



COUNCIL

7.30 p.m. to 10.10 p.m.

29 March 2006

Present: Councillor Waters (Deputy Lord Mayor in the Chair), Brenda Arthur (Sheriff), Councillors Aalders-Dunthorne, Ahmed, Blakeway, Blower, Borrett, Bradford, Brociek-Coulton, Collishaw, Couzens, Cooke, Divers, Driver, Ferris, Gledhill, Goldfinch, Harper, Hartley, Holmes, Hume, Lowe, Lubbock, Morpew, Morrey, Ramsay, Read, Rumsby, Thomas, Watkins, Westmacott, Williams and Wood

Apologies: Councillor Banham (Lord Mayor)

1. LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Deputy Lord Mayor announced that Norwich City Council had received an award for St Andrews Car Park for 'Best New Car Park' at the British Parking Association annual awards

2. PRESENTATION OF LONG SERVICE AWARD

The Deputy Lord Mayor presented a long service award to Lilian Barber formerly of the Directorate of Housing.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hartley declared a prejudicial interest in item 10, motion – National Health Service.

4. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Question 1

Robin Taylor to the Spokesperson for Transport -

'Following the extension of the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) in the Thorpe Road area, there has been a marked increase in thoughtless and nuisance parking in the streets nearby that are not included in the CPZ.

These streets include Wellesley Avenue South, Cintra Road, Stanley Avenue, Cremorne Lane and Salisbury Road. The last two streets are very narrow and are now sometimes too congested to allow safe and easy access and local people frequently find their own cars totally blocked in.

Will the City Council urgently take steps to consult with residents of these streets as to whether they would like to be included in the Controlled Parking Zone.'

Councillor Lubbock, Spokesperson for Transport's reply -

'The recent extension to the Eastern Controlled Parking Zone in Thorpe Hamlet was introduced at the end of November 2005. The Council has received very few, if any concerns, to date from local residents living in streets adjacent to the extension.

However, it is always possible that commuter parking will migrate and cause problems elsewhere. Therefore, £7,000 is identified in the Local Transport Plan allocation for Norwich in 2006/07 to allow, if necessary, a further review.

A CPZ extension always takes several months to settle down. Normally the Council would not commence a review until 6 to 12 months had elapsed. The precise nature and extent of the review is not yet determined and will depend on representations received and site investigation.'

Robin Taylor said that there were often problems in the area due to people attending Norwich City Football Club matches. There were plans to increase the capacity of the football ground in the future and asked as a supplementary question, whether the Council was working with the Football Club on a travel plan. **Councillor Lubbock** said that a travel plan was formulated for any large organisation that generated a significant amount of traffic and the Council would work with Norwich City F.C. to look at ways of mitigating traffic problems. For example, the controlled parking zone could be extended to include Saturdays.

Question 2

Richard Edwards to the Executive Member for Housing -

'Most of the small trees on the piece of land next door to the Gall Pen Factory near Starling Road have been chopped down. Could the Council please let us know when these will be cleared away as they have been left there for about the past six months.'

Councillor Cooke, Executive Member for Housing's reply -

'The Land in question is in the ownership of the Housing Service and will eventually be developed. The Council did not cut down the trees, so it is assumed that a member of the public did. The trees have been placed behind the hedge running along the footpath and are not easily visible therefore from the road. An order has been placed by the Housing Service with Green Spaces to clear the area.'

Question 3

Kingsley Canham to the Spokesperson for Transport -

'I wrote to you and others connected with the local transport system to complain of an iniquity caused by the decision of Norwich City Council, acting in accordance with

current Government policy, to offer free bus transport for pensioners with effect from 1 April 2006.

By setting a start time of 8.30 a.m., pensioners who (in line with current Government desires) are working on beyond pensionable age and start work before 8.30 a.m. , are now faced with paying full fares on First Bus for their morning transport. I catch the 21 bus 6.25 a.m. from Anglia Square to Castle Meadow, followed by the 24 bus at 7.00 a.m. from Castle Meadow to Broadland Business Park, and currently pay a concessionary weekly fare of £6.00, as I am aged over 60.

First Bus informs me that this concession will be scrapped, so I will have to pay £12.00 a week for a full rate weekly ticket! To add insult to injury, the 24 service will from 1 April 2006, terminate at Sainsbury's in Pound Lane, instead of continuing on to Broadland Business Park as it does at present, which would entail me walking approximately 20 minutes each morning from Sainsbury's to Broadland Business Park. Since I already walk the equivalent of 10 miles per day in my job, this is not a palatable prospect, so I will have to endure a longer wait to catch the 17 bus at Castle Meadow at 7.18 a.m. each morning.

Would that I had the choice and could sit back on my pension and benefits at tax payers' expense, but some of us have no choice but to carry on working as long as we physically can!

I would like to request that you use your influence to support an alteration to Council policy removing time limits on the free bus pass for pensioners. I trust that you will not be fobbed off by any suggestion from First Bus that their transport will be flooded with pensioners using the bus services during the rush hour. After all, most do not leave their homes until 9.00 a.m. or later, whilst only a small minority of us work in jobs that necessitate us leaving home earlier than 8.30 a.m., but that is no reason why we should be penalised and miss out on Government/local Council concessions to which we are entitled.'

Councillor Lubbock, Spokesperson for Transport's reply.

'The Transport Act 2000 requires local authorities to offer free travel on local bus services to men and women over 60 and disabled persons:

- Within their administrative area only; and
- 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. on weekdays and all day on weekends, and bank holidays.

However, by joining forces with the other Norfolk district councils, Norwich City Council is able to offer a more generous scheme. This enables pass holders to travel on local bus services across the whole of Norfolk providing they start or finish within the County. Pass holders in Norwich may also travel free between 8:30 a.m. and 11.00 p.m. which is an extra hour of free travel on the statutory requirement.

In devising this scheme, the district councils have tried to maximise benefits for residents. However they also need to ensure that whatever is provided is affordable. A scheme starting earlier is likely to be significantly more expensive as not only would the councils need to pay operators for additional revenue foregone but also

any increased costs from having to provide additional capacity due to increased demand.

The new scheme is a considerable improvement for the vast majority of older people. I am sorry that you appear to be adversely affected by this.'

Kingsley Canham said that it seemed unlikely that the Council would operate a system similar to that in Suffolk with no time limits and asked as a supplementary question whether his only option was to lobby Government. **Councillor Lubbock** said that she interpreted parts of the Government's recent budget as suggesting that free travel for old age pensioners would be provided sometime in the future. People should lobby their local MP's and the Government.

Question 4

Linda Mitchell to the Chair of the Waste Management Select Committee -

'I refer to the Waste Management Select Committee meeting on Friday, 24 February 2006. Why did the Chair of the Waste Management Select Committee not air his concerns about the incinerator on this occasion and when the Waste Management Select Committee reported back to the Council on 7 March instead of his Committee's recommendation that more information was needed about the environmental impact of the incinerator before a final decision was made?'

Councillor Morrey, Chair of the Waste Management Select Committee's reply -

'If my memory serves me correct which may not be true as I am getting on in life I did comment that I had problems with Energy from Waste, which are not connected with the emissions from such facilities. The job of a committee chair is not to force his or her point of view onto a committee, the committee voted with one abstention to wait for the Environmental Impact Assessment which is part of the Planning process. This is the correct procedure if one wishes to influence the Planning Application Decision.'

5. PETITION

The Lord Mayor received a petition presented by Orlando Williams, on behalf of parents of children attending St John's Primary School -

'We, the undersigned, are parents at St John's Primary School, are very concerned about the fact that we have been asked not to park our vehicles at West Pottergate Council car park and at the Community Health Centre car park and at Stafford Street, while dropping off and picking up our children at and from school. We cannot park in the school grounds because of safety concerns and lack of space. We cannot park on the roads outside the school because the roads are too narrow and because there are yellow traffic lines. If we were able to find a space to park on the Mill Hill side of Earlham Road we will be exposing our children to traffic accidents in trying to cross a very busy Earlham Road at these times of the day. This problem is made even more dangerous because there is no pedestrian crossing from the Mill Hill side of Earlham Road to the other side or on the Heigham Road crossing to the school. The three areas of parking identified above are usually empty at the times when we take our children to school and pick them up and hence the reason why we

are able to park. We are asking the Council to issue the parents with a 10-15 minutes parking pass between the times of 8.45 - 9.00 a.m. and 3.15 - 3.30 p.m. Monday to Friday. We believe this would be a satisfactory solution for all concerned.'

Councillor Lubbock, Spokesperson for Transport, responded on behalf of the Council and said that St John's Primary School has introduced a school travel plan and is actively working with parents and children to develop it. The plan encourages children to walk to school and use public transport.

The school is a Roman Catholic Church school and has a large catchment. Consequently, for many a car is the only feasible way to travel to the school. Parking adjacent to the school is either not practical or at a premium and the school has encouraged the Council to ensure that parking restrictions are properly enforced on safety grounds.

The school is encouraging parents to park a little distance away and to walk the remainder of the journey. Whilst there may be difficulties in parking to the south of Earlham Road (although pedestrian refuges at the junction with Mill Hill Road are provided) there are also parking opportunities to the north of the school site, including to the north of Dereham Road which has a signal controlled crossing.

The school has also approached the City Council to see if a limited number of permits could be provided to park in our off street 'housing' and other local car parks. The school would issue these permits on a needs basis. This proposal is presently being examined. Naturally, officers will want to discuss the petition with the school but if it were practical to issue a limited number of permits to the school, it would seem to satisfy the petitioners concerns.

6. MINUTES

RESOLVED to agree the accuracy of the minutes of Council held on 28 February and 7 March 2006.

7. QUESTIONS TO EXECUTIVE MEMBERS/COMMITTEE CHAIRS

The Lord Mayor advised that 9 questions had been received on which notice had been given in accordance with the provision of Appendix 1 of the Council's Constitution, as follows -

Question 1 Councillor Blakeway to the Executive Member for Community on the new arrangements for the Neighbourhood Wardens Scheme.

Question 2 Councillor Williams to the Spokesperson for Transport regarding the closure of a right of way in Branford Road.

Question 3 Councillor Borrett to the Executive Member for the Environment on the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act.

Question 4 Councillor Lay to the Executive Member for Community regarding the extension of the Neighbourhood Wardens' Scheme to Heartsease.

- Question 5** Councillor Waters to the Leader of the Council regarding the Audit Commission's Annual Letter to the Council.
- Question 6** Councillor Gledhill to the Executive Member for the Environment on the deferred motion to object to the County Council's proposal for a waste to energy plant at the Longwater Industrial Estate.
- Question 7** Councillor Ramsay to the Executive Member for the Environment on the health implications of incinerators.
- Question 8** Councillor Brociek-Coulton to the Chair of the Planning Applications Committee on the enforcement of planning conditions at a food preparation facility in Denmark Opening.

Copies of the questions and replies had been circulated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Details of the questions and replies are attached at Appendix A to these minutes together with any supplementary questions and responses.

The Deputy Lord Mayor advised Council that Councillor Ramsey had given notice that he wished to ask an urgent question to the Chair of Scrutiny Committee which had been accepted in accordance with paragraph 12.3 (ii) of Appendix 1 of the Council's Constitution.

Councillor Ramsay to the Chair of Scrutiny Committee –

"The last Scrutiny Committee meeting resolved to set up a Review Panel to investigate the issue of night flights from Norwich Airport and enforcement issues relating to the planning conditions and the Letter of Agreement. Given the ruling today from the Council's legal advisors that the Scrutiny Committee is not allowed to investigate matters relating to planning enforcement, can the Chair of Scrutiny Committee suggest a way forward to ensure this problem of night time noise and air pollution is addressed?"

Councillor Morpew moved and Councillor Ramsay seconded that Planning Applications Committee be asked to investigate the issue of night flights from Norwich Airport and enforcement issues relating to the planning conditions and the Letter of Agreement.

RESOLVED unanimously, to ask Planning Applications Committee to investigate the issue of night flights from Norwich Airport and enforcement issues relating to the planning conditions and the Letter of Agreement.

8. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW

Councillor Couzens moved and Councillor Morpew seconded the recommendations contained in the report of the Chief Executive Officer.

RESOLVED, with one abstention, to -

- (1) agree that Norwich City Council believes a unitary council for the city would bring significant potential benefits both to local people, but also to the wider region;
- (2) agree the submission of an initial case to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister setting out why Norwich should become a unitary authority;
- (3) agree the commissioning of research, advice and consultation in order to prepare both outline and detailed submissions;
- (4) agree to undertake collaborative work with Norfolk authorities, and other similar authorities elsewhere in England as part of a collaborative submission;
- (5) note that the funding of this initial work will be met from existing budgets, and;
- (6) delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the three Group Leaders, to finalise an initial case for unitary status for submission to the Minister for Communities and Local Government.

9. APPOINTMENT OF SECTION 151 OFFICER

Councillor Couzens moved and Councillor Waters seconded the recommendations contained in the report of the Chief Executive Officer.

RESOLVED, unanimously, to appoint David Ablett as the Council's Section 151 Officer.

(Councillor Hartley, having earlier declared a prejudicial interest, left the meeting at this point)

10. MOTION - NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

Councillor Read moved and Councillor Morpew seconded the motion.

Councillor Cooke moved and Councillor Divers seconded an amendment to the motion as follows -

'Delete the paragraph numbered (1) and replace with:

Council believes that a high quality, locally accountable health service is vital for the people of Norwich. Council calls upon the Government to develop the capacity of the public sector to deliver better services and ensure that when private and voluntary organisations are used to supplement such services, they are subject to robust clinical and financial governance from commissioning bodies.'

On being put to the vote, with the majority voting against, the motion was declared lost.

Councillor Morphew moved and Councillor Ferris seconded an amendment to the motion as follows –

“Amend paragraph (1) to refer to healthcare services”

With the majority voting in favour and five against, this amendment to the motion was carried and became the substantive motion.

RESOLVED, with the majority voting in favour and five abstaining, that -

‘This Council welcomes the increased funding into the NHS and initiatives such as Agenda for Change that tackles many problems for Norwich people who work directly for the NHS and those who work for companies providing services to the NHS.

However, Council is concerned that future government policy developments will not be in the best interests of Norwich -

- (1) Council believes that a locally accountable health service is not possible where the healthcare services are provided by private companies. Council therefore calls upon the government to develop the capacity of the public sector to deliver services and to reduce and eliminate the involvement of private sector competition to NHS healthcare provision as soon as possible whilst meanwhile creating a level playing field for NHS providers.
- (2) Council believes the proposals for a new Norfolk wide primary care trust are unacceptable because they do not distinguish between the needs of rural and urban communities and this would mean reconfiguration on any of the proposed options would be to the detriment of both. Council therefore supports a PCT based on boundaries that reflect the needs of the urban population of the Norwich area. In the event this is not achievable this Council would support as a second alternative the three PCT option for Norfolk proposed by the Norwich PCT.
- (3) Council calls upon the government to avoid future privately funded capital schemes that saddle the NHS with excessive costs. It further calls upon the government to recognise the extra costs associated with being an early PFI scheme for the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital and to compensate the local health economy accordingly.

Council agrees to write to the Secretary of State for Health and the Strategic Health Authority to advise them of their concerns and to ask for their response.’

11. COUNCILLORS STANDING DOWN

The Deputy Lord Mayor said that as this was the last ordinary meeting of the Council in the current civic year he would like to thank Councillors Belle and Castle-Green who had resigned, and Councillors Goldfinch, Wood and Williams who were standing down, for the service they have provided to the people of Norwich as Norwich City Councillors.

Councillors Goldfinch, Wood and Williams responded accordingly.

LORD MAYOR

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS TO EXECUTIVE MEMBERS/COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Question 1

Councillor Blakeway to the Executive Member for Community -

'Will the Executive member for community confirm that Mile Cross and Catton Grove wardens will be moving out of the Norman Centre to a centralised base away from the patch and will he assess the percentage reduction in foot patrols in Mile Cross /Catton Grove and Lakenham/Tuckswood as a consequence of the new arrangements?'

Councillor Aalders-Dunthorne, Executive Member for Community's reply -

'The changes being made to the two pilot Neighbourhood Warden teams to integrate them into a City wide Anti-social-behaviour Service are progressing, with appointments of new wardens being finalised.

To allow the wardens to develop as an effective city-wide team, to build relationships and to ensure they are effectively briefed, it is important that they are located in a single base.

However, this base will only be used by the wardens for signing on at the beginning of a shift, sharing intelligence and collecting their personal equipment before they move out to one of the four areas in the City where they will patrol. In general, they will not return to their base until the end of their shift.

Once the wardens reach their area, they will form part of virtual local neighbourhood team, initially made up of a Neighbourhood Housing Officer, a Senior Warden and Premises Manager who will work closely with the neighbourhood focused police teams as these come on stream. This will provide opportunities for joint working, the sharing of information and intelligence and joint tasking of wardens and Police Community Support Officers so that the appropriate Officer attends. This will maximise the effectiveness of the patrolling resources of the two agencies.

The wardens will also have the opportunity to join the Housing Service's Neighbourhood surgeries, where Council tenants can report problems and discuss issues with their Neighbourhood Housing Officer, Warden and in the future, Community Police Officer.

The wardens will be able to make use of all the Council buildings within their area for accessing a computer to collect e-mails, interrogate Comino, as well as being able to take rest breaks.

In addition, the public will have the benefit of the Council's new ASB Reporting Line, which through new technology will allow the residents to:

- telephone the City Council 24 hours per day, 7 days per week to report their concerns to a Council Officer;
- report all problems of anti-social behaviour, e.g. noise, fly tipping, abandoned cars, litter, youths causing disturbance;
- receive an appropriate response, which may include arranging for a service such as collecting the fly tipped material or removing the graffiti; a 'real-time' response from a Neighbourhood Warden, arranging for a community alarm to be installed to provide continuous reassurance, refer the call to the police, or simply log the call if no action can be taken.

The ASB Hotline, which replaces the warden's external call centres will be the main point of contact for communities to report issues to the Council.

However, the benefit of the new corporate ASB Service is that:

- Wardens will contribute to a wider corporate response to anti-social behaviour which includes CCTV, Street and Citizen Services, Tenancy Enforcement and Licensing;
- where wardens have previously attended calls which should have been dealt by other Council Services these will now be sent directly to those Services through the Comino processes thus avoiding duplication of effort;
- Wardens will have more time to focus on the work in areas of greatest need;
- Wardens will cover more of the City and still maintain a local presence;
- it enables joint tasking with Police Community Support Officers from improved sharing of intelligence.

All calls to the ASB Hotline regarding anti-social behaviour will be logged and tracked through the system and the information analysed and shared with our partners, to identify trends and hot spots, so that longer-term actions can be taken. '

Councillor Blakeway asked as a supplementary question whether Community Steering Committees would be consulted on hotspots and longer-term actions. **Councillor Aalders-Dunthorne** said that Norwich City Council would continue an open and frank dialogue with community groups all over the City.

Question 2

Councillor Williams to the Spokesperson for Transport -

'Can a long established right of way used by much traffic for over 90 years, such as the eastern section of Branford Road, be closed off to traffic?'

Councillor Lubbock, Spokesperson for Transport's reply -

'There are procedures that provide for the extinguishment of rights of way, but that is not the issue in relation to the use of Branford Road. Branford Road is not an established right of way, but a permissive route over private land, and as such, the owner of the land is able to withdraw its use at any time. When officers of the Council negotiated the redevelopment of the site, it was agreed that the route should

be formalised as public highway for use by pedestrians and cyclists, and this will ensure that it remains available for those users at all times. However, for reasons of road safety, which were carefully considered by the Planning Applications Committee, it is not appropriate to establish such a public route for motor vehicles.'

Question 3

Councillor Borrett to the Executive Member for Technical Services -

'Would the Executive Member for the Environment please inform Council which of the powers provided in the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act will be taken up by this Council?'

Councillor Lowe, Executive Member for Technical Services -

'The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (CNEA) 2005 received Royal Assent in April 2005. It provides a number of enforcement powers to tackle environmental crime issues, such as fly-tipping. The introduction of the powers is phased between June 2005 to 2007.

The enforcement powers are a combination of Fixed Penalty Notices ranging from £75 to £300 for various offences, and powers to serve notices on occupiers and owners of land that requires clearing.

Fixed Penalty Notices have not been used by the Council for Environmental crimes other than dog fouling.

When issuing Fixed Penalty Notices evidence must be gathered to follow up non-payment of the notice with prosecution action in the Magistrates Court. Therefore, careful consideration must be given to the way in which the powers are introduced to minimise evidence gathering while maintaining the ability to prosecute when necessary.

The Act also provides for Gating Orders, which will allow the City or County Council's to issue a gating order to close alleys when it is shown that they are linked to crime and disorder in a neighbourhood.

Evaluation is currently under way on how to introduce these powers in a cost effective and efficient way, as part of an overall environmental strategy.

A report will be brought to Executive seeking approval for which of the new powers should be implemented to achieve the Council's environmental aims.'

Councillor Borrett asked as a supplementary question whether Councillors concerned would be taken into account when decided what powers to take under the Act. **Councillor Lowe** said that when the report was considered by the Executive Councillors could attend, listen and comment.

Question 4

Councillor Lay to the Executive Member for Community -

'Many people on the Heartsease Estate, including the Heartsease Residents' Association, are very keen to see the old housing office on Frere Road used as a contact point for the Community Wardens covering the east Norwich area.

Could the Executive member for Community give assurances that this proposal will be given serious consideration?'

Councillor Aalders-Dunthorne, Executive Member for Community's reply -

'Council will be aware that changes and improvements are being introduced that will increase the range of responses the City Council can provide to communities who are suffering anti-social behaviour and to give greater prominence to working with partners to tackle anti-social behaviour.

These improvements will include introducing a range of options to allow residents, businesses and visitors to report problems of anti-social behaviour.

The chief means of reporting will be through the Council's new ASB Hot Line, which through new technology will allow the residents to:

- telephone the City Council 24 hours per day, 7 days per week to report their concerns to a Council Officer
- report all problems of anti-social behaviour, e.g. noise, fly tipping, abandoned cars, litter, youths causing disturbance
- receive an appropriate response, which may include arranging for a service such as collecting the fly tipped material or removing the graffiti; a 'real-time' response from a Neighbourhood Warden, arranging for a community alarm to be installed to provide continuous reassurance, refer the call to the police, or simply log the call if no action can be taken.

Residents will also be able to report problems to their Neighbourhood Housing Officer, who with the local Senior Neighbourhood Warden, will form part of a virtual Neighbourhood Team to maximise information sharing and joint working.

The Neighbourhood Wardens will also have the opportunity join the Housing Service's Neighbourhood surgeries, which in Heartsease will be at Fugill Road Sheltered Housing Scheme, where Council tenants will be able to report and discuss issues of anti-social behaviour with their Neighbourhood Housing Officer, Warden or in the future, a Community Police Officer.

We know from the experience of the two pilot schemes in Mile Cross and Catton, and South East Norwich, that to maximise the benefit of wardens, they need to be out on patrol providing a visible presence, where they can talk to residents and local businesses as well as visiting residents associations, schools and youth clubs so that contact is maintained. They will be available at Fugill Road and will be present in the neighbourhood. '

Question 5

Councillor Waters to the Leader of the Council -

'The 'Use of Resources Assessment 2005' put the Norwich City Council in the lowest overall category: 'below minimum requirements - inadequate performance'.

'What has the Audit Commission recommended the Council do to achieve a far more positive assessment at the end of next financial year?'

Councillor Couzens, Leader of the Council's reply -

'It comes as no surprise that following the budget setting problems experienced this year that we should have scored so badly since this assessment is centred around issues of financial control. However there is no reason why this assessment should not show significant improvement next year as a result of measures already being implemented to address the following actions recommended by the District Auditor:-

- continue to drive forward the Council's improvement programme to address areas of poor performance;
- formally respond to the District Auditor's Section 11 recommendations;
- review the progress of implementing recommendations in the District Auditor's Regularity Report to ensure improvements are made to the financial and internal control framework and that agreed action plans are followed up promptly;
- take a more active role in monitoring the financial position of the Council and ensure that financial management arrangements and budget monitoring processes are improved; and
- address the required improvements in respect of the Council's use of resources.

Despite this setback, it should be remembered that the Council's performance as measured by a range of indicators has shown a steady improvement.'

Councillor Morpew asked as a supplementary question whose job it was to take an active role in monitoring the Council's accounts. **Councillor Couzens** said that councillors and officers had different roles and that it was reasonable for councillors to believe that the information they were given by professionals could be relied upon. He would be pleased to elaborate more when the monitoring of the budget was discussed at a future Scrutiny Committee.

Question 6

Councillor Gledhill to the Executive Member for Environment -

'How can the Executive defend its recent failure to support a Green Group motion calling for cross-party support at City Hall for the anti-incineration campaign?'

Councillor Rooza, Executive Member for Environment's reply -

'Councillor Gledhill will be aware that the Council decided that the Waste Management Select Committee was best placed to receive this information on the proposed waste to energy plant at Longwater Industrial Estate, assess it, and report back to full Council. The Council considered the Waste Management Select Committee's recommendations at the meeting on 7 March 2006.

The Waste Management Select Committee was established by a resolution of members at Council in July 2004. The Committee has representatives from all the Political Groups within the Council. There was strong support at the Council meeting on 31 January in support the Liberal Democrat amendment to refer the motion to the Waste Management Select Committee so that members of the Council could come to an informed decision on the proposals for an waste to energy plant at Longwater Industrial Estate. This was further endorsed on 7 March 2006 when Council agreed to defer consideration on the motion until the outcome of the Environmental Impact Assessment on the Waste Energy Plant at Longwater Industrial Estate became available and consideration of information from all sides of the debate.

Therefore there is cross-party support for an informed debate from both sides of the Council, where information is considered as it becomes available and both sides of the debate are taken into account. The Executive therefore has not failed to 'support the motion' but has encouraged an opportunity for all members of the Council to make a well informed decision on what is an important issue for the future of our City.'

Councillor Gledhill asked as a supplementary question what had changed since 2002 when the Council passed a motion proposed by Councillor Rooza to become a zero waste Council.

The Deputy Lord Mayor said that the same question was asked at the last meeting when the Liberal Democrat administration laid out its position and he suggested that it could be taken as read that its position had not changed.

Question 7

Councillor Ramsay to the Executive Member for Environment -

'Have Executive members read the report on the UK Health Research website (www.ukhr.org) about a study that found that there are higher levels of birth defects in areas downwind of incinerators and, if so, have they changed their position from recent full Council meetings of claiming that incineration is not harmful to human health?'

Councillor Rooza, Executive Member for Environment's reply -

'No - this report has not been considered at a meeting of the Executive.

In my reply to Councillor Gledhill's question above, I pointed out that the Council agreed with the recommendation of the Waste Management Select Committee to wait until the outcome of the Environmental Impact Assessment on the Waste Energy Plant at Longwater Industrial Estate becomes available before arriving at any decision about it. This Assessment will help the Council come to a conclusion on the implications of the proposed Waste Energy Plant and will make reference to current research findings.'

Councillor Ramsay said that County Councillor Tim East had received research on the adverse health effects of incineration and asked as a supplementary question whether he had sent it to his Liberal Democrat colleagues on Norwich City Council. **Councillor Cooke** said that any accurate research available would be considered as part of the environmental impact assessment.

Question 8

Councillor Brociek-Coulton to the Chair of Planning Applications Committee -

'Would the Chair of Planning Applications Committee be able to confirm that the conditions imposed upon the food preparation facility in Denmark Opening have been met?'

Councillor Lubbock, Chair of the Planning Applications Committee -

'Following complaints, investigations are currently progressing to ensure that all the conditions attached to the permission for this development are being complied with.'

Councillor Brociek-Coulton asked as a supplementary question for feedback on the enforcement. **Councillor Lubbock** said she would ask the Environmental Health Officer to report progress to Councillor Brociek-Coulton.