



## **Council**

Members of the council are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of the council to be held in the council chamber, City Hall, Norwich, on

**Tuesday, 16 July 2024**

**19:30**

## **Agenda**

	<b>Page nos</b>
<b>1 Lord Mayor's announcements</b>	
<b>2 Declarations of interest</b>	
(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)	
<b>3 Public questions/petitions</b>	
To receive questions / petitions from the public which have been submitted in accordance with the council's constitution.	
<b>4 Minutes</b>	<b>5 - 44</b>
To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2024 and the annual meeting held on 21 May 2024.	
<b>5 Questions to cabinet members</b>	
(A copy of the questions and replies will be available on the council's website prior to the meeting)	
<b>6 Appointment of statutory officers</b>	<b>45 - 50</b>
To consider the appointments of:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• interim chief finance officer and section 151 officer</li><li>• monitoring officer</li><li>• interim monitoring officer</li></ul>	

The chief finance officer and section 151 officer and the monitoring officer are two of the three statutory roles that the Council must have in place.

**7 Appointments to other committees 2024-25 51 - 54**

**Purpose** - To note that, under delegated authority, the monitoring officer has agreed the following appointments to other committees and working groups in line with the wishes of the political groups following the annual council on 21 May 2024.

**8 Appointments to outside bodies 2024-25 55 - 58**

**Purpose** - To consider the appointments to outside bodies for the 2024-25 civic year.  
Please note that Appendix A is to follow.

**9 Motions**

To consider motions for which notice has been given in accordance with the council's constitution.

**9(a) Motion - Multi-faith working 59 - 60**

**9(b) Motion - Anglia Square 61 - 62**

**9(c) Motion - Democratic models of governance 63 - 64**

**9(d) Motion - The future of Anglia Square 65 - 66**

**9(e) Motion - Protect workers' rights 67 - 70**



Sameera Khan

Interim Head of Legal and Procurement (Monitoring Officer)

**For further information please contact:**

Colin Sweeney, interim democratic services team leader

t: (01603) 987835

e: colinsweeney@norwich.gov.uk

Democratic services  
City Hall, Norwich, NR2 1NH  
[www.norwich.gov.uk](http://www.norwich.gov.uk)

Date of publication: **Monday, 08 July 2024**

### **Information for members of the public**

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

For information about attending or speaking at meetings, please contact the committee officer above or refer to the council's website



If you would like this agenda in an alternative format, such as a larger or smaller font, audio or Braille, or in a different language, please contact the committee officer above.





**19:30 to 22:29**

**12 March 2024**

**Present:** Councillors Wright (Lord Mayor), Ackroyd, Calvert, Carrington, Catt, Champion, Davis, Driver, Fox, Francis, Fulton-McAlister, Galvin, Giles, Hampton, Hoechner, Huntley, Jones, Kendrick, Kidman, Lubbock, Maguire, Oliver, Osborn, Packer, Padda, Peek, Price, Prinsley, Sands (M), Sands (S), Schmierer, Stonard, Stutely, Thomas (Va), Thomas (Vi) and Young

**Apologies:** Councillors Everett and Worley.

## **1. Lord Mayor's Announcements**

The Lord Mayor made the following announcements:

- i) 220 engagements had been undertaken by himself and the Lord Sheriff throughout the current municipal year and showed no signs of letting up.
- ii) Since the last meeting of the Council, the Lord Mayor had visited Novi Sad (twinned with Norwich since 1989) with David Fulman (who was Lord Mayor of Norwich at the time the twinning agreement was signed) and Peter Beckley (Mr Beckley and his late wife had been awarded Freedom of the City there for their work in fostering the corporation).
- iii) The Lord Mayor had attended the Junior Apprenticeships Week and Norfolk Apprenticeships Award and was pleased to have made an award on behalf of Investors in People (IIP) and how gratifying it had been to see the amount of work that employers were putting in to support apprentices at all levels.
- iv) The Lord Mayor had met with some members of Norwich City Council's UNISON Branch to launch Local Unions' Week.
- v) The Lord Mayor and the Lord Sheriff had accepted an invitation from the Mayor of King's Lynn to the opening of King's Lynn Mart.
- vi) The Lord Mayor had accepted an invitation to Open Doors Café, which provided food and companionship on a regular basis, where he had spoken with people who used the café as well as those volunteers who worked there.
- vii) On 1 March, the Lord Mayor had presided over the Lord Mayoralty, at which, he welcomed some new admissions to the Freemen of Norwich.

- viii) The Lord Mayor announced that 11 March 2024 marked Commonwealth Day when a flag-raising event had been held with local children.
- ix) The Lord Mayor had accepted an invitation to dinner with the Round Table.
- x) The Lord Mayor presented a past Councillor badge to Councillor Vaughan Thomas, who was not standing for re-election at the 2 May 2024 local elections. A Member collected a past Councillor badge on behalf of Councillor Rachel Everett who was not standing for re-election at the 2 May 2024 local elections.
- xi) The Lord Mayor deferred to the Leader of the Council. Councillor Mike Stonard, to propose the Lord Mayor-elect for the Civic Year 2024-25. Councillor Stonard was delighted to nominate Councillor Vivien Thomas as the Lord Mayor-elect for the Civic Year 2024-25.

## **2. Declarations of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest received from Members.

## **3. Public Questions and Petitions**

### **a) Public Questions**

The Lord Mayor announced that three public questions had been received within the provisions of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

#### **Question 1 – from Mr George Heaney to the Leader of the Council**

“Following the withdrawal of Weston Homes from regenerating Anglia Square and the consequent loss of significant investment in Norwich, can the Leader comment on what is needed to finally ensure this urban blight on our city is removed and new homes, jobs and investment can be delivered?”

#### **Councillor Stonard, Leader of the Council, gave the following response:**

“The Council is very committed to seeing this site be re-developed. We recognise that Anglia Square is a vital part of the local community in the north city centre and provides an important meeting place for people with affordable shops and many independent businesses and social enterprises.

We need to be sure that our next steps make a real difference to bringing this site forward and we can't do that on our own. We will work with the existing site owners, and of course the local community, to look at every option available to us.

We are engaging with the Secretary of State and other government agencies. These third-party partners are best placed to help us deliver this city centre regeneration and offer funding to de-risk the development of the site.

The right development partner will also be key to unlocking this site and we will work to attract a wide range of people who are potentially interested in working with us.”

**Question 2 – from Mr Chris Smith to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion**

“As an active trade unionist and President of the Norwich Trades Council I am impressed by the work of this City Council in promoting efforts to build a better, more inclusive and worker friendly local economy despite its limited powers. Leadership on the Real Living Wage, Good Economy Commission and enhancing the terms and conditions of workers through the new wholly owned companies are all actions in a positive direction. Can the Cabinet Member comment on what further steps they feel are needed to radically enhance this agenda further within the local city economy?”

**Councillor Giles, the Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion gave the following response:**

“The Living Wage Places action plan commits to making Norwich a Living Wage City, a place that values its labour force and seeks to ensure workers are paid enough to live a good life, free from financial anxiety. The Council, with partners continues work to increase the number of accredited employers within Norwich to 110 by the end of the year. Predictions are that this would represent approximately 14,750 employees working for a Real Living Wage employer.

The Council recognises the need to focus its resources on the local economy as set out in its new Corporate Plan 2024-2029: We are Norwich – A Prosperous Norwich. We want to put good work, and sustainable and inclusive economic growth at the forefront of our work. Our aim is, to work in partnership with businesses and trade unions, to enable a thriving, successful economy that is creative, innovative, inclusive and environmentally sustainable. We will make Norwich a great place to live, work, learn, and visit, where everyone shares in its success.

Working with partners and businesses, this will involve, for example:

- Diversifying our economy to deliver good jobs for all and enabling people to maximise their household incomes.
- Ensuring everyone can gain the right skills for a changing economy and that there is support for people to get into work.
- Protecting commercial spaces to support diverse sectors, entrepreneurialism, and job creation; and
- Making the Real Living Wage the norm not the exception.

Ultimately, we want to see an economy that is more inclusive, adapted to a net zero carbon world and provides opportunities for all the people of Norwich to live a good life.”

In response to a supplementary question from Mr Smith, which asked, as a Labour Council, would it commit to the Labour Party’s New Deal for working

people and ensure it was actively delivered in the event of a change in government, Councillor Giles, the Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion, in summary, responded as follows:

- The Labour Party had pledged to bring forward a Labour Rights Bill within 100 days of forming a government if successful at the next general election.
- A key element of this new deal would be establishing fair wages agreement in social care, which was hoped would lead to sectoral collective bargaining.
- If this new deal was successful in social care, a Labour Government would look to roll this out to other sectors, which faced similar issues.
- The Labour Party did not want to see strikes and workers did not want strikes as these represented failure in collective bargaining.
- A Labour Government would repeal the Trade Union Act 2016, which it believed imposed disproportionate notice and rebalancing obligations on trade unions.
- A Labour Government would introduce critical reforms to individual employment law by moving towards a single worker status with critical employment rights currently deprived from enjoying.
- A Labour Government would give workers the right of reasonable notice to any changes to shifts or working times and would end the increasing practice of dismissal and re-engagement and would work with the Low Pay Commission to ensure the minimum wage was a real living wage, which took into account the cost of living.
- Repeal any legislation passed by the current Government to reintroduce employment tribunals, a measure previously seen as contrary to the rule of law by the Supreme Court.
- He said that the Council was ready to work together with a Labour Government to help overcome the barriers of paying the real living wage.

**Question 3 – from Ms Alison Ledington to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion**

“The ongoing audit of parks and green spaces has raised considerable concerns that the Council intends to close smaller parks or schedule them for sale and redevelopment. What assurances can you give that this is not the case?”

**Councillor Giles, the Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion gave the following response:**



“I am sorry these suspicions have arisen. I can assure you that not only our city parks, but also our smaller community parks will be safe under the stewardship of this Labour-led Council. This Council announced a total capital investment package of just under £10 million in our parks and open spaces at budget Council last month.

The audit will highlight the existing quality and value of our parks and open spaces, and shape proposals on how they can be effectively managed, maintained and where relevant, improved in the future. This will be reflected in the draft Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and Investment Plan scheduled for June Cabinet.

At an early stage in the production of the Strategy, we held a consultation away day at the Football Club, with over 120 delegates representing 60 organisations, including the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, the Norwich BID, Friends groups, resident associations, Norfolk County Council and many environmental organisations.

The final Strategy will be subject to a public consultation, with a ‘roadshow’ of in-person, on-site engagement in communities across the city with Friends groups to maximise feedback and input from residents.”

## **b) Petitions**

Ms Lesley Grahame presented the following petition:

“We have been watching in horror the events unfolding in Gaza since October, which according to the [provisional ruling](#) of the International Court of Justice could plausibly amount to genocide under international law.

While local Councils have limited leverage over events in Israel/Palestine and other places where war crimes are committed, they do have control over their investments.

Data from the [Campaign Against the Arms Trade](#) demonstrate that arms companies are prepared to do deals even with states involved in the most egregious human rights violations and that many governments, including the UK, actively facilitate such deals.

The least Norwich City Council can do to show solidarity with the Palestinian people, and with victims of violence, oppression, and occupation around the globe, is to ensure that none of its investments help finance weapons that are likely to contribute to serious human rights violations and war crimes.

As a city of sanctuary and longstanding Member of [‘Mayors for Peace’](#), an organisation committed to promoting world peace, the Council has a moral duty to do all it can to make sure its investments do not contribute to death and suffering.

We therefore ask Norwich City Council:

- To screen its current investment portfolio / counterparties list to establish which of the institutions/instruments the Council is currently invested in have

exclusion clauses for the arms industry, and to establish, where such clauses exist, what is precisely their reach.

- To seek specialist treasury management advice on investment opportunities that screen out investments in the arms industry to the highest degree.
- To report to Council, based on the above, a strategy for adoption, for ensuring within the shortest possible timeframe that none of the Council's investments could directly or indirectly help fund the arms industry.
- To use its influence to ask that the above steps are also taken by the Norfolk Pension Fund, and that opportunities are investigated for investing purposefully in sectors that seek to facilitate positive social change, for example by addressing the transition to net zero."

Councillor Stonard thanked Ms Grahame for her petition.

The Lord Mayor officially received the petition.

#### 4. Minutes

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 January 2024, be approved as a correct record.

#### 5. Questions to Cabinet Members

The Lord Mayor announced that 29 questions had been received from Members of the Council to Cabinet Members, for which notice had been given in accordance with the provisions of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

The questions are summarised as follows:

- Question 1      Councillor Carrington to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety on assistance given by the Council, to people who fled the conflict in Ukraine.
- Question 2      Councillor Driver to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion on those sites that would benefit from new play equipment in the next 12 months.
- Question 3      Councillor Huntley to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety on the practical steps this Council can take to protect, promote, and strengthen the common bonds and friendships between faiths to ensure Norwich always remained a safe and welcoming city for all.
- Question 4      Councillor Sue Sands to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion on the work of NCSL and the local probation service.

- Question 5 Councillor Vaughan Thomas to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety on a planning application to develop the former Mile Cross depot site.
- Question 6 Councillor Vivien Thomas to the Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services on ensuring establishments in this city remained safe for residents to visit and purchase items from.
- Question 7 Councillor Maguire to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety on the success of the LetNCC Scheme.
- Question 8 Councillor Padda to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion on the new Love Norwich community grants scheme.
- Question 9 Councillor Peek to the Cabinet Member for Resources on the impact of Voter ID policy at elections.
- Question 10 Councillor Prinsley to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change on the importance of Get Norwich Talking and the consultation process.
- Question 11 Councillor Mike Sands to the Leader of the Council on the proposed Greater Norwich Local Plan.
- Question 12 Councillor Haynes to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety.
- Question 13 Councillor Catt to the Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services on enforcement action is the Council taking against landlords, who's privately rented properties fell behind the minimum legal standards.
- Question 14 Councillor Worley to the Cabinet Member for Resources on ensuring committee reports are published in good time.
- Question 15 Councillor Young to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change on working processes to swiftly empty and clean communal waste bins.
- Question 16 Councillor Francis to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change on best practice to improve recycling rates.
- Question 17 Councillor Galvin to the Cabinet Member for Well-being and Culture on the impact of the collapse of One Norwich Practices.
- Question 18 Councillor Price to the Leader of the Council on actions taken following a resolution by the Council in November 2023 in relation to informed choices on who residents banked with.

- Question 19 Councillor Hoechner to the Cabinet Member for Resources on capacity numbers within the Council Chamber.
- Question 20 Councillor Osborn to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety on flooding in Talbot Square.
- Question 21 Councillor Calvert to the Leader of the Council on the level of Freedom of Information requests received from Members.
- Question 22 Councillor Lubbock to the Leader of the Council on Members being excluded from meetings held in public.
- Question 23 Councillor Stutely to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety on the development at the Mile Cross Depot site on Mile Cross Road and whether the allocation would be 100% Council owned housing available for a social rent.
- Question 24 Councillor Davis to the Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services on funding for a further two enforcement roles at the Council.
- Question 25 Councillor Oliver to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety on installations of security entry door systems.
- Question 26 Councillor Everett to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety on streamlining the repairs service.
- Question 27 Councillor Champion to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion on the Council's Parks Audit.

In accordance with Rule No.53, Questions 28 and 29 were not considered.

(Full details of the questions and responses were available on the Council's website prior to the meeting and is attached to these minutes at Appendix A).

## **6. Corporate Plan 2024 to 2029**

Councillor Stonard, Leader of the Council, moved and Councillor Mike Sands seconded the recommendation, as set out in the report.

Following debate, it was:

**RESOLVED** that 'We are Norwich' – the Draft Corporate Plan 2024 to 2029, be adopted.

In accordance with Rule 27, Agenda Items 7, 8, 9 and 10 were taken as unopposed business and accordingly approved in line with recommendations.

**7. Adoption of the Greater Norwich Local Plan**

**RESOLVED** that, having considered the outcome of the examination into the Greater Norwich Local Plan, the Plan be adopted.

**8. Pay Policy Statement 2024 to 2025**

**RESOLVED** that, the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25, be approved.

**9. Treasury Management Quarter 3 Review Report 2023-24**

**RESOLVED** that, the Treasury Management Quarter 3 Review Report 2023/24, be approved.

**10. Funding Approval for Three Carbon Reduction Projects**

**RESOLVED** that, following Cabinet approval on 6 March 2024 to recommend that Council delegates authority to the Council's Chief Finance (s151) Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Resources, the following actions:

- a) Sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Department of Net Zero and Energy Security (DESNZ) to agree terms and conditions for Social Housing Decarbonisation funding up to a value of £3m.
- b) Increase the HRA Capital Programme by an amount equivalent to any DESNZ grant funding agreed plus the match funding element from the Council, currently anticipated to be £2.7m.
- c) Increase the General Fund Capital Programme by £0.895m for the solar panel project on Riverside Leisure Centre and formally sign any related grant documentation for £0.520m. Note that the funding requirement from the Council of £0.375m could be funded from borrowing.
- d) Apply and sign a grant application for heat networks feasibility and business case. Noting, following approval on 6 March 2024, that Cabinet delegated authority, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, the following actions:
  - i) to the Executive Director of Housing and Community Safety in combination with the Section 151 Officer to sign subsequent delivery contracts for the energy efficiency works on its social housing stock.
  - ii) to the Executive Director of Housing and Community Safety to sign subsequent delivery contracts for the solar panel project at Riverside Leisure.

- iii) to the Chief Finance Officer to sign subsequent procurement contracts for the energy network items detailed within the report.

## **11. Adjustment to the 2024-2025 Budget and Capital Programme**

This item was withdrawn.

*Council stood adjourned until 9.45pm.*

## **12. Motions**

### **Motion 12(a) – Scrap CIL ECR for Private Developers**

Councillor Davis moved and Councillor Stutely seconded the motion as set out on the agenda.

In accordance with Rule 103, a recorded vote was called of those Members present, the result of which was as follows:

For the Motion (14)

Councillors Calvert, Catt, Champion, Davis, Fox, Galvin, Haynes, Hoechner, Oliver, Osborn, Price, Schmierer, Stutely and Young.

Against the Motion (22)

Councillors Ackroyd, Carrington, Driver, Fulton-McAlister, Giles, Hampton, Huntley, Jones, Kendrick, Kidman, Lubbock, Maguire, Packer, Padda, Peek, Prinsley, Mike Sands, Sue Sands, Stonard, Vaughan Thomas, Vivien Thomas and Wright.

There were no abstentions.

Accordingly, the motion was declared **NOT CARRIED**.

### **Motion 12(b) – Multi-faith Working**

### **Motion 12(c) – Anglia Square**

### **Motion 12(d) – Democratic Models of Governance**

### **Motion 12(f) – The Future of Anglia Square**

Motions 12(b), (c), (d) and (f) above, stood deferred to the next ordinary meeting of the Council, to be held in June 2024.

The Lord Mayor declared the meeting closed at 10.29pm.

**LORD MAYOR  
APPENDIX A**

**Questions to Cabinet Members**

**Question 1**

**Councillor Carrington to ask the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety the following question:**

“It has now been two years since the illegal invasion, by Russia, of Ukraine. This city Council has, in keeping with its tradition of welcoming people to Norwich, assisted hundreds of people fleeing the conflict during this time. Can the Cabinet Member comment on what has been delivered so far?”

**Councillor Jones, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety's response:**

“Since March 2022, our community support team has been working in collaboration with Norfolk County Council to deliver the Homes for Ukraine scheme in Norwich.

This scheme was stood up very quickly with our first guests arriving in April 2022, less than 6 weeks after the illegal invasion began. In total we have helped support over 246 guests (adults and children) through the scheme.

This has been with the help and generosity of over 135 hosts that have opened their homes to help accommodate. Whilst initially being asked to sponsor and hosts guests coming from Ukraine for a minimum of 6 months, many hosting arrangements are still in place nearly 2 years on. A number have also welcomed multiple guests, showing the repeated generosity and hospitality that is indicative of Norwich residents. In January we hosted a thank you event at City Hall and we were grateful for the time the Lord Mayor gave to welcome and personally thank so many of our hosts.

A significant amount of work goes into a scheme such as this one. Our team have completed almost 200 inspections to ensure the accommodation being offered by hosts is suitable, and they have made nearly 400 welfare visits to hosts and guests. Through these visits and ongoing dialogue, we have supported both hosts and guests with resolving a number of issues and concerns. This goes alongside strong partnership working with children's services to support the many mothers and their children who have fled the conflict.

We are still supporting 88 Ukrainian guests in hosted arrangements and have supported many others into other accommodation at the end of their hosting arrangements. We continue to support guests after they have left hosting arrangements, and the team are able to advise and signpost them to help answer their queries and questions.”

## Question 2

### **Councillor Driver to ask the Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion the following question:**

“I was pleased that following a thorough audit of our play areas, the Budget allocated £1.1 million in Section 106 funding to provide new play area equipment for 28 play areas across the city over a three-year period. Could the Cabinet Member please inform us which sites will benefit from new play equipment in the next 12 months?”

### **Councillor Giles, the Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion's response:**

“The following play facilities are due for improvement next year following completion of a full condition survey of all sites and inclusivity audit:

- Eaton Skate park
- Greenfields Skate park
- Heartsease Childrens' Playground (CPG)
- Heartsease Skate park
- Heigham Park CPG
- Jenny Lind CPG
- Stylman road CPG
- Waterloo Park CPG (Splash Pad)
- Wilberforce Road CPG.

This £500,000 of investment reflects the value this Labour-led Council places on free play and recreation for children and young people in communities across Norwich, and the health and wellbeing benefits this brings.”

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Driver asked what extra expenses would be spent in Lakenham next year.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion responded by saying that Council had approved funding for the resurfacing of the cycle speedway in Harford Park. He added that in the 2025-26 financial year, there would be play area upgrades to Jubilee Park, Lee Bridges Park and Netherwood Green. He said that in 2026-27, there would be an upgrade to the play area at Harford Park and that, in the medium-term, the Council had aspirations under the emerging Parks Strategy, given that Lakenham was one of the areas which was a two-bus ride away from a large city park, a more significant upgrade to one of the more community parks would be aspired to but that funding had not yet been identified at this stage.



### Question 3

#### **Councillor Huntley to ask the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety the following question:**

“In recent years this city has, like many, witnessed an increase in Far-Right activity which has sought to undermine and disrupt the community cohesion enjoyed in Norwich. Coupled to this I was horrified by the behaviour of the Conservative Party deputy chairman Lee Anderson MP who recently lost the whip due to his Islamophobic comments made against the Mayor of London. Can the Cabinet Member comment on what practical steps this Council can take to protect, promote, and strengthen the common bonds and friendships between faiths to ensure Norwich always remains a safe and welcoming city for all?”

#### **Councillor Jones, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety's response:**

“Thank you for highlighting this important issue, which Norwich, like many other parts of the country is facing.

Norwich City Council recognises the devastating impact that racially and religiously motivated hate crimes have on the city's people and communities. We are committed to proactively engaging with partner organisations and local community groups (including faith groups) to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, whilst simultaneously working to promote good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Race and faith, of course, being two of the nine protected characteristics.

The Council has recently agreed a new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy. This strategy provides a renewed opportunity to celebrate the positive contributions that people from different backgrounds make, and actively seeks to promote tolerance, tackle inequalities and foster good relationships across our communities.

In addition, Norwich City Council benefits from several existing relationships with faith groups across the city, including those from Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Sikh communities. Through these, it supports faith groups to connect with others in the neighbourhoods and communities they serve.

Norwich is fortunate to have a strong and healthy understanding between faiths, demonstrated through a willingness to work together. One example is the relationship between Norwich Central Mosque and St. Luke's on Aylsham Road, who work together for the good of their shared community.

Over the past year, the Council has worked hard to promote a sense of welcome and belonging for people sharing various faiths. In November last year, the Festive Light Switch On included contributions from local faith groups representing Muslim, Jewish, Hindu and Christian communities. This was followed by the placement of a big screen on City Hall wishing 'Peace and goodwill to all' in seven

languages including Hebrew and Arabic. Additionally, Hanukah was celebrated at City Hall for the first-time which *Council: 12 March 2024*

included a short ceremony where the menorah candle was lit. The Council is working on an initiative to mark a wider range of religious and community festivals going forward.”

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Huntley asked whether in the Cabinet Member’s opinion, there was anything more the Council could be doing to engage with faith communities within the city to promote community cohesion?

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety responded by saying that there was a motion in the agenda this evening aimed at setting up a working group to bring together representatives of faith groups within the community. She said it was really important that the Council listened to their voice and understood that the experiences affecting communities and the challenges they were facing. The more we listen, engage and ask our communities what they need was important and this was something that she hoped would have full support when that motion was considered later.

#### **Question 4**

**Councillor Sue Sands to ask the Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion the following question:**

“Enhancing the quality of life for residents across the city will always remain a key city Council priority. Building on the work of NCSL, I have been impressed by the ongoing and strengthening relationship with the local probation service through their Community Payback scheme. This has seen additional improvements being delivered, but also important rehabilitation work achieved too. Can the Cabinet Member comment on what has been delivered so far by this partnership?”

**Councillor Giles, the Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion's response:**

“We’re proud to have built such a brilliant working relationship with the Probation Service’s Community Payback team, enhancing our communities, while providing critical rehabilitation and training objectives. To date we have worked with them on 41 referred projects, involving 215 persons on probation who have provided 160 hours of service. This has generated 92 tonnes of general waste and 130 tonnes of green waste - which is the equivalent weight of approximately 17 fire engines. Examples of some this fantastic work includes clearance of land to provide spaces for a community garden; fence painting; garden tidying and clearances; remedial repair work to garden and street scene furniture; hard standing clearances and weed removal, shrub, and hedge tidying; and litter and detritus removal. This is collaborative work we look forward to continuing in partnership between the Council, Probation Service, and NCSL.”

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Sands asked whether the Cabinet Member would commit to ensure the Council kept working with the partners the Council had currently developed as well as a wide range of voluntary

organisations as the Council sought to further enhance the quality of life of residents across the communities the Council represented.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion responded by saying that he would commit to continuing the Council's relationship with the Probation Service's Community Payback Scheme as it provided valuable rehabilitation and training opportunities for those who had committed criminal offences. He said that in terms of working with volunteer groups, the Green Space Permissions Policy had been streamlined across the Council to make it easier for community groups to take on certain raised beds or areas within Council estates where they may wish to create community gardens.

## **Question 5**

**Councillor Vaughan Thomas to ask the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety the following question:**

"Since our last usual Council meeting in January, I was particularly pleased that a planning application to develop the former Mile Cross depot site will be lodged before May. Building new Council housing on this site and creating a new community will be another lasting testament to the political willpower of this Labour led administration to always deliver housing choice for Norwich people. Can the Cabinet Member comment on what will be contained in the application and the difference this will make if passed?"

**Councillor Jones, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety 's response:**

"The planning application for the redevelopment of the former Mile Cross depot site was validated by our planning department on 7 February 2024. It is for the first phase of the transformation of this disused brownfield site into a new community. If approved and built, it will deliver 67 much needed new high quality Council homes, but it will also deliver the infrastructure to unlock the rest of the depot site, which is allocated for residential led mixed use development expected to accommodate 170 homes in total in the GNLP being considered for adoption by Council later today.

I hope this will make a real positive difference to Mile Cross and the connection of it to the city via fantastic links such as Marriotts Way when they consider it in due course."

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Vaughan Thomas asked if she believed the properties in Mile Cross were in keeping with this Labour tradition particularly since the Council would celebrate the 150th anniversary of Council house provision in Mile Cross this year.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety responded by saying that this tradition would continue and looked forward to the proposals being progressed through the Council's Planning processes. She said this was an exciting opportunity and hoped would continue to develop new technologies moving forward and produce the best housing for the city's residents.

## Question 6

### **Councillor Vivien Thomas to ask the Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services the following question:**

“Recently, I assisted a resident who had complained of being food poisoned following a visit to a local eating establishment. After contacting the city Council this was vigorously pursued and action against the proprietor pursued successfully. Following recent successful prosecutions against establishments selling out of date food, can the Cabinet comment on the work this Council undertakes to ensure establishments in this city remain safe for residents to visit and purchase items from?”

### **Councillor Fulton-McAlister, the Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services' response:**

“The food and safety team follows the national program of inspecting all food businesses based on their risk profile. All food businesses are inspected: from home cake bakers; multisite restaurants and takeaways; and food factories. Higher risk food businesses are visited at least every 6 months, and the team are on track to complete inspections of all the high-risk businesses by the end of the financial year.

The team supports businesses by offering direct advice and runs frequent training courses to help food business operators comply with the law.

All food complaints including both food poisoning complaints and food hygiene complaints, come into the team, are triaged and action taken according to the risk. Actions may include a visit, advice and potentially, formal action. Formal action is balanced with that of advice in accordance with the Council's corporate enforcement policy.

Recently, meat from two businesses was seized and cases taken before the Magistrates' court. An absence of suitable labels meant the businesses were unable to show where the meat had come from. Such interventions by the Food and safety team are essential in helping prevent the trade in stolen livestock and the placing of illegally slaughtered meat onto the market. This food has now been destroyed.

The Food and safety team also works in partnership with the Food Standards Agency in delivering the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. Most food businesses selling food to the public receive a food hygiene rating from zero (very poor) to five (very good). A rating of three is considered generally satisfactory. Approximately 96% of the rated food businesses in Norwich achieve at least this standard but nearly 50% of businesses achieve the top rating of five.”

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Vivien Thomas asked if the Cabinet Member could comment on why such a high number of businesses achieved a satisfactory score or above and how this compared with other areas.

The Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services responded by saying that the national average for places achieving satisfactory or above was 915, compared to

the Council's 95%. He said the national average for five stars was 38%, compared to the Council's 50% and that this was achieved because the Council's Food Safety Team, when it was undertaking these visits and was constantly speaking with the business owners, trying to ensure that they got the higher hygiene ratings etc. rather than just undertaking the inspection quickly in standard manner, which would ensure that boxes were ticked. He said that what was important to the Council was the health of the people of Norwich and, as a trade union official, he had seen the types of situations where his members had suffered from food poisoning and had to retire on the grounds of ill-health. He said he was proud of the Council's Food Hygiene Team, and he commended their good work.

## **Question 7**

**Councillor Maguire to ask the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety the following question:**

"With an ever-reducing amount of Council housing, due to the impact of the Tory enhanced right to buy, many residents now rent privately in my ward. Over the years I have met an increasing number of constituents who have benefitted from the city Council LetNCC scheme whereby private landlords pass their properties to us and we ensure a tenant provided with a home. Can the Cabinet comment on the success of this scheme in terms of the numbers of properties used and tenants provided a home who otherwise might have been left in temporary accommodation?"

**Councillor Jones, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety's response:**

"The LET NCC scheme currently leases over 300 properties from private landlords to provide much needed accommodation to households threatened with homelessness who are working with the Council's housing options team. Since April 2023 63 households have been offered and accepted a tenancy within the scheme which has resulted in these households no longer needing housing assistance.

The scheme currently has an advert in the Spring Citizen magazine recruiting new landlords to bring their properties to the scheme which is already generating a good deal of interest".

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Maguire asked what the benefits were for landlords using the scheme and whether the Council could promote this still further.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety responded by saying that it was important to get landlords onboard because this was about providing another source of housing. She said that the Scheme ensured a guaranteed rent, no management fee and expert advice and information was available. She added that landlords had the chance to be part of the cycle of breaking homelessness and this was about affordable housing for people and a positive means of letting out property.

## Question 8

### **Councillor Padda to ask the Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion the following question:**

“I have been impressed with the successes of the Love Norwich campaign run by the city Council across communities in Norwich. Many of the interventions have been largescale and presumably involved significant resources. From talking to constituents, I believe there is a need for smaller and perhaps more flexible interventions which are more community led but could deliver practical and positive changes. Can the Cabinet Member comment on whether he believes the new Love Norwich community grants scheme will deliver this?”

### **Councillor Giles, the Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion's response:**

“Smaller, community led interventions often have a sustained impact on a neighbourhood, enabling residents to take local action themselves alongside fulfilling the wider duties the Council delivers.

I am therefore extremely pleased that we have been able to establish the Love Norwich community grants to do just this.

The scheme has been integrated to link in with the existing support our community enabling team to provide, to make processes as easy as possible for residents.

To date we have received 21 applications, have made 5 awards, are in the process of assessing a further 6 and are supporting the remaining 10 to develop their ideas ahead of assessing the applications.

The grant scheme has been created to encourage and support residents and community groups to take grassroots community action to improve their neighbourhood. It is designed to eliminate barriers to participation through a simplified application process and timely assessment, whilst the integration with the community enabling team means we can ensure the appropriate other support is in place, such as whether any permissions or insurances are required, whether they would benefit from being put in touch with others doing similar initiatives, or whether it would help to borrow some equipment.

This flexible approach is enabling residents to design and deliver practical changes to spaces that are important to them; from designing out problems, to improving already loved community spaces.

We are excited about the positive impact this grant scheme will have on multiple neighbourhoods and communities. Community led action, supported by a Love Norwich grant, enables meaningful ground up change that transforms spaces and builds stronger communities with increased connection, improved wellbeing and greater pride and ownership of where they live.”

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Padda asked if the Cabinet Member could set out what projects Norwich Community grants had funded to date.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion responded by saying that the resurfacing of the cycle speedway in Harford Park; a safe outdoor space for the Charity “Get me out these four walls”, which worked with mothers who were experiencing post-natal depression and social isolation issues after pregnancy; arts murals in Suffolk Square; raised beds and enhancements for the Civic and Community Gardens.

### **Question 9**

**Councillor Peek to ask the Cabinet Member for Resources the following question:**

“Last year this Council, like all in England, witnessed the first impact of Voter ID and the consequent damage this caused to thousands of people for whom voting became more difficult, cumbersome and in some cases proved impossible. Approaching the second anniversary of this and with the heightened risk of an approaching General Election and potentially many more people being negatively impacted, can the Cabinet Member comment on the steps this Council has taken to limit the impact of the regressive and unfortunate national policy?”

**Councillor Kendrick, the Cabinet Member for Resources' response:**

“The Government introduced the requirement for all electors to show photographic ID in December 2022. This made the local elections on 4 May 2023 the first year where electors had to provide photographic ID to vote. The Electoral Commission ran a national campaign to raise awareness which included adverts on TV, radio, billboards, buses, on social media and website banners and in local newspapers across England and we have been assured will be promoting it nationally again this year.

In addition to this, Norwich City Council is producing a comprehensive communications plan to further ensure that residents are aware of the requirements to bring photographic ID to vote at polling stations. All existing electors that are currently set up to vote in polling stations have been written to with full details of what forms of photographic ID are acceptable in polling stations. They have also been given the appropriate information to enable them set up a postal vote or alternative ID if required. All individuals added to the electoral register are informed of the new requirements.”

### **Question 10**

**Councillor Prinsley to ask the Cabinet Member for Climate Change the following question:**

“I was pleased to see that early public engagement on the Council’s forthcoming Norwich Climate Action Plan has been launched, with a survey live on GetTalking Norwich and residents having had a chance to input in-person at Norwich Science Festival. Could the Cabinet Member comment on the importance of this strategy and consultation process?”

**Councillor Hampton, the Cabinet Member for Climate Change's response:**

“The Norwich Climate Action Plan is a crucial step towards our target of achieving a net zero city by 2045. The plan will set out what we need to do as a city to achieve our 2045 target, but also what’s needed to ensure the city remains resilient and prosperous as the climate continues to change.

We’re currently working with the Norwich Climate Commission to develop the plan, and hearing from the public at this early stage is a key part of the process. By engaging with people now, we can ensure that the Plan is informed by the diverse range of views across Norwich, and as such is rooted in the perspectives, concerns, and ideas of our residents.

Having a presence at the Norwich Science Festival was an important part of this engagement process, listening to our residents’ hopes and concerns for the future. It was inspiring to hear from Norwich’s young people who are passionate about the environment and our city, and a great opportunity to reassure them that Norwich City Council are taking the climate crisis seriously. Many people were impressed by the great work that we’ve undertaken as a Council, ranging from the solar panels and air source heat pump on City Hall to the multi-million pound retrofit projects that we’ve delivered, but they also shared our desire to be more ambitious for Norwich. The Norwich Climate Action Plan will set out how we can do that, and anyone wishing to feed into our early engagement can do so on Get Talking Norwich until the 25 March.”

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Prinsley asked if the Cabinet Member could further expand on what the Council’s role was, versus who else needed to be involved in this journey.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change responded by saying that in order for net zero to be achieved as a city by 2045, there was a need for partners and others who were going to be required, to act too. She said that it was not something that the Council could achieve on its own and the Norwich Climate Action Plan would be looking at how the Council could lead, enable and co-ordinate the climate action. She added that the Norwich Climate Commission was being consulted throughout the development of the Plan and at this relatively early stage, a key area it was giving advice on was what the scope of the Plan should be and how the Council got the balance right between largely putting emphasis and resourcing elements the Council could deliver or influence, while at the same time creating a full and honest picture of what net zero for the city would entail overall, which would require some changes and the Council would have a more limited ability to deliver and also feedback from the initial formal public consultation would help provide a steer as to how to get that balance right.

She said as a Council, it had a key role to play with regard to leading by example with its own estate and cutting its own operational emissions, for example, housing, which was important given that domestic were the largest of emissions in Norwich. She said the Council needed to deliver on its ambitious commitment to retrofit its own stock not just for the benefits that would bring directly but also in the wider context of strengthening the net zero supply chain in Norwich. She said there would be areas, which required engagement with or perhaps lobbying partners. She referred also to transport (the second largest source of emissions in



the city) and the need to work in partnership with Norfolk County Council to promote active and sustainable transport in the city, while being clear at the same time, what the Council's own vision was and holding them to account if this was not being met. She said there did need to be an increase in emission nationally to make sure the Council had the power and resources available to go as far and fast as the Council could towards net zero for Norwich and to that end, she said, a general election could not come soon enough.

### **Question 11**

**Councillor Mike Sands to ask the Leader of the Council the following question:**

"Ensuring the city develops in a sustainable manner, working with partners, to deliver upon the goals to creating new homes, infrastructure and the associated benefit from coordinated growth remains a key planning and political priority for this administration. Can the Cabinet Member comment on whether the proposed Greater Norwich Local Plan will deliver our shared objectives?"

**Councillor Stonard, the Leader of the Council's response:**

"I will say more when I introduce the item proposing the adoption of the local plan shortly, but doing so will play a major role in both delivering the objectives we share with our partners and our priorities for Norwich.

The GNLP strategy and site allocations will assist the delivery of new homes, including affordable homes. Over 45,000 new homes will be delivered in Greater Norwich from the start of the plan period in 2018 to 2038. The majority of these will be delivered in and around the city, with good access to our growing employment base and services. The plan will help the delivery of a wide variety of new jobs, including jobs in growth sectors such as agri-tech, life sciences, advanced engineering, and digital creative industries.

Having a local plan in place brings major benefits. It:

- Maximises the potential to deliver the affordable homes we so desperately need;
- De-risks the development of allocated sites, supports our long-term joint approach for strategically planned growth and greatly reduces the likelihood of speculative development on unallocated sites;
- And increases the likelihood of securing funding and support to help deliver high quality development.

So, adopting it will bring significant benefits, helping us to meet our housing and jobs needs, address climate change and deliver the infrastructure we need."

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Sands asked that, moving forward, how was the redevelopment of Anglia Square reflected in the Corporate Plan.

The Leader of the Council responded by saying that with regard to Anglia Square, the policy for the site quoted identity housing-led, mixed used development of squared site and surrounding vacant land. He said that redevelopment proposals would also need to include retail and employment and community and leisure facilities. He said that the regeneration of Anglia Square was also intended to be the catalyst for substantial investment further regeneration works which, as a result, the whole of the northern city area as defined in the Plan, was identified as a strategic regeneration area, which would help enormously in terms of future development.

## **Question 12**

### **Councillor Haynes to ask the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety the following question:**

“With a rampant housing crisis, we should be doing all we can to ensure that homes are not sat empty in our city, and that long-term empty properties are brought back into use to increase the demand of quality housing in the city. Last April, Councillor Beth Jones said that there is a plan in place to expand the service aimed at reducing the number of empty homes in the city. She said that the first step of this is the restructure that was underway at the time, but we have not had any answers about whether work has actually started on this. Can the Cabinet Member confirm whether or not the Council has an Empty Homes Strategy and the resources to deal with this?”

### **Councillor Jones, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety's response:**

“The restructure of regulatory services was completed in April 2023 and the resultant recruitment has now been completed. There has been further investment in the service in order to allow improved digitisation of various records and regulatory process. This is changing and should not only improve services to our customers but will also increase efficiency of our operations allowing an increased proportion of officer time to be spent on tackling issues such as long-term empty properties.

Whilst these efficiencies are being delivered, we continue to work across the Council and with property owners to address issues associated with empty homes where there is a detrimental impact on neighbours or the amenity of an area. It remains our intention to produce an empty homes strategy in due course.”

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Haynes asked if it could be defined in due course as to when the Strategy would be ready.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety responded by saying that the Strategy had now moved outside of her portfolio area however, it would become part of a wider strategy and whilst she couldn't say for certain when the strategy would be ready, she did say this would be discussed with current portfolio holder.

### Question 13

#### **Councillor Catt to ask the Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services the following question:**

“Data from last year showed that 740 privately rented properties in Norwich had an EPC rating of either F or G, falling below the minimum legal standard for privately rented properties. It is the job of local authorities to enforce these rules and ensure the renters are not suffering in extremely cold and leaky homes or having to pay excessive amounts on heating during a cost-of-living crisis. When I asked what enforcement action the Council was taking on this, I was told the Council does not collect data on this (despite data of this nature previously being sent to another Councillor). What enforcement action is the Council taking against these landlords?”

#### **Councillor Fulton-McAlister, the Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services' response:**

“Norwich City Council will always take robust action against unethical landlords where the law allows. We will not shy away from issuing the maximum penalties and will always prioritise tenants. Unfortunately, however, the law is not as strong as we would like.

The Housing Act 2004 gives Local Authorities the power to enforce minimum Housing Standards in the private rented sector using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). One key limitation of The Housing Act is that the EPC rating of a property cannot be considered in isolation, this often limits any legal action we could take against a landlord, it could however limit their power in the landlord/tenant relationship such as they may find it difficult to issue a section 21 eviction notice and enforce it within a court, while we will provide advice to tenants on these matters ultimately it is for them/their legal representatives/their tenant's unions to utilise but it could fall short of the legal threshold for us to take enforcement action. Even if a property meets an EPC rating of E, landlords will need to provide adequate heating and thermal comfort. Local Authorities can prosecute or issue penalties of up to £30,000 when hazards including excess cold are identified in a property and not rectified. As it stands, it is a requirement for privately rented properties to have an **Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)** rating of at least **E** before the tenancy is renewed or the house is rented out to a new tenant. The legislation prevents landlords from renting out a property with a rating of **F** or **G**. As of 1 April 2020, this applied to new and existing tenancies. We therefore expect to see a reduction year on year as existing tenancies come to an end.

As part of our service improvement plan for regulatory services, we are reviewing how we record data regarding conditions in the private rented housing stock and any actions we take to address this.

In the meantime, the Council will continue to investigate cases of excess cold in the private rented stock that are reported to us and will take the appropriate action where necessary to address.”

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Catt asked if more details could be given about the strategy and what action the Council might take; would there be a programme and resources for a way to enforce these rules, rather than waiting for renters to come and complain as often they were not aware of their rights.

The Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services responded by saying that he recognised that backbench Members required support in bringing such complaints forward but that ultimately, the Council was hindered by Conservative government cuts year upon year, which was designed to ensure that Councils could not assist renters because most Conservative MPs were private landlords. He said that ultimately, what the Council did want to do was to ensure that, in the longer-term, the Council had a self-funding system, which would fine landlords the maximum permitted under the law, and to ensure that these fines were used to pay for the staff required.

The Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services said that this would be part of a longer-term strategy to ensure that the Council was able to have a more proactive approach, however, unfortunately, in the short-term, this was not realistic to expect the Council to immediately start taking on additional staff to have an immediate proactive approach.

The Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services said he had spoken in the Chamber multiple times on “landlordism” having been a scourge on society, especially when it came to residential landlords who often exploited the most vulnerable within society. He said that the Council needed to ensure that when there was a change in government, that the Council fully utilise the changes that this would bring.

#### **Question 14**

**Councillor Worley to ask the Cabinet Member for Resources the following question:**

“One of the items for the 7 of February Cabinet meeting, scrutiny committee papers, was made available to the public and Councillors at 11.27am on the day of Cabinet, just 6 hours ahead of the meeting. These were the recommendations of the scrutiny committee on two important issues: next year's budget, and a major programme of works for energy efficiency in the Council's 14.5k Council homes. Scrutiny is the Council's main way of holding Cabinet to account. The response from Cabinet to one report was given only verbally. Since November, 10 out of 18 Cabinet reports have been sent out well after the deadline agreed in our constitution. This lateness of key reports shows a Council in disarray with a clear lack of leadership. What will be done to ensure reports are on time?”

**Councillor Kendrick, the Cabinet Member for resources' response:**

“The recommendations from the scrutiny committee were tabled at the Cabinet meeting due to the scrutiny meeting being held at the end of the previous week. We appreciate this was not an ideal situation but unfortunately the timings of the meetings meant that this was the case. This was nothing to do with reports being late as seems to be suggested.

On the different matter of publishing reports. The Council has a forward plan for all committees to ensure that reports are published on time, however in few instances there may be urgent items, unforeseen circumstances or technical report content reasons that cause a slight delay in publishing reports, but this is by exception. Officers work extremely hard on behalf of us as Members to ensure we receive quality, comprehensive, thorough reports to enable informed decisions to be made on important matters – on few occasions, there may be a slight delay in order to make sure that none of these elements are compromised or to ensure we have the most up to date information possible.

In relation to your point about the Constitution, you will be aware that part 4 – codes and protocols access to information rules point 29 within our Constitution states that *'If an item is added to the agenda later, the revised agenda will be open to inspection from the time the item was added to the agenda'*.

And point 30 of part 4 of the Constitution states *'Where reports are prepared after the summons has been sent out, the designated officer shall make each such report available to the public as soon as the report is completed and sent to Councillors.'*

This is all within the rules and procedures that our constitution sets out.”

### **Question 15**

#### **Councillor Young to ask the Cabinet Member for Climate Change the following question:**

“Communal food waste bins need regular collection to remain sanitary, or they become smelly and a magnet for rodents. Despite residents and Councillors reporting it, a large communal food waste bin was uncollected since December in Charles Square. Does the Cabinet Member commit to making sure that there is a working process to swiftly empty and clean communal waste bins, even if contaminated, as leaving them for months with a red tag on is a blight on communities?”

#### **Councillor Hampton, the Cabinet Member for Climate Change's response:**

“The food waste bins are emptied weekly and cleaned monthly in the winter and fortnightly in the summer. Contaminated bins will be referred back to Biffa to add to the contamination runs. If this has not been collected, then residents should report this through the Council's website to ensure swift collection. I understand that the bin in Charles Square has recently been collected, however I have asked that our contractors add it to their next contamination run to ensure it is clean.”

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Young Catt asked if data was collected on contamination e.g. the timing of contamination collections following reports, and also frequency and location of contamination reports in order that preventative action on hot spots could be considered and if such data was available, could this be shared please?

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change responded by saying that she was unsure off the top of her head, which data could be shared but that she would look into this and hopefully be able to share her findings in due course.

### **Question 16**

**Councillor Francis to ask the Cabinet Member for Climate Change the following question:**

“Recent figures from Defra show that Norwich City Council is 210th out of 342 local authorities on its recycling rate, following a year of stagnant recycling rates falling below target for four quarters in a row. Is the Council reaching out to broadly comparable local authorities in the region such as Cambridge, Welwyn Hatfield, Colchester or St Albans to investigate best practice for how we can improve in Norwich?”

**Councillor Hampton, the Cabinet Member for Climate Change's response:**

“The Council offers a class leading range of recycling services. Whilst the Council’s recycling rates have not changed over the last few years, the amount of waste and recycling collected have reduced over the last 3 years. In this, we are similar to many Councils nationally and locally, and the latest published national recycling rate for 2021 is the same as it was in 2015.

Despite this, we are working hard to put the foundations in place for a new waste strategy that will deliver the Council’s environmental commitments. Whilst we are disappointed that the government has delayed the introduction of new legislation to extend producer responsibility for packaging, and introduce a deposit return scheme for drinks containers, we are committed to improving our services and recycling rates over the next 12 to 18 months. This will be done through a range of interventions from redesigned collection services to improved engagement and enforcement.

Compared with predominantly urban LAs, with levels of high deprivation, our performance is in the top 50% and top 25% for areas with a similar population. There is room for improvement, as there always is, and we are always happy to benchmark our performance with comparable Councils.”

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Francis asked what evidence the Cabinet Member had of reaching out to other Councils and how she was benchmarking her performance.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change responded by saying that only this morning she had met with Norfolk Waste Partnership, which involved talking with the Council’s immediate neighbours in the region about what the different districts and County were doing and sharing that practice but was more than happy to provide the information in due course.

### **Question 17**

**Councillor Galvin to ask the Cabinet Member for Well-being and Culture the following question:**

“One Norwich Practices, which provided an estimated 120,000 essential appointments to patients a year in our city, including through the much-used Walk-In Centre, collapsed, and went into receivership in January due to severe financial issues. Could you please explain the assessment the Council has done on the impact the transition of service is having on the health landscape and risk to patients in Norwich, including the steps has it taken to engage with partners to try to minimise risk to patients, including vulnerable service users?”

**Councillor Kidman, the Cabinet Member for Well-being and Culture's response:**

“Thank you for your question.

At the Council meeting on 28 November 2023, the previous Cabinet Member’s response to a similar question from you was that the City Council looked to Norfolk County Council as the responsible body for public health and health scrutiny to review this matter further.

At this same meeting the Cabinet Member’s response to a question from Councillor Price also on this subject, provided:

“Reassurance about our continued work to provide services to some of the most vulnerable within our communities by saying that: the City Council will continue to provide vital services to individuals who present as homeless, as well as the work it does to prevent homelessness and support some of the most vulnerable in our communities.

As Norfolk County Council has responsibility for public health and health scrutiny, any questions about the impacts of this important service need to be taken up with relevant County Council colleagues or those responsible for commissioning the services of OneNorwich Practices.”

By way of a supplementary question, which referenced the Leader of the Council and former Financial Director of OneNorwich from November 2021 to November 2023, Councillor Stonard, Councillor Galvin asked if he (Councillor Stonard) could explain why he did not disclose this interest on his Norwich City Council Register of Interests form, whilst on the Board of Directors the Lord Mayor stressed that the supplementary question be addressed to the Cabinet Member to whom the original question was put to.

Councillor Galvin asked the Cabinet Member for Well-being and Culture whether she thought Councillor Stonard should answer questions in public on why he did not disclose his interest when he had been a Director of OneNorwich.

The Cabinet Member for Well-being and Culture responded by saying that her original answer had outlined that Norfolk County Council was the body responsible for public health and, as part of her portfolio, she had a place on the Care Board and could raise these concerns with it. She reiterated that public health was not a City Council function and felt that this response was relevant to the supplementary question put. She said she was happy to come back to Councillor Galvin with any responses she might receive.

## **Question 18**

**Councillor Price to ask the Leader of the Council the following question:**

“On 28 November 2023, the Council passed a motion committing to signpost to residents the resources to assist them in making informed choices on who they bank with, with particular reference to ethical considerations including fossil fuel exposure, on the Norwich City Council Website and on Norwich City Council social media channels. What actions have been taken with regard to these resolutions since November?”

**Councillor Stonard, the Leader of the Council's response:**

“The Council can make their own pledges, but it does not have any duty or power to steer its residents in relation to persuading them about making informed decisions regarding who they bank with.

Given this, it would be entirely inappropriate for the Council to use any of its communications channels for this particular matter.

However, we will continue, within the powers and resources available to always encourage residents to consider ethical and sustainable choice and our support and promotion of such policies such as using local credit unions is example of this.”

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Price asked if the Leader was wrong then to support the motion put by the Green Party or was, he wrong now when he refused to action the motion he had voted for.

The Leader of the Council responded by saying that he would be very happy to go away and look at this.

## **Question 19**

**Councillor Hoechner to ask the Cabinet Member for Resources the following question:**

“I understand that no more than 80 people can be allowed into the Council Chamber due to fire safety requirements. At the full Council meeting on 30 January, people were sent into the overflow room even though well less than 80 people were in the Council Chamber, as can be seen on the YouTube recording. Assuming that numbers in the Council Chamber are being closely monitored, it should be possible to only send those Members of the public to the overflow room who can no longer be accommodated safely within the Council Chamber. Was there a specific reason why the Council Chamber was not filled to capacity before people were directed to the overflow room, seeing that the quality of the attendance experience in the overflow room is certainly lower than that of being in the actual Council Chamber?”

**Councillor Kendrick, the Cabinet Member for Resources' response:**



“We are always pleased to have more people interested in attending, but the fire safety requirements in the Council Chamber means we can accommodate a maximum of 80 people in the room which includes Councillors, our officers, guests, and security. If we become aware that there may be a significant public presence, an overflow room is set up to assist in trying to enable as many Members of the public as possible to see and hear the meeting, and we ensure security officers are present on site to assist in the appropriate management of the meeting locations and the safety of all attending. These decisions are made primarily considering safety, risk assessment and public access to the meetings.

Several factors can influence the decision to utilise a second space proactively:

- Anticipated numbers of those people who have indicated their attendance.
- Ensuring comfortable occupancy: Reaching or exceeding the designated capacity, even slightly, can lead to a feeling of overcrowding and discomfort for participants. By occasionally utilising a second room, we aim to maintain a comfortable environment conducive to productive engagement.
- Anticipating increased attendance: If there's a possibility of additional participants arriving, having a second room prepared allows for a smooth transition and avoids last-minute adjustments that could disrupt the event flow.
- Facilitating efficient movement: In case of an emergency evacuation, having participants spread across two designated spaces allows for a quicker and more orderly process.

When we are aware of exact numbers, we are able to make adjustments to the arrangements as the Lord Mayor did at the last meeting of full Council to allow Members of the public into the chamber at an appropriate time.”

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Hoechner asked if the Cabinet Member could explain the rationale behind preferential treatment given to Councillor invitees over other members of the public interested in listening to the meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Resources responded by saying that the Council was very much committed to transparency and had the opportunity to have its business livestreamed and where there was overcapacity, another room was made available and did not see anything wrong with Members being accompanied by other interested parties and that the Lord Mayor reserved the right to maintain public order and to allow others into the Chamber, where possible.

## **Question 20**

**Councillor Osborn to ask the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety the following question:**

“In January 2023 residents reported damage in Talbot Square due to flooding, and a major repair works order was logged. A target completion date was set for March 2023. In November 2023 residents contacted me to say the repairs had not

been done and they had heard nothing despite reporting again. I sent in a Civica Enquiry on 23 November, and on 19 December, I was told that NCSL had been contacted for an update. On 12 January 2024 I was told in a separate response to my enquiry that NCSL had now been instructed to carry out the repair. Please can the Cabinet Member explain why the initial major repairs order was not fulfilled and why it has subsequently taken nearly two months to get it reinstated?"

**Councillor Jones, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety's response:**

"The initial order was issued to NCSL on 13 January 2023 to remove existing ceiling boards and renew, whilst creating new loft access following a flood at the property. These works were not completed satisfactorily.

A further order was raised by Norwich City Council's property services team in early 2024 and issued to NCSL's major works team. These works are scheduled to be completed week commencing 11 March 2024.

Significant work has been undertaken over the past 6 months to improve systems, and in the creation of additional operational roles to improve tracking and communication with residents. As part of the ongoing improvement NCSL have also introduced daily checks on work orders to verify their status, and take additional action as required."

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Osborn asked if the Cabinet Member could share any data that had had been accrued as a result of these daily checks on work orders that had been carried out to verify their status, and what, if any additional action had been taken.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety responded by asking Councillor Osborn to email her the details of his request and that she would respond to him then.

**Question 21**

**Councillor Calvert to ask the Leader of the Council the following question:**

"At the last Cabinet meeting Councillor Stonard seemed to suggest that an annual 28% increase in Freedom of Information requests was the result of opposition Councillors making requests. Does the portfolio holder stand by that analysis given that less than 1% of FOI requests in the last year were from Councillors?"

**Councillor Stonard, the Leader of the Council's response:**

I disagree with the suggestion from the Leader of the Norwich Greens that the number of FOIs the Council receives represents a level of mistrust or a lack of transparency. The Council have seen an increase in the number of requests received. This trend is not limited to Norwich City Council as other public authorities and neighbouring Councils have seen a similar or even greater increase in the number of requests. The increase in the number of requests, received under either the Freedom of Information Act and / or the Environmental Information Regulations, between 2022 and 2023 was 13%.

I would add that despite this increase, the Council provided on-time response to over 95% of requests in 2023, this I would suggest, highlights our dedication to transparency and public engagement. However, I agree with your analysis that less than 1 percent of all requests received are from Norwich City Councillors.”

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Calvert asked if public trust was not an issue within the Council, why did so many people have to resort to the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act to obtain information they were legally entitled to.

The Leader of the Council responded by saying that if Councillor Calvert read Councillor Stonard’s response to his original question, he (Councillor Calvert) would see what the answer to his supplementary question was. Councillor Stonard then said that Norwich was not anyway different to many Councils in the area which had seen a similar or greater in FOI requests and he did not accept that the number of requests actually related to the measure of the transparency of the Council.

## **Question 22**

### **Councillor Lubbock to ask the Leader of the Council the following question:**

“Recently I have become aware of Councillors being excluded from public meetings and not being informed of consultations which affect their area. I feel this amounts to not treating Councillors with the respect their position deserves and purposely preventing them from effectively carrying out their duties as a city Councillor.

Examples of such exclusion. There was an event convened by the Council on Parks & Open Spaces which I heard about from a resident who had attended the event. Another was the 'online' consultation on the refurbishment of the children’s playground in Eaton Park which I came across by accident.

I find this attitude of 'side lining' Councillors very disrespectful. How are we to represent our residents and encourage their participation in such events when we ourselves are excluded from even knowing about them?”

### **Councillor Stonard, the Leader of the Council's response:**

“Please can I assure you that Councillors are not being excluded from involvement in matters that they should be involved in.

I believe the Parks and Open Spaces event that you refer to was one held at Norwich City Football Club. This event was aimed at organisations involved in the management, maintenance, conservation and enhancement of our parks and green spaces. This included representatives from organisations such as the wildlife trust, county gardens trust, friends’ groups, volunteer organisations from across the city. 120 delegates attended from over 60 organisations. Some Members did attend as representatives of the environmental organisations.

It was specifically to assist in the early stages of preparation with the Parks and Open Strategy which is shortly to be discussed at scrutiny and will be considered through Council processes during the next civic year.

With regard to the Eaton Park consultation, you should have been informed. Please accept my apologies for the omission, I understand the consultation was extended to allow you to comment. I will ensure our processes require Members to be alerted to consultation in their ward in future.”

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Lubbock asked if communication amongst Councillors could be improved so they were not excluded from events being held.

The Leader of the Council responded by saying that there was no attempt to exclude her, or any other Councillor, from the event referred to, which had been held at the football club and that there was no reason why there would be a wish to have done so. He said he was happy to go away and look at this again but promised Councillor Lubbock that the invitation list drawn up did not deliberately intend to exclude.

### **Question 23**

**Councillor Stutely to ask the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety the following question:**

“As a former Non-executive Director of Lion Homes (Norwich) Limited, I welcome the recent application for the first phase of development at the Mile Cross Depot site on Mile Cross Road, and I am proud of my own contribution to this successful venture. I also welcome the commitment to 100% affordable housing for this phase. Please can the Cabinet Member for Housing confirm that the allocation will be 100% Council owned housing available for a social rent?”

**Councillor Jones, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety's response:**

“Mile Cross is an exciting development and I very much look forward to this development coming through the planning process. If we gain planning permission, officers will then continue to develop the design and continue to assess the overall residential viability of the scheme. It is only then can we take a view on the overall affordability to HRA and formally agree the rent levels that will be set.”

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Stutely asked the Cabinet Member to confirm that Phases 2 and 3 would be 100% affordable, as well as Phase 1, and if not, what would the allocations be.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety responded by saying that Phase 1 was 100% affordable and looking at social and whether affordable, she said that was where viability was narrow but actually did not want to commit in the event it was not social rent at this point because there were several years in which to construct and some of the things needed in design in construction would be cheaper as industries developed and it became more

common place, particularly when building in a more energy efficient way, it was hoped that some of the costs might come down, but her aim would be social rent but 100% affordable worst case, but hopefully 100% social. It was, she said a question of getting good quality homes built that were affordable for residents and that this was a 100% commitment as well as building these and setting the rents now.

#### **Question 24**

**Councillor Davis to ask the Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services the following question:**

“At Budget Council last month, the accepted Independent Group Amendment allocated an additional £150,000 for Licensing enforcement resources. It was understood and agreed that this would generate two additional Enforcement Officers. The amendment was agreed following the decision to make an existing temporary enforcement officer a permanent role. Please can the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Regulatory Services confirm that the additional resources agreed at Budget Council will be allocated to a further two enforcement roles to ensure this Council has three enforcement officers in 2024/25.”

**Councillor Fulton-McAlister, the Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services' response:**

“The Council decision was to agree an additional £150,000 of one-off resources to support the important work of licensing services. The use of a previous underspend in this way recognises that offsetting permanent savings were not identified at the same time as reserves do not support the permanent recruitment of staff, it will however help us to invest in the enforcement team on a long term self-funding basis. This cash injection will afford us the opportunity to deploy immediate action where needed which we envisage will be across both licensing and enforcement activity; this might be seen through some short term staffing resources to focus on specific areas but might also require the use of relevant companies with skills to carry out other more specialist work, for example inspections, or where a team might be more effective if obtained from a single contractor rather than the Council seeking to recruit to a number of temporary roles. This will all take place alongside the evaluation of the impact of the digitalisation, which is happening across the service and will, as a result, inform the case for any future budget provision considerations including whether any net additional permanent resource is needed.”

#### **Question 25**

**Councillor Oliver to ask the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety the following question:**

“Security entry door systems at the entrances to our blocks of flats are vital to help people feel secure in their homes and deter anti-social behaviour. We welcome all new installations and upgrades to existing systems. However, we are aware of long delays with some blocks in my ward, Town Close, and across the city. Please can the Cabinet Member for housing explain why there have been such long

delays, and confirm that promises made to our residents for installations this coming spring will go ahead?"

**Councillor Jones, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety's response:**

"The installation of new doors and access control systems is under review. We are looking at how this can be streamlined and made more efficient. It should be borne in mind that in every instance we are required to assess the viability of actually installing such a system so that they are fully compliant with current regulations. We then have to undertake S20 consultation with leaseholders and obtain planning consent before we can contractually commit to undertaking the physical works. Our current programme for 2024-2025 comprises c 80 blocks where new door entry systems will be installed, and further schemes will be assessed as these are identified."

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Oliver asked if the Deputy Leader could commit to communicating any changes in plans.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety responded by saying that she had tried to secure timescales but the person she wanted to speak with was unavailable but committed to getting the current schedule and update any changes as they arose.

**Question 26**

**Councillor Everett to ask the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety the following question:**

"Independent Councillors often support residents that are waiting for repairs to their properties, and we always hope that things will go smoothly. However, often they do not, and residents are left with out-of-pocket expenses. The complaints procedure is hard to follow, and the nature of complaints often misunderstood which leads to delays and further problems.

What is being done, to include work on better accessibility, to streamline the process and ensure residents receive an adequate review and response, and, where appropriate, outcomes that accurately reflect all reasonable costs?"

**Councillor Jones, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety's response:**

"Our aim is to always put something right when it has gone wrong for our residents. Each individual circumstance is decided on a case-by-case basis with regards to out of pocket expenses in consultation with the resident. We offer an accessible service to make a complaint whether it is by email, telephone, online or post. We have a clear complaints policy which is aligned to Ombudsman requirements and best practice.

Our complaint handlers are trained to act to resolve complaints promptly and fairly. We are aware we need to improve the time taken to respond to some complaints

and to fully understand the nature of the complaint, which we are taking action to address.

From April 2024 we will be obliged by law to follow the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, which will drive further change that will benefit residents.

Finally, we review the complaint process annually to assess if further improvements can be made to ease the customer experience. Should you, or any other Councillor, have specific suggestions please do share these."

## **Question 27**

### **Councillor Champion to ask the Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion the following question:**

"As with an ever-increasing number of reports, there have been delays to the release of the Parks Audit, which would allow insight into the context of other initiative, such as the Biodiversity Strategy. The Council could take inspiration from interesting projects in other areas of the country, such as insect hotels, edible gardens, and rewilding. How will the Council use the Parks Audit to help meet its biodiversity objectives, which increase the city's resilience in the face of climate change, as per one of the pillars of the new corporate plan?"

### **Councillor Giles, the Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion's response:**

"Progress on the Parks Strategy will be reported to Scrutiny Committee next week and is underpinned by an audit of open spaces based on quality and value. Over 100 sites have been audited to date, including all parks. Separate condition surveys and accessibility audits of all 81 play areas have been completed. The audit of all sites is scheduled for completion by the end of this month.

Work on the Strategy has also entailed a full review of a wide range of current policies and need to be reflected in the strategy and this includes the biodiversity strategy. Parks Officers have also been heavily involved in the recent Biodiversity Baseline Study carried out by the county Council and this is reflected in the Strategy. There will be clear recommendations emerging in the strategy highlighting priorities to further enhance the natural green spaces we already manage as well as priorities for other spaces, identifying opportunities for enhancing biodiversity, whether through changes to management regimes sensitive to community wishes and heritage, increasing the number of pollinators, and tree planting initiatives.

Our small team of officers work incredibly hard achieving a huge amount for our parks and open spaces. As you will be aware parks and open spaces is a non-statutory service, and I would call on the Government to reflect to value local communities place on their parks and open spaces by providing local authorities with revenue funding to manage them."

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Champion asked whether Ward Councillors, with unique knowledge of the local area be asked about insights to

help shape proposals and how they can be improved and be sought during the internal consultation, which was set to be the first draft to be completed for the June Cabinet

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Social Inclusion responded by saying that in terms of any specific proposals, he was happy to commit to consultation with Ward Councillors. He said there would be a roadshow of events around the City looking at parks, community centres, libraries and suchlike to consult residents on shaping the Strategy. He said that if Scrutiny wished to look into this over the next Civic Year, he would be very happy to return to discuss the Strategy and take questions.





## **Council - Annual Meeting**

**15.30 – 17:00**

**21 May 2024**

Present: Councillor Thomas (Lord Mayor following election), (Sheriff, following election), Councillors Ackroyd, Bolton, Caine, Calvert, Carrington, Catt, Champion, Davis, Driver, Fox, Fulton-McAlister, Galvin, Giles, Hampton, Harper, Haynes, Hoechner, Huntley, Jones, Kendrick, Kidman, Lubbock, Maguire, Oliver, Osborn, Packer, Padda, Price, Prinsley, Sands (M), Sands (S), Schmierer, Smith, Stonard, Wright

Apologies: Councillors Carrington, Francis, Haynes, Osborn, Worley and Young

### **1. Lord Mayor's Announcements**

The Lord Mayor said a few words of welcome to councillors, guests and officers and detailed the practical arrangements for the meeting.

In accordance with tradition at council meetings, the Lord Mayor highlighted some of the events he had attended over the last two months, as follows:

- He had the privilege of joining the Three Dads, advocates for suicide prevention following their own tragic losses, in the last couple of miles of their 500-mile suicide prevention walk.
- A precedent had been set for future Lord Mayors, as he had attended the 5am May Day celebrations at St James Hill with Kemps Men, and later at the cathedral.
- He had the honour of previewing the new entrance to Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery.
- He had attended the Nourishing Norwich Award ceremony and commended the young people at Norwich City College for their stellar catering, hospitality, and entertaining skills that had contributed to this event.
- Accompanied by the Sheriff, he had celebrated his last evening as Lord Mayor and appropriately as "Admiral of the Wensum", with a trip on the River Wensum hosted by the Sea Cadets.

### **2. Election of Lord Mayor**

Councillor Stonard moved, and Councillor Schmierer seconded the motion, and it was:

**RESOLVED**, unanimously, to elect Councillor Thomas to the office of Lord Mayor of Norwich for the 2024-25 Civic Year.

Councillor Vivien Thomas read and signed the declaration of acceptance of office and acknowledged the honour conferred on her. She would be attended by Vaughan Thomas, as Lord Mayor's Consort.

(The Lord Mayor (Councillor Thomas) in the chair.)

### **3. Appointment of Sheriff**

Councillor Hampton moved, and Councillor Wright seconded the motion, and it was:

**RESOLVED**, unanimously, to appoint Sirajul Islam to the office of Sheriff of Norwich for the 2024-25 Civic Year.

Sirajul Islam then made and signed the declaration of acceptance of office and acknowledged the honour conferred on him. He would be attended by Sadia Islam, as the Sheriff's Consort.

The Sheriff named Ms Jane Mary Anderson as the Under-Sheriff.

### **4. Vote of Thanks to the Outgoing Lord Mayor and the Outgoing Sheriff**

Councillor Stonard moved, and Councillor Ackroyd seconded the vote of thanks, and it was:

**RESOLVED**, unanimously, to express the council's appreciation of the valuable service rendered to the city by:

- (1) Councillor James Wright as Lord Mayor and by the Lady Mayoress Kate Atkins and the other Lord Mayor's Consorts during the past year and, on behalf of the citizens of Norwich, records its warmest thanks.
- (2) Dr Janet Sheldon, as Sheriff, and Jo Gillies-Wheatly, as Sheriff's consort, during the past year and, on behalf of the citizens of Norwich, records its warmest thanks.

The outgoing Lord Mayor and Sheriff then returned thanks.

### **5. Election of Deputy Lord Mayor**

Councillor Ackroyd moved, and Councillor Jones seconded the motion, and it was:

**RESOLVED**, unanimously, to elect Councillor Wright, as Deputy Lord Mayor for the 2024-25 Civic Year.

### **6. Appointment of Honorary Recorder**

Councillor Stonard moved, and Councillor Hampton seconded the motion, and it was

**RESOLVED**, unanimously, to appoint Her Honour Judge, Alice Robinson, as the Honorary Recorder for the 2024-25 Civic Year.

### **7. Declarations of Interest**

(No declarations of interest were received.)

## **8. Political Proportionality of Norwich City Council 2024-25**

Councillor Kendrick moved, and Councillor Hampton seconded, the recommendations as detailed in the report, and it was:

**RESOLVED**, unanimously, to approve:

- (1) the political proportionality for the 2024-25 Civic Year;
- (2) that the Interim Head of Legal and Procurement, in consultation with the leaders of the political groups, be authorised to make the appointment of members to committees, joint committees and other working parties/panels of the Council, in accordance with the political balance rules.

## **9. Election of Leader of the Council**

Councillor Hampton moved and Councillor Jones seconded the motion.

Councillors Catt and Davis addressed the meeting.

**RESOLVED**, with 21 members voting in favour and 12 members voting against, to elect Councillor Stonard as the Leader of the Council for the 2024-2025 Civic Year.

## **10. Leader's Cabinet Appointments**

The Lord Mayor called on the Council, having elected Councillor Stonard as Leader of the Council, to note his Cabinet appointments, as detailed in the supplementary agenda as follows:

Councillor Hampton (Deputy Leader)  
Councillor Giles  
Councillor Jones  
Councillor Kendrick  
Councillor Kidman  
Councillor Packer

(Details of individual portfolios will be published in due course.)

## **11. Election of the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor Stonard moved, and Councillor Hampton seconded the motion, and it was:

**RESOLVED** to elect Councillor Wright as chair of the Scrutiny Committee for the 2024-25 Civic Year.

## **12. Election of the Chair of the Audit Committee**

Councillor Stonard moved, and Councillor Hampton seconded the motion, and it was:

**RESOLVED** to elect Councillor Price as chair of the Audit Committee for the 2024-25 Civic Year.

### **13. Election of the Chair of Planning Applications Committee**

Councillor Stonard moved, and Councillor Hampton seconded the motion, and it was:

**RESOLVED** to elect Councillor Driver as chair of the Planning Applications Committee for the 2024-25 Civic Year.

### **14. Election of the Chair of Licensing and Regulatory Committees**

Councillor Stonard moved, and Councillor Hampton seconded the motion, and it was:

**RESOLVED** to elect Councillor Huntley as chair of the Licensing and Regulatory Committees for the 2024-25 Civic Year.

### **15. Schedule of Meetings 2024-25**

Councillor Stonard moved, and Councillor Hampton seconded the revised schedule of meetings for 2024-25 as detailed in the supplementary agenda.

Councillor Wright moved, and Councillor Lubbock seconded, the following amendment to the schedule of meetings:

“That the issue of holding a council meeting in the school holidays in July had been addressed in the revised schedule (as detailed in the supplementary agenda), and to ask council to agree to move the Budget Council from Wednesday 19 February to Wednesday 12 February 2025, to avoid the school half-term holiday.”

On being put to the vote the amendment was carried and became part of the substantive item.

**RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of meetings for 2024-25 as amended.

### **16. APPOINTMENT OF A STATUTORY OFFICER**

(This item was withdrawn.)

LORD MAYOR



**Committee Name: COUNCIL**

**Committee Date: 16/07/2024**

**Report Title: Appointment of statutory chief officers**

**Portfolio: Councillor Kendrick, Cabinet member for resources**

**Report from: Chief executive**

**Wards: All Wards**

### **OPEN PUBLIC ITEM**

#### **Purpose**

To consider the appointments of:

- interim chief finance officer and section 151 officer.
- monitoring officer
- interim monitoring officer

The chief finance and section 151 officer and the monitoring officer are two of the three statutory roles that the Council must have in place.

#### **Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the Council:

- 1) Appoint Alistair Rush as interim director of finance and section 151 officer from 17 July 2024.
- 2) Appoint Janice Robinson as head of legal and governance and monitoring officer from 30 September 2024.
- 3) Appoint Emily Yule as monitoring officer from 3 September to 29 September 2024

#### **Policy Framework**

The Council has five corporate priorities, which are:

- An open and modern council
- A prosperous Norwich
- A fairer Norwich
- A climate responsive Norwich
- A future proof Norwich.

This report meets the Norwich City Council is an open and modern council corporate priority.

## Report Details

1. Appendix 9a, Paragraph 1 of the constitution states that full Council appoints proper officers. The roles of chief finance and s151 officer and monitoring officer are proper officers and appointments to these roles requires the approval of full Council.

### Appointment of interim chief finance and s151 officer

2. Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs. This officer in the case of Norwich City Council is the director of finance.
3. Section 113 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires that the officer appointed as Section 151 officer must be a member of one of the following bodies to qualify as a responsible officer:
  - (a) the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales;
  - (b) the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland;
  - (c) the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants;
  - (d) the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy;
  - (e) the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland;
  - (f) the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants; and
  - (g) any other body of accountants established in the United Kingdom and for the time being approved by the Secretary of State for the purposes of this section.
4. The chief finance officer and s151 officer has been provided by an interim resource since the permanent post holder left.
5. The role of director of finance, which incorporates the roles of chief finance officer and s151 officer has been the subject of a national recruitment campaign twice in the last eight months. The most recent campaign ran from April to June 2024 and whilst this yielded a reasonable number of applications, the appointments panel was not able to make an appointment from the shortlisted candidates. It should be noted that Norwich is not unique in finding this role difficult to appoint to on a permanent basis. There is a national recognition of the significant challenges facing the sector in recruiting and retaining statutory officers with an increasing reliance on the interim market.
6. An interim resource is therefore required to fulfil the role until such time as a permanent appointment can be made. This report seeks authority to appoint Alistair Rush as interim director of finance and s151 officer with effect from 17 July 2024.
7. Alistair Rush is a qualified and fellow member of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). He has substantial experience in director level and senior finance roles in local government; including county councils and a unitary council, where he previously held deputy S151 positions.
8. Alistair has held the position of interim deputy S151 for Norwich City Council since 20 November 2023.

## **Appointment of monitoring officer**

9. Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires the Council to designate one of its officers as its monitoring officer, to discharge statutory responsibilities relating to the Council's Constitution and arrangements for effective governance.
10. The main functions of the monitoring officer are set out below:
  - a) Ensuring that the Council acts within the law. They have a duty to report on matters they believe to be illegal or amount to maladministration or breach of statutory code under section 5 and 5A of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, as amended by Schedule 5 paragraph 24 of the Local Government Act 2000.
  - b) Responsible for matters relating to the conduct of elected members and officers. Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Council members and investigate any complaints in regard to the code of conduct and in accordance with the Council's standards provisions.
  - c) Responsible for the operation and regular review of the Council's Constitution and arrangements to support the Council's functions and activities.
  - d) Investigate any matter which they have reason to believe may constitute a reportable incident under Section 5 and 5A of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
  - e) Establishing and maintaining a register of interests for elected members
  - f) Implementation of the Council's policies which support whistleblowing, including conducting investigations.
11. The role of monitoring officer has been carried out by an interim resource following the resignation of the permanent post holder.
12. The Officer Employment Procedures state that full Council shall approve the appointment of the monitoring officer following a recommendation by the appointments panel. Accordingly an appointments panel was established comprising of Councillors Stonard, Kendrick, Galvin, Lubbock and Davis, to undertake final interviews and recommend an appointee to the Council. The Chief Executive and the executive director of resources were also members of the final panel.
13. The appointments panel are recommending that Janice Robinson is appointed to the statutory role of monitoring officer. Janice is currently corporate manager for governance and civic office and monitoring officer at Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils.
14. As part of the transition arrangements and pending the commencement of the permanent post holder, it is proposed that Emily Yule, executive director of resources is designated as the Council's monitoring officer. Emily has management responsibility for the head of legal and governance and monitoring officer role and has substantial previous experience of carrying out the functions of the monitoring officer.

## **Consultation**



15. The proposals within this report have been subject to consultation with the political group leaders and no objections have been received.

## Implications

### Financial and Resources

16. Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively, increase income must be made within the context of the Council's stated priorities, as set out in its community-led plan 2024-29 and budget.

17. The appointment to the role of monitoring officer is within existing resources.

18. The gross estimated additional cost for the s151 appointment from 17 July 2024 to 31 March 2025 is £60,000. The additional cost pressure on the salary budget for 2024/25 when taking into account all costs is estimated to be £90,000. These additional costs can be met from the general fund contingency allocation. As with all corporate services, a proportion of the costs will be recharged to the housing revenue account at the year-end.

### Legal

19. The Council has statutory obligations within an existing legal framework for the appointment of Council officers to a number of specified posts. The recommendations will support the Council in securing compliance with those statutory duties and the effective management of the Council's functions.

20. Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires local authorities to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and appoint a Chief Finance Officer, known as the S151 officer, to have responsibility for those arrangements.

21. Section 113 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires that the officer appointed as the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) must be a member of a specified accountancy body.

22. Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 required local authorities to appoint one of its officers as monitoring officer.

### Statutory Considerations

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and diversity	n/a
Health, social and economic impact	n/a
Crime and disorder	n/a
Children and adults safeguarding	n/a

<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:</b>
Environmental impact	n/a

### Risk Management

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Controls required</b>
Appointment of statutory officers is not agreed.	Norwich City Council will not be compliant with the statutory requirement to have a suitably qualified s151 officer and monitoring officer.	Appoint a suitably qualified CFO/s151 officer. Appoint a Monitoring Officer

### Other Options Considered

23. No other options have been considered. The proposed appointees are suitably experienced, skilled and qualified and will provide the necessary resource to fulfil the Council's statutory requirements.

### Reason for the Decision and Recommendation


24. It is a statutory requirement for the Council to have a chief finance officer and s151 officer and monitoring officer.

**Background papers:** None

**Appendices:**

**Contact Officer:** Dawn Bradshaw, Head of HR and organisational development.

**Email address:** [dawnbradshaw@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:dawnbradshaw@norwich.gov.uk)

	If you would like this agenda in an alternative format, such as a larger or smaller font, audio or Braille, or in a different language, please contact the committee officer above.
---	---

## Political Balance 2024-25

Other Committees and Working Parties	No of Members	Labour	Green	Lib Dem	Ind Norwich
Twinning	6	3 Sands (M) Sands(S) Smith	2 Catt Young	1 Wright	0
Sustainable development panel	7	3 Giles Hampton Harper	3 Bolton Hoechner Osborn	1 Lubbock	0
Climate Emergency and Environment Executive Panel	7	3 Hampton Harper Padda	3 Bolton Champion Hoechner	1 Lubbock	0
Treasury Management committee		Leader of the Council: Stonard Chair of Audit: Price Chair of Scrutiny: Wright Portfolio holder for resources: Kendrick			
Constitution WP	5	2 Driver	1 Calvert	1 Wright	1 Davis

<b>Other Committees and Working Parties</b>	<b>No of Members</b>	<b>Labour</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Lib Dem</b>	<b>Ind Norwich</b>
		Sands (S)			
Norwich area museums	<b>6</b>	3 Huntley Kidman (1 Vacancy)	2 Caine Schmierer	1 Wright	0
Mousehold Heath Conservators	<b>9 (of whom 7 must be cllrs)</b>	3 Carrington Kendrick Kidman	3 Caine Champion Fox	1 Lubbock	0
Councillors' development group	<b>7</b>	3 Jones Sands (M) Sands (S)	2 Catt Galvin	1 Ackroyd	1 Davis
Cross party working group – council tax reduction scheme	<b>7</b>	3 Carrington Giles Kendrick	2 Haynes Young	1 Ackroyd	1 Davis

<b>Other Committees and Working Parties</b>	<b>No of Members</b>	<b>Labour</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Lib Dem</b>	<b>Ind Norwich</b>
Personnel Appeals Panel	<b>3 (from a pool of 12)</b>	6 Driver Fulton-McAlister Huntley Packer Sands (M) Sands (S)	4 Caine Calvert Francis Worley	1 Ackroyd	1 Davis
Polling District Review Group	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b> Carrington Giles Kendrick	<b>2</b> Calvert Catt	1 Wright	1 Davis

Notes:

Q = quorum





**Committee Name: Council**

**Committee Date: 16/07/2024**

**Report Title: Appointments of Representatives to Outside Bodies 2024-25**

**Portfolio:** Councillor Kendrick, Cabinet member for an open and modern council

**Report from:** Head of Legal and Procurement

**Wards:** All Wards

### **OPEN PUBLIC ITEM**

#### **Purpose**

To consider appointments to outside bodies for the 2024-25 Civic Year.

#### **Recommendation:**

It is recommended that Council:

- 1) Approve the appointments to non-executive outside bodies for 2024-25, as set out in appendix A to this report; and
- 2) Delegate to the Head of Legal and Procurement, in consultation with the leaders of the political groups, to make any changes to the appointments arising during the year.

#### **Policy Framework**

The Council has five corporate priorities, which are:

- A prosperous Norwich.
- A fairer Norwich.
- A climate responsive Norwich.
- A future-proof Norwich.
- An open and modern council.

This report meets the “An open and modern council” corporate priority.

This report addresses the reserve and strengthen confidence in the Council’s governance framework, providing the foundations for a high performing council that is compliant with its statutory obligations action in the Corporate Plan

## Report Details

1. There are many outside bodies to which the Council appoints representatives. The Council is only required to confirm those appointments in relation to non-executive functions, with the Leader nominating appointees to executive functions. A list of nominations for 2024-25 is attached as Appendix A to this report.

## Consultation

2. The majority group on the Council was consulted, and its nominations are reflected in the appendix.

## Implications

### Financial and Resources

3. Any decision to reduce or increase resources or, alternatively, increase income must be made within the context of the Council's stated priorities, as set out in its Corporate Plan and budget.
4. There are no proposals in this report that would reduce or increase resources.

## Legal

5. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## Statutory Considerations

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and diversity	Neutral impact
Health, social and economic impact	Neutral impact
Crime and disorder	Neutral impact
Children and adults safeguarding	Neutral impact
Environmental impact	Neutral impact

## Risk Management

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
No risk	No risk	No risk

## Other Options Considered

6. No other options were considered.



## Reasons for the Decision/Recommendation

7. The Council's Constitution specifies that appointments to outside bodies shall be made by Council where it relates to non-executive functions and by the Leader where it relates to executive functions.

**Background Papers: None**

**Appendices: Appendix A – Representation on Outside Bodies 2024-25**

**Contact Officer:**

**Name:** Colin Sweeney (Interim Democratic Services Team Leader)

**Telephone number:** 01603 987835

**Email address:** [colinsweeney@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:colinsweeney@norwich.gov.uk)



If you would like this agenda in an alternative format, such as a larger or smaller font, audio or Braille, or in a different language, please contact the committee officer above.



**Motion to:** Council

Item 9(a)

16 July 2024 (Deferred from 12 March 2024)

**Subject:** Multi-faith working

**Proposer:** Councillor Jones

**Seconder:** Councillor Padda

---

Norwich has a proud and positive history of welcoming people to the city, which also includes creating an environment in which people of all faiths can practice without fear or persecution. As far back as the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Norwich became home to those fleeing religious persecution and today as a City of Sanctuary we are proud to continue to welcome those escaping persecution.

But sadly, recent years has seen a rise of politics of the hate, with far-right groups fuelling fear. We must take every opportunity to challenge this within our city, celebrating the benefits that come from diversity and the important role different faiths play in our city.

Religious or faith-based hatred is one of the most common motivations for hate crimes in the UK. As recent as 2022/23 religious hate crime reported to the police has more than doubled. As hate crimes increase and religious divisions heighten, there has never been a more important time to ensure that we elected members are listening and responding to all faith groups in our city.

There is no space for hate crime of any form in our city and as elected members and leaders in our community, it is crucial that we reject this in all forms. As elected representatives, we should actively engage in promoting community cohesion and engaging inclusively with all faith groups in our city and in doing so, gaining a better understanding of the challenges they face.

Council **RESOLVES** to

- 1) Invite representatives of the city's diverse faith groups to a multi-faith working group to collaborate with the council on:
  - a) supporting its engagement with members of faith groups throughout the city
  - b) better understanding the challenges faced by faith communities in our city.
  - c) promoting community cohesion across the city

- 2) Work collaboratively with religious or faith representatives to explore opportunities to support and share the celebration of faith-based festivals, recognising the diversity of faith groups in the city and their contribution.
- 3) To explore other forums where the city council can engage with all faiths in the city and continue to work with local faith partners, networks, and forums, aligning this with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Action Plan when next agreed by the council.

**Motion to:** Council

Item 9(b)

16 July 2024 (Deferred from 12 March 2024)

**Subject:** Anglia Square

**Proposer:** Councillor Stonard

**Seconder:** Councillor Fulton-McAlister

---

Anglia Square is the most significant development opportunity within Norwich City Centre, it sits at the heart of the city and will play a vital role in defining the culture of Norwich moving forwards. Since 2008 there have been various proposals to redevelop the site. The 2008 proposal fell through, despite the best efforts of Norwich City Council, due to the financial crisis.

The various redevelopment proposals by Weston Homes, running from 2018 – 2024, received the support of the Labour and Liberal Democrat groups on the council.

Again, despite the best efforts of Norwich City Council, the developer has withdrawn due to a lack of viability and the unhelpful policies and unhelpful intervention of the Tory government. The Developer, Bob Weston, himself stated "The core contributor to a lot of the issues in this saga is the Conservative government, which seems to have no understanding of the importance of supporting the housebuilding industry, regional cities and local communities in the UK."

As a result of this Tory Government's mismanagement, and the efforts of opposition councillors to obstruct progress, we have lost 2,211 direct construction jobs, 288 jobs in the retail and commercial premises and more than 1,000 badly needed new homes, as well as additional spending by residents in the local economy of up to £36.4 million each year.

Council notes that the change in political composition of the council and the submission of a motion to remove the CIL exemption, at a time when Green councillors also opposed the CIL exemption policy, added to an environment of uncertainty for developers of large sites such as Anglia Square, and contributed to Weston Homes' decision to withdraw the project.

This Council **RESOLVES** to:

- 1) Work in partnership with the site owners Colombia Threadneedle and the local community to examine all options to secure the regeneration of the site delivering on the objectives of the local plan as a matter of urgency, including the following:
  - a. Engaging with the Secretary of State and government agencies seeking to maximise funding to de-risk the housing led development of the site and

make it more attractive for investment. This is to include examination of potentially taking the site into public ownership if this is ultimately required in order to facilitate redevelopment;

- b. Work to attract the widest possible range of developers to regenerate the Anglia Square Site as a key housing led development for the city; and
- c. Examining measures to support existing businesses and community organisations operating in the area until clarity is gained on the site's future.

**Motion to:** Council

Item 9(c)

16 July 2024 (Deferred from 12 March 2024)

**Subject:** Democratic models of governance

**Proposer:** Councillor Davis

**Seconder:** Councillor Catt

---

This council notes that:

- 1) Under Norwich City Council's current 'Leader and Cabinet' model, Council is responsible for some decisions and the Executive (the collective term for the Leader, the Cabinet and Cabinet Members) is responsible for others. While the Executive is accountable to Council, it does not act under delegated authority from it, and it is not the case that Council could choose to take the decisions itself which are in practice taken by the Executive.
- 2) In a Committee System, there is no Executive. There is still a Leader, elected by Council in the same way as in the Leader and Cabinet model, but they do not have executive powers. There is no Cabinet and no Cabinet Members, and thus decision-making by individual councillors is restricted.
- 3) Instead, all decisions are in principle taken by Council, but in practice the decisions which, in this Council's current model are taken by the Executive, are in a Committee System taken by politically-balanced Service Committees operating under delegated authority from Council. These Service Committees are generally thematically based, with each committee being responsible for a range of issues and/or a range of council services.
- 4) In most models there is one additional committee, often known as the Policy and Resources Committee, whose membership usually includes senior councillors from each political group and often the financial lead councillors for each political group. This committee differs from a Cabinet primarily in that it is politically balanced, but also in that it is the 'first among equals' in relation to the other committees, which typically retain broad decision-making autonomy.
- 5) It is important to bear in mind that the changes being considered only affect the way that decisions currently taken by Cabinet or Cabinet Members are made. Regulatory Committees such as Planning, Licensing, Audit and Standards, which are all committees of the Council rather than of the Executive, would be unaffected.
- 6) The role of Full Council would in practice also remain unchanged. Council is currently responsible for agreeing the overarching policy and budget frameworks which the Executive proposes to it and within which the Executive then has to

operate, and this would be the same under a committee system. The framework would be proposed to Council by one or more service committees, and once it was adopted, all service committees would take their decisions in accordance with it.

- 7) The Scrutiny Committee is an essential component of the Leader and Cabinet model, intended to provide Council at large with a mechanism for holding the Executive to account for its decision-making. Within a committee model, Scrutiny is usually embedded into the work of individual committees, with each committee responsible for monitoring budgets and performance relating to its functions. In addition, members of the committee could highlight areas of concern and request reports on issues relating to their functions.

This council believes that:

- 8) In a Council under No Overall Control, a Coalition, or with a slim majority administration, the committee system provides democratic engagement and accountability for elected members from all political groups.
- 9) Further benefits of adopting a committee style of governance are, predominantly:
  - a) Increased involvement of all elected members in decision-making;
  - b) Politically proportional decision-making across all committees;
  - c) Returning more decision-making power to the Full Council;
  - d) More regular and focused scrutiny of decision-making and implementation of Council policy

This council **RESOLVES** to:

- 10) Support the adoption, at the earliest opportunity, of a Committee System of Governance.
- 11) Examine the options for a more democratically representative Committee System via a report to the Constitution Working Party by August 2024, including risk, resource, inclusivity, and environmental implications.
- 12) Ensure full implementation of the new system at the Council's AGM in May 2025, with the establishment of a Committee Model Working Group of Councillors to hear from experts and stakeholders about how this system will work.
- 13) Ensure the 2024/25 Constitution Working Party and the new Committee Model Working Group are politically balanced with representatives from all political groups.
- 14) Examine the options for the establishment of a Housing Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the housing and homelessness service under this Council, via a report to the Constitution Working Party by August 2024. The Committee should not only consist of councillors, but also elected tenant and leaseholder representatives. This Committee would exercise similar powers to the current Scrutiny Committee, and would replace the current Tenant Involvement Panel and Annual Review Group.



**Motion to:** Council

Item 9(d)

16 July 2024 (Deferred from 12 March 2024)

**Subject:** The future of Anglia Square

**Proposer:** Councillor Schmierer

**Seconder:** Councillor Osborn

---

The decision by Weston Homes to pull out of the proposed Anglia Square development has reopened the debate around the future of this key site in the north city centre.

Anglia Square, sitting alongside Magdalen Street, is a vital part of the local community in the north city centre and NR3, providing a place for people to meet and affordable cafes and shops, including many independent businesses. It has also provided a home for the city's artists.

Unfortunately, since Weston Homes had said that they were planning to demolish existing buildings and businesses would need to relocate, many businesses in Anglia Square have already closed their doors.

The process that the council has gone through with Weston Homes since 2017 has meant that other options for Anglia Square have not been sufficiently proactively explored.

Council notes:

- 1) That many people wish to see Anglia Square redeveloped, but the nearly 800 objections to the original 2018 Weston Homes plans show that they want a development that respects the city's heritage.
- 2) That people also want to see a development that will not result in local people being priced out of the area, and that retains the community aspect of the Square.
- 3) That provision of social and affordable housing is of the highest priority and every effort should be made to ensure that at least 33% of housing at Anglia Square should be available for social rent or at affordable rates.
- 4) That certainty is essential to the confidence of businesses in the area and that the risks involved in private company-led development have not been conducive to that essential certainty.

- 5) That large parts of the Anglia Square site have remained unutilised for many years.
- 6) That areas surrounding Anglia Square, for example the St Saviours Lane carpark, offer opportunities for further brownfield redevelopment.

Council **RESOLVES** to:

- 7) Ask Cabinet to immediately produce a plan to support businesses in Anglia Square, who have suffered due to the uncertainty around the development.
- 8) Ask Cabinet to bring forward a report within six months exploring options for future ownership of the site, including the potential for the city council to purchase the site.
- 9) Ask Cabinet to consider a report setting out potential models for redevelopment of the site and identifying partners with whom the Council could work to develop it within twelve months.
- 10) Support the Norwich Over The Wensum neighbourhood forum in producing planning policy that is specific to the area surrounding Anglia Square.

**Motion to:** Council

Item 9(e)

16 July 2024

**Subject:** Protect workers' rights: refuse to operate minimum service levels and work notices.

**Proposer:** Councillor Hoechner

**Seconder:** Councillor Stonard

---

This Council:

1) notes:

- i) the right to strike is a fundamental freedom which is protected by international law; this can be seen in the Human Rights Act, Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights, the International Labour Organisation's Convention 87 and Article 6(4) of the European Social Charter;
- ii) the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act 2023 sets out that when employees in relevant sectors democratically vote to strike, they can be required to work and then lawfully sacked if they don't comply;
- iii) the legislation is clear that issuing a work notice is at the discretion of an employer, as confirmed by Ministers in Parliament;
- iv) minimum service levels are not applicable for non-strike days, where service delivery has been decimated by public service cuts over the last 14 years, which suggests the Act is therefore not primarily concerned with minimum service levels as it purports;
- v) the Joint Committee on Human Rights has expressed concern that this legislation is not compatible with the UK's commitments to human rights for workers and trade union members; and
- vi) the Regulatory Policy Committee has determined that the impact assessment for this Bill was "not fit for purpose".

2) Believes

- i) the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act 2023 is a direct attack on the right to strike as a fundamental freedom;
- ii) that consecutive Conservative Governments had been carrying out brutal attacks on trade unions for decades, culminating with this most recent attack on the right to strike;
- iii) that the previous Government, instead of tackling the causes of the cost-of-living crisis, had attempted to cut through the recent wave of strikes by trying to shift the blame from profiteering bosses on to ordinary workers who are exercising their right to fight for dignity and fair pay at work and in their lives;
- iv) the regime initiated by the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act 2023 is draconian, unnecessary, and unworkable;
- v) the Act undermines constructive industrial relations and is likely to inflame and prolong disputes;
- vi) in addition to ethical implications, there is also a risk of legal challenges arising from issuance of work notices; and
- vii) this Act is a direct attack on the freedoms of the ordinary, hardworking residents of our City;

Council **RESOLVES** to:

- 1) Instruct the Chief Executive to consider how the Council will continue to protect the rights of its workers to strike, including by agreeing to exercise its discretion to not issue work notices; and how this should be reflected in our policies;
- 2) Continue to work constructively with our trade union colleagues on maintaining harmonious industrial relations, which includes the opposition to this draconian legislation;
- 3) Note that the Labour Government has pledged to repeal this legislation, and to write to Keir Starmer to ask that he further pledges that the Labour Government to reverse fines and other measures taken against any union under the terms of the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act 2023, if any were taken; and

- 4) Ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Leadership of Norfolk County Council encouraging them to take the same steps this Council resolves to take.

