

PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD
13 JULY 2011**

The Mayor – Councillor Paula Thacker MBE

Present:

Councillors: Allen, Arculus, Ash, Casey, Cereste, M Dalton, S Dalton, S Day, Dobbs, Elsey, Fitzgerald, Fletcher, JA Fox, JR Fox, Goldspink, Goodwin, Harper, Harrington, Hiller, Holdich, Jamil, Khan, Kreling, Lamb, Lane, Lee, Martin, Miners, Murphy, Nadeem, Nawaz, North, Over, Peach, Rush, Saltmarsh, Sanders, Sandford, Seaton, Serluca, Shabbir, Shaheed, Sharp, Shearman, Simons, Stokes, Swift, Thacker, Todd, Walsh and Winslade.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Benton, Burton, D Day, Fower, Nash and Scott.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Solicitor to the Council advised Members that owning a house or other property, or conducting business relating to property did not require that Members declare this as an interest in relation to item 7(i)(b) on the agenda unless that Member thought it necessary to do so.

No declarations of interest were received.

3. Minutes of the meetings held on 16 May 2011

The minutes of the meetings held on 16 May 2011 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as an accurate record.

4. Communications Time

4(i) Mayor's Announcements

Members noted the report outlining the Mayor's engagements for the period Tuesday 17 May to Thursday 30 June 2011.

The Mayor made a further announcement advising Members that her chosen charities had changed so that the Royal British Legion Women's Section would replace Help for Heroes.

4(ii) Leader's Announcements

There were no announcements from the Leader of the Council.

4(iii) Chief Executive's Announcements

There were no announcements from the Chief Executive.

5. Community Involvement Time

5(i) Questions with Notice by Members of the public

There were no questions raised.

5(ii) Questions with notice by Members of the Council relating to ward matters to Cabinet Members and to Committee Chairmen

Questions relating to Ward matters were taken as read in respect of the following:

- Traffic management around Dogsthorpe Infant and Junior schools and their possible merging;
- Ward related press releases and the publication of quotes by Ward Councillors; and
- Use of Section 106 monies for improvements to facilities in Central Park.

A summary of all questions and answers raised within agenda items 5(iii) are attached at **Appendix A**.

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

Questions to the representative of the Police Authority were taken as read in respect of the following:

- Use of public consultation to find solutions to ongoing issues;
- Policing levels in Barnack Ward following closure of the police house;
- Use of land in Dogsthorpe to temporarily site Travellers; and
- Police powers to tackle dog fouling and occasions these powers have been used.

Questions to the representative of the Fire Authority were taken as read in respect of the following:

- Future proposals for services of Peterborough's two main Fire Stations (Dogsthorpe and Stanground) following saving targets.

A summary of all questions and answers raised within agenda items 5(iii) are attached at **Appendix A**.

5(iv) Petitions submitted by Members or Residents

Councillor Lee submitted a petition from local residents requesting residents parking be introduced on Fletton Avenue.

6. Executive Business Time

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

Questions to the Leader and Members of the Executive were taken as read in respect of the following:

- Progress on the North Westgate development;
- Youth provision in areas where there are no established youth clubs;
- How partners are selected for University Centre Peterborough;
- Measures to tackle parking on pavements;
- How land, specifically the Dogsthorpe Triangle, is authorised for use by Gypsy and Travellers;
- Central government regulations against local controls and the Neighbourhood Strategy;
- Number of fines issued regarding dog fouling for previous two years;
- Outcome of the play centre review;
- Educational attainment of and provision for children in care; and
- Non-use of fountains in Cathedral Square.

A summary of all questions and answers raised within agenda items 6(i) are attached at **Appendix B**.

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

Members received and noted a report summarising:

- Decisions from the Cabinet Meeting held on 13 June 2011;
- Use of the Council's call-in mechanism, which had not been invoked since the last meeting;
- Special Urgency and Waiver of Call-in provision, which had been invoked once since the previous meeting ; and
- Cabinet Member Decisions taken during the period 31 March 2011 to 28 June 2011.

Questions were asked about the following:

Review of the use of Consultants

Councillor Sandford queried why some of the recommendations from the scrutiny review were not accepted. Councillor Seaton responded that the recommendations that were not accepted were able to be carried out within other recommendations that Cabinet agreed or that systems were already in place to address those concerns.

Councillor Sandford further queried why the Cabinet Member had not attended the review group to voice his concerns over any recommendations. Councillor Seaton advised Members that he was not requested to attend a meeting of the review group. On a point of information, Councillor Lee advised that he had been invited to attend the review group but that invitation was then cancelled.

Councillor Murphy raised a question regarding whether consultants should declare membership of other organisations such as the Freemasons as other officers need to. Councillor Seaton advised that there were no recommendations put to Cabinet to that effect so no decision was taken on that issue.

The Solicitor to the Council reminded Members that questions must be relevant to the decisions taken or recommendations agreed by Cabinet and Cabinet Members.

Councillor Miners raised a question clarifying the term 'appropriate circumstances' that was used in recommendation 11. Councillor Seaton gave the example where if a manager or other officer was employed through Manor Drive on an interim basis, if that role was being outsourced through the Manor Drive contract or would not exist in the future within the Council, it would not then be deemed appropriate to request that they sign a Council contract.

Energy Services Company (ESCO) and other Energy Related Products

Councillor Shearman queried whether everything possible was being done to meet the August deadline for higher feed-in tariffs for energy generated through the project. Councillor Sam Dalton confirmed that everything was being done to ensure this target was met.

Councillor Khan queried why a separate company was needed to run the service instead of the Council. Councillor Sam Dalton responded that although the City Council was permitted to generate energy, it was not permitted to trade in energy and therefore a separate company was needed for this and would be administered by existing officers in the first instance. This would not happen if the scheme was not viable.

Following a concern raised, the Solicitor to the Council advised that no declaration of interest was needed by Members if they had installed their own energy generating products such as solar panels.

Opportunity Peterborough Business Plan

Councillor Khan questioned why the City Council was now the sole funder for Opportunity Peterborough, what had happened to its other partners and how long the City Council would continue to fund the organisation. Councillor Cereste responded that funding was no longer available from Central Government and the Homes and Communities Agency, the work could not be undertaken within the Council without greater expense and the results from Opportunity Peterborough were improving regarding job provision and investment opportunities for companies.

Councillor Arculus queried whether the governance structure within the business plan should reflect greater City Council control. Councillor Cereste advised that there were now more City Council Members on the Opportunity Peterborough Board to reflect the funding situation for the organisation.

Budget Monitoring – Final Outturn 2010-2011

Councillor Khan queried how £475,000 was able to be saved, whether it was an error in spending and what was going to be done with the money. Councillor Cereste advised that from a budget of around £300 million, this saving was a good result in accounting. Councillor Seaton added that some projects were finished early so costs were reduced and under-spending was preferable to over-spending. The saving was a one-off saving and could not be guaranteed in the future.

Councillor John Fox questioned whether the money could be used towards community groups such as the Sunshine Club that was at risk of closing. Councillor Holdich advised that the Sunshine Club was to be maintained albeit by a different provider.

Councillor Sanford queried whether the Cabinet Member knew what would be done with the saving considering the budget reductions to some services already experienced. Councillor Seaton advised that it could go into the Council's reserves. Councillor Sam Dalton advised Members that capital and revenue savings were different and therefore the saving did not automatically mean that money was available to spend.

Award of Contract of the Design and Construction of an Artificial Grass Pitch at the Grange, Netherton

Councillor Shaheed questioned whether the £300k contribution from the Council was justified given the limited appeal across the community of the facility. Councillor Lee advised that many sports clubs from across the city would be able to use the facility and therefore it was a benefit to the city, not just the local area.

Councillor Murphy questioned if money from a previous youth club on the site was used towards the cost of the new sports pitch. Councillor Lee advised that this wasn't part of the decision but would respond outside the meeting to Councillor Murphy.

Local Transport Plan Capital Programme of Works 2011-12

Councillor Jamil queried whether, following development, large sections of pavement improvements could be made instead of just the area immediately outside that development in a piecemeal fashion. Councillor Hiller advised that he would respond outside the meeting to the query.

Discretionary Rate Relief for Businesses on the Grounds of Hardship

Councillor Shabbir questioned what criteria were used to determine whether to accept or refuse the applications. Councillor Seaton advised that he would provide a written response outside the meeting.

Acquisition of Freehold Interest in the land and buildings known as the Engine Sheds on Fletton Quays, South Bank

Councillor Ash queried the impact of the purchase on the land and buildings. Councillor Lee advised that there were planning issues to be resolved concerning the status of the former engine sheds ahead of development approvals.

School Term Dates 2012-2013

Councillor Shearman queried why there was no agreement across the region for professional dates (training days). Councillor Holdich advised that efforts were made each year to do this but it could not always be achieved.

Children's Services Transport Policy for Post-16 Students

Councillor Khan queried whether this was now in force or still out for consultation. Councillor Holdich confirmed that the policy was now agreed.

Award of Contract for the New Build of Welland Primary School

Councillor Saltmarsh queried how this was linked to the Ormiston Bushfield Academy decision and whether the schools were linked. Councillor Holdich advised that the contract with Kier to build the new school at Bushfield included the (lump sum) option for further school building projects to be awarded to Kier to ensure value for money for the Council.

Provision of Grant Support to Cranfield University

Councillor Sandford queried what benefit this £300k grant would provide to residents of Peterborough. Councillor Cereste responded that it would ensure a reputable organisation remained in the city providing skills and education opportunities for the residents of Peterborough.

Extension and Variation to the Section 75 National Health Service Act 2006 Partnership Agreement for Integrated Substance Misuse Services

Councillor Murphy queried how this decision involved Bridgegate and why the extension was required. Councillor Walsh responded that the extension was necessary due to NHS restructures, national requirements and funding changes. The relevance to Bridgegate could be detailed in writing outside the meeting.

7. Council Business Time

7(i) Executive Recommendations

a) Safer Peterborough Partnership Plan 2011-14

Cabinet at its meeting of 13 June received a report presenting the refreshed version of the Safer Peterborough Partnership Plan to approve prior to Full Council. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 required that a Community Safety Partnership was formed by the bringing together of agencies who had a statutory responsibility for tackling crime and disorder in the local area. It was acknowledged that far more could be achieved to make Peterborough a safer place if agencies worked together rather than in isolation.

Councillor Walsh introduced and moved the recommendation that Council approves the Safer Peterborough Partnership 3-year Plan (2011-2014), highlighting the need to protect vulnerable people and tackle the causes of offending to bring continued benefits to the community. This was seconded by Councillor Hiller.

During debate, concerns were raised about the level of engagement with residents groups especially around road safety initiatives.

Following debate, a vote was taken (unanimous) and it was **RESOLVED** to:

Approve the Safer Peterborough Partnership 3-year Plan (2011-2014).

b) Local Authority Mortgage Scheme

The Mayor advised Council that Members would have the opportunity to ask questions on Decisions from the Cabinet meeting on 13 June, of which the corresponding Cabinet report was

included in the agenda papers for background information, before debating the Cabinet recommendation and scheme eligibility policy.

A question was raised about declarations of interest from Cabinet Members for this item at the previous Cabinet meeting. The Solicitor to the Council advised that questions should be about the decision taken by Cabinet and not about the procedures of the Cabinet meeting itself. No more questions were received.

Cabinet at its meeting of 13 June received a report entitled Local Authority Mortgage Scheme following consideration as to how the Council could support first time buyers and the local housing market; help deliver the Council's priority of delivering substantial and truly sustainable growth and seeking Cabinet approval for the Council to participate in the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme. Cabinet considered the report and approved three of the recommendations, referring the fourth to Council; to approve the local policy for scheme eligibility following its development by the responsible Cabinet Members. The scheme had subsequently been developed and submitted with the agenda papers for the attention of all Members.

Councillor Seaton introduced and moved the recommendation that Council agree to amend the Peterborough Housing Strategy, specifically the inclusion of the local eligibility policy for the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme. This was seconded by Councillor Cereste.

Councillor Murphy moved an amendment to the recommendation so that the eligibility policy would include an additional criterion as below:

“Applicants (HM forces with a local connection exempted) have registered and been accepted on the housing waiting list, reside in Peterborough and have been resident in Peterborough for the last 4 years.”

This was seconded by Councillor Khan.

The Solicitor to the Council advised that the amendment, if agreed, could be accepted with caveats that its impact be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and acceptance from the Housing team.

Members debated the amendment raising points including:

- Full impact of this amendment would need to be assessed before agreeing to it;
- Local residence criterion already contained in the policy;
- It could work to exclude people returning to Peterborough such as students;
- Implications need to be considered before accepting it;
- Already affordable and shared ownership to encourage house ownership;
- Would restrict the range of people who could apply which is against the aim of the scheme;
- Not everyone on the housing list would be eligible for a mortgage;
- Further information was required for a proper debate on the amendment; and
- Long term residents should be able to benefit from the policy ahead of more recent residents.

During the debate above, the Solicitor to the Council reminded Members of the rules of procedure when raising points of information, order or giving personal explanations.

Following debate a vote was taken and the amendment was **DEFEATED** (6 in favour, 37 against, 2 abstentions).

When debate continued on the original recommendations, it was requested that when the scheme was expanded and reviewed, new build housing was included in its focus.

Councillor Seaton, in summing up, encouraged support for the scheme from all sections of Council.

A vote was taken (39 in favour, 4 against, 4 abstentions) and it was **RESOLVED** to.

Approve the amendment to the Peterborough Housing Strategy, specifically the inclusion of the local eligibility policy for the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme

7(ii) Reports and Recommendations

a) Annual Report of the Standards Committee

Council received a report giving information about the future of the Standards Committee and statistical information about the number and types of complaints made to the committee over the preceding year.

Councillor Lee moved the recommendations in the report. This was seconded by Councillor Miners.

A vote was taken (unanimous) and it was **RESOLVED** to:

- (1) Note the work carried out by the Standards Committee; and
- (2) Endorse the proposals to convene a working group to consider the future of the Standards Committee within the Council.

Meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.

MAYOR

COUNCIL MEETING – 13 JULY 2011

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questions have been received under the following categories:

<u>AGENDA ITEM 5 - COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT TIME</u>	
5 (i)	<u>Questions with notice by members of the public</u>
	None received.
5 (ii)	<u>Questions with notice by Members relating to ward matters to Cabinet Members and to Committee Chairmen</u>
1.	<p>Councillor Adrian Miners asked the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University:</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University update me on the times and progress of interschool and interagency meetings to attempt to resolve the traffic and parking issues outside the Primary and Infant Schools on Central Avenue, Dogsthorpe and in light of these protracted arrangements, whether he has given consideration to amalgamating the schools into one new school?</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University responded:</p> <p>A meeting has been arranged for Monday 18 July (3.30pm) at Dogsthorpe Infant School between the two schools and council officers from engineering, traffic management, enforcement, neighbourhoods and road safety teams.</p> <p>Our policy for amalgamating schools is that where a suitable opportunity arises, Infant and Junior Schools should merge (especially when co-located on the same site). Suitable opportunities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial difficulties in either school • Retirement or resignation of either Headteacher • Governance failure • Standards being below expected levels / Ofsted Concern • Falling pupil numbers • Rationalisation of school sites. <p>We believe that none of these issues currently apply to the Dogsthorpe Schools and therefore without a suitable driver the merger should not proceed at the current time. However, if this was to change we would seek to proceed to merge.</p> <p>The following supplementary question was asked:</p> <p>Is the Cabinet Member in favour of having all of our local residential roads, especially those close by schools, to be made into 20mph zones?</p> <p>Councillor Holdich responded:</p> <p>Yes. However, this would depend on each individually school and advice from traffic managers.</p>

2.	<p>Councillor Chris Ash asked the Cabinet Member for Communications:</p> <p>I note that press releases on Dogsthorpe Ward issues have not included comment from Councillors or Members of the local community. Does the Cabinet Member for Communications agree with me that a quote from appropriate community leaders in official press releases from the Council will help residents feel they have a real input into local projects?</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Communications responded:</p> <p>It has been a long held policy that the communications team does not quote Ward Councillors on issues in their ward. The communications team has to maintain a non-political stance in all of its work and quoting Ward Councillors could prove an issue and cause undue tension. The communications team is able to quote cabinet members because these Councillors decide on the policies of the Council.</p> <p>In terms of quoting members of the community this would be acceptable if the person had been influential in the project, and there have been instances where members of the community have been quoted in press releases. For example, in a recent press release about a hydrotherapy pool which the Council is seeking to develop into a profit-making business, a resident who has been involved since the project began was quoted on the need for a hydrotherapy pool in Peterborough.</p> <p>The following supplementary questions was asked:</p> <p>Does the Cabinet Member agree that residents should get involved in media releases?</p> <p>Councillor Dalton responded:</p> <p>If residents were involved in a particular project then yes, that would be appropriate.</p>
3.	<p>Councillor John Shearman asked the Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning:</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning advise me how the Section 106 monies, from the recently approved housing development in Park Crescent, can be used towards the cost of the much needed refurbishment of the public toilets in central park?</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning responded:</p> <p>Financial contributions secured through our Planning Obligations Implementation Scheme (POIS) are split between Strategic (65%) & Neighbourhood (35%) Pools, in accordance with our adopted policy. Money collected through this process is spent on projects identified in our Integrated Development Programme (IDP), again in accordance with our adopted policy.</p> <p>The Strategic Pool can be spent on city wide infrastructure projects identified in the IDP whilst the Neighbourhood Pool can be spent on IDP infrastructure projects within the specific Neighbourhood area in which the money was generated.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Managers are currently liaising with local residents and councillors to identify future neighbourhood projects to include in the IDP. These projects should also be captured in forthcoming Community Action Plans.</p> <p>A contribution of £22,000 was recently secured from the granting of permission to build three new houses at the Peterborough City Lawn Tennis Club, Park Crescent. This money is payable when the development starts, which could be at any time in the next three years (the period of the planning consent).</p>

The Neighbourhood Manager will liaise with the local community and ward members to determine if this is a priority for POIS funding, and if so establish the scope and cost of the improvement and refurbishment works required. Councillors Peach and Kreling also recognise the importance of Central Park and its facilities and I would advise that Councillor Shearman liaises with his fellow Ward Councillors to get up to speed with any work already undertaken.

The following supplementary question was asked:

What guarantee can be given that the 35% of the above POIS monies that goes into the Neighbourhood pool could be ring fenced for use by the Dogsthorpe, East and Park Neighbourhood Committee for improving the facilities in Central Park?

Councillor Hiller responded:

There can be no guarantee that the total amount above can be used for that purpose. The Neighbourhood Managers will determine with local residents and Ward Councillors where the priorities in each Wards lie. Attendance at the Friends of Central Park meetings would also help to develop a more rounded understanding of all issues to do with Central Park.

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

1. Councillor John Fox asked the Council's representative on the Police Authority:

A recent article in the Peterborough Evening Telegraph highlighted the plight of a homeless and alcoholic young man in Peterborough and Police efforts to successfully tackle his situation. The Police Officer in the article called for suggestions from members of the public on how to help the young man as he was persistently drunk in public and had been given a Criminal Anti-Social Behaviour Order (CRASBO) in an effort to tackle this. Will members of the public in Peterborough now see more requests from the Police to come forward with ideas and suggestions on how to tackle cases where traditional Police methods have not been successful? I believe that problems like the one highlighted recently, which is not an isolated case, are very complex and the solutions are far from straight forward and therefore need to be dealt with, with more compassion and understanding by people who have a thorough understanding of such issues. If not any proposed solution could be construed by some as throwing people to the wolves.

The Council's representative on the Police Authority responded:

Cambridgeshire Police Authority recognises public involvement in policing is key to 'policing by consent', whether that is tackling organised crime gangs or street-level anti-social behaviour. We, and the constabulary, will work with local communities who are affected by crime or disorder issues and listen to their concerns and suggestions. Modern day policing is much more about problem solving in partnership with other agencies and of course members of the public, which is a step forward for policing, not backward. The Police don't have all the answers and it is quite right for officers to call upon the public's help to solve the issues they highlight as being a problem at local panel meetings.

The following supplementary question was asked:

Could the Police liaise with the editor of the Evening Telegraph (ET) and remove the vile comments made on its website that were posted about this story?

Councillor Lee responded:

	<p>I will relay the concerns to the Police Authority and the Cabinet Member for Communications will also liaise with the editor of the [ET] about this matter. However, it is not the Police's role to sensor news organisations.</p>
2.	<p>Councillor David Over asked the Council's representative on the Police Authority:</p> <p>Does the selling of the Police house in Barnack continue to indicate a policy where only emergency cover, when available, will be given by the Police to Barnack Ward?</p> <p>The Council's representative on the Police Authority responded:</p> <p>Over the past year there has been significant reductions in both crime and anti-social behaviour in northern sector, which encompasses Barnack and its neighbouring villages. In fact overall crime is down by 20 per cent which accounts for more than 1,250 fewer victims. The local officer continues to police the village alongside neighbourhood policing colleagues with support from a whole range of staff in specialist units. For example the Rural Community Action Team, Roads Policing Unit, Tactical Firearms Unit and the Criminal Investigation Unit. Local policing isn't just about one officer walking the streets; it's about the combined efforts of many people, not least those who live in the area itself.</p> <p>If you wish to know more detail on the operational deployments of individual officers then Chief Superintendent Andy Hebb has said he is happy to talk to you direct.</p> <p>The following supplementary questions was asked:</p> <p>Does the representative agree that consultation should have taken place regarding these significant changes to before they were imposed on them?</p> <p>Councillor Lee responded:</p> <p>Operational deployment issues are not the concern of the police Authority and this issue should be taken up directly with Chief Superintendant Andy Hebb.</p>
3.	<p>Councillor Adrian Miners asked the Council's representative on the Fire Authority:</p> <p>Noting that some of the proposed "savings" earmarked for our Peterborough Fire Service have been branded "dangerous" by the Fire Brigade Union and others, could we please have clarification about just what is happening at our two main full-time Peterborough Fire Stations and their very survival as bases within our local communities?</p> <p>The Council's representative on the Fire Authority responded:</p> <p>There are a number of recommendations already agreed that affect the Peterborough Stations of Dogsthorpe and Stanground. They are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the turntable ladder sited at Dogsthorpe is to be withdrawn from service as it had been replaced already by a combined aerial rescue appliance based in Stanground, which combines a standard fire engine with an aerial reach capability. • That the service should begin negotiations with the Fire Brigade Union to look at the Fire Fighters shift system. <p>A further recommendation for review is to determine whether the Rescue vehicle at Dogsthorpe should be sited at Stanground to provide a better operational cover across the authority area.</p> <p>Two other options are currently in the early stages of a feasibility study. They are;</p>

- To merge the two fire stations in Peterborough to one location.
- To look at changing Stanground from a 24/7 station to day-crewed plus.

Neither the service nor fire authority would recommend or agree any change that they believed was dangerous.

The following supplementary question was asked:

Cuts to funding can cost lives. Would it be possible to increase the Fire Service precept to cover this?

Councillor Goodwin responded:

A written response will be provided outside the meeting.

4. **Councillor Adrian Miners asked the Council's representative on the Police Authority:**

Noting the use of the Dogsthorpe Triangle Site (Old Newborough Road) as an unauthorised Travellers' Transit Site, what involvement did the Police have in encouraging its use - especially in relation with their discussions/consultations with others such as Enterprise Peterborough, Peterborough City Council, Local Councillors, Neighbourhood Committees and Local Residents Associations?

The Council's representative on the Police Authority responded:

This question is about a specific operational policing matter and not one members of Cambridgeshire Police Authority can answer, but one the constabulary is happy to speak to Councillor Miners about. Peterborough's Divisional Commander, Chief Superintendent Andy Hebb, has offered to provide Councillor Miners with an answer. We hope Councillor Miners is happy to take this offer and is able to continue his discussion with Chief Supt Hebb.

The following supplementary question was asked:

As part of local policing, should the local community and Ward Councillors be involved in these types of decisions before and not after they are taken?

Councillor Lee responded:

This is a specific operational policing matter and therefore Councillor Miners should liaise with the local constabulary directly.

5. **Councillor Stephen Lane asked the Council's representative on the Police Authority:**

Can the Cambridgeshire Police Authority representative please inform Council of what enforcement powers are carried by its officers with regard to dog fouling; and supply details of the numbers in each Ward that have been successfully used by its officers in Peterborough for the two years to March 2011?

The Council's representative on the Police Authority responded:

This is an important issue, on which we will be providing a joint written response with the Local Authority following further discussions with them.

AGENDA ITEM 6 - EXECUTIVE BUSINESS TIME

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

1. Councillor Chris Ash asked the Leader of the Council:

Noting recent press reports that Marks & Spencer's are looking to have an 'out of town' store, can the Leader tell me if he considers that this will impact on the belated redevelopment of North Westgate and when can we look to be seeing the long awaited start on revitalising that area of the city centre?

The Leader of the Council responded:

No, this will not impact on the North Westgate development. Only a development of the very highest quality will be seen in the North Westgate area. Until a scheme comes forward to do this, we will wait.

The following supplementary question was asked:

Does the Leader agree that the derelict site is not appealing considering the commercial units that were shut for the project to go ahead? Is this good for the city?

Councillor Cereste responded:

Having empty units/sites is not good for the city. However, to improve the city, only developments of the highest quality should be entertained. A second rate development should not be accepted over waiting and being patient.

2. Councillor John Shearman asked the Cabinet Member for Children's Services:

Could the Cabinet Member for Children's Services explain the Council's policy towards youth provision in areas of the city where there are no established youth clubs?

The Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University responded:

The Council recognises the value of youth provision in communities and the positive impact it can have on the lives of young people. It also accepts that in some areas there is very little universal provision for young people and, as funding declines, the capacity to provide such a resource is further challenged. The strategy the Council has adopted to address this is as follows:

- Identify community based/third sector organisation that have an interest, or capacity to deliver youth work/provision
- Use expertise within the 8 -19 Service to support these community groups to establish such provision and market activities to young people
- Provide some initial 'start up' funding to buy necessary equipment
- Provide advice and on-going support to build capacity
- Work with the organisation to support them in terms of seeking and securing grant funding to build sustainability

The recent Youth Work in the Community Conference held in partnership with Young Lives had the above as its focus. The conference showcased some examples where this capacity building by the 8 -19 Service was already taking place. Youth provision in Glington, for example, has been supported by the North West and Rural Locality Team in the 8 -19 service in precisely the way identified above. The youth provision in Glington is

	<p>now self-sufficient. There are similar examples of this co-production in the Central Ward and in other areas within the city.</p> <p>The following supplementary question was asked:</p> <p>Lots of youths are on the streets in the evenings in Park Ward, could the Cabinet Member come to see the issues and then meet with Ward Councillors to attempt to identify solutions?</p> <p>Councillor Holdich responded:</p> <p>This request will be passed to Councillor Scott.</p>
3.	<p>Councillor Mohammed Jamil asked the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University:</p> <p>Whilst welcoming the news that Cranfield University is the latest Higher Education provider to sign up to offering courses in Peterborough, please can the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University tell the Council what policy/rationale we have in place when we decide which universities come to Peterborough? Does the Council have a written policy or criteria in place for making this type of decision?</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University responded:</p> <p>We have a number of Universities providing Higher Education in the city:</p> <p>Anglia Ruskin, University Centre Peterborough (with Peterborough Regional College), University of Bedfordshire.</p> <p>Canfield University will be providing Masters courses and modular programmes in renewable energy. We also launched Middlesex University last month.</p> <p>The simple criteria used has been to increase the Higher Education offer in the city by looking at the gaps in current provision, looking for the best providers and negotiating with them to provide a programme in Peterborough.</p> <p>The Universities@Peterborough Project is overseen by a project board which agrees or not, recommendations made to it by officers.</p> <p>The following supplementary question was asked:</p> <p>The additional partners are costing the City Council money, could this money not go into the University Centre to provide the service itself?</p> <p>Councillor Holdich responded:</p> <p>No. Not all partners cost money. The university is already full and cannot provide a further range of courses needed at the level required which the partner organisation can.</p>
4.	<p>Councillor Bella Saltmarsh asked the Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning:</p> <p>Parking on the pavement is likely to cause grave danger to pedestrians especially to people with disabilities, visual impairments, older people, people riding mobility scooters and those with prams and pushchairs. People in wheel chairs, parents with buggies and people with shopping have to go into the road to get past parked cars and this should not be necessary. Can the Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning please advise Council the measures which could be taken to ban pavement parking using the Traffic Regulation Orders?</p>

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning responded:

There are already legal provisions in place enforced by the Police which enable action to be taken regarding obstructions on the pavement.

Recent changes to legislation have in addition streamlined the process adopted by Councils to implement restrictions that would prohibit parking on pavements and verges. A blanket prohibition across the city would not resolve parking issues due to problems associated with the displacement of vehicles. It is however recognised that parking restrictions can form part of a solution.

The Council has been collating location data regarding verge and pavement parking problems in order to identify hotspots, and is plotting it onto a Global Information System. Once hotspots have been identified, affordable solutions will be developed for these, and as part of that process there will be engagement with Ward Councillors. It is intended to take proposals following input from Councillors to Neighbourhood Committees to seek community views before finalising them.

The following supplementary question was asked:

If it is recognised as a city wide problem, including parking on clearways and cars for sale, could the Clean Neighbourhoods Act not be used to tackle and enforce this?

Councillor Hiller responded:

A written response will be provided.

5. **Councillor Adrian Miners asked the Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning:**

Given that Peterborough City Council determines local policy towards Gypsy and Traveller provision, could the Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning advise me who approved the use of land at the Dogsthorpe Triangle (Old Newborough Road) to be used to provide a Traveller Transit Site and why, and who authorised and carried out the removal of protective earth mounds and concrete block pallets to allow access to the site?

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning responded:

The area known locally as the Dogsthorpe Triangle has not been approved as a Traveller Transit Site. Investigations have been ongoing regarding how to deal with the issue of unauthorised encampments and a meeting will be held with all Councillors to discuss this issue later in July.

On 19th May an unauthorised encampment appeared on the former Lady Lodge Centre for Arts grounds. It was the 6th encampment there since March 2011. The encampment was in a residential area opposite a children's play area. Due to the urgent need to deal with this situation as an emergency, the Traveller Liaison Officer immediately moved the Travellers to an area which has been used to park workmen's caravans for the past 2 years, and which is away from local housing and largely obscured from view. This area was the Dogsthorpe Triangle.

The team regularly visits the site, which is being kept clean and tidy, and will be removing any waste while they are there.

Unfortunately the decision to use the current site had to be taken at incredibly short notice which did not allow for the usual approval processes.

	<p>The Travellers' presence on this site has no bearing on any future decision on whether to have a transit site and where that should be. Our investigations at this time lead us to believe that a transit site may not be the most suitable solution to the issue of unauthorised encampments, and this will be debated further with councillors at the aforementioned meeting.</p> <p>The following supplementary question was asked:</p> <p>What guarantee can be given to local residents that this is not a done deal especially as the government is issuing a new 'light touch' paper on dealing with the historic demand of travellers and their needs for a transit site?</p> <p>Councillor Hiller responded:</p> <p>This is not a done deal.</p>
6.	<p>Councillor Adrian Miners asked the Leader of the Council:</p> <p>Rumour has it that the Coalition Government has given itself over 140 powers to control local politics under the Localism Bill. Could the Leader therefore give the people of Peterborough assurances these "controlling central powers" will not undermine the developing Neighbourhood Strategy in the city, where greater <u>local</u> control and accountability of services is a major part of governing Peterborough?</p> <p>The Leader of the Council responded:</p> <p>Councillors will be aware of the commitment that the Council has made to the neighbourhoods approach, which is delivering real and lasting differences within our communities. This can only grow and become stronger in response to the national localism agenda which sets out to decentralise decision making to local level and to pass more power to local communities.</p> <p>The additional powers should ensure a smoother transition to allowing a decentralisation of powers, not greater central control.</p> <p>The review of the Neighbourhood Committees was supported by Cabinet to ensure this process continues.</p> <p>The following supplementary question was asked:</p> <p>The Localism Bill also seeks to pass on EU fines to Local Authorities. Have we any idea how these potential fines could impact on us locally?</p> <p>Councillor Cereste responded:</p> <p>The best course of action is to run this Council so that it does not receive any fines.</p>
7.	<p>Councillor Stephen Lane asked the Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning:</p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member please inform Council of how many fines have been issued by Local Authority officers under the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 in the two years to March 2011?</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning responded:</p> <p>This is an important issue, on which we will be providing a joint written response with the Police following further discussions with them.</p>

	<p>The following supplementary question was asked:</p> <p>This issue was raised previously and was told it would be looked into. Has this been done and will it continue to be done?</p> <p>Councillor Hiller responded:</p> <p>Yes. Three fixed penalty notices were issued over the previous two years.</p>
8.	<p>Councillor Stuart Martin asked the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services:</p> <p>For some time now there has been an ongoing review of play centre facilities in our city. Can the Cabinet member for Children’s Services either confirm that the review is now complete or, if the review is not yet completed, give an indication of when we can expect to learn the outcome of the review?</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University responded:</p> <p>The Play Centre services in Peterborough are being reviewed following approval of the medium term financial plan by Council, which identified savings of £300,000 to be found from the Play Centre service, over a two year period. The Play Centre review is nearing completion. The results of the review have been included into the overall restructure of the Children’s Services Department, the consultation on which is due for release in September 2011.</p>
9.	<p>Councillor Ed Murphy asked the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University:</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University tell me how well do looked after children in our care perform at school, both academically and in terms of other kinds of achievements compared to the national average and what more could be done to help fulfil the Council in its responsibilities as a ‘corporate parent’</p> <p>The Cabinet member for Education, Skills and University responded:</p> <p>Peterborough City Council has responsibility for 199 children that the Council has taken into care who are in statutory education, (years Reception to Year 11). 103 are educated in city schools, Academies and educational providers and 96 attend schools and providers in other Local Authorities closer to where they live. Of the Peterborough children in care, 60% have full statements of special educational needs. This is one of the highest figures in England where the national average is 30%.</p> <p>At the OfSTED inspection of Children’s Services in March 2010 the inspectors concluded that, <i>“there is a very good focus on educational achievement for children in care, which has led to children in care making good educational progress.”</i> To support this finding they stated that, <i>“The impact of services on enabling looked after children to enjoy and achieve is good. There are examples of satisfactory and better educational outcomes for looked after children including those care leavers who have successfully accessed higher education. Most children in care begin their education from a very low attainment base but they make good progress from their starting point and academic outcomes are satisfactory overall”</i></p> <p>Peterborough children in care have made considerable improvements since the inspection in their attainment at both Key Stage 2 and at GCSE.</p> <p>In terms of children, staying on into post 16 education and training our figures compare favourably with national figures for children in care and the numbers of children who attend higher education courses are higher than the national average.</p>

The attendance of children in care is better than the national average. There are relatively few persistent absentees and very low numbers who missed 25 or more school days.

We have been able to support educational attainment by deploying the staff and funds allocated to the Education Team for Children in Care and the Personal Education Allowance. This has meant that we have been able to provide one to one support, tuition, equipment and resources, amongst other things, as a good parent would, to support a child's learning.

Educational achievement forms a significant proportion of the Promise that elected members have made to children in care. The achievement of children in care is regularly reported to the Corporate Parenting Panel.

All Councillors are corporate parents and more involvement in the Corporate Parenting group would be welcome.

The following supplementary question was asked:

This is good news. What more could be done to help the Council's responsibility?

Councillor Holdich responded:

I will request that this is placed onto the next Corporate Parenting group meeting agenda.

10. **Councillor Chris Ash asked the Leader of the Council:**

Can the Leader explain the logic of spending time and money on fountains in Cathedral Square, let alone the inconvenience of installing them, only to see the area used for promotional events?

The Leader of the Council responded:

The newly refurbished Cathedral Square was designed to be a versatile space offering a water feature display in the main with the flexibility to switch them off for key city events. The City Centre location is felt to be the most appropriate for many events such as the recent Luminarium, as it provides maximum exposure and accessibility for all.

The appropriate location for every event within the City Centre is considered and Cathedral Square will only be used when necessary to ensure the full benefit of the water feature is realised.

The following supplementary question was asked:

Was it the best idea to put fountains in at great expense if they are not permanently on? Would it not have been better to place them elsewhere so that they could remain switched on all the time?

Councillor Cereste responded:

When the Square is not being used for events, it is a wonderful space with the fountains.