at the same levels

To date no council tenant has been evicted for rent arrears that are solely due to bedroom tax.

At the end of March 2015 a total of 2071 (14%) of council tenants in Norwich were having a weekly reduction in their housing benefit entitlement in respect of the bedroom tax.

- 1761 have a one bedroom 14% reduction
- 310 have a 25% reduction for two bedrooms plus.

The average amount of weekly housing benefit deducted for those with one 'surplus' bedroom is £11.40 and for those with a two bedroom plus deduction the average is £21.39. The anticipated annual benefit loss for those with a one bedroom deduction is £570 and for two bedroom plus deduction £1070.

The current rent arrears situation for council tenants continues to be mitigated by three main factors:

- Extensive support available to tenants in preventing and resolving budgeting difficulties. The two budget advisors have provided one-off face-to-face advice to over 800 tenants since January 2014 with exceptionally high success rates.
- All new tenants are contacted following assessment against a risk index to check payment method/ benefits are in place and offer budgeting service or signpost to specialist advice where appropriate
- An effective campaign to ensure the discretionary housing payment scheme is fully utilised.

In Norwich, further grant funding has been provided to the voluntary sector to ensure independent debt advice is available for all tenures and another job fair /welfare reform event for all residents is planned for St Andrews Hall in September, focusing on jobs and training. This will be the fifth welfare reform event and will take attendance at these events to over 2000 residents.

The next welfare reform challenge will be the introduction of universal credit for new single claimants in receipt of jobseekers allowance. Under this change housing costs will be paid direct to claimants who will then have to make arrangements to pay their full rent. Currently housing costs are paid directly to the council. Locally this change will commence in Norwich in December 2015."

## **Question 6**

**Councillor Ryan to ask the leader of the council:**

"Can the leader give his opinions on the benefits achieved from Norwich hosting BBC Radio 1's Big Weekend on Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 May 2015?"

**Councillor Waters, leader of the council's response:**

"There many are good reasons why cities up and down the UK compete so hard to get to host the Radio 1 Big Weekend.

The Big Weekend not only brought 50,000 people into our city for the largest free music festival in Europe – it also brought Norwich to the world through the millions who watched it, listened to it and talked about it through social media. And Earlham Park looked absolutely amazing and proved a perfect venue.

Norwich was also promoted relentlessly through Radio1, BBC TV and the national media for months before the event took place. And our fine city was trending on social media in a volume we will probably never see again. Marketing and promotion like this, if you had to buy it, would cost many millions of pounds.

Around 7,000 of our young also people got chance to take part in the week long academy that preceded the event itself. They worked alongside musicians, film makers, radio presenters, DJs and the media. Through this they learnt new skills and had access to people who could truly inspire them.

An incredible 55% of tickets went to people living in city council postcodes and they were able to see amazing, world class music acts for free.

Over the weekend itself thousands of people came to Norwich to spend their money in our shops, restaurants, bars and hotels. Local suppliers and caterers worked on site. Our residents around the park even rented out rooms and their drives!

All in all I think we can be proud of Norwich and how it responded to the Radio 1 Big Weekend.

I would like to thank the UEA and the Police for working so closely with us to help make this happen. But in particular I would like to thank BBC Radio 1 for choosing Norwich."

**Question 7**

**Councillor Vivien Thomas to ask the portfolio holder for parks, markets and open spaces:**

"Can the cabinet member for parks, markets and open spaces give his opinion on the anticipated benefits associated with the new signs and online web presence designed to promote and support the profile of Norwich market?"

**Councillor Kendrick, portfolio holder for parks, markets and open spaces response:**

“Norwich market’s future success and vitality is a common goal for Norwich City Council, our traders and the public alike.

The market is a well-loved city institution with a proud history and we really hope these two new projects will give it a boost and be well-received by traders and shoppers, and give a clear message of the council’s intention to rejuvenate the market.

In this financial climate, running any small business is challenging and markets all over the country have faced particular challenges over the last few years because the way people shop has changed.

However, our citizens and visitors to Norwich are really missing out if they don’t visit and experience the market, with its many interesting stalls, local produce, great service and real character.

The new webpages and signs on Gentleman’s Walk give lots more detail for people about what’s on the market, where to find it and when it’s open.

First of all we’ve divided all the stalls into categories and colour-coded those categories. This will make it far easier for people to find what they’re looking for.

We’ve included a picture, the location of each stall, a brief description of what it sells and the days and times visitors can expect to find the stall open.

Many stalls now accept debit and credit cards, which is handy for shoppers, so that is indicated there too. There are also links to websites, Twitter and Facebook accounts where stallholders have them.

It’s a great opportunity for people to see what’s on offer and for stalls to reach new customers.

Our dedicated markets team has always worked hard to support Norwich market traders and encourage new businesses by keeping basic rents low and ensuring a broad mix of products and services to create a vibrant and diverse shopping experience. ”

**Question 8**

**Councillor Harris to ask the portfolio holder for environment and sustainable development:**

“Can the cabinet member for environment and sustainable development give their opinion on the benefits to Norwich of the northern distributor road?”

**Councillor Bremner, portfolio holder for environment and sustainable development response:**

“I am very pleased to hear that the secretary of state has given approval to plans to build the Northern Distributor Route (NDR) as it will provide major travel benefits as well as support the city’s future growth and prosperity.

The NDR has the potential to bring over £1bn of economic benefits to Norfolk, providing jobs and helping businesses in Norwich, Broadland and North Norfolk. It will unlock new business sites, particularly in north east Norwich and Broadland, improve access to existing industrial and commercial estates, and make some of the most attractive parts of Norfolk more accessible to tourists.

Deliveries and customer journeys will be quicker, easier and more reliable, and it will enhance the value of recent improvements to the A11, and promised investment in the A47.

Alongside complimentary transport measures such as investment in public transport, cycling and traffic management, at the same time the NDR will benefit the city centre, enhancing the city's status as regional capital and premier shopping destination. Existing and new businesses in the city centre will benefit from reduced congestion, improved public transport services, cycling and walking improvements and public realm enhancements. This overall transport package will help to deliver an anticipated 100,000sqm or more of new office floor space in the city centre, reinforcing the key employment cluster in the area's most accessible location.

By supporting growth, particularly in the north east quadrant, the NDR will help maximise the exciting economic opportunity offered through the Greater Norwich City Deal with Government; designed to accelerate local growth and act as a catalyst to deliver 40,000 new jobs – a 30% uplift from previous projections – and 37,000 new homes.

The Northern Distributor Road will provide a high-quality link to Norwich International Airport – vital to business, and supporting Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft's designation as a national Centre for Offshore Renewable Engineering.

The road will also support the Norwich Aeropark proposals for aviation-related enterprises adjoining the airport, and around 30ha of other employment uses in the new Airport Business Park.

The NDR is needed to tackle a range of existing travel and transport problems that will only intensify as new housing and employment areas are developed to the north-east of the city. The absence of a high quality route around the north of the city has forced traffic on to increasingly busy routes through Norwich, or down unsuitable 'rat-runs' that blight communities and residential streets.

The NDR will carry around 40,000 vehicles a day. In drawing this traffic from less suitable roads it will also create capacity that allows significant improvements to public transport, walking and cycling, making them more attractive travel choices. It will also provide a quicker and more convenient route for a range of shorter journeys by linking existing roads into Norwich, cutting journey times and bringing relief to local communities and the city centre.

The scope for significant improvements in public transport is limited without the NDR due to the weight of traffic on the existing network, which will

increase as the north-east of the city is developed. The NDR will provide the relief that will allow further bus and cycle route improvements, including Bus Rapid Transit.

The council has always supported the NDR but our support has been conditional on delivery of the whole NATS package including improvements for public transport, cycling and walking and not simply the NDR alone. This need for a balanced approach is reaffirmed by the secretary of state and is the reason that I equally welcome the injection of some £20 million over the next four years alone in walking, cycling and public transport funded via the Government's cycle ambition grant and New Anglia LEP's Local Growth Fund."

## **Question 9**

### **Councillor Bremner to ask the portfolio holder for housing and wellbeing:**

"Following the sad news of the death of a rough sleeper in Norwich on 10 June, is the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing and wellbeing able to comment on the wider work and support offered by this council to people experiencing homelessness? "

### **Councillor Harris, portfolio holder for housing and wellbeing's response:**

"Norwich City Council is seeing a year-on-year rise in people approaching us for housing advice and assistance. In addition there has also been an increase in the number of people sleeping rough.

The council takes a pro-active approach to dealing with rough-sleeping through the employment of a specialist Rough-Sleeper Co-ordinator who seeks to actively manage and co-ordinate outreach and homeless services. This is an approach designed to minimise rough sleeping through intensive management of rough sleeping and of hostel bed spaces.

The rough-sleeper co-ordinator works closely with a variety of agencies to fulfil both a strategic and operational role, ensuring a locally co-ordinated approach to the issues. This includes facilitating the Multi Agency Rough Sleeper group (MARS), which ensures a person-based approach to resolving each individual rough-sleeper's situation.

The council through its rough-sleeper co-ordinator has introduced innovations such as a hostels eviction protocol, reconnections approach and homeless services maps ([www.searchnorwich.org.uk](http://www.searchnorwich.org.uk)). The council is also working with and supporting partner agencies on innovative projects such as No Second Night Out, Housing First<sup>i</sup> and Make Every Adult Matter (MEAM<sup>ii</sup>)

While the assistance that the council can provide will depend on each individual's circumstances and needs, a range of help is available including hostel referral, reconnection, specialist housing advice, statutory homeless application, rent deposits, the housing register and hostel move-on,

signposting to other services (health, social care), the LEAP project, food vouchers, rough sleeping kits, homeless services maps and SWEP (severe weather emergency provision).

There are 260 hostel beds in Norwich, by far the greatest number in the region. The hostel system in Norwich provides a key service in finding temporary housing for the majority of people who find themselves homeless in the area (including those who are street homeless).

Once a client has accessed the hostel system, usually through the direct access hostel at Bishop Bridge House, support packages can be put in place and clients can move through the hostel system. This system is managed through a weekly accommodation meeting chaired by the council's rough sleeper co-ordinator, to ensure that occupation of hostel beds is maximized.

This council's Home Options housing allocations policy contains a 'move-on' agreement enabling hostel clients that are deemed ready to maintain a tenancy to be awarded gold banding to ensure a managed transition into social housing and a through-flow within the hostel system.

The council supports and promotes StreetLink- this is a national service enabling general public to alert relevant organisations about anyone sleeping rough.

In light of this, I am pleased that the council, with its partners, is able to provide such a range of services to rough sleepers. This demonstrates our ongoing commitment to assist this vulnerable group, who face risks which have been recently, tragically evidenced."

## **Question 10**

### **Councillor Maxwell to ask the leader of the council:**

"The recent performance report received by Scrutiny Committee showed resident satisfaction with the last service they received from the City Council was above target at 95.4%. This compares with our target of 93% and continues a run of excellent results for this measure. Can the Leader give his comments on how this benchmarks with other councils of a similar size?"

### **Councillor Waters, leader of the council's response:**

"As there is no longer any national requirement to ask specific questions in specific ways then precise benchmarking is difficult. One of the closest comparators is the "Are you being served" questions devised by the LGA. In 2013 / 14 the average satisfaction in English councils to how they were perceived to run things was 71%. Our surveys are but one way in which we test satisfaction with services and some work is done in specific areas as well. However, it is clear that a customer satisfaction level of consistently over 93% is something that any organisation would be rightly very proud of."



## **Question 11**

### **Councillor Woollard to ask the portfolio holder for housing and wellbeing:**

“The latest Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) showed a marked improvement in Council housing tenant satisfaction with the overall service provided. 82% of tenants were either very or fairly satisfied with the service, a boost from 71% satisfaction rating in the last survey. Is the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing and wellbeing able to comment on how these positive improvements have been achieved?”

### **Councillor Harris, portfolio holder for housing and wellbeing response:**

“In December 2014 the council appointed an independent market research company called Wyman Dillon to carry out the STAR customer satisfaction survey on our behalf and between January and March this year they telephoned a cross-section of our tenant base and 975 tenants answered the seven questions in the survey.

By using the same STAR survey questions we can compare our results with other similar social housing services. The results show how well we have performed in comparison with other local authorities who manage more than 10,000 homes. We are joint third in terms of overall tenant satisfaction within our benchmarking group of 13 local authorities.

Overall satisfaction has improved by 11 percentage points showing that the hard work of officers and partners has continued to improve all aspects of the housing service for our tenants. Not only has satisfaction increased or remained the same for all questions asked within the survey, we are also performing well compared to our peers, showing that the work we have undertaken to assist tenants to maintain tenancies in the face of welfare reform, improve their homes and neighbourhoods and offer value for money services has been a great success.

The improvements are as a result of setting our annual continuous housing improvement plan measured against the corporate objectives and service plan.

Also through our commitment to ensuring that all our homes will meet the ‘Norwich Standard’ by 2017, combined with providing an effective, high quality repairs service for our tenants from start to finish.

And involving tenants and leaseholders in how we provide and deliver services, working with tenants to produce the annual report to tenants and learning from customer feedback.

## **Question 12**

### **Councillor Packer to ask the leader of the council:**

“The Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill had its second reading in the House of Lords on 8 June, and went Committee yesterday. Given the

concerns expressed by some local authority leaders, including former Leader of Norwich City Council, Baroness Hollis of Heigham, can the Leader give his opinion on the opportunities and risks presented to our council?”

**Councillor Waters, leader of the council response:**

“The Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill supports the Government’s commitment to devolve powers and budgets to boost local growth in England. The Bill would provide the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government with a series of order and regulation making powers, allowing for the devolution of functions currently owned by central government and local public bodies. It is intended as the means of delivering local “devolution deals”, agreed between combined authorities and central government. Currently, the most advanced of these is the Greater Manchester agreement. The other main elements of the Bill include:-

- proposals for the creation of a ‘Northern Powerhouse’, to enable cities in the north of England to work more closely together on policy areas such as transport, housing, strategic planning, health, social care and skills training, and to compete more effectively with London in terms of economies of scale and access to human capital.
- Provisions to enable combined authorities to have an elected mayor. These elected mayors would take on powers agreed with central government, and established in the relevant order from the Secretary of State. These mayoral functions could also include taking on the role of a Police and Crime Commissioner. The Bill would also enable the remit of combined authorities to be expanded. Combined authorities would be required to establish overview and scrutiny committees under the Bill.
- The Government has recognised that the mayoral combined authority model may not be appropriate in all contexts, such as for areas outside cities. The Bill also includes measures to enable changes to be made to the role and the powers of local authorities in England where the Government agrees that it may not be appropriate to establish a combined authority.

It is widely recognised that devolution within England is the most effective way to create jobs, build homes, strengthen healthy communities and protect the vulnerable. All areas stand to benefit when decisions are made locally. Norwich welcomes devolution and the opportunities for greater local control. This would build on the collaboration and partnership work with our neighbouring Districts and the County Council that we have developed in delivering the City Deal for Greater Norwich. Norwich is a forward looking city, keen to work in partnership with our neighbours, local businesses, the Local enterprise partnership and our thriving universities.

We have also been working with the other Key Cities to identify how devolved powers could strengthen local economic growth and prosperity (see the Key

cities manifesto for devolution prepared by ResPublica). In that manifesto we argue that the 26 Key cities have a particular role to play in the economy and indeed have a combined GVA of £163b (more than the combined GVA of Core cities). Regional cities like Norwich also host a range of retail and support businesses and have more diverse economies e.g. Norwich has strengths in health and life sciences, financial industries and digital and media businesses.

On a Norfolk level, we are working with the county and the districts to develop Norfolk's devolution offer.

Norwich would like to have a conversation with the government about some or all of the following being devolved :

- Transport, housing, employment and skills, business support, planning, business rate retention, housing revenue account borrowing, and earn back deals.

In terms of risks, the biggest issue is that not pursuing a devolution proposal may result in central government imposing solutions that may not be right for Norwich. Government should reconsider its position on elected mayors a condition for greater devolution so that local government and central government can work together more effectively. There are other models of governance that could be adopted. It is important that the decision-making process is transparent with clear criteria and a route of appeal. The decision to devolve powers to a combined authority should not be based solely on financial matters but should take account of the wider impact so that changes are appropriate to the local area.

It is also recognised that the benefits of devolution are unlikely to be fully realised unless funding reforms accompany the legislative change. The Independent Commission on Local government finance report Financing English Devolution, argued that fundamental to securing good quality public services is a finance system which provides choice and enables local authorities to determine how ambitious they want to be.

Of course the devil is in the detail. At present no clear answers as to how the process of adapting to the new devolved powers will be managed or how long it will take. This will all depend on how far Government wants to go and how quickly. The key opportunities for Norwich will arise If we can gain more local control so that we can support business more effectively, grow the city fairly and sustainably and tailor these sources of funds to local need and circumstances. ”

### **Question 13**

#### **Councillor Herries to ask the portfolio holder for housing and wellbeing:**

“The Coalition government's previous failure on 1-for-1 replacement under the right to buy scheme - with building work starting on only one new house for

every ten sold off - has resulted in a significant impact on council stock in Norwich.

Does the Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing have any confidence that the new proposed housing sell-off will be any different? ”

**Councillor Harris, portfolio holder for housing and wellbeing response:**

Unfortunately I am far from confident that any future right to buy schemes will result in the desired one to one replacement of our housing stock. Extending the Right to Buy to Housing Association properties will of course give more people the opportunity to buy their houses and the rather optimistic theory that for every home sold another should be built is just that, simply a theory.

The table below gives the level of sales of council houses from Norwich City Council stock under the Right to Buy scheme during the term of the last coalition government, with sales increasing due to the enhanced discounts granted by that same government from March 2014.

Year	Sales
2010/11	37
2011/15	38
2012/13	90
2013/14	145
2014/15	150

The Council has a retention agreement enabling the retention of a portion of receipts from Right to Buy sales, but these retained amounts must be used within three years of retention to enable the provision of replacement social housing. They may fund up to 30% of the overall cost of providing the replacement housing. Alternatively, they can also be used to provide grant funding to Registered Providers of Affordable Housing to contribute up to 30% to their build costs. Any retained amounts not used within the required timescale must be paid to the Secretary of State with interest.

Borrowing in relation to the Housing Revenue Account is subject to a tightly controlled debt cap which the council cannot exceed. The 2015/16 to 2019/20 capital plan for the HRA anticipates the building of 183 new council houses over the five years of the plan which takes projected borrowing levels up to the debt cap. Where there is not headroom within the debt cap to fund the 70% required to match Right to Buy receipts from the council's own resources, Right to Buy receipts can be grant funded to Registered Providers for their developments.

In Norwich, building under these financial constraints makes it impossible for the City Council to come anywhere close to replacing council properties that have been sold off. We have been forced to sell valuable properties at massively discounted prices.

This council should be rightly proud of the fact that in 2014 the first council built homes were built at Pointers Field in Norwich for over two decades, but that shows how difficult the task ahead of us is.

We should be under no illusion that we are dealing with a serious and deepening housing crisis across the United Kingdom and that of course includes Norwich. Our residents need homes that they can afford to rent and at the moment they are being driven into the more expensive private rental market. Ironically sometimes people are renting houses previously owned by the local authority and now owned by private landlords.

#### **Question 14**

##### **Councillor Peek to ask the portfolio holder for fairness and equality:**

“Can the Cabinet Member for Fairness and Equality give his comments on the progress achieved with the Solar Together Norfolk initiative? What benefits will it offer those who have signed up?”

##### **Councillor Vaughn Thomas, portfolio holder for fairness and equality’s response:**

“Well over 3200 people have signed up the UK’s first Solar Auction. 455 of these registrations are from Norwich which accounts for potentially 4200 panels.

The council believes that approximately 1/3 of the registrants will accept the offer from the scheme. The remaining 2/3 have been made aware of the advantages of solar PV. Research suggests a substantial percentage of these people will look for an alternative, from which the local installers can benefit if they make themselves visible.

The benefits from the auction to the registrant are trust, quality and price. The council is a trusted provider of services. Helping people to act and make a decision on purchasing solar PV. The auction is all about getting the best Quality/Price combination. All work will be tested by an independent auditor throughout the process. All systems will have a 10 year guarantee including the inverters.

It took 6 rounds to get to the end result, being an average discount of 15.8% compared with the indicative prices we gave to registrants. The discounts differ per package, ranging from 11.2% to 19.3%. We will show this result on our website tomorrow.

As an example: The price for 16 panels ended in £4,630, which is over £1,100 less than the indicative price of £5,740.

Finally each house will have an EPC assessment so they can claim the maximum FIT. (Feed in Tariff). The scheme will also link to Cosy City as and when appropriate.”

## Question 15

### **Councillor Ackroyd to ask the portfolio holder for parks, markets and open spaces:**

“The City has marvellous parks for the enjoyment of young and old alike, however, there are times when the parks are not enjoyable and that is when dogs are allowed off leads. It can then be very intimidating particularly for young children and, recently, there have been instances of adults being knocked over or bitten. When dogs are off lead this also means greater opportunity for dog fouling going completely unnoticed by the owner.

Can the Portfolio Holder tell me whether the council has any plans to introduce a dog policy which could be applied to all the council's parks to prevent anti-social behaviour of this type?”

### **Councillor Kendrick, portfolio holder for parks, markets and open spaces' response:**

The council has a policy in that where dogs are allowed in parks they need to be kept under control. Wensum and St Clements parks are designated as dog free parks as are all children's play areas. The council will act in proportion to the reports received. Where it is identified as a priority that there are issues with dogs, officers will visit our parks to monitor and challenge dog owners accordingly. Please note where dogs are perceived to be dangerous this is a matter for the police.

**Councillor Ackroyd** asked, as a supplementary question, what was the council's definition of “ under control”. **Councillor Kendrick** said the council followed the legal definition.

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**Report to** Council  
21 July 2015  
**Report of** Chief finance officer  
**Subject** Annual audit committee report 2014-15

**Item**

**7**

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**Purpose**

To present of the annual audit committee report 2014-15 to council.

**Recommendation**

To receive the annual audit committee report 2014-15.

**Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority value for money services.

**Financial implications**

This report has no direct financial consequences.

**Ward/s:** All

**Cabinet member:** Councillor Waters, resources

**Contact officers**

Justine Hartley, chief finance officer

01603 212440

**Background documents**

None

## **Report**

1. On 11 March 2014, the audit committee resolved to approve new procedures for the audit committee in line with Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) guidance.
2. The audit committee approved the annual audit committee report 2014-15 at its meeting on 23 June 2015.
3. The report sets out the work of the audit committee over the last financial year. The committee has been effective in undertaking the functions set out in its terms of reference, in accordance with the council's procedure rules and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011.



### **Annual report of the audit committee 2014-15**

#### **Introduction**

This is the second annual report of the audit committee and advises the council of the work of the audit committee for the period 2014 to 2015.

Councillor Paul Neale  
Chair, audit committee

## Background

1. This report covers the work of the audit committee for the financial and civic year 2014 to 2015. The committee met five times during this period.
2. The council established an audit committee in 2007. Article 17, Audit committee, of the council's constitution sets out the terms of reference and procedures for the committee. Article 17 was reviewed and reissued in July 2014. A copy of Article 17 is appended to this report as Appendix A. The production of an annual report by the committee is good practice.
3. The members on the committee in 2014 to 2015 were:

Councillor Paul Neale (chair)  
Councillor James Wright (vice chair)  
Councillor Andrew Boswell  
Councillor James 'Bert' Bremner  
Councillor Gail Harris  
Councillor Paul Kendrick  
Councillor Stephen Little  
Councillor Alan Waters

Councillor Keith Driver attended two meetings as a substitute for Councillor Bremner.

4. The key officers that support the audit committee are:

Justine Hartley, chief finance officer  
Philippa Dransfield, chief accountant and deputy S151 officer  
Steve Dowson, internal audit manager (LGSS)  
Laura McGillivray, chief executive

The committee was also supported by Jonathan Idle, head of internal audit and risk management (LGSS) who has now left the service, and has been replaced by Neil Hunter and by Andy Rush, fraud team leader, until the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud responsibilities and the associated staff to the DWP at the end of March 2015.

5. The committee has regular training sessions. This included training on the Statement of accounts, governance arrangements and the housing revenue account. The training was held in the half hour before the formal business of the committee. Training is not restricted to committee members and there is an open invitation for all members of the council to attend. The external auditors also provide information briefings for audit committees which are discussed and considered by members at committee.
6. The external auditors (Ernst & Young) attend meetings of the audit committee and answer members' questions. The engagement team is led by Rob Murray, who has significant experience of Norwich City Council, supported by David Riglar who is responsible for the day-to-day direction of audit work, and who is the key point of contact for the finance team. To meet regulatory requirements and ensure a smooth rotation plan for future years, Mark Hodgson

will be replacing Rob Murray in 2015-16. The committee monitors the fees paid by the council to the external auditors to ensure value for money. The committee has expressed concern that the council had to pay an additional £12,000 fees for the 2013-14 accounts because of a complex enquiry from a member of the public. It is hoped that this is a one off occurrence and that it was due to a particular set of circumstances.

### **Statement of accounts and annual governance statement**

7. For the second year running the council's Statement of accounts 2013-14 was approved by the statutory deadline of 30 September 2014 and received an unqualified opinion from the external auditors.
8. The committee considered the draft statement of accounts 2013-14 and annual governance statement at its meeting on 22 July 2014 and made further comments at its September meeting.
9. During discussion, the committee considered that it is important that the Statement of accounts is easily understood by members of the public and therefore asked for explanatory text to be inserted. Members also considered that acronyms should only be used if the name is given first in full.
10. There was also some lively debate and an exchange of views regarding whether the statement regarding air quality should be deleted from the Statement of accounts as some members considered that the proposed Northern distributor road (NDR), a key feature of the Norwich area transportation strategy (NATS), would increase carbon emissions from transport in the city and county in the future, a view that was rejected by other members. References in the Statement of accounts are a neutral record of the council's position at a given moment of time and the corporate plan states the council's commitment to improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions.
11. The annual governance statement follows guidance on good practice. Members discussed the content of the annual governance statement 2013-14 in detail. The committee considered whether there should be specific reference to the revenues and benefits service in the annual governance statement. There had been significant issues arising from the service which had been considered in detail by both the audit and scrutiny committees. The external auditors had taken the view that a specific reference in the previous year's annual governance statement was not required and therefore the same view was taken for 2013-14. The committee also considered how the involvement of opposition members was reflected in the annual governance statement. Members noted that the various committees of the council were mentioned and that it was implicit that members from the opposition groups contributed to the work of the council. The practice of the council to elect the chairs of the scrutiny and audit committees from the minority groups was also noted.
12. A supplementary report, comprising the council's response to the external auditors' audit results report was circulated at the September meeting. The chief finance officer explained that it was not possible to circulate the response at an earlier stage until the accounts had been audited and therefore the officers cannot prepare the response until they have received the external auditors' report. The response must be included in the letter of representation. It was hoped that in future years the council could receive the external auditors' audit

results report earlier to allow for the council response to be included with the audit committee agenda papers.

### **Risk management**

13. The committee reviews the corporate register throughout the year and notes any changes to the corporate risk register proposed by the corporate leadership team. The council's risk management processes are well embedded within the council, and members can be assured that the corporate risk register is kept up to date following regular review by the corporate leadership team and business managers' group of the key risks to achieving the council's objectives.
14. The committee has had considerable discussion about what should be included on the corporate risk register. Cabinet proposes the corporate plan to the council for adoption and discussion on policy is outside the remit of the audit committee. The council addresses climate change through its policies and strategies, but Green group members consider that climate change should be listed as a risk in its own right.
15. The instability of local government funding from central government means that there is a high residual risk for public sector funding which can change and be adverse to the council's delivery of its corporate policies. The council takes steps to limit these risks but it is noted that cuts in public sector funding affecting its major partners may result in increased costs to the council, for instance in health and social care.
16. The committee has been concerned that the council needs a fixed asset register and has been assured it that it will be part of the new financial system that will be procured in the next financial year.

### **Internal audit and fraud team**

17. The committee receives an annual internal audit opinion and regular reports on the progress against the audit plan report at each meeting. This gives the committee an opportunity to ask detailed questions and monitor progress. In January 2015 the committee endorsed an amendment to the audit plan to include income generation and joint ventures on the plan.
18. The committee has been briefed on the audit process and is aware that each audit is followed up by a review to check that agreed actions arising from the audit are completed and report back to committee. The committee may also call managers to account for non-compliance with agreed actions arising from the internal audit. This would give a strong message to managers throughout the authority. However the rate of compliance is good and the committee has not found it necessary to invite managers to attend the committee. A letter was written on the committee's behalf to the responsible manager of the Norman Centre, only for it to be reported at the next meeting that all of the agreed actions had already been implemented, and therefore it was not necessary for her to attend the committee meeting.
19. An increase in resources to deal with the backlog in processing claims led to more benefit cases being identified for investigation. Many of the cases were due to customers not informing the authority of a change of circumstances.

20. The draft internal audit plan for 2015-16 was considered at the March meeting. The audit of core systems will not take as long as in previous years. It is also noted that the internal audit team can call on resources in the wider team within LGSS if required. Members have an opportunity to challenge the allocation of resources for audits and ask questions.
21. The external auditors seek confirmation from the chair each year requesting confirmation of the council's management processes and arrangements. The chair has responded to this letter and copies have been circulated to members of the committee.

### **Transfer of housing benefit fraud work to the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)**

22. On 1 April 2015, housing benefit fraud work transferred to the DWP. The committee received regular updates on the arrangements for the transfer of the council's benefit fraud work and meetings were attended by Andy Rush, the fraud team leader (LGSS), who answered members' questions.
23. Members considered that it was regrettable that the skilled investigative staff within the fraud team will be lost to the council. In September 2014, the committee noted that the fraud team had already exceeded its key performance indicator (based on the running costs of the fraud team) by £14,000.
24. The internal audit team will cover the residual fraud work following the transfer of the fraud team to DWP. Also LGSS has created a counter fraud team and has appointed two new counter fraud managers to cover fraud investigative support across the shared service following the transfer. There will be a service level agreement between the council and the DWP for benefit fraud work.
25. The committee would like to record its gratitude to the internal fraud team for the contribution it made to the council.

### **Conclusion**

26. The committee has been effective in undertaking the functions set out in its terms of reference, in accordance with the council's procedure rules and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011.



**ARTICLE 17 – AUDIT COMMITTEE****Membership**

1. Membership of the audit committee shall comprise 8 members appointed by council.
2. The chair of the committee shall be elected by council and the vice-chair shall be appointed by the committee.

**Terms of reference**

3. The audit committee shall -
  - (a) undertake the council's financial responsibilities in the manner set out:
    - (i) in the council's audit committee procedure rules as produced from time to time by the chief finance officer; and
    - (ii) in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011;
  - (b) consider and approve the annual statement of accounts;
  - (c) ensure that the financial management of the council is adequate and effective;
  - (d) ensure that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk;
  - (e) review annually the council's system of internal control and agree an Annual Governance Statement for inclusion in the statement of accounts;
  - (f) ensure that the council has an adequate and effective internal audit function;
  - (g) have power to make recommendations to cabinet or council on any matter within its remit.

## **AUDIT COMMITTEE PROCEDURE RULES**

The audit committee will carry out its terms of reference in accordance with the following:

### ***Corporate governance***

1. Review the effectiveness of internal control across the council and the adequacy of actions taken to address any weaknesses or control failures.
2. Consider the adequacy and effectiveness of the council's arrangements for the identification and management of the organisation's business risks; including the risk management policy, strategy and risk register.
3. Receive and consider regular reports on the risk environment and associated management actions.
4. Review and ensure the adequacy of the council's anti-fraud and corruption policy and strategy and the effectiveness of their application.
5. Review and ensure that adequate arrangements are established and operating to deal with situations of suspected or actual fraud and corruption.
6. Review, consider and agree the AGS including the adequacy of the corporate governance framework and improvement action plan contained within it.
7. Receive periodic updates on improvement actions taken.

### ***Internal and external audit***

8. Approve the internal audit charter.
9. Approve and monitor delivery of the internal audit strategy.
10. Consider, endorse and monitor delivery of the internal audit annual work programme, including any significant in-year changes to the programme or resource requirements.
11. Ensure adequate resourcing of the internal audit function, approving any significant additional consulting services requested from internal audit not already included in the internal audit annual work programme.
12. Receive and consider the annual internal audit report and opinion on behalf of the council.
13. Oversee the annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal audit, to include the performance of the internal audit function, compliance with standards and delivery of improvement actions.
14. Contribute to the external quality assessment of internal audit that takes place every five years.
15. Commission work from internal and external audit and consider the resulting reports.
16. Comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and ensure it gives value for money.
17. Ensure that there are effective relationships between external and internal audit, inspection agencies and other relevant bodies, and that the value of the audit process is actively promoted.
18. Seek assurance that action has been taken to implement the recommendations arising from the findings of significant audit and inspection work.



### ***Statement of accounts***

19. Discuss the annual audit plan for the audit of the financial statements with external audit.
20. Consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports and the report to those charged with governance.
21. Review and approve the annual statement of accounts, including subsequent amendments on behalf of the council.

### ***Referred powers***

22. Consider and make recommendations on all matters described above.  
Recommendations relating to all paragraphs except 9 – 10 and 12 – 21 shall be made to the cabinet and chief finance officer. Recommendations relating to paragraphs 9 – 10 and 12 – 21 shall be made to the chief finance officer.

### ***Accountability arrangements***

23. Report to those charged with governance on the committee's findings, conclusions and recommendations concerning the effectiveness of their governance, risk management and internal control frameworks, financial reporting arrangements and internal and external audit functions.
24. Report to full council on the committee's performance in relation to the terms of reference and effectiveness of the committee in meeting its purpose.



<b>Report to</b>	Council	<b>Item</b>
	21 July 2015	
<b>Report of</b>	Executive head of regeneration and development	<b>8</b>
<b>Subject</b>	Community Infrastructure Levy- Norwich Business Plan 2016-17	

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## Purpose

To consider the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), draft annual business plan for Norwich for 2016-17.

## Recommendations

To:

1. approve the draft Norwich annual business plan for 2016-17;
2. present the business plan for 2016-17 to the greater Norwich growth board (GNGB) to form the Norwich element of the greater Norwich annual growth programme.

## Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority prosperous city.

## Financial implications

The council agreed in March 2014 to pool CIL income (not including the neighbourhood funding and administrative funding elements (i.e. excluding 20% or 30% depending on whether there is a neighbourhood plan). £191,000 for 2014-15 and £841K for 2015-16 from the pooled fund was allocated for projects in Norwich.

The total pooled amount for Greater Norwich (amount pooled from Broadland, South Norfolk and the city councils) is currently projected to be as follows:

- Collected in 2013-4- £55,699
- Collected in 2014-15- £850,818
- Predicted in 2015-16- £1,962,367
- Predicted in 2016-17- £5,657,184

Taking account of existing commitments, £6,534,068 pooled CIL funding will be available in 2016-17 across greater Norwich.

The report seeks £1.490M for 2016-17 from the pooled funding for projects in Norwich.

**Ward/s:** All

**Cabinet member:** Councillor Alan Waters, leader of the council.

**Contact officers**

Gwyn Jones, city growth and development manager 01603 212364

**Background documents:**

None

## Background

1. In February 2014, council approved the Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB) agreement and constitution. Council also agreed to pool its CIL income (not including the neighbourhood element or the proportion retained to cover its administrative costs) across greater Norwich to pay for strategic infrastructure. Delivery of the strategic programme is vital to keep planned housing and jobs growth on track.
2. The council has now approved annual business plans for 2014-15 and 2015-16 (setting out strategic infrastructure projects for Norwich to be funded from the pooled CIL pot) and these have been included in the greater Norwich growth programme.

## Draft Norwich business plan for 2016-17

3. The draft Norwich business plan for 2016-17 is included in Appendix 1. This has been prepared to set out the infrastructure priorities for Norwich in 2016-17 and to recommend projects to be delivered from pooled CIL funding. The projects have been derived from the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Programme (GNIP) which is the strategic plan for all infrastructure needed to deliver growth in greater Norwich to 2025-6. This document can be viewed: [http://www.greaternorwichgrowth.org.uk/document-search/SearchForm?Subject=&hidden-Subject=&action\\_doSubjectSearch=Search&Title=greater+norwich+infrastructure+plan](http://www.greaternorwichgrowth.org.uk/document-search/SearchForm?Subject=&hidden-Subject=&action_doSubjectSearch=Search&Title=greater+norwich+infrastructure+plan)
4. The GNGB will consider the business plans from the 3 districts at its meeting in September 2015. The GNGB will need to consider whether there is sufficient funding to allow all projects proposed by the 3 districts to be included in the greater Norwich growth programme for 2016-17. Other sources of funding may need to be considered and at this stage there may need to be some prioritisation of projects across greater Norwich. The greater Norwich growth programme will be reported to cabinet and council for approval in the autumn and approved projects will subsequently be incorporated in the council's capital programme for 2016-17.
5. The draft Norwich business plan promotes schemes to receive funding £1,490,000 from pooled CIL contributions for delivery in 2016-17. The projects identified for delivery are:
  - a) River Wensum Parkway- £100K (enhancement of the strategic green link along the wooded ridge between the river Wensum and Ber Street)
  - b) Carrow Bridge to Deal Ground riverside path- £100K (short stretch which provides a 'missing link' vital to the development of the Deal Ground and utilities site. CIL funding to supplement £250K existing Sustrans funding).
  - c) Colney River crossing (providing a footpath link between Norwich Research park and Three Score- £150K)
  - d) Yare and Wensum Valleys link- £65K (specific enhancements to the green infrastructure corridor at Marlpit Wood and the linear green space between West Earlham and Bowthorpe to supplement £59K s.106 funding for Bunker's Hill Wood received from the Three Score development)

- e) Marriotts Way- phase - £275K (surfacing and lighting improvements to the route from Anderson's Meadow to Sloughbottom Park, to complete work carried out 2014-15 and committed for 2015-16).
  - f) Castle Gardens improvements- £150K (improving the important City centre open space as a complementary measure to improvements planned to the Castle)
  - g) Golden Ball St- contingency - £500K (to complete the pedestrianisation of Westlegate to a high quality)
  - h) Heathgate- pink pedalway- contingency- £150K (to complete the footpath/ cycle link at Heathgate to connect to Gurney Road)
6. All of these projects are capable of being taken forward in 2016-17 and have no significant constraints. A description and the rationale for selecting these projects are included as Appendix 2.
  7. In addition £150K funding for scheme development work is required in 2016-17 for Prince of Wales Road/ Rose Lane transportation project in the strategic programme to prepare for delivery in subsequent years.
  8. The cost of this development work is recommended to be met by Norfolk county council.
  9. The GNIP sets out the key infrastructure projects that are required to support growth. The programme includes green infrastructure, education, community facilities and Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (NATS) schemes. For NATS, the programme identifies the future investment in the six BRT corridors to link major growth locations, measures in the city centre and measures to aid public transport, walking and cycling, as well as the NDR.
  10. At the 17 March 2011 Greater Norwich Development Partnership Policy Group Meeting it was agreed to use a significant proportion of future CIL revenues to establish a shared investment fund to support delivery of priority 1 key infrastructure projects and this includes up to £40m of local investment for the delivery of the NDR and related measures.
  11. In March 2014, council approved the Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB) agreement and constitution. Council also agreed to pool its CIL income (not including the neighbourhood element or the proportion retained to cover its administrative costs) across greater Norwich to pay for strategic infrastructure.
  12. The NDR has a significant funding contribution from Central Government and the Long Stratton bypass will have significant developer contributions but both schemes will need additional funding. It is likely that the other NATS projects will be primarily funded from other sources (for instance £11m LGF funding has already been secured for NATS through the Growth Deal and in excess of £12m secured for cycle improvements to 2020) although funding sources for longer term projects are yet to be secured.
  13. Approval has now been granted by the Secretary of State and construction of the NDR is programmed to commence in 2015. As the planned scale and distribution of

growth is dependent on the NDR, it is important that this scheme is included in this Business Plan to minimise delay. The NDR will have no call on the pooled fund in 2016-17; however there will be a requirement for future years. Work will continue to determine the order, timing and detail of other NATS priorities and to secure funding from mainstream sources and through bidding opportunities that may arise.

14. Agreement in principle to use pooled CIL funding in future years to ensure the delivery of NATS measures, including particularly the NDR and Long Stratton bypass, is needed in the 16-17 Business Plan to provide certainty.

### **Other business of the greater Norwich growth board**

15. In line with the GNGB constitution, it is the role of individual councils to scrutinise the work of the board. At its meetings on 8 October 2014 and 24 March 2015, the items discussed included:
  - a) Updates on the Growth Deal
  - b) City Deals
  - c) Update on the Greater Norwich Growth Programme
  - d) Greater Norwich Local Infrastructure Fund
  - e) A communications protocol
16. A copy of the GNGB papers is available on the GNGB web site via this link: <http://www.greaternorwichgrowth.org.uk/growth-board/papers/>

## Integrated impact assessment



**NORWICH**  
City Council

### Report author to complete

<b>Committee:</b>	Council
<b>Committee date:</b>	21 July 2015
<b>Head of service:</b>	Andy Watt
<b>Report subject:</b>	Norwich Annual Business Plan 2016-17
<b>Date assessed:</b>	09 July 2015
<b>Description:</b>	To approve the draft Norwich Annual business plan for 2016-17. .

<b>Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Finance (value for money)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CIL income will allow delivery of projects in Norwich
<b>Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>ICT services</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Economic development</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CIL projects eg transportation and public realm make Norwich more attractive for investors



<b>Financial inclusion</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Proposes support for transportation projects which include priority for non- car modes
<b>Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Safeguarding children and adults</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b><u>S17 crime and disorder act 1998</u></b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Human Rights Act 1998</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Health and well being</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Projects promote active lifestyles
<b>Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Relations between groups (cohesion)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Eliminating discrimination &amp; harassment</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Advancing equality of opportunity</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Transportation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Projects will improve transportation in Norwich
<b>Natural and built environment</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Projects provide for improvements to strategic open space
<b>Waste minimisation &amp; resource use</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Pollution</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sustainable transport projects will provide potential to reduce pollution through reduced car use.
<b>Sustainable procurement</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

<b>Energy and climate change</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sustainable transport projects will provide potential to reduce energy consumption through reduced car use.
<b>(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Risk management</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Recommendations from impact assessment</b>				
<b>Positive</b>				
The projects proposed will improve the quality of the environment and provide benefits for local people.				
<b>Negative</b>				
<b>Neutral</b>				
<b>Issues</b>				

NORWICH CITY COUNCIL

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Annual Business Plan 2016-7

DRAFT

## **Introduction**

This Business Plan sets out Norwich city council's priorities for infrastructure investment required in 2016-7 to support the delivery of planned growth for which pooled funding support is sought through the Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB).

The infrastructure investment is essential to delivery of the Joint Core Strategy (JCS), adopted in January 2014. The Joint Core Strategy includes in Appendix 7 tables of infrastructure required to support the planned growth. Infrastructure planning and delivery continues to progress and the latest position is reported in the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan (July 2014).

## **Context**

This year's business plan identifies schemes that are considered by Norwich city council to be a priority for delivery to assist achieving our economic and growth targets set out in the greater Norwich City Deal. The 16-7 Business Plan incorporates the updated position on infrastructure delivery since the preparation of the 2015-6 growth programme which was agreed in January 2015. Since then changes include progress on delivery, the outcome of the Local Growth Fund settlement, revised Community Infrastructure Levy projections, work on infrastructure development and programming, an update of the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan (GNIP) and decisions made on the allocation of pooled funding in the 2014/5 annual growth programme.

This 2016-7 business plan, along with those of Broadland and South Norfolk will be put together into the annual growth programme for 2016-7 by the Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB) in September 2015.

## **Greater Norwich Growth Board**

At the first meeting of GNGB, the governance arrangements for preparation of the annual growth programme (AGP) were agreed. The Board also approved the 2014-15 AGP that sets the context for the future business plans. The 2015-6 AGP was approved by the GNGB in October 2014. The programmes were subsequently approved by the Council.

## **The Growth Deal**

New Anglia Growth Deal 2015-6 award and provisional award for 2016-7 onwards were announced in July 2014. This reconfirmed the Government funding for the Northern Distributor Road (NDR) and the Local Transport Body allocation of £7m to 2019 for the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (NATS).

## **Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan**

The Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan (GNIP) is constantly being updated to reflect progress on infrastructure delivery and timing of projects to support the planned growth. The GNIP provides base information for preparation of this Business Plan and identifies an infrastructure programme to 2026.

### **Progress on projects funded through the strategic CIL pool to-date**

*Golden Ball Street/ Westlegate* (£500K CIL funding in 2015-6)

- Consultation is due to be undertaken in July
- The detailed design work will then be undertaken ahead of pricing in October
- Anticipated start on site in January 2016

*Riverside Walk Improvements* (total of £51K CIL funding in 2014-5 plus £19K s.106)

- Clearance and fencing works have been completed along with the refurbishment of the existing platform on site.
- A topographical survey has been undertaken and detailed design work will begin shortly on the refurbishment of the whole site.
- A contract to be let by September 2015 with work to begin on site in October.
- All work will be completed by the end of the current financial year and there will be no financial carry over.

*Earlham Millennium Green* (total of £81K CIL (£15K) in 2014-5 and 2015-6 (£66K))

- In Autumn 2014 the site was prepared ready for the contract work. Some large willow trees were taken out by the contractor in preparation for starting the contract element of the work. However the contract element of the work did not commence due to poor weather.
- In autumn 2015 Phase one will be started and completed. This will involve removing the old wooden boardwalk, which has come to the end of its life. Material sourced from the site will be used to create a raised path,

*Danby Wood* £35K in 2014-5

All work completed:

- 50 trees thinned - creating an age structure and admitting more light to the woodland floor
- Main access track, cleaned and resurfaced
- Boundary hedgerow cleaned out and replanted with native trees 25 Bird and bat boxes installed by volunteers

*Marriott's Way* £60K in 2014-5

Section from Barn Road to the Dragon Crossing Bridge:

- Ducting for street lighting installed
- Street lighting design completed
- Bat report produced
- Tree and vegetation management works carried out
- Surfacing improvements
- Habitat improvement carried out by community volunteers
- Dragon Crossing Bridge inspection

A public consultation exercise and user surveys were undertaken to help produce a Marriott's Way Delivery & Implementation Plan.

Actual expenditure: £ 64,204 (overspend to be taken from 2015-16 CIL)

£250K CIL in 2015-6:

Projects based on the Delivery & Implementation Plan. These include:

- Installing street lighting between Barn Road and Dragon Crossing Bridge
- Improvements to access points and barriers mainly in the Mile Cross area
- Providing sealed path surfacing in the Gunton Lane/Red Bridge area
- Wayfinding and signage; Barn Rd – Thorpe Marriott
- Dragon Crossing Bridge - repairs to enable adoption
- Biodiversity work e.g. treatment of invasive plants, statutory species surveys

Anticipated completion date for all the above: 31-03-2016

*Marston Marsh*- footpath £30K in 2014-5

All work completed:

- Two existing muddy wet paths, much used by visitors, have been improved. The work involved digging out an existing and new ditch, the excavated material was used to create a new raised path.
- Three new culvert access points on the Marsh have also been created to allow easier access for management work and for grazing cattle.

*Eaton interchange*- £25K in 2015-6 to supplement LGF

The Eaton interchange is a small part of the wider project for cycling and BRT improvements in the centre of Eaton. A brief for this project is due to be drafted by 30 June for submission to the NATS Co-ordination Group for approval. Expenditure in 2015-6 will be on feasibility, design and consultation. (Note- £75K CIL has already been allocated for this project for 2016-7.)

**List of projects for delivery from pooled CIL in 2016-7**

- River Wensum Parkway- £100K
- Pedestrian/cycle link- Carrow bridge to Deal Ground riverside path- £100K
- Colney River crossing (Norwich Research park to Threescore - £150K
- Yare and Wensum Valleys link- £65K

- Marriotts Way- phase - £275K
- Castle Gardens improvements- £150K
- Golden Ball St contingency - £500K
- Heathgate- pink pedalway- £150K

Details of these projects are set out in Appendix 2.

## Future Programme

In addition, the Rose Lane/ Prince of Wales Road transportation project has been identified for development this year to meet delivery dates over the next few years. This scheme is not seeking pooled funding support but it is a request that the delivery body commits £150K to develop the scheme this year to meet the overall infrastructure programme.

## City Deal

The four local authorities continue to work with Government on delivery of the outcomes from City Deals, one of which is the delivery of a programme of infrastructure facilitated by pooled funding arrangements between the Authorities. Progress on the City Deal is reported quarterly to Government.

## Pooled Funding

The pooled funding position is based on forecasts of CIL income. The table below give the current projections and commitments to schemes from the previous AGP.

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Existing commitment		£196,000	£1,066,000	£730,000	£105,000	£1,605,000
Annual pooled funding income projection	£55,699	£850,818	£1,962,367	£5,657,184	£7,708,249	£7,993,066
Surplus/deficit	£55,699	£654,818	£896,367	£4,927,184	£7,603,249	£6,388,066
<b>Cumulative position</b>	<b>£55,699</b>	<b>£710,517</b>	<b>£1,606,884</b>	<b>£6,534,068</b>	<b>£14,137,317</b>	<b>£20,525,383</b>

## Annual Proposal

For the year 2016-7 Norwich City Council has identified 8 schemes totalling £1,490,000 as priorities to receive pooled funding support. In addition to scheme delivery preparatory work is requested on a further x schemes as these are at this time considered to be priorities for delivery in 2017-8

This Business Plan is to be presented to the GNGB as the Priorities for Norwich City Council to be included in the 2016-/7 AGP.

### **NATS including the NDR and Long Stratton Bypass**

The Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan sets out the key infrastructure projects that are required to support growth. The programme includes green infrastructure, education, community facilities and Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (NATS) schemes. For NATS, the programme identifies the future investment in the six BRT corridors to link major growth locations, measures in the city centre and measures to aid public transport, walking and cycling, as well as the NDR.

At the 17 March 2011 Greater Norwich Development Partnership Policy Group Meeting it was agreed to use a significant proportion of future CIL revenues to establish a shared investment fund to support delivery of priority 1 key infrastructure projects and this includes up to £40m of local investment for the delivery of the NDR and related measures.

In March 2014, council approved the Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB) agreement and constitution. Council also agreed to pool its CIL income (not including the neighbourhood element or the proportion retained to cover its administrative costs) across greater Norwich to pay for strategic infrastructure.

The NDR has a significant funding contribution from Central Government and the Long Stratton bypass will have significant developer contributions but both schemes will need additional funding. It is likely that the other NATS projects will be primarily funded from other sources (for instance £11m LGF funding has already been secured for NATS through the Growth Deal and in excess of £12m secured for cycle improvements to 2020) although funding sources for longer term projects are yet to be secured.

Approval has now been granted by the Secretary of State and construction of the NDR is programmed to commence in 2015. As the planned scale and distribution of growth is dependent on the NDR, it is important that this scheme is included in this Business Plan to minimise delay. The NDR will have no call on the pooled fund in 2016-17; however there will be a requirement for future years. Work will continue to determine the order, timing and detail of other NATS priorities and to secure funding from mainstream sources and through bidding opportunities that may arise.

Agreement in principle to use pooled CIL funding in future years to ensure the delivery of NATS measures, including particularly the NDR and Long Stratton bypass, is needed in the 16-17 Business Plan to provide certainty.



### **Neighbourhood funded projects**

The following projects were approved for funding in 2015-6:

- Community Noticeboards £10K
- Britannia Road traffic issues £20K
- Bignold Road/ Drayton Road junction £3K
- Natural area/ boundaries improvements George Fox Way and Augustus Hare Drive £10K
- Lakenham Way stage 1 £7K

SUB TOTAL- £50K

- Subject to further funding being received during the course of the year, the following projects are also recommended to be taken forward in 2015-6
- City trees £50K
- Netherwood Green £48K

Projects using CIL neighbourhood funding in 2016-7 will be considered later in the year.



### **CIL Business Plan 2016-7.**

#### **Description of proposed projects.**

##### **River Wensum Parkway- £100K**

Enhancements to the strategic green link network between the River Wensum and Ber Street will include improvements to the wooded ridge path between Thorn Lane and Carrow Hill and measures to improve river access for pedestrians from King Street. Also included is enhancement of the setting of the Boom Towers and City Walls between the river and Ber Street, including repairs and tree work. This will help strengthen the strategic green link network which is identified in the Joint Core Strategy, and encourage greater use of this link from the river up to Ber Street and along the wooded ridge into the heart of the city centre. This is needed to serve development currently underway in the King Street and Riverside areas.

##### **Pedestrian/cycle link- Carrow bridge to Deal Ground riverside path- £100K**

Delivery of a short section of cycle / footway on north bank of the River Wensum will provide a key 'missing link' in the route between Norwich city centre / rail station and Whitlingham Country Park. The project is part of overarching vision to improve links between Norwich City centre and Whitlingham Country Park, alongside a new bridge across the River Wensum, to be delivered through development of Deal / Utilities site. It forms part of the vital connection to allow the development of the Deal Ground and utilities site. The CIL funding is to supplement £250K existing Sustrans money.

##### **Colney River crossing (Norwich Research Park to Threescore) - £150K**

Improvements to the existing right of way, including a new footbridge across the river Yare and improvements to the existing footpaths would provide a direct link between housing in Bowthorpe, the Bowthorpe Southern Park and the major employment locations at the NRP and the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital.

The project would enable this direct route to be used for journeys to work on foot (large numbers of Bowthorpe residents work at the research park/hospital), would improve access to Bowthorpe Southern Park for workers at the research park and would enable the existing riverside path along the river Yare to be accessed more easily, enabling attractive circular walks to be developed in the area. The route would also link with significant improvements to green infrastructure being made both through the new development at Three Score.

##### **Yare and Wensum Valleys link- £65K**

The River Wensum and Yare run fairly close together in the west of the city between Marriott's Way and the Three Score development site. The link between the two river valleys is a recognised green infrastructure corridor and the route of the purple pedalway.

The link is currently fragmented in character, in part because it runs along the border between Norwich City Council and South Norfolk Council. It needs a strategic GNGP project to weld the disparate parts together - this project includes a suite of improvements to paths and landscaping within Norwich City Council's boundary, specifically path improvements to Marlpit wood, cycle and landscape improvements in the linear green space between West Earham and Bowthorpe. The CIL funding will supplement £59K funding for Bunker's Hill Wood secured as part of the development of Three score.

##### **Marriotts Way- phase 3- £275K**

Marriott's Way provides a traffic-free connection allowing residents of Drayton, Taverham, Thorpe Marriott and Mile Cross / Wensum wards good access to the city centre and to the Broadland countryside. The path is narrow and poorly surfaced in parts and some access points are obstructed.

Work to make the section of Marriott's Way within the Norwich urban area more usable and attractive for commuter and leisure cycling and walking through a suite of access and

surfacing improvements. Specifically the CIL funding will fund surface and lighting improvements from the stretch of route between Anderson's Meadow and Sloughbottom park, to complete the improvements carried out in 2014-5 and 2015-6, improving the route from Mile Cross to the City centre.

### **Castle Gardens improvements- £150K**

A comprehensive restoration of Castle Gardens and Castle Green is proposed in order to complement the planned revamp of the interior exhibition spaces within the Castle, for which c£850k of HLF funding is being sought. It is clear that in order to attract HLF support the project will need to achieve ambitious design changes to the gardens and green. The garden and its association with the castle is steeped in history and this should be reflected in a design for the whole area enhancing the existing infrastructure.

The Gardens are in a shabby state and although they are not at present specifically visited by many people, they are a well-used thoroughfare for those passing through the city and also visiting the castle. They are a precious area of green space within the city centre, and should be well used and complement the experience of visiting the Castle and Norwich.

### **Golden Ball St - £500K (contingency)**

NATS provides a long term plan to reduce traffic in the city centre and promote cycling, walking and public transport in order to boost the city centre retail and visitor economy, improve the setting of heritage assets, and increase cycling and walking.

Key to this is a £3m scheme to remove through traffic from All Saints Green and Westlegate, making Golden Ball Street and Farmers Avenue two way in order to allow public realm enhancements. Additional funding is being sought from the private sector to ensure that the quality of public realm in Westlegate and All Saints Green is as good as it can be. This funding may be needed to supplement any shortfall in funding obtained.

### **Heathgate- pink pedalway- £150K (contingency)**

The construction of a 3m wide lit cycling and walking path between Heathgate and Gurney Road at the junction with Britannia Road. This provides a missing link between Heathgate and Gurney Road in order to provide a more direct route on the pink pedalway (NE Growth Triangle / Heartsease to Norwich Research Park)

While this remains incomplete, the value of cycling / walking projects elsewhere in the east of the city is undermined because they do not form part of the strategic route. The CIL funding is a contingency, (which it is hoped will not be needed) to supplement funding already allocated for this project.