

PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD 14 OCTOBER 2009

The Mayor – Councillor Irene Walsh

Present:

Councillors: Allen, Ash, Benton, Cereste, Collins, Croft, M Dalton, S Dalton, C Day, S Day, Dobbs, Eley, Fazal, Fitzgerald, Fletcher, Fower, JA Fox, JR Fox, Goldspink, Goodwin, Harrington, Hiller, Holdich, Hussain, Khan, Kreling, Lamb, Lane, Lee, Lowndes, Miners, Morley, Murphy, Nash, Nawaz, Newton, North, Over, Peach, Rush, Sanders, Sandford, Scott, Seaton, Sharp, Swift, Todd, Trueman, Wilkinson and Winslade.

1. ONE MINUTE'S SILENCE

The Mayor paid tribute to Councillor M Burton and invited Members to observe one minute's silence.

Group Leaders individually addressed the meeting, paying tribute to Councillor Burton.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Burton, D Day, Saltmarsh and Thacker.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Mayor advised those present that a new political group of the Council had been formed: the English Democrats. As a result, she had agreed to accept an urgent item of business relating to Political Balance arrangements. The matter was urgent in order to ensure the Council complied with Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 regarding the allocation of seats on committees to the respective political groups. The Mayor advised that this matter would be discussed after agenda item 4.

The Mayor also informed the meeting that, in view of its impact on local residents, she had allowed a late ward related question from Councillor Ash relating to the new road layout on the A47. She emphasised that she would not expect submission of late questions to become normal practice and reminded Members that questions should relate to matters of policy, rather than seeking factual information that could otherwise be obtained outside the meeting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD 16 JULY 2009

The minutes of the meeting held 16 July 2009 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as an accurate record.

4 (a) URGENT ITEM – POLITICAL GROUPS AND GROUP OFFICERS 2009-2010 AND CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS TO ALLOCATIONS TO COMMITTEES

Following the establishment of the English Democrats Group, and in order to comply with Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Council was required to consider the allocation of seats held on its committees by each political group.

The Mayor advised that the recommendations within this report had been separated into four sections. Recommendations relating to the Licensing Act 2003 Committee and the Standards Committee would be taken as separate items, given that Council had previously agreed to exempt these committees from political balance requirements.

Members considered each of the following in turn:

(i) Political Group Allocations and Committee Memberships:

The following recommendations were moved by the Leader of the Council and seconded by Councillor Lee:

- To note the amended Political Group membership and Group Officers for 2009-2010 as set out in Appendix 1 and 2 of the report;
- To affirm approval of the Committee structure as set out in the report;
- To agree the allocation of seats to political groups as set out within the report;
- To agree amendments to Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of Committees as set out within the report;
- To agree the appointments to committees to which the political balance rules apply as set out within the report.

During debate, a concern was raised with regard to the lack of consultation with minority groups in respect of the recommendations. The Leader advised Members that since the next Council meeting was not until December, it had been considered appropriate for these matters to be dealt with urgently in order to enable the Council to conduct its business efficiently and the recommendations had been compiled within a tight timescale. He assured Members that any subsequent proposals resulting from Group Meetings would be considered at the next meeting of full Council.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- Note the amended Political Group membership and Group Officers for 2009 – 2010 (**Appendix 1 and 2 refer**);
- Affirm its approval of the Committee structure (**Appendix 3 refers**);
- Agree the allocation of seats to political groups (**Appendix 4 refers**);
- Agree amendments to Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of Licensing Committee and the Licensing Act 2003 Committee as follows:
 - Licensing Committee – Councillor Newton to Chair in place of Councillor Dobbs; and
 - Licensing Act 2003 Committee – Councillor Dobbs to Chair in place of Councillor Newton.
- Agree the appointments to committees to which the political balance rules apply (**Appendix 5 refers**).

It was **FURTHER RESOLVED**:

To consider any alternative proposals arising from individual Group Meetings at the meeting of full Council on 2 December 2009.

(ii) Licensing Act 2003 Committee

The following recommendation was moved by the Leader of the Council and seconded by Councillor Lee:

To agree to reduce the Conservative membership of this ten member committee to six members, with membership from other groups remaining the same, and the appointment of Councillor Murphy to the Committee as the English Democrats representative.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

Reduce the Conservative membership of the Licensing Act 2003 Committee to six Conservative Group members and appoint Councillor Murphy to the Committee as the English Democrats representative.

(iii) Standards Committee and Selection Panel for the Appointment of Independent Members

Members were asked to consider whether to change the allocation of seats to the Standards Committee so that it reverted to comprising one elected Member from each of the five political groups and to change the membership of the Selection Panel for the Appointment of Independent Members, which is an advisory panel covered by the political balance arrangements, so that the Conservative group have four seats instead of five seats enabling the remaining groups to have one seat each.

Councillor Sandford moved this proposal, which was seconded by Councillor Goldspink.

Following a vote: 9 for, 0 against and 42 abstentions, it was **RESOLVED** to:

- Change the membership of the Standards Committee so that a seat be held by one elected Member from each of the five political groups;
- Change the membership of the Selection Panel for the Appointment of Independent Members of the Standards Committee so that the Conservative Group holds four seats rather than five, thereby enabling the remaining groups to have one seat each;
- To appoint Councillor Graham Murphy as the English Democrats representative on the Standards Committee and the Selection Panel for the Appointment of Independent Members of the Standards Committee.

(iv) Procedural Matters

Members were asked to affirm approval for the Leader's Scheme of Delegations, and delegate the consequential updating of the Council's Constitution arising from the changes to the Solicitor to the Council. This proposal was moved by the Leader of the Council and seconded by Councillor Lee.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- Affirm approval for the Leader's Scheme of Delegations as set out in Part 3, Section 3 of the Council's Constitution; and
- Delegate consequential updating of the Constitution arising from the changes to the Solicitor to the Council.

5. COMMUNICATIONS TIME

The Mayor announced that Councillor Sandford had made a request to address the meeting and invited Councillor Sandford to make his statement.

Councillor Sandford informed those present that he had been chosen as the prospective Parliamentary candidate for the Liberal Democrats in the Peterborough constituency and as a result would be relinquishing his position as Group Leader at the conclusion of the Council meeting. Councillor Fower would take over as Group Leader and he would take the position of Deputy Group Leader. Councillor Trueman would remain as Group Secretary. Councillor Sandford asked that his thanks be recorded to Members of the Liberal Democrats Group, other Group Leaders, the Chief Executive and Chief Officers for their support during his time as Group Leader.

In response, the Leader of the Council thanked Councillor Sandford for his contribution as a Group Leader and welcomed Councillor Fower to his new role.

5 (i) Mayor's Announcements

The report outlining the Mayor's engagements for the period 6 July 2009 to 30 September 2009 was noted.

The Mayor drew Members' attention to the following forthcoming events:

- Remembrance Sunday service to be held at the Cathedral on 8 November 2009;
- The Armistice Day service to be held on the steps of the Town Hall with the end of the two minutes' silence being marked by a Harrier fly-past (weather permitting);
- The switch-on of the Christmas Lights on 19 November;
- An afternoon of celebrations hosted by members of the Italian community to mark sixty years of being in Peterborough: the event to be held in Bridge Street on 18 October.

The Mayor thanked those who had attended and/or participated in the recent Great Eastern Run, and advised that nearly £1,000 had been raised for her three charities. She added that the opening of Bridge Fair and the Annual Sausage Supper had been a successful evening, raising over £900 and that 'Peterborough Has Talent' had raised a further £1, 142.39.

Finally, the Mayor welcomed the Deputy Youth MP for Peterborough, Bedrea Laftah to the meeting. Ms. Laftah had come to observe the meeting as part of Local Democracy Week.

5 (ii) Leader's Announcements

There were no announcements for the Leader of the Council.

5 (iii) Chief Executive's Announcements

There were no announcements from the Chief Executive.

6. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT TIME

6 (i) Questions with Notice by Members of the Public

There were no questions submitted.

6 (ii) Questions with Notice by Members of the Council relating to Ward Matters and to Committee Chairmen

Questions were asked in respect of the following:

- Vehicle activated speeding signs along Gunthorpe Road and the possibility of installing a crossing, or other road safety measures, outside Norwood School;
- The decision to install an energy from waste facility in East Ward and the procedures which will be put in place to consult residents on any changes to the original proposals;
- The arrangements in place to redirect wide loads through the road works at Eye.

6 (iii) Questions with Notice by Members of the Council to representatives of the Police and Fire Authorities

Questions were asked in respect of the following:

- The appointment of three bi-lingual PCSO's, funded through the Migration Impact Fund for the years 2009/10 and 2010/11, the areas in which they are working and how they have made themselves known to local Councillors in areas where migration has had the most impact;
- The participation of full time or retained fire personnel in Guards of Honour at the funerals of retired fire fighters;
- The number of primary and secondary fires that have been deliberately started in wheelie bins during the past five years and the annual cost to the taxpayer.

A summary of all questions and answers raised within agenda item 5 (i), (ii) and (iii) is attached at **Appendix 6**.

6 (d) Petitions submitted by Members or Residents

The following petitions were received:

- Petition in response to the Bus Review, objecting to changes to services 401 and 403;
- Petition to retain the recreation ground at Scott's Close and restore play equipment;
- Petition to retain use of the field adjacent to Norwood School for the public outside school hours.

7. EXECUTIVE BUSINESS TIME

7 (i) Questions with Notice to the Leader and Members of the Executive

Questions were asked of the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members in respect of the following:

- The amount of money to be delegated from Council departmental budgets to each of the Neighbourhood Councils;
- The visit to the MIPIM property convention by the Chief Executive during 2007 and the benefits derived from the trip;
- The timescale for publication of a report into complaints about the way the Council handled the transfer of Westcombe;
- Consultation arrangements in respect of the installation of a water feature at Bretton Park;
- The visit, to a number of countries, by an officer of Opportunity Peterborough and the benefits thereof;
- The introduction of a bollard system at Fitzwilliam Street.

A summary of all questions and answers raised within agenda item 7 (i) is attached (**Appendix 7 refers**).

The meeting was adjourned at 8.25 p.m. and reconvened at 8.35 p.m.

7 (ii) Questions without Notice on the Record of Executive Decisions

Members received and noted a report summarising:

- Decisions from the Cabinet Meeting held 6 July 2009;
- The outcome of petitions previously presented to full Council;
- The Council's call-in mechanism which had not been invoked since the last meeting;
- Special Urgency provisions in relation to the decision relating to the Peterborough Crematorium – Mercury Abatement and Special Urgency and waive of call-in provisions relating to the Nene Bridge Refurbishment Extension of Contract;
- Cabinet Member Decisions taken during the period 6 July to 30 September 2009.

Questions were asked about the following decisions:

Budget Monitoring Final Outturn 2008/9

A query was raised in respect of potential cuts to departmental budgets and the effect any such cuts would have on services and jobs. The Leader advised that there were no plans at the present time to make any redundancies but that it was necessary to consider how services are delivered in order to ensure efficiency.

Discretionary Rate Relief from Business Rates on the grounds of hardship

Councillor Murphy queried the decision, in view of the downturn in the local economy, to refuse an application for discretionary rate relief on the grounds of hardship and how this decision might be perceived amongst the business community. In response, Councillor

Seaton advised that it would not have been prudent to approve this application in view of the substantial asset that was in existence.

The sale of surplus former allotment land at Itter Crescent

Councillor Sandford expressed concern at the sale of former allotment land.

Councillor Seaton advised that the number of allotments in Peterborough compared well to other authorities and that allotment waiting lists were at fair levels and that measures were in place to promote empty sites in order to avoid vacant allotments.

Proposed New Children's Centre at Eye and Thorney Primary Schools

Councillor Khan sought assurance that the funding in respect of this decision had not been obtained by transferring funds from another area. Councillor Scott advised that funding had been obtained from central Government, but stated that she would meet with Councillor Khan to discuss any further queries or concerns he may have.

Disposal of Lady Lodge Arts Centre Site, Goldhay Way

Councillor Trueman queried whether there were any plans to replace the Lady Lodge Arts Centre with another arts facility in the area. In response, Councillor Lee advised that this centre had been closed for some considerable time prior to its disposal, but that a range of cultural activities continued to take in other venues across the city. He emphasised that he strongly supported the delivery of a variety of cultural activities and the implementation of a Cultural Trust within the city.

Managed ICT Service

Councillor Fower asked whether this decision had any relation to the recent breakdown in the Council's e mail service. Councillor Seaton advised that the transfer of the ICT service had improved the service and cut costs and that the problem had arisen before the transfer. He added that the new provider had assisted in resolving the problem.

East Midlands Spatial Strategy Partial Review: Options Consultation

Councillor Sandford queried the timeframe of the publication of this decision and the associated timescales for implementation of the call-in process. The Leader advised that timescales for consultation documents were often limited, however procedures would be implemented to ensure sufficient time was allowed for the implementation of call-in and the associated scrutiny process wherever possible in future.

8. COUNCIL BUSINESS TIME

8 (i) Executive Recommendations

There were no recommendations from the Executive.

8 (ii) Committee Recommendations

There were no recommendations from Committees.

8 (iii) Notices of Motion

The Mayor advised those present that Councillor Lee had suggested an amendment to the motion submitted by Councillor Fower (set out at paragraph 1, page 17 of the agenda book) and this had been agreed by Councillor Fower. Members' consented to submission of the amended motion as set out in the Order Papers.

(1) Councillor Fower moved the following Motion:

That this Council:

- (i) Joins the thousands of individuals, schools, hospitals, businesses and local authorities all actively helping to combat climate change by making simple changes to their lifestyles, homes and workplaces, by adding its support to the national initiative: 1010 www.1010org.uk which is aimed at cutting carbon emissions nationally by 10% in 2010.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Sandford.

Councillor Lee moved the following amendment, which was seconded by the Leader of the Council:

To **delete** paragraph (i) above and **replace** with:

That this Council:

- (i) Recognises the programme of work already commenced by the Climate Change Team;
- (ii) Notes that it is already participating in the Carbon Trusts Local Authority Carbon Management Programme, an intensive programme that works with the Council to establish robust baseline data and develop a comprehensive plan for reduction, which works towards the same goal as the 1010 scheme and is equally viable;
- (iii) Notes that as part of this scheme the Council has committed to achieving a reduction of up to 35% of 2008/9 levels over a five year period, which is even more ambitious than the governments 2020 target of 34%;
- (iv) Notes that the Carbon Trust Programme results in a Carbon Management Plan which will ensure reductions are achieved in a measured way and can be sustained;
- (v) Pledges its support for initiatives recommended by the Climate Change Team to reduce carbon emissions, including a Green Champions scheme to embed a culture change within our organisations to ensure we are operating in a truly environmental arena.

A vote was taken and the amendment was CARRIED.

Following debate, the substantive motion was put to the vote and CARRIED: 44 in favour, 0 against and 6 abstentions.

(2) Motion from Councillor Holdich

Councillor Holdich moved the following motion:

That this Council:

- (i) Notwithstanding the City Council's efforts to obtain a footbridge at the Foxcovert Road railway crossing when the line from Peterborough to Spalding is upgraded, agrees to urge Network Rail to ensure that there are some other safety measures installed at this crossing without delay, until such time as the footbridge can be achieved.

This was seconded by Councillor John Fox.

Following debate, this motion put to the vote and CARRIED unanimously.

(3) Motion from Councillor John Fox

The Mayor advised those present that a proposal had been received to alter the motion submitted by Councillor Fox. Councillor Fox had agreed to the altered motion.

Council consented to the motion as amended and Councillor Fox moved the motion as follows:

That this Council:

- (i) Acknowledges the importance of Cuckoo's Hollow as a wildlife and leisure amenity, and
- (ii) Refers the future funding and maintenance of Cuckoo's Hollow to the local Neighbourhood Council for consideration as part of the development of its community plan.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Lee and CARRIED unanimously.

(4) Motion from Councillor Murphy

The Mayor clarified that this motion would be moved by Councillor Murphy, rather than Councillor Goldspink as stated in the agenda book.

Councillor Murphy moved the following motion:

That this Council:

- (i) Notes that the best estimates available indicate that expenditure on translation services averaged over £107,000 per annum over the period 1.4.07 to 31.3.09 and requests the Cabinet to ensure that at least 60% of this sum is redirected into improving the advertising, availability and take up of English Language courses, achieving the reduction in translation costs by using Language Line more widely, or even Google translate.

This was seconded by Councillor Goldspink.

Following debate, a vote was taken and the Motion was DEFEATED: 44 against, 2 in favour and 3 abstentions.

(5) Motion from Councillor Sandford

The Mayor drew Members' attention to the revised version of this motion, which had been circulated to all Members on 7 October 2009 and replaced the version that appeared in the agenda book. A copy of the revised version had also been made available to all Members at the meeting.

Councillor Sandford moved the following:

That this Council notes:

- (i) The severe impact of the economic recession on people and families in Peterborough, with many suffering loss of employment, reduced incomes and associated hardship and stress;
- (ii) That at the same time a number of senior staff in the public and private sectors continue to enjoy very high levels of pay and that in the public sector, this is often accompanied by generous pension provision and other benefits;
- (iii) That when the economy recovers from recession, significant reductions in public expenditure will be needed in order to repay the large government debt which has been accumulated and that this will of necessity have to include public sector pay restraint, particularly for those on very high earnings.

Council therefore requests the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, the directors and heads of service of Peterborough City Council, and in particular those earning more than £100,000 a year, to voluntarily accept a freeze on their salaries for one year, commencing from 1 April 2010.

This was seconded by Councillor Fower.

The Mayor advised that an amendment to the above motion had been submitted by Councillor Lee. Councillor Lee moved the following amendment, which was seconded by Councillor Scott:

To **delete the final paragraph** of the above Motion and **replace** with the following paragraphs:

That this Council:

- (iv) Notes that the next Conservative government is determined to leave public services and society stronger than it finds them, and asks officers to note this policy when working on the budget projections for 2010/11 and 2011/12;
- (v) Notes that all officers are being asked to make ever more ambitious efficiency savings to ensure that the Council is able to continue to deliver high quality services despite significant reductions in public spending and asking senior officers to accept a pay freeze would result in a saving of less than £10,000 if applied only to those earning over £100,000 and £33,000 if applied to first and second tier officers;
- (vi) Further notes and wishes to record and commend the restraint shown by senior officers, in that none has had more than a basic cost of living increase for some years. The Chief Executive's salary was last reviewed around 2005. Whilst recognising that restraint, and although there would be a very small saving overall, in recognition of the severe impact of the recession, asks its officers at tier 1 and 2 to accept a voluntary pay freeze for one year from 1 April 2010.

Councillor Sandford indicated his agreement to the amended motion as put forward by Councillor Lee, subject to the deletion of its first paragraph (paragraph iv). Councillor Lee agreed to this proposal. The substantive motion was moved by Councillor Sandford and seconded by Councillor Lee.

A vote was taken on the substantive motion which was CARRIED (38 in favour, 8 against and 3 abstentions) as follows:

That this Council notes:

- (i) The severe impact of the economic recession on people and families in Peterborough, with many suffering loss of employment, reduced incomes and associated hardship and stress;
- (ii) That at the same time a number of senior staff in the public and private sectors continue to enjoy very high levels of pay and that in the public sector, this is often accompanied by generous pension provision and other benefits;
- (iii) That when the economy recovers from recession, significant reductions in public expenditure will be needed in order to repay the large government debt which has been accumulated and that this will of necessity have to include public sector pay restraint, particularly for those on very high earnings.
- (iv) Notes that all officers are being asked to make ever more ambitious efficiency savings to ensure that the Council is able to continue to deliver high quality services despite significant reductions in public spending and asking senior officers to accept a pay freeze would result in a saving of less than £10,000 if applied only to those earning over £100,000 and £33,000 if applied to first and second tier officers;
- (v) Further notes and wishes to record and commend the restraint shown by senior officers, in that none has had more than a basic cost of living increase for some years. The Chief Executive's salary was last reviewed around 2005. Whilst recognising that restraint, and although there would be a very small saving overall, in recognition of the severe impact of the recession, asks its officers at tier 1 and 2 to accept a voluntary pay freeze for one year from 1 April 2010.

(6) Motion from Councillor Goldspink

Councillor Goldspink advised that he wished to withdraw this motion.

8 (iv) Reports and Recommendations

(a) Appointments of Vice Chairs to Committees

Following the recent death of Councillor M Burton, Members were asked to appoint a Vice Chairs to the following committees:

- Planning and Environmental Protection Committee, and
- Scrutiny Commission for Health Issues.

The recommendations were moved by the Leader of the Council and seconded by Councillor Lee.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- Appoint Councillor Lowndes as Vice Chair of the Planning and Environmental Protection Committee; and
- Appoint Councillor Fazal as Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Commission for Health Issues.

(b) Neighbourhood Councils – Appointment of Vice Chairmen

The Mayor advised of an amendment to this report which proposed appointing Councillor Khan as Vice Chair of the Neighbourhood Council (Central and East 1), rather than Councillor Swift as stated in the report.

The report, subject to the amendment outlined above, was moved by Councillor Elsey and seconded by Councillor Hiller.

The Mayor informed those present that Councillor Sandford wished to put forward some alternative nominations for consideration and invited Councillor Sandford to address the meeting. In response, Councillor Sandford confirmed that he wished to support Neighbourhood Councils and wished therefore to withdraw his proposals.

Councillor Goldspink expressed the view that due to the short notice period in respect of the first round of meetings, some Members had been unable to attend. In view of this, and the fact that there was now a formal schedule of meetings in place, he suggested the report be deferred in order to allow clarification in respect of support for nominees prior to further consideration of the matter at the next meeting of full Council.

The Mayor proposed that the appointment of Vice Chairs to Neighbourhood Councils should be considered without delay in order to enable the forthcoming Neighbourhood Council meetings to function effectively. She emphasised that the arrangements would be reviewed, if necessary, at a later stage.

Following debate, it was **RESOLVED** to:

Approve the appointment of Vice Chairmen to the seven Neighbourhood Councils as follows:

Central and East 1 -	Councillor N Khan
Central and East 2 -	Councillor B Saltmarsh
North and West 1 -	Councillor R Dobbs
North and West 2 -	Councillor John Fox
North and West 3 -	Councillor M Dalton
South 1 -	Councillor B Rush
South 2 -	Councillor N North

(c) Changes to the Constitution

The Leader of the Council moved the recommendations within this report, subject to an amendment in respect of the identification of the Chairman of the Sustainable Growth Scrutiny Committee to act as deputy to the Chairman of the Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee in relation to urgency provisions. It was emphasised that all other aspects of the report remained the same.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the report, subject to the amendment outlined above.

Meeting closed at 9.40 p.m.

APPENDIX 1

POLITICAL GROUP MEMBERSHIP 2009 – 2010

CONSERVATIVE		
ALLEN Sue	FLETCHER Michael	PEACH John
BENTON Frances	GILBERT Lee	RUSH Brian
BURTON Colin	GOODWIN Janet	SANDERS David
CERESTE Marco	HILLER Peter	SCOTT Sheila
COLLINS Mark	HOLDICH John	SEATON David
CROFT Piers	KRELING Pam	THACKER Paula
DALTON Matthew	LAMB Diane	TODD Marion
DALTON Samantha	LEE Matthew	WALSH Irene
DAY Charles	LOWNDES Yvonne	WILKINSON Janet
DAY David	MORLEY Darren	WINSLADE Pam
DAY Sue	NASH Pat	
DOBBS Ray	NAWAZ Gul	
ELSEY Gavin	NEWTON Harry	
FAZAL Mahmood	NORTH Nigel	
FITZGERALD Wayne	OVER David	

PETERBOROUGH INDEPENDENT FORUM	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT	LABOUR	ENGLISH DEMOCRATS
ASH Chris	FOWER Darren	HUSSAIN Zahid	GOLDSPINK Stephen
FOX John	SANDFORD Nick	KHAN Nazim	MURPHY Graham
FOX Judy	TRUEMAN William		
HARRINGTON David			
LANE Stephen			
MINERS Adrian			
SALTMARSH Bella			
SHARP Keith			
SWIFT Charles			

GROUP OFFICERS 2009– 2010

CONSERVATIVE GROUP

Group Leader	Councillor Cereste
Deputy Group Leader	Councillor Lee
Group Secretary	Councillor Kreling
Treasurer	Councillor Rush
Policy Chairman	Councillor Dalton
Chief Whip	To be advised
Press Officer	Councillor Fitzgerald

PETERBOROUGH INDEPENDENT FORUM

Group Leader	Councillor Swift
Deputy Group Leader	Councillor John Fox
Group Secretary	Councillor Saltmarsh
Assistant Secretary	Councillor Lane
Press Officer	Councillor Sharp
Assistant Press Officer	Councillor John Fox

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP

Group Leader	Councillor Sandford
Deputy Group Leader & Press Officer	Councillor Fower
Group Secretary	Councillor Trueman

LABOUR GROUP

Group Leader and Group Secretary	Councillor Khan
Deputy Group Leader	Councillor Hussain

ENGLISH DEMOCRATS

Group Leader	Councillor Goldspink
Group Secretary	Councillor Murphy

APPENDIX 3

Committee Structure:

Committee	No of Councillors
Scrutiny Commission for Rural Communities	7
Scrutiny Commission for Health Issues	7
Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee	7
Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities Scrutiny Committee	7
Sustainable Growth Scrutiny Committee	7
Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee	7
Audit Committee	7
Employment Committee	7
Licensing Committee	10
Planning and Environmental Protection Committee	10
Appeals Committee (Service Issues) *	3
Joint Consultative Panel *	7
<u>Other bodies to which S.15 LGHA applies</u>	
Selection Panel (Independent Members Standards Committee)*	9
Employment Appeals Sub Committee*	3
<u>Committees to which S.15 does not apply</u>	
Standards Committee	5 + 5 independent members and 2 parish reps
Licensing Act 2003 Committee	10
<p><i>* NB. In accordance with decisions already taken by Council, it is proposed that the seats on these committees are not subject to political balance arrangements.</i></p>	
<p>Note : Neighbourhood Councils At its meeting in July 2009 Council approved the setting up of Neighbourhood Councils. S15 does not apply to Neighbourhood Councils in the way that they are constituted, and they are made up of the ward members of the relevant wards.</p>	

APPENDIX 4

Applying the political balance rules to calculate the number of seats on ordinary committees to be allocated on ordinary committees produces the following calculation. The political balance calculation applies to the total number of seats on ordinary committees, namely 76. Applying the political balance rules to the total number of seats produces the following calculation:

Party	Cons	PIF	Lib Dem	Lab	English Democrat	Total
No Elected	40	9	3	2	2	56
Proportionality	71.43	16.07	5.38	3.57	3.57	100
Entitlement	54.29	12.21	4.07	2.71	2.71	75.99
No of seats	54	12	4	3	3	76
Change	-3	0	0	0	+3	0

The seats must be allocated across all ordinary committees to give effect to that calculation.

Sustainable Growth Scrutiny Committee

7 member committee, currently made up of 6 Conservatives and 1 PIF member. There is currently a vacancy in the Conservative allocation following the recent death of Councillor Michael Burton, therefore this vacancy can be allocated to the English Democrats.

Change to:

5 Conservatives (Cllrs Fletcher, *Chair*, Allen, D Day, S Day and Peach

1 PIF (Cllr Lane)

1 English Democrats (Cllr Murphy)

Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee

7 member committee, currently made up of 6 Conservatives and 1 PIF member.

Change to :

5 Conservatives (Cllr C Burton, *Chair*, Cllr D Day, Cllr Dobbs, Cllr North, Cllr Wilkinson) Cllr Fazal is to give up his seat on this committee.

1 PIF (Cllr J Fox)

1 English Democrats (Cllr Goldspink)

Audit Committee

7 member committee, currently made up of 5 Conservatives, 1 PIF, 1 Labour. PIF have agreed that Cllr Harrington will give up his seat on this committee and take a seat on Planning Committee instead.

Change to:

5 Conservative (Cllr M Dalton, *Chair*, Cllr North, Cllr Gilbert, Cllr Kreling, Cllr Rush)

1 Labour (Cllr Hussain)

1 English Democrats (Cllr Goldspink)

Planning and Environmental Protection Committee

10 member committee, currently made up of 8 Conservatives, 2 PIF

Change to:

7 Conservatives (Cllrs North, *Chair*, C Burton, Kreling, Lowndes, Thacker, Todd, Winslade)

3 PIF (Cllrs Ash, Lane, Harrington)

The **Appeals Panel (Service Issues)** and the **Employment Appeals (Sub-Committee)** are not permanent committees, but they are subject to the political proportionality rules. However, it is intended that they should retain cross party representation as agreed by Council previously. This is to enable the panel selection arrangements to be implemented effectively and means that the seats are allocated as follows: 2 to the Conservative Group and 1 to one of the other minority groups.

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS RAISED UNDER AGENDA ITEM 6 - COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT TIME

1. Questions with Notice by Members of the Public

There were no questions from members of the public.

2. Questions with Notice by Members of the Council relating to Ward Matters and to Committee Chairmen

Councillor Fower asked the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development:

The vehicle activated signs along Gunthorpe Road have been described by one resident as a 'waste of time'. Having been there for years and despite monitoring of speeding vehicles by the local FOCUS team, myself and the police, (whose findings included speeds of 70 mph in this 30 mph zone) speeding and dangerous driving remains a problem for many residents. Can the Cabinet Member tell me what the present plans are for these signs, do they actually record data and if so, what is done with this information? Are there plans for a crossing outside Norwood School or for the introduction of some road safety measures along Gunthorpe Road?

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development respnded:

The vehicle activated signs on Gunthorpe Road do not record any information, they simply activate at a pre-set threshold on the approach of a speeding vehicle. Such signs provide a reminder to the conscientious motorist to moderate their speed should they have inadvertently exceeded the threshold. They will never address the reckless behaviour of any motorist wilfully travelling at speeds substantially in excess of the speed limit.

There are no current plans to replace the school crossing patroller outside Norwood School with a crossing outside, or road safety measures along Gunthorpe Road, but I have asked officers to investigate and review the situation.

Councillor Goldspink asked the Deputy Leader:

Can the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment Capital and Culture please explain why the Council is now considering re-interpreting its minuted decision of 28 February 2007 to build an energy from waste facility, which was clearly a decision for oscillating kiln technology such as the plant at Grimsby, to instead allow the siting in my ward of a plant that could use the unproven gasification of pyrolysis technology, how much additional waste will have to be brought in from outside the city to keep the plant running, and can he say what procedures he intends to use to fully consult on this massive change of direction with residents of East Ward and other wards nearly before a decision is taken?

The Deputy Leader responded:

Thank you for this question. The question seems to be in three parts and I will respond to each part in turn. Firstly, I will answer the suggestion that the Council's minuted decision refers to an oscillating kiln technology and is now being re-interpreted.

I would remind Members that at Council on 28 February 2007 the resolution was that, as part of the integrated solution for waste management in Peterborough, including the commitment to 65% plus recycling" the infrastructure would provide for (and I quote) –

“an energy recovery resource facility that can provide heat and power to local industries and preserves natural resources”.

Furthermore, Council went on to resolve (and I quote again) –

“to establish an energy resource recovery facility in Peterborough” and that “the preferred technology type of treatment facility for the energy resource facility” was as referred to in the report to Council “and identified in option 3 referred to in paragraph 7.4.7 of that report.

Option 3 referred to in that report related to “Residual treatment with emphasis on energy resource recovery (EFW)”. This was described as being for “the small residue which has been left after maximising recycling and composting at the kerbside is delivered to the facility with no requirement for further processing. The waste is loaded into the kiln and used as a fuel in the CHP plant”.

Members will note, therefore, that no part of the Council's resolution referred to any preferred specific type of technology – not oscillating kiln or any other type.

In fact, the only technology commitment made, if it can even be called that, is for the facility to be a high efficiency Combined Heat and Power (CHP) type. Any energy from waste facility that is capable of producing electricity is also capable of producing heat (ie. CHP).

In line with the Council's resolution which I repeat, is non-technology specific, the Council's current procurement process has not prescribed any specific technology solution for the energy from waste facility. Had the Council's resolution agreed specifically to Cyclerval technology, and the procurement specified this as the only solution, the Council would have left itself open to challenge from other bidders under the European procurement rules. Such allegations would have involved the Council being anti-competitive under the rules by stating that only one bidder could meet the Council's requirements where there are other solutions available in the market.

Clearly, any technology solutions proposed by bidders in the current procurement will need to be carefully analysed and tested to ensure that they meet the Council's overall requirements. Amongst these requirements, emphasis will be placed on technology being fit for purpose (including alignment with the Environment Capital agenda, proven technology, delivery on time and suitability to treat the Council's residual waste) along with value for money.

Secondly, I will answer the point about what additional waste will have to be brought into the city to keep the plant running.

In parallel with running the procurement process, the Council has applied for planning permission for an energy from waste facility with a capacity to deal with 65,000 tonnes of waste. This size of facility would allow the Council to manage its waste in the long term and would include sufficient capacity to take account of the considerable growth agenda for Peterborough over the coming years.

It is true to say that there would be some capacity available in the early years of the facility's operation but this would be reduced and filled during the life of the facility by waste arising from a growing population.

Thirdly, I will deal with the point on consultation. Should the procurement bring forward alternative solutions which are outside of the resolution made by Council in 2007, the matter would be referred back to Council.

Councillor Sanders asked the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development:

Does the Cabinet Member believe that adequate arrangements have been made to redirect wide loads through the road works at Eye?

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development responded:

The works on the A47 trunk road near Eye have been ongoing for several months without any known issues being raised regarding the narrow lanes. I am therefore satisfied that the reduction in lane width does not adversely affect the passage of heavy goods vehicles. Similarly the diversion route for the 3m width restriction on Frank Perkins Parkway was appropriately signed via Nene Parkway and the A47. The passage of any wide load requiring a movement order would be dealt with on receipt of such an application.

Councillor Sanders asked the following supplementary question:

Will the Cabinet Member, Leader and/or Deputy Leader, along with the relevant director, meet with Ward and Parish Councillors and visit the site?

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development responded:

I will provide a response to this request in due course.

The following questions and answers were distributed after the meeting as the time limit for this category had expired:

Councillor Lane would have asked the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development:

Owning a dog can bring great happiness, but also places a lifelong responsibility on the owner to ensure that the dog is not a hazard, health risk or nuisance. Unfortunately a small number of owners do not take such a responsible attitude and in my ward, we are experiencing a number of complaints covering issues such as uncollected dog faeces and dogs running unattended in public spaces.

This Council has had the power to introduce Dog Control Orders since April 2006 but has chosen not to do so, despite the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 being repealed. Although existing byelaws remain in force until replaced, could this mean that until such an Order is made, new communities and townships will have no-one to enforce any action?

Does the Cabinet Member agree that it would be a responsible move to look at these measures and that this is long overdue, and that Dog Control Orders would be more efficient by consolidating the many different byelaws?

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development may have responded:

Our newly configured Neighbourhood Management Teams are now responsible for a range of neighbourhood-related enforcement activity, thereby maximising the impact this type of action can have on community wellbeing.

This includes enforcement action where relevant to prevent inappropriate dog-related behaviour.

As part of a wider review of our total enforcement activity within neighbourhoods, we will review the potential offered by Dog Protection Orders alongside other enforcement powers that are available to us and will ensure the most appropriate model of enforcement is introduced for the benefit of our whole community.

Councillor Ash would have asked the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development:

I am sure the Cabinet Member will be aware that it has been acknowledged by officers that the new road layout on the A47 will increase traffic using Welland Road and will have an adverse impact on the residential amenity in Dogsthorpe, Bluebell and those on the surrounding road network. There are also concerns that the works at Junction 8 (Eye Road/Parkway system) will also have an adverse affect on traffic flows in the area, both during construction and once the development at the Eye Road site is open for business.

Can residents be assured that steps will be taken to discourage increased traffic flows along Welland Road and the interconnecting roads in the Dogsthorpe area prior to the roundabout at the junction of Welland Road and the A47 becoming fully operational?

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development may have responded:

There are a number of highway schemes underway or planned that are or will affect traffic in the Welland Road area. The new roundabout under construction at the junction of Welland Road and the A47 is being constructed as part of the major A1073 improvement scheme. The new road will join the A47 here. It is anticipated that the new roundabout will be open at the end of October, although the new A1073 highway to the A16 at Spalding will not open until next year.

When the A47 roundabout opens all traffic movements into Welland Road will be possible. However, when the roundabout opens traffic management should be reducing on Junction 20, Dogsthorpe Interchange, and at the new garden centre development road works in Eye Road. The easing of congestion at these locations of these works will return vehicle capacity elsewhere on the road network and make rat running in the Welland Road area less attractive in the period up to Christmas. Environment, Transport and Engineering officers propose to monitor traffic flows before and after the roundabout opens.

In January work commences on both the Welland Road traffic calming scheme and the A15/A1139 Junction 8 improvement scheme. The Welland Road scheme is being delivered to discourage rat running through the Welland Road and is a planning condition on the A1073 improvement scheme. Once work starts in Welland Road the temporary traffic management associated with construction and the rolling out of the traffic calming scheme will discourage traffic using Welland road as a diversionary route from the Junction 8 scheme.

3. Questions from Members to Representatives of the Police / Fire Authorities

The following questions were submitted to Representatives of the Police / Fire Authorities:

Councillor Swift asked the Council's representative on the Police Authority:

Cambridgeshire Constabulary has been allocated £246.371 through the migration impact fund for the years 2009/10 and 2010/11. £196,371 is for three bi-lingual PCSO's from the migrated community to assist in policing. Six months of this financial year have already passed. Would the Council's representative please tell me:

1. When the three PCSO's were appointed;
2. Which area they are working in;
3. Have they / are they going to make themselves known to the local councillors in areas where migration has had the most impact; and
4. Does he share my concern that the initiative is not reaching the communities it was intended to support?

Councillor Fazal responded:

Having consulted the Constabulary on the details, we welcome the opportunity to provide some context. I would first like to deal with the opening statement that 'Cambridgeshire Constabulary have been allocated £246.371 through the migration impact fund for the years 2009/10 and 2010/11':

This is inaccurate. The Constabulary put in a number of bids to cover projects in both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Not all of those bids were approved and not all those that were approved were fully funded - the bid for multi-lingual Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) for Peterborough being an example. The Constabulary received £313,714 in total for the financial year 2009/10 and this is being used to support five projects across the county. Further funding is possible in 2010/11, but this is not certain - it is dependant on whether the government's tax on economic migrants generates enough money.

The question mentions £196,371 being allocated for three bi-lingual PCSO's from the migrated community to assist in policing: this is inaccurate. We did ask for money for three PCSOs for Peterborough and three PCSOs for Cambridgeshire, but the total funding for PCSO projects only allowed three in total to be recruited. Two of those went to Peterborough and one will go to Wisbech. Whilst six months may have elapsed since the beginning of the financial year the money from the Migration Impacts Fund was received by the Constabulary on the 28 July 2009 and not at the beginning of the financial year. Our recruitment of PCSOs with the right skills and languages has in fact been speedy.

In reply to the specific questions posed:

One PCSO started at the beginning of this month and the other one starts on the 28 October 2009. Both PCSOs will be based within the Community Cohesion Unit at Bridge Street Police

Station and will be deployed across the city to wherever their skills and presence are needed to deal with local issues of concern.

Local councillors are key individuals in all our neighbourhoods. The PCSOs will be making contact as soon as they are able. Please bear in mind that one has not yet started and the other was appointed to the role only very recently.

We are confident that in time and with the involvement of our partners this can be very successful. It has only just begun with one PCSO expected in post at the end of the month. The bid for PCSOs was supported by the Greater Peterborough Partnership and approved by the Department of Communities and Local Government because the use of multi-lingual PCSOs within the Community Cohesion Unit has a proven track record of making real in-roads into new communities, breaking down barriers and helping maintain community cohesion. The two PCSOs between them have the following languages - Russian, Slovakian, Macadonian, Serbain, Bosnian, Croatian, Bulgarian. The skills alone will make a tremendous contribution to improving understanding and generating confidence.

Councillor John Fox asked the Council's representative on the Fire Authority:

I understand that instructions were issued at the beginning of October by a Senior Fire Officer that in future no full time or retained fire personnel will participate in being part of a Guard of Honour at a funeral of a retired fire fighter, either retained or full time. Does the same ruling apply with regard to the death of a fire fighter whilst on duty and what is the view of the Council's representative on the Fire Authority in relation to this matter?

Councillor Goodwin responded:

At no point have instructions been issued to the effect that fire fighters will not take part on a Guard of Honour duties for serving or retired members of the service. Some years ago, on the basis of cost and rare usage, the decision was taken not to issue fire fighters with undress uniform. This was a sound decision that has saved the Authority many thousands of pounds over the years. It has reached a point where a significant number of serving fire fighters do not possess undress uniform and supplying a uniform for ceremonial duties incurs additional costs that the Authority has to meet from its budget.

It has been our practice to offer the possibility of a Guard of Honour as a matter of course following the death of retired members of the service. It has become increasingly difficult to ensure we can offer that service and the Chief Fire Officer will not offer a service that cannot be delivered professionally and to the standard these occasions demand. The decision recently taken was to stop offering the possibility of a Guard of Honour as a routine part of our welfare and benevolent services; this does not mean that should families of the bereaved specially request a Guard of Honour, it will not be considered and every effort made to meet the request.

There will be no change with regard to fire fighters who die in the course of their duties.

Councillor Lane asked the Council's representative on the Fire Authority:

Arson is a serious crime which can have potentially fatal consequences, not to mention serious financial implications. Can the Council representative on the Fire Authority provide the statistics from the last five years relating to:

- (a) secondary fires that were deliberately started in a wheelie bin;
- (b) primary fires that were deliberately started in a wheelie bin;
- (c) the annual cost to the taxpayer of these fires.

Councillor Goodwin responded:

During the last twelve months period there were 205 deliberate wheelie bin fires, 39 of which were accidental.

Each wheelie bin fire costs an average of £2,004, thus equating to at least £410,820 for the year, for all agencies involved.

National figures have recently been collated in respect of wheelie bin fires and I understand the Government is due to publish this information shortly.

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS RAISED UNDER AGENDA ITEM 7 (a) – EXECUTIVE BUSINESS TIME

1. Questions with Notice from Members to the Leader and Members of the Executive

1. Councillor Sandford asked the Leader:

Could the Leader tell us how much money will be delegated from Council departmental budgets to each of the Neighbourhood Councils and when will this delegation of funding take place?

The Leader responded:

As all Members will be aware, the introduction and subsequent effective implementation of these Councils is one of my top priorities. As such, I have already asked officers to ensure that the maximum possible amounts are allocated to them. I believe, however, that before this can take place, each area should have its own neighbourhood plan to determine how the monies should be spent. The first meetings that started this week have kicked off this process.

Councillor Sandford asked the following supplementary question:

Can the Leader provide an assurance that when the Council publishes its proposals with regard to the budget, such proposals will clearly show how much money will be given to Neighbourhood Councils?

The Leader responded:

The budget proposals will contain details of monies that will be spent in the neighbourhoods. If we are able to identify what that is in respect of each neighbourhood and how it is to be spent, we will do so.

2. Councillor Fower asked the Leader:

Following a recent article in the Mail on Sunday, it has become clear that the Chief Executive attended a property convention in Cannes during 2007. Can the Leader explain the purpose of this trip and advise the Council what benefits have been derived from the visit?

The Leader responded:

The property conference being referred to is 'MIPIM' (Marché International des Professionnels d'Immobilier). This is an annual international property convention held in Cannes and is a market leader in the property and regeneration industry for promoting regions, cities and individual development opportunities to a wide audience of international investors, developers and property and regeneration professionals. Many UK cities and their Councils attend this convention to promote investment opportunities for their cities and communities.

In 2007 Opportunity Peterborough sponsored and led a delegation to MIPIM to promote the city generally in terms of its ambitious growth agenda, environmental credentials and particularly

the emerging development opportunities at South Bank and Station Quarter. The latter development opportunities were of considerable interest to the investment market.

The results of this trip were as follows:

- The beginning of a strong relationship by Opportunity Peterborough / Peterborough City Council with Ashwell Land who are now a key land owner and development partner in the delivery of Station Quarter West;
- An opportunity for Opportunity Peterborough / Peterborough City Council Chief Executive's to have a detailed discussion with Margaret Ford, the then Chair of English Partnerships, about the city's environmental and growth aspirations, which was a key factor in the designation of Peterborough as one of only two Carbon Challenge cities in the UK;
- An opportunity to meet major master-planning consultancy practices, together with examining their previous work through their exhibitions and displays, to assist the selection of consultants to be invited to tender for the City Centre Area Action Plan work. This led to the final appointment of EDAW, who was one of the consultants met at MIPIM;
- Investment interest from key developers in South Bank and Station Quarter, which led to a strong list of developers bidding for the opportunity to develop the Carbon Challenge site.

3. Councillor Goldspink asked the Leader:

Can the Leader of the Council please explain why the report into Councillor Fletcher's complaints about the way the Council has handled the transfer of Westcombe to his management has still not been published several months after it was written, and advise the Council when he will release a meaningful version of the report that either rebuffs or supports Councillor Fletcher's very serious allegations?

The Leader responded:

The report you mention confirmed that a number of significant issues needed to be dealt with, and these have been actioned expeditiously with the co-operation of other authorities and agencies. I cannot comment publicly on any of the detail, just as I cannot share the contents of the confidential report, which details the acts and omissions of individuals on both sides. I am not willing to share this detail: I am legally constrained from doing so.

The action plan being implemented now is aimed at securing Westcombe's future as a supplier to Perkins, and most importantly aimed at securing the future of the employees, and excellent progress is being made on both fronts.

Councillor Goldspink asked the following supplementary question:

Does the Leader agree that it is essential to make the details available to the public at the earliest opportunity and will he undertake to share as much information as he is able by no later than the next meeting of full Council?

The Leader responded:

Agreed.

4. Councillor John Fox asked the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development

Were the residents of Bretton consulted about the use of monies obtained from the closure of Bretton Woods School, in particular regarding the use of some of these funds to install a new water feature at Bretton Park and what is the cost to the taxpayer of Bretton in terms of running costs?

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development responded:

Prior to the closure of the Bretton Woods Community School in July 2007 full consultation was carried out with all local community groups who used the school premises in order to identify future needs. This included public meetings held at the Cresset to assess their requirements including future accommodation.

The S106 contributions following the sale of the Bretton Woods Community School land are as follows:

1. Travel Plan and Travel Services (i.e, increase in bus services, etc), a contribution of £2,500;
2. Highways Improvements Contribution of £2000 to mitigate the effect of traffic generated by the development of the new Aldi supermarket;
3. Lighting of £5,500 the subway linking Bretton and Ravensthorpe to reflect that more people will be using this facility after the new supermarket opens;
4. Bus Stop improvements of £10,000 at Bus Stop numbers PNB577 and PNB820 to accommodate increased bus services

This equates to a total contribution of £20,000 for the sale of land used by the Aldi supermarket only. Future developments (as yet not known will lead to further S106 contributions)

Bretton Parish Council were the major consultees concerning the Water Park installation prior to the planning application being submitted and also articles featured in local ward newsletters describing the proposed installation.

Funding for the Water Park was made available through the Council's Community Reinvestment Fund following the closure of two secondary schools. The cost of the Water Park was £337,000 with a weekly operation and maintenance cost of £1,500.

Councillor Fox asked the following supplementary question:

My concern relates to the funding for the maintenance of this facility and would the money not have been better spent improving Crofts Corner play area which I understand has fallen into disrepair.

The Cabinet Member responded:

I am given understand that funding for the maintenance of the water park has been budgeted for. I am not aware of specific plans for Crofts Corner.

Councillor Fitzgerald, as a Ward Councillor, added that plans for Crofts Corner were currently being considered.

5. Councillor Murphy asked the Leader:

Can the Leader explain why Opportunity Peterborough sent an officer to several countries, including China and Poland, when it knew that the officer concerned would be leaving the day after he returned from his trip? How has this trip benefited Peterborough, given that the officer was hardly around long enough on his return to unpack his suitcase, and can he list the benefits that the city has accrued from the trip?

The Leader responded:

The Council and Opportunity Peterborough sent a team of four representatives to China recently, principally in response to a significant inward investment enquiry from a business with whom discussions continue, but with the intention of combining with those discussions presentations to Chinese businesses and investors that set out the city's attractions as a location and source of trade partners.

The global nature of today's markets and the re-balancing of the world's economy towards the Indian sub-continent, Latin America and China, combined with our city's unique cluster of green businesses - one of the few growth sectors clearly to have emerged in the UK economy over the past few years - mean that there is a very strong case for developing effective links with Chinese government organisations as well as with Chinese businesses and investors.

Of course, there is every chance that these links will benefit our future University too.

No other UK local authorities were represented at the trade fair which was the main focus of the visit, which allowed Peterborough plausibly to assert its status as a prospective Environment Capital for the UK and demonstrate its commitment to a green growth agenda and an economy that is open for business.

A number of leads are being followed up at present by officers within the council and Opportunity Peterborough, and Councillor Croft will update colleagues as these discussions progress.

Turning to the detail of your question, one of the people who made the trip happened to change his contractual arrangement during the period of the trip, but he remains engaged by ourselves in his effective work on the Environment Capital agenda, so the implication that his attendance was wasteful is incorrect.

6. Councillor Fower asked the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development:

The cost of introducing a bollard system in Fitzwilliam Street has set local taxpayers back nearly £50K. Given that this mechanism has not worked for several weeks and the new Administration's ethos of greater openness, does the Cabinet Member agree that this has been to quote a local taxi driver, a 'stupid idea', can he inform me who signed off this expensive concept and how will the Council be rectifying this scenario?

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development responded:

The introduction of the rising bollard in Fitzwilliam Street was instigated at the request of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Forum with the support of the Cabinet Member at that time. The funding for the bollard has been taken from the revenue generated by the licensing of such vehicles.

At present we are reviewing the operation and signing of the bollard system with the intention of preventing the widespread abuse of the existing system. Once any modifications have been implemented we will actively publicise the re-introduction of the bollards prior to them being brought back into operation. It is difficult to provide definitive timescales at present, but I would hope that it is all resolved in the next 2 – 3 months subject to the modifications that are undertaken and I undertake to ensure the Ward Member is kept fully advised.

Questions and Answers to the following questions and answers were distributed after the meeting as the time limit for this category had expired:

7. Councillor Goldspink would have asked the Cabinet Member for Resources:

Can the Cabinet Member please tell the Council the total expended on Members' Allowances plus Democratic Services salaries in support of Members and of the Cabinet and Scrutiny structure in 2008/9, and the projected total for Members' Allowances plus Democratic Services salaries in support of Members and the new structure for Cabinet, Scrutiny and Neighbourhood Councils in 2009/10, and the projected full year cost of the 2009/10 arrangements for 2010/11, and explain where the funds to support the additional costs have come from?

The Cabinet Member for Resources may have answered:

Items on Members' Allowances and Neighbourhood Councils have both come before the Council in the past 6 months. They have been fully debated and decisions agreed on the ways forward. Therefore, I have to say, that I was somewhat surprised to receive a further question on these matters from Councillor Goldspink.

However, for Members' information, the costs are as follows:

Members' Allowances:

2008/09 actual was £627,814, the projection for the current year is £724,611 and the initial forecast for 2010/11 is £733,992.

Staff Salaries:

2008/09 actual was £309,938, the projection for the current year is £315,948 and the initial forecast for 2010/11 is also £315,948.

In commenting on the amounts firstly, I will stress again that this Council needs to adequately recompense its Councillors if it to attract high calibre people to lead the city and provide the high quality services that our citizens deserve within the resources at our disposal. To my mind, this city is far too important for us to fail in this respect.

Secondly, the Councillor appears to have misunderstood how we have reallocated existing staffing resources to ensure that they have the maximum effect in supporting the new leadership and the new Neighbourhood Management arrangements. I can assure the Councillor that there has been no increase in the salary costs of Members' Support. I can also confirm that there has been no increase in the staffing establishment for Democratic Services in supporting the Council's decision-making arrangements including the new Neighbourhood Councils.

Finally, my meeting of Cabinet on Monday this week set out the current year's budgetary position and that for 2010/11. All members will see from this report that any extra costs are being contained from within overall council resources available for both financial years.

8. Councillor Murphy would have asked the Cabinet Member for Resources:

Can the Cabinet Member assure the Council and the hard-pressed tax payers of Peterborough that the increase in Council Tax from 1 April 2010 will be no more than 2.5%?

The Cabinet Member for Resources may have answered:

The Council is committed to delivering value for money for the Council Tax payers of Peterborough. Levels of Council Tax in Peterborough are among the lowest in the country, and increases in recent years have been below the national average.

We have been able to achieve because we have been working hard to improve efficiency and transform our services. This has enabled us to deliver substantial savings. We have taken more than £23.1 million in savings out of our base budget in recent years, which in turn minimises the demands on hard pressed Council Tax payers.

We fully recognise the impact that the recession is having on household incomes, and will work to ensure that any increases in council tax are kept to an absolute minimum.

We have just started the budget setting process for the coming years, and indeed Cabinet considered this at its meeting of 12 October. As we are at the start of the process, there remains much work to be done before Council meets in late February to agree the budget and Council Tax levels. This work will include public consultation on budget issues.

After the news of our financial settlement for next year is released by Government later this year, we will consult our communities on the emerging budget proposals prior to any final decisions being taken. The results of this consultation will be published to ensure this process is as transparent as possible.

It would not be sensible to make specific statements on Council Tax levels before we have undertaken budget work and have our financial settlement for next year and more specifically before we have consulted with our communities.

9. Councillor Sandford would have asked the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development:

When major construction works were carried out on the Town Bridge and it was converted into a five lane highway, we were told that provision for pedestrians and cyclists would be made in the form of a separate structure cantilevered off from the side of the main bridge. Could the Cabinet Member tell us when any form of adequate provision for cyclists is going to be provided on the Town Bridge, given that it is now well over a year since the main works were completed?

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development may have answered:

Given the current availability of transport funding for major schemes, the proposal for a new foot/cycle bridge alongside the Town Bridge remains a longer term proposal.

The viability of such a scheme also depends on when new foot/cycle bridges across the River Nene and east west rail line are delivered as part of the South Bank development. It is unlikely that funding would be available in the foreseeable future to construct river crossings at both Town Bridge and the South Bank site.

However, the value of Town Bridge as part of the walking and cycling network is fully recognised. To this end work is currently underway to convert the western footway of Town

Bridge over the River Nene to a shared use walking/cycle facility. This will provide a key link between the widened foot/cycle way over the Town Rail Bridge, and the recently improved cycle link in Lower Bridge Street.

10. Councillor John Fox would have asked the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment Capital and Culture:

Does the Council plan to object to the proposed landfill site for contaminated nuclear waste material at Kings Cliffe in Northants? This site lies between the river Welland and river Nene, which could cause residents of Peterborough problems in the future, bearing in mind the water table. Can the Cabinet Member provide reassurance that officers will investigate this fully, especially with regard to the safety factor to our residents, advise this Council accordingly and make their objections and recommendations known publicly?

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment Capital and Culture may have answered:

Northamptonshire County Council is the determining authority for the planning application relating to this proposed site at Kings Cliffe. The application has been referred to PCC as adjoining planning authority, and our response will be taken into account along with other consultation responses.

I can confirm that officers have investigated the issue of the proximity of the site to both the River Nene and River Welland, and the issues this could cause to the residents of Peterborough in the future. The situation is as follows:

- The Environment Agency is reviewing the hydrogeological risk assessment submitted by Augean as part of the authorisation application for the Environmental Permit, which the operator requires in addition to planning permission to landfill LLW at the site.
- The risks to groundwater and surface water and resultant risks to users of the water are, and will continue to be, controlled by the presence of engineered low permeability barriers on the base, sides and cap of the landfill area. These barriers are constructed to an agreed specification and the protection afforded by them is determined through quantitative risk assessments. Ongoing monitoring would detect emissions in the groundwater well before it reaches surface watercourses and at concentrations well below those that might cause concern.
- In the unlikely event that contaminants are detected in the groundwater adjacent to the site at concentrations which give potential concern, action will be taken to address.
- It is concluded that there is a negligible risk to the quality of the water in the Rivers Welland or Nene.