

**MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD
10 October 2012**

The Mayor – Councillor George Simons

Present:

Councillors Allen, Arculus, Ash, Casey, Cereste, Dalton, Davidson, Day, Elsey, Fitzgerald, Fletcher, Forbes, Fower, JA Fox, JR Fox, Goodwin, Harper, Harrington, Hiller, Holdich, Jamil, Johnson, Khan, Knowles, Kreling, Lamb, Lane, Maqbool, Martin, McKean, Miners, Murphy, Nadeem, Nawaz, North, Over, Peach, Rush, Saltmarsh, Sandford, Scott, Seaton, Serluca, Shabbir, Shaheed, Sharp, Shearman, Simons, Stokes, Swift, Sylvester, Thacker, Todd, Thulbourn and Walsh.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lee and Sanders.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Marco Cereste declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in item 13 on the agenda, the third notice of motion received from Councillor Sandford in relation to the Energy from Waste Facility. The interest had been disclosed within Councillor Cereste's register of interests and he had been granted a dispensation by the Monitoring Officer to speak on the motion and any subsequent amendment, but not to vote on the motion.

Councillor Matthew Dalton declared an interest in item 13 on the agenda, the third notice of motion received from Councillor Sandford in relation to the Energy from Waste Facility. Councillor Dalton was a Director at JE and VM Dalton Ltd and he had taken the view that it would be neither appropriate to speak nor vote on the item

Councillor Ash declared a personal interest in item 12 on the agenda in relation to the grants to voluntary organisations as he was a trustee on the board of the Citizen's Advice Bureau.

Councillor Murphy declared a personal interest in item 12 on the agenda in relation to the grants to voluntary organisations as he was a Programme Director at Gladstone Connect.

Councillor Kahn declared a personal interest in item 12 on the agenda in relation to the grants to voluntary organisations as he was Chairman of Gladstone Connect.

Councillor John Fox declared a personal interest in item 12 on the agenda in relation to the grants to voluntary organisations as he worked for Peterborough Council of Voluntary Services, a recipient of grant funding.

Councillor Fletcher declared a personal interest in item 12 on the agenda in relation to the grants to voluntary organisations as he was the Chairman of Peterborough Workspace.

Councillor Judy Fox declared a personal interest in item 12 on the agenda in relation to the grants to voluntary organisations, in that she was married to Councillor John Fox.

3. Minutes of the Meetings Held on 11 July 2012

The minutes of the meetings held on 11 July 2012 were agreed and signed as an accurate record subject to the inclusion of a recorded vote list for the motion moved by Councillor Shearman calling for the resignation of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

4. Mayors Announcement Report

Members noted the updated report outlining the Mayor's engagements for the period commencing 9 July 2012.

The Mayor addressed the meeting and congratulated the Olympic and Paralympic Champions and outlined the mayoral achievements made so far during the year including the funds raised for the Mayor's charities and the handrails installed on the steps at the back of the Town Hall. The Mayor further outlined forthcoming charity events.

5. Leader's Announcements

There were no announcements from the Leader.

6. Chief Executive's Announcements

There were no announcements from the Chief Executive.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT TIME

7. Questions with Notice by Members of the Public

Seven questions had been raised by members of the public, these were in relation to:

1. The Energy Park, its guaranteed tariff and when a financial benefit would be realised;
2. The Energy Park, how the removal of 3000 acres of farmland could be justified;
3. The Energy Park, how the farming and rural businesses were being supported;
4. The Energy Park, what were the future opportunities for young farmers;
5. The Energy Park, how did the removal of farmland add to Peterborough as a green city?
6. The Energy Park, would there be redundancies or job security for the tenant farmers? and
7. The Energy Park, why should the tenant farmers be penalised for Peterborough City Council being in financial difficulty?

A summary of the question and answers raised within agenda item 7 is attached at **Appendix A** to these minutes.

8. Questions with Notice by Members of the Council Relating to Ward Matters to the Cabinet Members and to Committee Chairmen

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

1. The action to be taken at Staniland Way following two recent serious accidents; and
2. The condition of the vacant Royal Arms Public House building.

A summary of all questions and answers raised within agenda item 8 are attached at **Appendix A** to these minutes.

9. Questions with Notice by Members of the Council to representatives of the Police and Fire Authorities

One question had been raised to the representatives of the Police Authority:

1. The reasons behind the proposed closure of Werrington Police Station whilst maintaining Bretton Police Station.

A summary of this question and the answer raised within agenda item 9 are attached at **Appendix A** to these minutes.

10. Petitions Submitted by Members or Residents

Councillor Harrington submitted a petition containing 613 signatures, on behalf of the Members of Newborough Landscape Protection Group, against the placing of wind turbines and solar panels on the farm estates.

Councillor Dale McKean submitted two petitions in relation to the building of a skate park within the village of Thorney. The first petition containing 316 signatures had been presented to the Rural North Neighbourhood Council in December 2011 at which time the gentleman who had submitted the petition had been advised that he needed to create a campaign group. The second petition, containing 402 signatures, had been completed over the last six weeks by the newly formed campaign group.

Councillor Murphy submitted two petitions in relation to the proposed care home closures. The first petition, containing 2813 signatures, was in relation to the future of the residential care homes in Peterborough and the need for respite care and a dementia unit. It requested that the Council considered a new build to replace the current provision in the future.

The second petition from Councillor Murphy called for a referendum into the proposals to close Welland House and Greenwood House and to defer the closures until a new building had been established by the city council that provided a home and services for current and future residents and service users and which also included an integrated day service.

Councillor Khan moved that two procedure rules be suspended relating to the time allowed for questions during the Executive Business Time item on the agenda. It was requested that the Council agreed to:

- 1) Suspend the time limit of 20 minutes for questions with notice to the Executive, which could be found at procedure number 14.2;
- 2) Suspend the time limit of 40 minutes for questions without notice on the Record of Executive Decisions which could be found at the procedure rule 14.3.1; and
- 3) In their place, allow a total of 90 minutes for these items to be considered.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Cereste and it was **AGREED** that the time limit for the next two items be extended to 90 minutes.

EXECUTIVE BUSINESS TIME

11. Questions with Notice to the Leader and Members of the Executive

Questions to the Leader and Members of the Executive were raised, with all of the questions, apart from the first, being taken as read in respect of the following:

1. The progress made since January 2012 in relation to the safeguarding of the most vulnerable children;

2. How many PFI agreements the Council had;
3. Arrangements for temporary school accommodation;
4. The level of help and guidance available at the Council for those people experiencing times of trouble;
5. The assistance being given to the market traders; and
6. What was being done to increase road safety awareness particularly within the vicinity of schools?

A summary of all questions and answers raised within agenda item 11 are attached at **Appendix B** to these minutes.

12. Questions without Notice on the Record of Executive Decisions

Members received and noted a report summarising:

1. Decisions taken at the Cabinet Meeting held on 24 September 2012;
2. Use of the Council's call-in mechanism, which had not been invoked since the last meeting;
3. Special Urgency and Waiver of Call-in provision, which had not been invoked since the previous meeting; and
4. Cabinet Member Decisions taken during the period 6 July 2012 to 1 October 2012.

Questions were asked about the following:

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule (PDCS)

Councillor Sandford requested clarification as to why Cabinet had recently agreed to the new charging schedule, which gave only 5% of the funding from the CIL to Neighbourhood Committees? Councillor Hiller advised that the equation was very complex and he would be happy to send the structure of the payment percentages to Councillor Sandford directly and any other Members who wished to be informed of progress on the Draft Schedule.

Councillor Sandford questioned that under the Council's current Planning Obligations Strategy, Neighbourhood Committees were to be given access and control of 35% of the monies gained. With the imposition of the CIL, this would drop to 5%. How did this fit with the Leader's previous statement that as much of the budget as possible would be delegated to the Neighbourhood Committees? Councillor Cereste responded that the 5% would be exclusively dedicated to the use of Neighbourhood Committees but there would be further monies from other parts of the CIL which would also come to Neighbourhood Committees for determination. Furthermore, Cabinet was of the view that the percentage should be more than 5%.

Councillor Khan stated that the pooling of funds had been previously discussed and if an increase in percentage could be achieved, this would be of benefit to the city. Councillor Cereste responded that the idea of a pool to be spread across all Neighbourhood Committees was still an option and a meeting of all Group Leaders in order to identify the best way forward, and to understand what 5% of the CIL meant in monetary terms, would be of benefit.

Citizen's Panel Survey

Councillor Fower questioned who sat on the Panel, how many people sat on the Panel and how you became a member of the Panel? Councillor Seaton responded that there were 2000 Peterborough citizens who had been independently selected from across the city by an external organisation. The results of the Panel had been positive.

Councillor Fitzgerald sought clarification as to the findings of the Panel in relation to the overall performance of the Council. Councillor Seaton responded that in relation to the financial management of the Council, £120m had been saved in efficiency

improvements over the past years with a 28% cut in government grant and no significant cuts in services.

Councillor Fower stated that he would be interested to see the figures and the costs that were charged to the authority for the exercise undertaken. Councillor Seaton advised that this information could be provided.

Bridge Street Public Realm Improvements

Councillor Sandford queried what public consultation had taken place in respect of the improvements, why 13 mature trees had been removed contrary to the responses of earlier public consultation and furthermore when would the 200 replacement trees be planted and what would be their locations? Councillor Cereste stated that in order to ensure an in-depth response to the questions, an answer would be provided in writing to Councillor Sandford and forwarded to all Members.

Councillor Ash queried whether there was a limit to the number of variations to the improvements that could be submitted, as variations could increase the costs. Councillor Cereste responded that costs were being monitored and the scheme was being kept within budget.

Councillor Fower queried whether the Leader was aware of any variations that were imminent, including the provision of a cycle lane along Bridge Street. Councillor Cereste responded that he was not aware of any variations.

South Bank Phase 1: Carbon Challenge – Energy Solutions

Councillor Ash sought assurance that the site would be a zero carbon site. Councillor Cereste confirmed that the site would be a zero carbon site and would be one of the most, if not the most, efficient in the country.

National BMX 2012 Event – Peterborough City Council Sponsorship

Councillor John Fox queried why the Ward Councillors for the area had not sponsored the event through their Community Leadership Fund (CLF) and why the funding had come out of the main budget? Councillor Cereste stated that he was not aware of whether the Ward Councillors had supported the sponsorship or not. The event was important for the city on a national level and the council wanted to make sure that it took place.

All Saints Primary School – Transfer of Funding for New School to Extend Age Range

Councillor Shearman queried whether the Diocese paid any money towards the new build or whether the Council was the sole provider of the funds? Councillor Holdich stated that he believed the Council to be the sole provider of the funds, but any extras were paid for by the Diocese.

Waste 2020 Programme: Energy from Waste Facility and Other Associated Works and Services

Councillor Ash sought clarification as to the possible inclusion of an anaerobic digester for food waste, and its location. Councillor Seaton stated that he was due to receive a Cabinet Member Decision Notice (CMDN) which would outline where the food waste was to go. Further information would therefore be available to Members within the next seven days.

Councillor Murphy declared that he was a Public Governor of the Cambridge and Peterborough Foundation's Trust.

Councillor Harrington questioned what the tonnage limit was for the waste programme and how this had been set? Councillor Seaton responded that he would put this detail in writing to Councillor Harrington.

Councillor Ash sought clarification that once an anaerobic digester had been built in the city, waste would not be transported to other locations. Councillor Seaton confirmed that the food waste would not be transferring to a company based in Peterborough. In the next week Members would be able to see the decision and Councillor Seaton would be happy to take any further questions on the subject.

Roundabout at Junction 5 and Boongate West Widening Scheme – Contract Award

Councillor Fower queried how much money was spent on alternative modes of transport, such as cycleways? Councillor Hiller stated that he was happy to provide Councillor Fower with the information requested in writing.

Street Lighting Efficiency Project and Street Lighting Column Replacement - Contractor Award

Councillor Khan queried what the criteria were for street lighting replacement? Councillor Hiller responded that it was generally done on the age of the installation and it was not done on a ward by ward basis.

Councillor Khan further questioned when the replacements would start in Central Ward? Councillor Hiller stated that he would provide Councillor Kahn with this information in due course.

Grants to Not for Profit Organisations

Councillor Davidson queried whether the recent reports in the media, which had stated that the funding to the soup kitchen was to be withdrawn, were true? Councillor Seaton responded that although he did not believe the question to be relevant to the decision, he would be happy to look at the query and to respond to Councillor Davidson in writing.

The Legal Officer addressed the meeting and stated that she had received a note from a member of the public Ms Dawn Clipston, who had raised a number of questions earlier. This note stated that Ms Clipston had forwarded questions on behalf of Mr Goodliffe, however there had been some important wording missed off the second question in relation to the solar and wind farm project. The question should have read:

“Regarding the solar and wind farm project, Peterborough City Council is currently trying to address a financial deficit that, as I understand, is not down to the tenant farmers in Borough Fen, nor Morris Fen nor America Farm. Is it not down to bad management and decision making of this local authority in the past?”

It was to be noted in the minutes that the words “in the past” had been missed off and that the question was in no way meant to suggest bad decision making of the local authority at the present.

COUNCIL BUSINESS TIME

13. Notices of Motion

1. Councillor Harrington moved the following motion:

That this Council:

1. Requests that Cabinet reviews and overturns its decision made on 10 July 2012 relating to the use of land on the farm estate for non-agricultural purposes;
2. Requests that Cabinet advises the tenant farmers on the proposed farmland that their tenancies are secure for future years; and

3. Agrees that valuable farmland should be maintained to provide jobs and locally produced food for future generations.

In summary, during his speech Councillor Harrington stated that historically, the local farmers had played an important part in the local farming economy and they had proven to be versatile in comparison to the larger farmers. The retention of the small farmers was crucial, as not only would it mean a loss of their livelihoods, but also a loss of expertise which was much needed in the future of farming. The industry would be diminished leading to an insecure future for the production of food. Council was requested to support the motion, to allow the local farmers to play their part in supporting the local economy by producing the much needed crops which would secure food for the future.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Murphy who reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Sandford moved an amendment to the motion as follows (added words being the underlined text, deleted words being the ~~striketrough~~ text);

That this Council:

1. Recognises that world is facing an urgent crisis caused by accelerating climate change and, that in the UK Climate Change Act requires our Government to meet ambitious and legally binding targets for reducing CO2 emissions;
2. Welcomes the Coalition Government's commitment to generating 15 % of the UK's energy from renewable sources by 2020, which will necessitate a large scale expansion of a range of renewable technologies including wind and solar energy;
3. Welcomes the Leader of the Council's stated ambition to make Peterborough self sufficient in energy production;
4. Recognises that use of agricultural land for renewable energy purposes will involve difficult decisions balancing different priorities relating to energy and food production; and
5. Requests that Cabinet in consultation with the Sustainable Growth and Environment Capital Scrutiny committee reviews and overturns its decision made on 10 July 2012 relating to the use of land on the farm estate for non-agricultural purposes renewable energy purposes, looking in detail at each site proposed and its appropriateness taking into account all relevant factors and seeking to minimise any adverse impacts on those people currently farming the land.
- ~~2. Requests that Cabinet advises the tenant farmers on the proposed farmland that their tenancies are secure for future years; and~~
- ~~3. Agrees that valuable farmland should be maintained to provide jobs and locally produced food for future generations.~~

In moving his amendment, Councillor Sandford outlined the reasons why he was unable to support the motion in its original form. He further stated that there were difficult issues to be addressed in the first instance, including whether the land should be used for food or solar panels/wind farms. Furthermore, those people affected needed to be able to fully air their concerns having not been consulted adequately in the first instance.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor North and he reserved his right to speak.

Members debated the amendment and raised points for and against the amendment including:

- It was regrettable that communications with tenant farmers had not been better;
- The Council must do what was right for the current and future residents of the city. There had been a 28% cut in grant and there was another cut in Government grant due;
- The revenue of £100m over 25 years would contribute towards maintaining frontline services;
- The proposals would significantly reduce the Council's carbon footprint;
- Need to limit the adverse impact upon those farming the land;
- Renewable energy was required, but it should not be located on valuable land currently used for food production;
- There had been distress caused to the farmers and the apparent u-turn made in relation to the amount of land proposed for use had only contributed further to this distress;
- The imposition of wind farms and solar farms was part of a project that would deliver income for the city and make it energy sustainable. It would also enable growth and economic prosperity to be delivered during one of the most difficult times experienced by the country;
- If the proposed installations were not protected, they could be damaged or stolen.

Following debate, Councillor North exercised his right to speak and stated that farming was an extremely important industry for Britain and needed to be protected. However, a balance also needed to be struck between farming and the provision of green energy. The amendment represented a fair and sensible approach to the issue. Bringing revenue into the city was essential and there had been no alternative options put forward as to where the £120m would come from should the proposals not take place.

Councillor Murphy addressed Council and stated that Councillor Sandford should retract his amendment as he was letting residents down and putting the livelihoods of the farmers at risk.

Councillor Harrington exercised his right of reply as the mover of the original motion and in so doing, opposed the amendment.

Following debate, all Members agreed to a recorded vote being taken. Members voted as follows:

Councillors for: Allen, Arculus, Casey, Cereste, Davidson, Day, Eley, Fitzgerald, Fower, Goodwin, Harper, Hiller, Holdich, Kreling, Lamb, Maqbool, McKean, Nadeem, Nawaz, North, Over, Peach, Rush, Sandford, Scott, Seaton, Serluca, Shaheed, Simons, Stokes, Thacker, Todd, Walsh

Councillors against: Ash, Fletcher, Forbes, JR Fox, JA Fox, Harrington, Jamil, Johnson, Khan, Knowles, Lane, Martin, Miners, Murphy, Saltmarsh, Shabbir, Sharp, Shearman, Swift, Sylvester, Thulbourn

The amendment to the motion was **CARRIED** (33 for, 21 against and 1 not voting).

Members debated the substantive motion and raised points including:

- The provision of food was needed above everything else;
- Where would the Police resource come from to patrol the sites?
- The infrastructure for the proposals was inadequate;
- Alternative ideas to involve the farmers, for example in anaerobic digestion, were being explored;
- There were other locations in the city that were more suitable;
- The land had been identified due to grid connection issues;

- Gratitude was expressed to the Leader of the Council for the offer of meeting with the farmers and residents directly affected.

Following debate, a vote was taken on the substantive motion. The motion was **CARRIED** (32 for, 20 against and 2 not voting).

2. Councillor John Fox moved the following motion:

That this Council:

1. Recognises and commends the dedicated work carried out by the volunteers working in our local communities and requests that the Cabinet Introduces a Citizens Award Scheme to formally recognise the contributions made by volunteers within the local communities; and
2. Agrees that the make up of a Citizen's Award Scheme panel, that agrees the nominations, the nature of the award and presentation ceremony, be formed by a representative from each political group along with an equal number of independent members ensuring that it is non-political, transparent and fair.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Swift who reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Walsh addressed the meeting and stated that although she agreed with Councillor John Fox that the work of volunteers should be recognised and commended, implementing a secondary scheme alongside the one already run by the Peterborough Council for Voluntary Service (PCVS) could be counter productive to the Council. A working group had therefore been set up to liaise with PCVS and to offer support to their scheme going forward. Councillor Walsh stated that she therefore wished for Council not to support the motion as an additional scheme was considered unnecessary.

Councillor John Fox exercised his right of reply as the mover of the motion and in so doing stated that he would accept a position on the PCVS Committee but he wished for its work to remain non-party political.

Councillor Walsh assured Councillor Fox that she would take a personal interest in the matter and she encouraged cross party participation.

Councillor John Fox stated that in respect of Councillor Walsh's comments, he was happy to withdraw his motion and this was **AGREED** by Council.

3. Councillor Sandford moved the following motion:

That this Council:

1. Rescinds the decision of this Council on 28 February 2007 to establish an energy from waste facility in Peterborough;
2. Notes that in rescinding that 2007 decision, the recent executive decision to enter into a contract for the provision of an energy from waste facility at Fengate will no longer be in accordance with Council policy;
3. Requests that officers bring a report back to Council to consider all alternative waste treatment technologies available and options for further increasing waste reduction and recycling; and
4. Should have a full and open public debate on those alternatives and their financial costs and environmental impacts before proceeding further with any procurement process.

In summary, during his speech Councillor Sandford stated that there was no certainty as to what emissions would be produced by the waste incinerated at the plant and the amount of emissions had not been definitively stated. Furthermore, the contractor had declared that they would promote recycling but not how this would be achieved. Other local authorities had better solutions which involved extracting much of the waste beforehand, such as metal and plastic etc.

The contractor had also planned to build a plant 30% bigger than originally outlined to take 85,000 tonnes of waste, however the future waste projections for the city only stood at around 69,000 tonnes, did the site therefore need to have such capacity? Councillor Sandford further outlined the health risks around the incinerator and summarised by stating that Council was requested to support the motion to allow for proper public debate and proper public evaluation of all alternatives available including full disclosure of all the financial information.

Councillor Thulbourn seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

Members debated the motion and raised points for and against including:

- If the incinerator was not built, large sums would be spent on land tax;
- There would be a local plant dealing with local waste. There would also be some capacity for neighbouring authorities;
- The contents of the black bags should not include recyclables;
- There was no market for certain types of plastics;
- The tonnage proposed was based on growth and having flexibility in terms of seasonal demand and assisting other smaller authorities etc;
- The project was not viable at 38,000 tonnes, as stated by Councillor Sandford;
- There had been no claims that the £87m would be recouped by electricity or heat generation;
- If the plant broke down the Council would not pay any costs;
- A report had been produced back in 2009 outlining alternatives;
- There had been five years to debate the issue and the decision making process had involved all the political groups;
- The permit had been obtained from the Environment Agency;
- The proposal was out of date and there were still health worries; and
- The amount of rubbish needed to be reduced and there needed to be more recycling.

Councillor Holdich proposed to move to the vote, this was seconded by Councillor Scott.

Councillor Sandford exercised his right of reply as the mover of the motion following which a vote was taken. The motion was **DEFEATED** (21 for, 28 against and 6 not voting).

The Legal Officer addressed the meeting and advised that the guillotine had now fallen and all further items would be moved directly to the vote with no further debate.

14. Reports and Recommendations

a) Peterborough City Council Pay Policy

Council received a report which outlined the revised Pay Policy Statement for 2012/13 following the transfer of Adult Social Care Staff on 1 March 2012.

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

Adopt the revised Pay Policy Statement for 2012/13.

b) Budget and Policy Framework – Revised Budget Timetable

Council received a report which outlined a revised budget process and timetable that included commencing budget consultation during January 2013.

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

Approve the revised budget process and timetable that included commencing budget consultation during January 2013.

The Mayor
19.00 – 23.00

FULL COUNCIL 10 OCTOBER 2012

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questions were received under the following categories:

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT TIME

7. Questions with notice by members of the public

1. Question from Kate Wilkinson

To Councillor Cereste, Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Business Engagement and Environment Capital:

In the last couple of years the Government has changed tack on their energy tariffs, how can you guarantee that the expenditure on this project can guarantee a safe return of funds giving an estimated profit of £80k to £137k and on which year would this revenue start to be fully appreciated by our city and surrounding villages?

Councillor Cereste responded:

There are 3 parts to this question:

- (a) Government attitude to renewable tariffs
- (b) safe return of funds and
- (c) when the council will realise revenue.

With regards (a), DECC has now laid out a coherent plan towards the digression of incentives which allows the council to forecast, in the business case, what the tariff will be, when and how this ties up with the build out of the proposed sites. Of course we cannot account for reactive changes that DECC may make in the meantime, however, the Council will closely monitor such announcements during the development period.

With regard (b), the Council has taken the worst case scenario in developing the business cases for the proposed plants and are confident that prices and costs will come down during the development period. Once the sites are operational, the income generated from incentives is guaranteed by the UK government. No EU government with more mature renewable markets has retrospectively cut tariffs that have been committed to operational plant. The UK is highly unlikely to be the first since it will damage investor confidence in the UK as a whole.

With regards (c), the Council will realise the revenue once the sites are operational, currently forecast to be:

Solar Farms – between Q1 2014 and Q1 2015

Wind Farms – Q1 2015.

Kate Wilkinson asked the following supplementary question:

The Government have already done a u-turn denying our farms small and medium term businesses to benefit, like quite a few of our European neighbours. So what reassurances are there that the Government will not do another u-turn on the renewable generation payments in the future? Especially as Owen Paterson mentioned yesterday in the Daily Telegraph that the people for the wind developers should actually be standing on their own two feet instead of asking for money from the state at the time.

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| | <p>Councillor Cereste responded:</p> <p>The present Government came in and reviewed what the previous Government had put in place and they have now come out with a very clear and precise way forward. There is no reason for us to believe that they will not do what they said they would do.</p> |
| 2. | <p>Question from Dawn Clipston</p> <p>To Councillor Cereste, Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Business Engagement and Environment Capital:</p> <p>As Portfolio holder for Business Engagement, how can you justify removing 3,000 acres approximately of prime quality arable farmland not only from the Peterborough economy, but by doing so denying established tenant farmers their livelihoods and totally eliminating any prospects of a future that at least six young up and coming farmers have, who have been learning and mastering their dying trade over many years, in readiness for the opportunity to add to the community, and apply for their own tenanted farm in our areas, and by so doing, contribute to the local economy, creating not only food, but employment?</p> <p>Councillor Cereste responded:</p> <p>Only part of the PCC farm land will have to be used to deliver this revenue. Our proposals will result in less than 900 acres being required (less than a third of the total estate). Our intention is to engage directly with those farmers affected in the next month to discuss the scheme and review the options available to them and their families. We are expecting that for many of them there will be farming options available on the estate. In addition, we are also looking at other ideas to involve the farmers in the energy park business e.g. anaerobic digestion plants that will provide revenue to them. This will be part of the long term strategy for the PCC farms.</p> <p>Dawn Clipston asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>You say that the proposal is now 900 acres, a third of the original proposal, when is that going to be advised to the group as they were not aware of any changes since the Cabinet report submitted in July 2012?</p> <p>Councillor Cereste responded:</p> <p>You are absolutely right and we have been moving this along as fast as we can, because clearly we want to talk to yourselves and the group to make sure that we can deal with any of your questions and any other things that you want to try and understand. I understand that the feasibility study has been completed now and it's only going through the technical phase where they are now trying to analyse whether or not what the feasibility shows is deliverable. The moment that we are clear, and I am expecting literally within the next few days or next couple of weeks, we will engage directly with those farmers affected and we will try and deal both with respect and understanding for what they are trying to do and clearly, where we possibly can we will make sure they get proper compensation and if they want to, the opportunity to continue farming if that is possible.</p> |
| 3. | <p>Question from Dawn Clipston</p> <p>To Councillor Cereste, Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Business Engagement and Environment Capital:</p> |

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| | <p>It has been said you encourage worthwhile, sustainable business, and there are many statements where you encourage “new businesses to the city and create new job opportunities”, but what about existing, thriving, established farmers; business people who have contributed enormously over many years and many generations to the local economy and its infrastructure, and the younger generation of farmers who wish to have a worthwhile and sustainable future? Are you not interested in jobs and businesses in the rural areas of Peterborough?</p> <p>Councillor Cereste responded:</p> <p>Yes very interested, in fact we will do whatever we can to maintain the level of jobs and improve on it if we possibly can. But there are various reasons for this scheme; the primary one being able to maintain our Council services across Peterborough and its rural areas. The income that will be created will help support these services/jobs in rural areas and will help to safeguard the ownership of the farm land within PCC. From a strategic perspective, this will allow the farms to be supported for the long term future of the people who farm them.</p> <p>Only part of the PCC farm land will have to be used to deliver this revenue. There are twenty two farms across the estate and we have taken due consideration of them all. Our proposals will result in less than 900 acres being required (less than a third of the total estate). Our intention is to engage directly with those farmers affected in the next month to discuss the scheme and review the options available to them and their families. We are expecting that for many of them there will be farming options available on the estate and in addition, we are also looking at other ideas to involve the farmers in the energy park business.</p> <p>Dawn Clipston asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>You comment on the farmers, but there is no comment on myself as a private home owner on Willow Drove on the proposed energy park site.</p> <p>Councillor Cereste responded:</p> <p>If you are affected by what we are trying to do then I can give you a guarantee that we will be talking to you about what we can do to help you as well.</p> |
| 4. | <p>Question from Stacey Stringer</p> <p>To Councillor Cereste, Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Business Engagement and Environment Capital:</p> <p>Councillor Cereste, despite all your passion and determination to ensure you run a city where everyone has a chance to fulfill their potential, where do I and other young farmers who share the same dream of having a tenant farm under PCC fit into this equation with the proposal to remove large amounts of farmland and replace it with energy generating facilities? Have you wasted valuable resources and funding that has been available through PCC for my and other Young Farmers’ educations and have I wasted the past nine years of my life and all of the Newborough Young Farmers Club’s members and supporters’ time and money in encouraging them to keep farming going locally and working towards having a tenant farm through PCC?</p> <p>Councillor North responded:</p> <p>Our proposals will result in less than 900 acres being required (less than a third of the total estate). We are also looking at a variety of ideas to involve the long term farmers in the energy park business e.g. anaerobic digestion plants that will provide revenue to</p> |

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| | <p>them. We have every intention of supporting young farmers, although this has to be done hand in hand with the budgets and constraints which have been placed on the Council. We are engaging with the National Farmers Union and, as our plans formulate, will continue to have open discussions with the farming community in the coming months. This has to be part of the long term strategy for the PCC farms.</p> <p>Stacey Stringer asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>Lincolnshire County Council and Cambridgeshire County Council are encouraging farmers and young farmers to take on farm tenancies to ensure we are growing valuable food for the country, why is it that Peterborough City Council's ideas are completely the opposite?</p> <p>Councillor North responded:</p> <p>I wouldn't agree that we are totally opposite. We wish to formulate a balance between green energy and the farmers. That's why we intend working closely with the farming community to ensure that the minimum effect will happen to them and we still enable the city to gain the great revenue which will benefit everyone here today and everyone in the city.</p> |
| 5. | <p>Question from Stacey Stringer</p> <p>To Councillor Cereste, Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Business Engagement and Environment Capital:</p> <p>At present we do not have enough food to feed the UK and currently have a significant carbon footprint, do you think by reducing valuable food growing land in and around Peterborough's villages you are helping to achieve the greener Peterborough that you have been introducing international business leaders to?</p> <p>Councillor North responded:</p> <p>The scheme will reduce the carbon footprint of Peterborough by 57,000 tonnes per year of Co2 and contribute to the well being of the total Peterborough population. We are also under an EU legal obligation to support the UK government in generating renewable energy and reducing our carbon usage. The scheme will support this UK obligation. Yes the scheme will take a small percentage of farming land; however, we will be maintaining the option for food production on the remaining 2000 plus acres of PCC land at this time.</p> <p>Stacey Stringer asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>900 acres is a substantial amount for an arable farm, we are reducing Co2 as you have said but we are not taking into account the food miles for the valuable land that we are cutting back for food, alongside that, what about the 1000 acres of land in Castor that the Council owns, which hasn't been tenanted by farmers. Why can't that be used?</p> <p>Councillor North responded:</p> <p>I personally have been working with a number of groups, for example Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT), which is one of the local charities and Peterborough in Transition to lower the food miles because I think it's absolutely right, we should be using local crops locally and I think we will be working together to achieve that wherever possible.</p> <p>Councillor Holdich raised a point of information and stated that the Council owned a very</p> |

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| | small proportion of land in Splash Lane, Castor. |
| 6. | <p>Question from Michael Goodliffe</p> <p>Regarding the solar and wind farm project, is this proposal not making 22 other farmers and myself redundant and as we have been Council farm tenants for a great many years, will we receive redundancy; and I'm looking for reassurances in your response to the fears I and my fellow farmers have on our future, and where you propose we are to live and what employment/career path you intend that we pursue?</p> <p>Councillor Cereste responded:</p> <p>The Council are absolutely clear that they are not seeking to put our farmers out of business. We can advise you that the detailed investigation, into the potential use of 3000 acres, has resulted in a proposed design area of less than 900 acres across the three sites whilst still delivering the power yields quoted in the cabinet paper.</p> <p>You will also know that where we have windmills, you as a young farmer will be able to continue farming around those windmills and we as a Council would have no proposals to ask you to leave that site. The sites where there would be a greater impact would be on the 300 plus acres that would then form part of the solar farms and we would intend to meet with you immediately in the next few weeks so that we can all be clear about your futures and what we can do to ensure that you can continue farming wherever that is possible. Our plans are to engage directly with those farmers affected, and certainly I would expect that to be undertaken within the next month to discuss the scheme and review the options available. Yes you will get compensation and yes we will be generous we will talk to you and we will listen to your needs and your fears and we will try and accommodate them where they are possible and where we can allow to you continue farming, where it is possible for you to continue farming we will make that possible and if there is spare land, which I am told there is, as part of the farm estate we would very much like you to transfer to that spare land. We also would not be looking to make you redundant from your homes, so it is not a given that just because you may lose a piece of land that you cannot farm, if you have a home there it is not a given that you will lose your home either, so that is something that we as a council are very clear about. However we will go into proper detail with those of you affected and I believe there are about eight families as I understand, affected and we will start those negotiations with you very soon.</p> <p>Michael Goodliffe asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>The proposed plan for 3000 acres has already been cut down to 900 acres is that not just a foot in the door to expand in further years, and even though you have said that farmers will not be put out of a job, you have also said that the solar panels will be on land that is un-farmable so without land to farm, we will not have a business, so that is putting people out of a job.</p> <p>Councillor Cereste responded:</p> <p>We will be working with you to look at alternatives and to see whether we can possibly allow you to continue farming, and if you cannot continue farming on that particular piece of land there is, I understand, other land available within the estate that you may be able to continue farming on. So it would be our objective to allow you to continue to be a farmer and to carry on your chosen trade if it is at all possible.</p> |
| 7. | <p>Question from Michael Goodliffe</p> <p>Regarding the solar and wind farm project, Peterborough City Council is currently trying</p> |

to address a financial deficit that, as I understand, is not down to the tenant farmers in Borough Fen, nor Morris Fen nor America Farm. Is it not down to bad management and decision making of this local authority in the past?

Councillor Cereste responded:

We as a local authority have taken £120m out of our costs in the last five years, and you will probably find that we have managed our finances better than any other local authority in this country and don't forget we are now going through one of the worst economic periods this country has known mainly because of the bad management of the previous Government. I am quite happy to accept that this is a very difficult situation and that you passionately feel about what you want to do and I am very happy to accept that this is a very difficult moment for many of you, but I will not stand here and be accused of managing the finances of this authority badly when we can actually show you very clearly and demonstrate that had it not been for good management, we would really be in a mess. This is one of the few towns in this country that is still growing and still thriving and it is because we manage it properly, and we look after the money, that we are able to do. Now I accept that you have a problem and you want me to sort it out and we will do, we will enter into negotiations with you as soon as we possibly can, we will be as generous as we possibly can and we will try and understand exactly where you are coming from to enable you to continue to do what you want to do that that you've been trained to do. you as a young farmer, I applaud what you do, it's fantastic, we need food, we need people like you, but we also need energy and we also need to balance the books and we also need schools. A £120m over five years will build five schools; this is 7,500 pupils for the city which this project will pay for. It is also half a hospital, 18m people per year go to our hospital. Let us get this into perspective, we are not being nasty or horrible, we just want to get it right and do the best by everybody including the farming community.

The Mayor permitted Stacey Stringer to ask a supplementary question on behalf of Michael Goodliffe:

I work for a renewable energy company and the basis of my job is with straw, which is produced with the crops. Based on one heston bale, and you can get up to four heston bales to the acre, an average of 0.67mw can be produced from one of these bales, now to power my house for the first quarter of this year that was one and a half heston bales. Now based on 100 acres, that's 400 bales so that is a lot of energy, what can these turbines produce? What can these solar panels produce, can we not utilise what we are already growing for a power station and provide food and provide these people a livelihood and work with the Council?

Councillor Cereste responded:

I think that's very sensible and I'm pleased to hear that you know what you are talking about. I think there is clearly something to look at when it comes to renewable energy crops. I would have to agree with you and we would all agree that, as you know, Sleaford has just been funded it's the first power station that has been funded in this country to burn straw and clearly it's a really good initiative. In the discussions that we have with you and your co-farmers, we will be happy to look at all of these options even if it does mean that we build the solar panel farms. Those options that you are identifying may be a way by which you can actually get a greater income, get a better return for your investment and for your training and its absolutely right that you should think like that. If we can do something like having a small power station that burns straw over on your sites, where it delivers energy for yourselves and the local village then why not, it's a really good idea but we need to sit down together and talk about it.

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| 8. | <p><u>Questions with notice by Members relating to ward matters To the Cabinet Members and to Committee Chairmen</u></p> |
| 1. | <p>Question from Councillor John Fox</p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning:</p> <p>After the two recent serious road traffic accidents at Staniland Way, Werrington, can the Cabinet Member reassure the residents of Werrington that some positive action will now be taken to alleviate the obvious danger of this Black Spot? We keep hearing of alterations to the junction, but accidents are happening at least three times a week.</p> <p>Councillor Hiller responded:</p> <p>I agree that the design was not well thought out some decades ago when the estate and road network was originally planned. The well documented and desired solution is the conversion of the junction into a roundabout. The developer has now submitted the revised application for this development in Werrington and our Officers are currently checking this for validation. The main changes will cover areas like the retention of the fuel station, loading bays redesign and the revised corporate logo. I'm well aware that a new application doesn't guarantee the start date of the development; I can assure him however that the current planning consent determines this junction will be revised before any proper development takes place and this condition will not be relaxed in any form for any new proposal.</p> <p>What I can also inform him is that in the interim, Officers have submitted a capacity bid to fund the possible modification of the junction layout should the development not proceed. The estimate for a conversion to the roundabout is in the region of 600k - £700k. In the last five years, there have been 22 slight and one serious accident at this junction most are vehicle shunts and as you might expect, the majority are occurring when vehicles exit Staniland Way onto Davids Lane, having criticised the design of the original junction layout, I think it is worth mentioning that according to police reports the vast majority of those accidents were caused by drivers not paying attention, drivers failing to look properly and drivers failing to judge another vehicles path. As an experienced former police officer, Councillor Fox will be aware that however much we improve roads layout and safety, careless driving will still result in traffic accidents. With this firmly in mind, in addition to the modifications to the road markings completed in February this year, Peterborough City Council Officers are consulting on proposals to reduce the existing 40mph speed limit to 30mph. Furthermore they are requesting authorisation from the Department For Transport to erect a bespoke warning sign on the northbound approach to the junction. This would inform drivers of the potentially hazardous junction as they approach it and to take due care when driving through it. I will of course keep Councillor Fox fully informed of all relevant progress during this process.</p> <p>Councillor Fox did not have a supplementary question however he thanked Councillor Hiller for his positive action towards the issue. Councillor Fox further stated that there appeared to be a flaw in the way statistics were handled as there were three to four accidents per week at the junction. If it was a damage only accident it was not recorded, hence a false overview of the black spot.</p> |
| 2. | <p>Question from Councillor Miners</p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Housing , Neighbourhoods and Planning:</p> <p>When Peterborough City Council Environmental Enforcement Team write to a Brewery regarding the condition of one of its buildings (Royal Arms Public House, Eye Road),</p> |

requesting some repairs to the building and removal of graffiti, isn't it normal practice to give the owners 21 days to undertake remedial works from receipt of the letter? If such works are not started/undertaken, then a formal notice is served giving them 7 days to undertake the works. Failure to do so then results in the Council arranging for the works to be undertaken, and a charge for the cost of the works will then be put on the property.

If all this procedure is correct, why is this vacant Public House still a blot on the landscape after many months of complaint?

Councillor Hiller responded:

I'm sure no one in this Chamber tonight will disagree with the sentiment of Councillor Miners question, graffiti is a senseless blight on any area, urban and rural it engenders a sense of disarray and pride where families live and work. Members will remember the repeated roof top daubing that we successfully had removed recently from Cathedral Square and how much better the area now looks without it and our authority's wider area is thankfully free from this moronic activity when compared with many other authorities' areas. DEFRA guidance on removal of graffiti on private premises requires local authorities to make reasonable attempts to work in constructive partnership with property owners to remove graffiti to minimise the need for formal notices.

This particular property is untenanted, and the brewery themselves had told our Officers that they can not afford to remove the graffiti having done so at their own expense before.

In order to get graffiti removed from private property, the council is required initially to give the property owner a reasonable period to do this, not necessarily 21 days. After this reasonable period the Council can serve a defacement removal notice, which must in law give not less than 28 days to undertake the works. After this period the property owner can ask for an extension with a sound reason to justify any increase in time to be allowed.

Where the owner can not or will not fund the graffiti removal works the Council can place a charge on the property recoverable on its sale, or fund the graffiti removal itself. In this particular case, and prior to me receiving this question, officers confirmed to me that they have exhausted all avenues open to them other than placing a charge on the property to enable the removal works to commence, and therefore this is the action I have requested to be taken, I have also asked the officers to keep Ward Councillors updated as the works progress.

Councillor Miners asked the following supplementary question:

Hasn't the delay been caused by officers trying to inform local councillors that they haven't acted because they haven't got the resources to undertake their statutory obligations.

Councillor Hiller responded:

No there is no intimation that I have heard that we can't afford to have graffiti removed. You will understand of course the sheer frustration of our officers when we are dealing with private properties. As far as I am aware breweries run a reasonably profitable business and to suggest they can't afford to do it themselves I think is nonsense. I do fully appreciate Councillor Miners' sentiments and I assure him that our officers are on the case and will indeed be progressing this extremely rapidly.

Questions with notice by Members of the Council to representatives of the Police and Fire Authorities**1. Question from Councillor John Fox**

Question to the Council's representatives on the Police Authority:

Could the Police Authority representative please explain to this council the logic of proposing to close Werrington Police Station and maintaining Bretton Police Station, especially as Bretton Police Station is a stone's throw from Thorpe Wood and when the Northern Area and Rural Areas appear to be lacking any true Police presence?

Councillor Khan responded:

Werrington Police Station has not been closed and it is still used daily by officers who work that area. The only difference is that officers no longer 'book on' and 'book off' at this location. Last year, only a very small pool of officers worked out of Werrington. They did not provide a 24 hour service from Werrington. Emergency cover was provided on a 24 hour basis by officers working from Thorpe Wood Police Station. These officers covered the entire city and did not have any specific local ownership of the Northern Area of Peterborough. A review was carried out that recognised we needed to provide a more bespoke, localised service to meet community needs. 41 constables, 21 PCSOs and eight sergeants were given newly defined parameters to provide cover for just the Northern Sector Area of Peterborough. Similar teams are established covering the Eastern and Southern sectors of Peterborough. This has allowed us to build stronger ties and increase visibility across a local area on a 24 hour basis.

In an effort to build continuity of service, ensure there are proper handover of matters and long term problem solving The Constabulary has decided to use three operational bases across the city rather than one large one and a number operated part of the time. The majority of officers and PCSOs patrolling Werrington will now come from Thorpe Wood Police Station. This enables them to come together as a team, share information and be effectively briefed and directed. Working from one location also helps the efficient use of transport, whereby cars and cycles are in constant use and not sat redundant at stations. This change does not reduce officer hours spent in the community, and once briefing is complete officers go to their local areas for the duration of their duty. Should they need to return to a police station during their shift, they will use Werrington or Bretton.

As a result of structural changes there are more local officers spending more time on the same streets working with the same community. Localised policing has increased, and feedback from the public has been positive with local councils and parishioners reporting improved police visibility.

Councillor John Fox asked the following supplementary question:

Are you giving me reassurance that and the residents of Werrington reassurance that Werrington Police Station is not planned for closure in the very near future?

Councillor Khan responded:

That I cannot do, I cannot give assurances that it will not happen, but what I can say is that now the structure has actually changed and we don't know what the outcome of the election is and it really will be depending on the new Police Commissioner who will be making decisions. I am on the Police and Commissioner Panel and I will keep an eye on it and I will do my best to keep Werrington open, but I can't give assurances.

EXECUTIVE BUSINESS TIME

11 Questions with Notice to the Leader and Members of the Executive

1. **Question from Councillor Shearman:**

To Councillor Cereste, Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Business Engagement and Environment Capital:

Will the Leader of the council join me in congratulating everyone tasked with safeguarding our most vulnerable children on the progress made since January 2012 in overcoming the serious weaknesses in our procedures and practices and does he agree with me that we are clearly moving towards a position where these systemic failures have been consigned to history?

Councillor Cereste responded:

I am grateful for these supportive comments. This has been an extremely challenging time for Children's Services and I would like to personally thank all the officers and Members who have contributed to our progress to date. I am only too aware of the tremendous work our social workers are doing to protect children and to help vulnerable families, often in very difficult circumstances, and they deserve all our support

As you have acknowledged Councillor Shearman, we have made great strides this year to put in place the foundations of an effective service. All the evidence points to the fact that significant progress has been made and all the areas for improvement specified by Ofsted are being addressed. However it would be wrong to be complacent and it is well understood that authorities who have found themselves in this position must accept that securing sustained improvement takes longer than the twelve months that has elapsed since the last inspection.

I am, therefore, determined that we continue the same pace of progress and remain absolutely focussed on delivering lasting improvements in Children's social care. What we can be assured of is the commitment and dedication of the workforce and their managers to ensure that progress moves steadily and safely in the right direction.

Councillor Shearman asked the following supplementary question:

Would you agree with me Councillor Cereste that when we debated the no confidence motion on 11 July it was very much on the basis of ignorance as to whether any child had been harmed as a result of the shortcomings in the department and I personally accept Mr Newsam's assertion that even if all the procedures and processes had been effective it is doubtful whether Tyler Whelan could have been protected but now that a mother has been jailed for three years for, in the words of Judge Enwright "a shocking case of child neglect", I feel justified in drawing back from my undertaking to support the Cabinet Member that I offered at the end of the debate last time. Councillor Cereste, in July you stressed the need for continuity in the department, we now have that following the appointment of Sue Westcott as Director of Children's Services, supported by two excellent deputies and a third on the way. Is it not time Councillor Cereste that you offered Mrs Westcott and her team a completely fresh start and demonstrated your leadership is based on backbone and not bluster and consign the Cabinet Member also to history?

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| | <p>Councillor Cereste responded:</p> <p>I have already answered this question on a number of occasions from Councillor Shearman.</p> |
| 2. | <p>Question from Councillor Miners:</p> <p>To Councillor Cereste, Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Business Engagement and Environment Capital:</p> <p>Could the Leader please inform the people of Peterborough how many 'Private Finance Initiatives' (PFI) this Local Authority is committed to locally, or has a partial involvement in?</p> <p>Councillor Holdich responded:</p> <p>There is currently a single PFI agreement in place which commenced in 2007 covering the three schools which were either rebuilt or refurbished in phase 1 of the secondary school review and they are Ken Stimpson Community School, Jack Hunt and Voyager Academy.</p> <p>Councillor Miners asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member please inform us of our present PFI interest rates and are they above or below the public borrowing rates for PFI?</p> <p>Councillor Holdich responded:</p> <p>I will advise Councillor Miners outside the meeting of this.</p> |
| 3. | <p>Question from Councillor Shearman:</p> <p>To Councillor Holdich, Cabinet member for Education, Skills and University:</p> <p>Will the cabinet member for schools confirm it is the Council's policy to ensure that as far as is possible school students are taught in permanent accommodation?</p> <p>Councillor Holdich responded:</p> <p>We are doing everything possible to make appropriate provision for the growing population in our City. Over the past four years we have created 289 additional reception year places. It is always our preferred option to have pupils in permanent accommodation and we have already completed numerous extension schemes creating additional accommodation where mobiles were previously sited. However, where need is short term only and in cases where we can only create temporary bulge year classes, it is the most cost effective solution to provide mobile classrooms. The quality of the mobiles is high, in some cases better than existing permanent accommodation.</p> <p>Councillor Shearman asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>Would you like to comment now whether the delay in building work at the school, which I understand has caused this situation is a result of sensitive information relating to the local authority's purchase of a nearby private dwelling being announced prematurely in the Park Ward Conservative's ward newsletter?</p> <p>Councillor Holdich responded:</p> <p>There is also a mobile classroom at All Saints as well whilst the development of that</p> |

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| | <p>school takes place and as far as the delay on Queens Drive School goes, he does actually have a written reply by email on his computer tonight.</p> <p>Councillor Holdich stated that Councillor Shearman had received an email from Mr Jonathan Lewis in response to a number of questions asked and Councillor Shearman could, if he was happy to, forward the response to Members directly.</p> |
| 4. | <p>Question from Councillor Ash:</p> <p>To Councillor Cereste, Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Business Engagement and Environment Capital:</p> <p>In its September 20-26th Edition, the Peterborough Telegraph included in a news piece on child care various quotes from the council including “Lessons have been learned” and “under immense pressure”. Of course none of us here would condone abuse or mistreatment of any kind and ultimately individuals must take full responsibility for their actions. However, would the Leader agree that people should be able to come to the council for advice and guidance when in times of trouble and that officers should have the necessary experience, knowledge and qualifications to be able to address these needs without being put under unnecessary levels of pressure where, as acknowledged in the newspaper article, mistakes may creep in?</p> <p>Councillor Scott responded:</p> <p>The case you refer to occurred last year and we are now in a very different position. Since then fundamental changes have been introduced and the department has made rapid improvements as has been acknowledged previously this evening. In the past year we have addressed the pressures and demands on staff. A new leadership and management structure is in place, all of whom have vast experience in children’s social care, we have recruited an additional 25 social workers and an improved computerised recording system helps managers check the quality and timeliness of work completed. These changes have ensured that our social workers now have manageable workloads and are able to respond more appropriately when families cause concern. All of this was also reported in the article you refer to.</p> <p>Councillor Ash asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>I thank the Cabinet Member for her response but it only answered in part what I asked and that was do people know where to go when they do have problems, when they do need advice and the question was also referring to the levels of social care for all ages, so it wasn’t just for children but I need assurances from the Cabinet Member that people will know where to go for help for people that are vulnerable at any age, particularly older people, who do need care in the home.</p> <p>Councillor Scott responded:</p> <p>I can’t respond with regard directly to older people, but I would like to say that a key to the progress that the department has made is improving our arrangements with a wide range of partners including the police, schools and many others and so we hope that through people’s understanding of the work of social care and also with younger children, with schools, that parents or other people wouldn’t just come to social care, they might well go to many of our partners as well. It is the improving relationships that we have with our partners that has meant we are able to respond better and have better practice around the reporting of incidents than we had before. With regard to adult care I believe they have been through a similar experience only sometime before us and they have also significantly improved relationships with partners who may be the people that raise safeguarding issues in the first place.</p> |

5.

Question from Councillor Jamil:

To Councillor Cereste, Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Business Engagement and Environment Capital:

Will the Leader of the Council please advise what steps are being taken by the authority to help stall holders at Peterborough market as over the last few years they have seen significant increases in rent and rates but little has been done to improve the condition of the market or to help those who have businesses there?

Councillor Goodwin responded:

There has been no increase in rent charges by Peterborough City Council to existing Market Traders since April 2007. Existing traders pay £90.50 per week. New traders from August 2012 pay £100.00 per week.

The Council takes every opportunity to promote the market's events and theme days through the Council's media team. In addition, all visitor coaches to the city will now drop off and pick up passengers in Midgate immediately opposite the market, hopefully encouraging more visitors.

This Christmas, to attract people to the market around the Christmas period, the Council is extending the City Centre Christmas lighting to the market also.

New City centre location signs and maps are to be placed strategically across the city centre early next year. The market will obviously be included in this and will hopefully encourage an increased footfall.

In March 2011 the authority invested £100,000 in re invigorating the market premises and will continue to be committed to investigating a number of options with regards to promoting the visitor experience.

Councillor Cereste, Gillian Beasley the Chief Executive, trader representatives and officers involved in the market, recently visited a very successful market in Newham East London and have gathered some valuable information and ideas about how to make markets successful. A meeting has now been arranged with representatives from the Market Federations and following that with the Friends of the Market to explore new ideas to make our market more successful.

Councillor Jamil asked the following supplementary question:

The market traders feel that they are being left out. According to them they feel that Peterborough City Council is talking about everything new that is happening and they are forgetting those people who have been there for 20, 30 or 40 years and some of the assurances that have been given this evening to the farmers were assurances that were given to them, but they say things like they used to have a manager who they could go to and complain to and get things done, but they don't want to be left out now. They feel that they want to be part of the growth of Peterborough again and they don't want to be left alone, so I just want assurances that they will be taken as seriously as if they were Hampton or Queensgate or any other new shopping centre that's opening up.

Councillor Goodwin responded:

I think one of the main points is that Peterborough City Council, especially the Leader and the Chief Executive, meet with the Chair of the Traders Committee monthly and I gather from him that he is very pleased with the working relationship that he now has with

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| | Peterborough City Council and he's very happy with the way that we are moving forward in trying to support the market traders. |
| 6. | <p>Question from Councillor Ash:</p> <p>To Councillor Walsh, Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion and Safety:</p> <p>I am sure that the Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion and Safety would agree that parking on the pavement and blocking the way for pedestrians can cause a danger, particularly in the vicinity of schools when children are being dropped off and collected as many drivers seem to show a disregard for road safety and parking restrictions. Also, I have noticed that in the vicinity of a large secondary school children were walking on and off pavements quite deliberately and wandering into busy roads showing a clear disregard or respect for other road users. Therefore, would the Cabinet Member agree that everything should be done to help make people more aware of the need for their own safety and show more consideration to all road users by working with all council departments and safety organisations as well as large employers, including schools, to press home the point that there is a greater need to be more aware of others on our roads?</p> <p>Councillor Walsh responded:</p> <p>Road Safety is a key priority for the Safer Peterborough Partnership and Peterborough City Council remains one of the major partners in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Road Safety Partnership.</p> <p>A Peterborough road safety task and finish plan is delivered each year working with various partners and organisations tackling key road safety issues. In the coming months messages being promoted include seatbelt safety, be safe be seen, winter driving and drink driving.</p> <p>Part of the plan also includes a comprehensive road safety education programme which is offered free of charge to all secondary schools across Peterborough. Education and training activities are also available for primary schools. I will ask officers to share details of this plan with Councillor Ash.</p> <p>A new campaign focussing on inconsiderate parking outside schools launched on 8th October and I'm pleased to say that work will take place at a school in my own ward and I'm looking forward to seeing the problems being tackled there. Banners are available for schools to erect, leaflets will be distributed to all parents and enforcement activities will take place in the areas affected. This is the first phase of the campaign and as the schools take part activities will also be planned to encourage sustainable travel to school. Mr Mayor, with your indulgence as I believe safeguarding our children is so important; I have brought a visual aid with me this evening if you would allow me to show this.</p> <p><i>A banner was displayed to the Chamber.</i></p> <p>Thank you Mr Mayor, I did think it was important to display how we are taking safeguarding of children as very important, with regards to different languages, I would like to point out we have proposed in our ESOL delivery board meeting tomorrow we discuss translating this very material.</p> <p>Councillor Ash asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>Very informative and I hope the campaign works. If however it doesn't work and the way some people carry on, will that be followed through by firm enforcement and also I'm just</p> |

a little bit worried about the way that youngsters walk from schools and I wonder whether that message could be go home to the children themselves. The final part is really with employers, I notice with a lot of delivery drivers now they seem to park wherever they will and other road users park on the pavement thinking it's in order, so I'm hoping the Cabinet Member is able to address those issues.

Councillor Walsh responded:

This is not instead of enforcement, this is together with enforcement. Our camera will be deployed to various locations where we feel that is required in addition there will be an educational programme taking place at the school which will give the very type of advice that Councillor Ash is referring to. We have taken this very seriously.

Councillor Shearman wished for it to be noted in the minutes that thanks were to be extended to Mr Daynes, Senior Governance Officer, for helping to present the banner to the Chamber.