

## FULL COUNCIL 8 MARCH 2017

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questions were received under the following categories:

<b><u>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</u></b>	
<b>6. <u>Questions from members of the public</u></b>	
1.	<p><b>Question from Mr Callum Robertson</b></p> <p>To Councillor Walsh, Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment Capital</p> <p>In relation to the issue of the spiking of drinks in clubs, what are the steps that can be taken by the Council to stop this occurring again?</p> <p><b>Councillor Walsh responded:</b></p> <p>We have spoken with our Police licensing colleagues who confirm that they're not aware of a significant problem with the spiking of drinks in licensed premises in Peterborough. However, we are far from complacent, and I am pleased to confirm that the city centre area has been identified as a Home Office sponsored 'Local Alcohol Action Area'. This offers the council, police and other agencies the opportunity to place a spotlight on issues in licensed premises and seek Home Office advice and support to implement an action plan. Preventing the spiking of drinks is included in this action plan.</p> <p>More generally, the council and police will continue to provide information to licence holders to educate them about their responsibilities and on what to look out for, and will encourage licence holders, bar staff and door staff to feed intelligence through to us so that action can be taken.</p>
2.	<p><b>Question from Mr Dale McKean</b></p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing, and Economic Development</p> <p>Can the leader of the Cabinet Member please provide a breakdown of the main reasons and number of objections to the new growth for Eye Village proposed in the local plan consultation and a breakdown of the main reasons and number that agree to any further growth in Eye.</p> <p><b>Councillor Hiller responded:</b></p> <p>I'm afraid I can't, Mr McKean. Nearly 2,000 comments were received to the Local Plan consultation, Mr Mayor. All those comments are currently being analysed. It is estimated that the detailed breakdown will be available by the end of March.</p> <p><b>Mr Dale McKean asked a supplementary question:</b></p> <p>I find it very disappointing that a month after the consultation finished that we haven't got an answer. As Eye population has expanded by 2,000 residents to 5,160 since the 1991 census, and we don't know the number of residents objecting to any more growth, what will the Council be doing to stop any further growth in Eye given this is the second time significant numbers of residents have objected to further growth in the village of Eye. I personally handed in 331 objection letters alone, apart from those that would</p>

have come through online and through emails.

**Councillor Hiller responded:**

I'm not quite sure what the supplementary follow up question was to my original answer, but all the comments will be available for you to see on the Council website. I'm sure the Ward Councillors, which you are one, Mr Mayor, will liaise with both Mr McKean and any other Eye residents over any queries they might have. Thank you, Mr Mayor.

## COUNCIL BUSINESS

### 8. Questions on notice to:

- i) The Mayor
- ii) To the Leader or Member of the Cabinet
- iii) To the Chair of any Committee or Sub-committee

#### 1. **Question from Councillor Ash**

To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing, and Economic Development

When the development for the Southern Township (now known as Hampton), was first conceived in the early 1980's as previously noted at the last Council, a site was set aside for what might have been a parkway station. It was suggested at the time a site for a new station on the northern side of the City also be included in the development plans.

Now that proposals for the new junction at Werrington are being discussed does the Cabinet Member feel that it would be worthwhile resurrecting the idea and work with Network Rail to discuss allocating a site for a station to the north of the city? Does he agree that as the city grows we will need to consider reserving land for transport interchange hubs to ensure that the relatively free flowing traffic movement remains manageable and smooth running in the years to come?

#### **Councillor Hiller responded:**

I thank Councillor Ash for his question. I'm slightly confused as to the suggestion that the works proposed in Werrington should somehow encourage the creation of a station. I can tell Members Network Rail and the Government have no plans whatsoever to build a new station in this area. Indeed Government's current plans are to speed up travel times on the East Coast Mainline and an example of this is the planned Werrington project which, as Councillor Ash knows, because he was at the same Planning Committee as me when this was demonstrated in great detail. This will take freight trains under the East Coast Mainline, and will improve reliability, journey times and also increase the number of trains, which I think is great for Peterborough and think is great for passengers as a whole. Thank you, Mr Mayor.

#### **Councillor Ash asked a supplementary question:**

First of all, yes, indeed I was at the site visit and it was that and the application that did get me thinking in particular on the last question last time on Hampton. The reason why I asked it was that traffic is growing in the city and it did seem to me, looking at the site, that there may be room for a transport hub; perhaps a park and ride with local rail services. The line, as well as serving the East Coast Mainline – and I agree about speeding up – also serves the Midland Line through Stamford through to Leicester and the line to Spalding, which is a run by single rail car, so there are local services as well. I wonder if that could be considered, but, really, the issue is taking into account the growth of the city in ten, twenty, even longer years, when traffic may start to bring things to a grind.

#### **Councillor Hiller responded:**

I think there was a question there, Mr Mayor. I do thank councillor Ash, and I know he's particularly concerned about traffic flow in and around our city, as I am myself, and I'm sure most Members here tonight. Frankly, Mr Mayor, I think it's more important to focus on areas and policies which are actually achievable, and where we can secure

	funding for those improvements. Thank you, Mr Mayor.
2.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Sandford</b></p> <p>To Councillor Seaton, Cabinet Member for Resources</p> <p>Councillors have recently been advised that an interim service director of financial services has been appointed to take over when the current permanent occupant of the role leaves the Council at the end of the month.</p> <p>At the same time, councillors have been told that the Executive Director for strategic resources is to take on additional duties as Section 151 officer for East Cambridgeshire Council.</p> <p>Considerable concern has been expressed in the past about the Council taking on interim managers, directors and consultants and the budgetary implications of this, especially at times when severe spending reductions are having to be made.</p> <p>Could the relevant Cabinet Member explain why the necessary short term expertise could not have been found within the council in this particular instance and why an interim appointment was deemed to be necessary?</p> <p><b>Councillor Seaton responded:</b></p> <p>Thank you, Mr Mayor. The first point I raise is, Councillor Sandford says that considerable concern has been expressed about the Council taking on Interim Managers, Directors, and Consultations, and I think it's just worth reminding Councillors that this is fully reported to Audit Committee in some considerable detail on a regular basis.</p> <p>Turning to the question, the recruitment for a permanent replacement for the Service Director is underway, with initial interviews taking place this month. There is usually a time lag between one post holder finishing and the new one starting, given that a thorough recruitment process takes longer than notice periods.</p> <p>We will always consider whether there is an opportunity for an internal candidate to act up. However this in turn then means that that role has to be covered. There is simply not the capacity to absorb workload in this manner, in that team. In this case we have determined that a short term interim arrangement is the best approach, especially as being deputy Section 151 Officer is a specialist role.</p> <p>Cllr Sandford raises concerns about the financial challenges the Council faces, and he'll of course be aware that this role, and the team within Financial Services, are absolutely critical in helping this Council meet those challenges.</p> <p><b>Councillor Sandford asked a supplementary question:</b></p> <p>Thank you, Mr Mayor. One of the reasons I put this question forward was, I'm sure Councillor Seaton will be aware, that the employment of an interim person, however competent, at such a level of seniority, for a short term period, is a considerable cost for the Council. Could I ask him if he is also aware, as he certainly should be, that four or five years ago there was a working group that looked at the employment of consultants and interim managers by the Council? And one of the key recommendations was that departments should develop succession planning to cope with precisely this situation. So, could he tell us why succession planning has not been carried out in this particular department and why, at the same time as this is happening, is the Section 151 Officer being loaned out to another local authority?</p>

	<p><b>Councillor Seaton responded:</b></p> <p>Thank you, Mr Mayor. It may have said 'succession planning', Councillor Sandford. What it didn't say was 'keep lots of staff there just in case one of them has to act up'. As I said in my first answer, there is simply not capacity to absorb workload in this manner. Thank you, Mr Mayor.</p>
3.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Whitby</b></p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing, and Economic Development</p> <p>I was concerned just prior to Christmas to receive a communication from a resident with regard to poor broadband speeds in one of the newer developments south of the river. I understand that BT are unable to offer a reasonable speed connection in this area. I am aware that you have had communication with regard to poor broadband speeds, could you advise what steps are being taken by what seems to be the monopoly supplier of Broadband connection in this area, and how we have a situation where a modern development is suffering from poor connection in a 'Digital City'.</p> <p><b>Councillor Hiller responded:</b></p> <p>I thank Councillor Whitby for his question. I agree that BT is the largest infrastructure provider, although broadband within Peterborough in our rural communities is supplied by a range of commercial internet service providers and where this is sometimes not possible, the Connecting Cambridgeshire programme has been rolling out superfast broadband to thousands of homes and businesses across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Phase one commenced 2013 with the programme targeted to be complete December 2018. It's anticipated that approximately 95%, sorry, even more than that, 97% of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough homes and businesses will have access to superfast broadband speeds by this time.</p> <p>In respect of your resident's concerns on poor broadband speeds in their particular development, I can confirm that your ward area obviously has existing commercial providers but, in addition, superfast broadband is planned in phase three of the programme, at a time leading up to the completion of that scheme. The programme is rolling out wholesale access broadband infrastructure which means any internet service provider, or ISP's as we popularly know them, can choose to offer a service. Thank you, Mayor.</p>
4.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Murphy</b></p> <p>To Councillor Walsh, Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment Capital</p> <p>I am aware that Luton Borough Council for example have said that they would not use Stef and Phillips. However it has been stated in email correspondence to an elderly tenant facing eviction that had we (PCC) not entered into that contract with Stef and Philips the accommodation would have been used by another local authority for their own homeless households adding even more pressure to the housing market. What proof is there from other councils confirming that they would have used these properties and if there is any can you explain how this would add more pressure to the housing market? There may have been pressure on services had another council used accommodation or possibly pressure in increased homelessness but I do not see how there would be any pressure on the housing market.</p> <p><b>Councillor Walsh responded:</b></p> <p>First, let me remind Council that Stef and Philips' business model is to secure vacant possession of properties they acquire - whether or not this Council entered into a lease</p>

	<p>with them for properties at St Michael's Gate, the tenants living there would have still been evicted.</p> <p>Now, how do we know this? It is widely publicised that London Boroughs in particular are using temporary accommodation outside of the capital to house homeless households and we know that Peterborough is an attractive option for them location wise.</p> <p>As has also been widely reported, as part of the due diligence process the Council undertook prior to entering into a lease for properties at St Michael's Gate, officers made contact with a number of local authorities who were already working with Stef and Philips.</p> <p>Officers did not ask them directly whether they were interested in using the accommodation at St Michael's Gate for fear of providing them with a direct opportunity to place their families there. Barnet Borough Council, however, did tell officers about the accommodation they were currently using at a Stef and Philips site with 48 units of accommodation in Luton.</p> <p>Mr Mayor, it is this Council's duty to ensure that services and facilities are protected for our own residents and we need to ensure that demand for services, including school places and health and social care, is managed. The risk that these services could be stretched even further was one we were simply not prepared to take. Thank you, Mr Mayor.</p> <p><b>Councillor Murphy asked a supplementary question:</b></p> <p>Thank you for your answer, which, quite frankly, isn't an answer. My question is taken from an email that a member of the public received from a very senior officer of this Council, where they talked about pressure on the housing market; clearly an error in drafting the email. I'm asking you what information you had that another Council was going to move here. I'm also asking you, did you hear your fellow Councillors on radio Cambridgeshire on that Friday, when Stewart Jackson was saying Councillor Holdich told him it was Luton. We all know Councillor Holdich didn't tell Stewart Jackson that. When we had Seaton be told (incoherent) saying that it was him that said it was Luton – Are you aware of that outrageous event on the BBC and can you tell us who told these lies about Luton?</p> <p><b>Councillor Walsh responded:</b></p> <p>Words almost fail me, Mr Mayor. Councillor Murphy is beginning to sound like a broken record. We've been over this again, and again, and again. I don't know which question I'm obliged to answer, I don't know how many supplementaries he is allowed to put to me, but, shall we just say, that we were very sure that had we not accepted Stef and Philips' offer, somebody else would. Now, what was said and what you say was said, that we can discuss on another occasion. I'm sure the Council has more serious business ahead of it. Thank you.</p>
5.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Fower</b></p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing, and Economic Development</p> <p>I have been contacted by local residents who have raised several queries relating to the so called "art work", what I and others would describe as a barrier, that runs along the central reservation of the Bourges Boulevard, and appeared following the £4.5 million improvement scheme the other year.</p> <p>Could the relevant Cabinet Member furnish me with a response to the following points;</p> <p>How much did this piece of "art" actually cost? Where did we buy it from? Which</p>

	<p>Member of the Cabinet actually signed off this spend? And who precisely actually came up with the idea to have this “art work” in the first place?</p> <p><b>Councillor Hiller responded:</b></p> <p>I thank Councillor Fower for his question. Mr Mayor, I’m encouraged, I have to say, I am encouraged that Councillor Fower appears to be the go-to Councillor for residents seeking opinions on things art related. I imagine his knowledge of the subject makes him a popular guest on the local dinner party circuit, too.</p> <p>Regarding the local residents’ apparent complaints, I must say, that I’ve had nothing but many, many positive statements about this barrier. For that is what it is, Mr Mayor, not art work as he seems to think. It’s a road safety barrier, required as part of the specification laid down when the scheme was originally drawn up. And, Mr Mayor, if we have to have a barrier, why not make it aesthetically pleasing?</p> <p>I suggest the cost of the safety barrier needs to be looked at in the context of the whole scheme. The total cost of this project was £4.5 million of which £2.1 million was government funded and £0.6million was a contribution secured from the rather splendid Waitrose development alongside; approved, he might remember, by the cross party Planning Committee. The remaining £1.8 was from the Council, agreed by Members as an integral element of the budget at that time.</p> <p>The estimated cost to plant trees directly into the central reservation without the use of planters and the erection of standard specification, somewhat utilitarian, railings was originally priced at about £720,000 whereas the use of planters and bespoke railings now installed cost well under £600,000. Quite a saving, I’m sure you’ll agree.</p> <p>The barrier planters were manufactured by a local firm in Stilton, and the chosen material of Corten steel forms a stable rust-like appearance, eliminating the need for painting and reducing future maintenance costs. Another cost saving, practical decision. Thank you, Mr Mayor.</p> <p><b>Councillor Fower asked a supplementary question:</b></p> <p>Thank you, Mr Mayor, and thank you Councillor Hiller for that informative response. A very simple follow up question, Mr Mayor. Can Councillor Hiller please confirm whether or not that particular, what I consider to be art, and others call something else, can you confirm whether or not it’s scratch proof?</p> <p><b>Councillor Hiller responded:</b></p> <p>Do you know what? I’ve absolutely no idea. No, really, absolutely no idea, but if he wants me to accompany him up there and we can scratch away to our hearts’ content. Thank you, Mr Mayor.</p>
6.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Peach</b></p> <p>To Councillor Walsh, Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment Capital</p> <p>Many Councillors have been encouraged at the development of the Council’s Prevention and Enforcement Service to enable many of the nuisances that affect our residents to be managed. However, the visibility of the PES in wards outside the centre of town or Lincoln Road is not as evident.</p> <p>Can we please have an update on the roll out and actions to date of the Prevention and Enforcement Service across the authority area?</p> <p><b>Councillor Walsh responded:</b></p>

	<p>Yes, thank you, Mr Mayor, and I thank Councillor Peach for his question. The Prevention and Enforcement Service is a Peterborough-wide resource. For operational purposes, the city is divided into three sectors and there are dedicated Prevention and Enforcement Service staff assigned to each area who are both patrolling daily and dealing with long term issues.</p> <p>To give context and by way of an example, on a typical daily basis the Northern Sector lead officer will deploy up to 23 Prevention and Enforcement Service officers to the sector, made up of a Police Sergeant, 4 Constables, 9 PCSO'S and 9 Council PES officers. They may not be as obviously visible as those in the City Centre as generally their workload dictates they deploy to individual or very targeted issues.</p> <p>The entire service has a daily resource meeting which uses an evidence-based approach to target resourcing in response to issues and new and emerging demands. It is this meeting that allows officers to consider the need for more visible deployment in any part of Peterborough where the need demands it.</p> <p>I have asked the Director of Adults and Communities to ensure that the details of local officers and ways to contact them is widely known across all wards.</p> <p><b>Councillor Peach asked a supplementary question:</b></p> <p>Thank you very much, Mr Mayor, and thank you very, very much for that answer, Councillor Walsh. I am very pleased that - of the new Prevention Service, and I would only just ask, and I appreciate everywhere is a priority in Peterborough, that they do whatever they can, and Kingdom, the firm that's hopefully going to be doing enforcement duties for us as well, do whatever they can to prioritise the Millfield and Lincoln Road area and the roads either side of Lincoln Road, because there is an awful lot of problems in that area. It does cover three wards: Park Ward, Central Ward, and North Ward, and I'm sure if they do concentrate on that area people would certainly recognise it and it would give a much better feeling to the area. Thank you very much indeed.</p> <p><b>Councillor Walsh responded:</b></p> <p>Yes, thank you, Mr Mayor. Yes, the Kingdom pilot is a twelve month pilot and it's focused on the Can-Do area, only. The PES will deploy Kingdom staff based on evidenced need and it's our thinking that the bulk of their work will be along Lincoln Road and the side roads that come off from Lincoln Road. There are also some issues at the town end of Eastfield Road, which they'll also cover. If the pilot's a success, we'll be bringing forward proposals to extend it to other areas. The pilot had been agreed with Kingdom to bring a small amount of revenue to the Council and there are no costs to the Council for the pilot.</p>
7.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Coles</b></p> <p>To Councillor Goodwin, Cabinet Member for City Centre Management, Culture and Tourism</p> <p>There have been some obvious improvements in arts and cultural activity in Peterborough in recent years, with Vivacity and Metal delivering a variety of performances and events. Peterborough's voluntary arts organisations also make a great contribution to our cultural offer. The problem is in making local residents aware of the breadth of arts and cultural events in the City.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member advise me on what he is doing to encourage all sectors to work together so that events are both scheduled and advertised in a way that makes it easier for our residents to find out what cultural events are taking place?</p> <p><b>Councillor Goodwin responded:</b></p>



	<p>Thank you Councillor Coles, for your question. I believe Councillor Coles is correct in his observation that the city is becoming a livelier and more culturally exciting place to be. Looking back we've seen a year packed with great events.</p> <p>In 2016 Vivacity delivered a range of events including an exhibition by international artists Lucy and Jorge Orta in the City's Art gallery, "KeyFeste", an outdoor theatre festival, "#ParkTales" a sculpture based festival at Thorpe Meadows, "Circle of Light" a light spectacular linked to Diwali, the Green Festival for the first time supported by the Arts Council, Katharine of Aragon Festival, the Heritage Festival, attracting 37,500 people</p> <p>In addition to Vivacity's events, our own City Centre Management Team, under the leadership of Annette Joyce, deliver a series of events throughout the year. These events included the Polish Festival, the Portuguese Festival, the Motorcycles event, the Peterborough Beer Festival, Classic and Vintage Vehicle show, the Italian Festival, Perkins Great Eastern Run, which attracted 7,000 runners, and 3,000 spectators, the Diwali Festival, Black History Month, and the Christmas lights, to mention a few.</p> <p>Peterborough City Council, with its partners, have been working hard to make sure residents can access information of what events are taking place in the City.</p> <p>In order to achieve this, Peterborough City Council and Arts Council England together funded the development of 'Idea1', an events website which is hosted and managed by Metal.</p> <p>The Idea1 website identifies through a calendar of events which activities are taking place across the city. Local organisers are also invited to advertise their own local cultural events on Idea1, for all age groups.</p> <p>Vivacity also has a newly refreshed website that helps residents find cultural events that are taking place in the City.</p> <p>Visitor Information Centre, Visitor Guide Book, Moment Magazines, are all additional ways of promoting.</p> <p>I would like to say to Members that, also, if we want to advertise local organisations, it would be great for us to put details in our newsletters. That would be a really good way of getting information out. Thank you very much.</p>
8.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Davidson</b></p> <p>To Councillor Seaton, Cabinet Member for Resources</p> <p>Can the relevant Cabinet Member please clarify why Housing Benefit, which is now to be replaced by Universal Credit, is paid in arrears?</p> <p><b>Councillor Seaton may have responded:</b></p> <p>Payment of Housing Benefit is paid in arrears in accordance with current legislation.</p> <p>The main reason housing benefit is paid in arrears is to protect the public purse and reduce the likelihood of housing benefit being overpaid e.g. if it were paid in advance and the tenant vacated the property or had some other change in their circumstances then the council would have to take steps to recover any sum no longer due. It is therefore administratively sensible to pay in arrears as well as well as legally required.</p> <p>I'm also grateful for the question as it gives me an opportunity to remind members that Peterborough's benefits team was recognised last year when they won an award at the Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation national awards. They do an excellent job and we should be proud of them.</p>

9.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Nadeem</b></p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing, and Economic Development</p> <p>It has been really positive to see that work is underway on Fletton Quays. Can we please be given an update on progress including the move of the Council offices?</p> <p><b>Councillor Hiller may have responded:</b></p> <p>I am very happy to report on progress with Fletton Quays. After many, many years of inactivity, false hopes and delay, our work with the Peterborough Investment Partnership over the last two years has led today to real delivery taking place.</p> <p>Construction work has now begun on both the main residential element - by Weston Homes - and the Council's new office - by Bride Hall Developments. The old concrete slabs that supported B&amp;Q and Matalan have been broken up and will be reused on site as part of the delivery of the riverside apartments. Groundwork preparation by Bowmer and Kirkland, Bride Hall's contractor, is well underway, and we are on track to see the new Council offices delivered on time for occupation in July 2018.</p> <p>Over the next months, fellow Councillors and residents will see major construction activity across the site. The bulk of the scheme, including the proposed new creative arts centre in the former Whitworth flour mill, should be delivered by mid-2019.</p>
10.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Murphy</b></p> <p>To Councillor Seaton, Cabinet Member for Resources</p> <p>What would the increased amount on our budget for social care be if we had a similar sweetheart deal on adult social care as Surrey County Council have recently received from the government. Have we joined with many other councils in requesting that the Government provide a similar deal for all of those Councils in England with responsibility for adult social care?</p> <p><b>Councillor Seaton may have responded:</b></p> <p>Nothing. No.</p>
11.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Sandford</b></p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing, and Economic Development</p> <p>When the phase 1 improvements were made to Bourges Boulevard a number of mature trees were planted along the central reservation and along the side of the road.</p> <p>However, during summer of 2016, it became apparent that at least five of the trees which had been planted were dead and had no leaves or other signs of life.</p> <p>Whilst recognising that dead trees have some value for biodiversity, they can become dangerous over time and can look unsightly in such a prominent location in the city.</p> <p>Could the relevant Cabinet Member tell me:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When are the dead trees going to be replaced?</li> <li>2. Could this be done before the end of March so as to ensure that the new trees have a good chance of getting established before the weather gets too dry and warm?</li> </ol>

	<p>3. Will the contractor who planted the original trees be required to pay for replacement of the dead ones?</p> <p><b>Councillor Hiller may have responded:</b></p> <p>1. When are the dead trees going to be replaced?</p> <p>Eurovia will be replacing nine trees in the central reserve this spring although they have not yet provided a detailed schedule for this. It will be done overnight with lane closures of Bourges Boulevard.</p> <p>2. Could this be done before the end of March so as to ensure that the new trees have a good chance of getting established before the weather gets too dry and warm?</p> <p>Eurovia are well aware of their commitment to replace the trees before April 2017 and we will be insisting they achieve this.</p> <p>3. Will the contractor who planted the original trees be required to pay for replacement of the dead ones?</p> <p>Yes; Eurovia and their landscaping subcontractor are responsible for paying for and planting the replacement trees as required in the main works contract.</p>
12.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Bull</b></p> <p>To Councillor Goodwin, Cabinet Member for City Centre Management, Culture and Tourism</p> <p>Peterborough has a long and proud history from Jurassic through to Neolithic, Bronze, Roman, Anglo Saxon, Medieval, Tudor, Georgian and Victorian to the present day. Indeed, the city continues to expand and its leisure facilities add to its many attractions. The added value of our diverse population, cultural offerings and historic buildings cannot be underestimated. How does the Peterborough culture and tourism experience help to give residents, newcomers, visitors and workers alike, a sense of identity and belonging?</p> <p><b>Councillor Goodwin may have responded:</b></p> <p>Peterborough does have a long proud history of representing all of its residents and visitors, not only making Peterborough a great place to live and work but also give a sense of identity and belonging.</p> <p>The council endorsed the culture strategy last year which was developed as an ambitious statement of aspiration. The strategy positions culture and its residents at the centre of Peterborough's approach to improving quality of life and improving life chances. This is expressed through a clear 'vision statement' and underpinned by three inter-linked objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing participation in cultural activity from all areas of the community</li> <li>• Developing, retaining and attracting people with talent from across the City</li> <li>• Making better use of the city's spaces – more places to go, more things to do, making Peterborough a vibrant and welcoming place.</li> </ul>

13.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Ash</b></p> <p>To Councillor Elsey, Cabinet Member for Waste and Street Scene</p> <p>I am sure the Cabinet like all of us notices the amount of litter on the streets and footpaths.</p> <p>One of the key blighted areas are walking routes to and from some schools.</p> <p>Does the Cabinet agree that we need to encourage youngsters to bin litter and that one way of doing this is to provide more litter bins and ask schools to sponsor bins.</p> <p><b>Councillor Elsey may have responded:</b></p> <p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>We are happy to work with schools and currently arrange assembly's where we talk about the benefits of recycling and the negative effects littering has on their area.</p> <p>We would also be happy to work with schools to arrange community litter picks and arrange a poster campaign that the students could design posters to be placed around their school area to deter littering.</p> <p>With regards to increasing litter bin provision, there is currently litter bins around schools however any major increase would need to be factored into the budget due to the ongoing revenue implication to empty each bin.</p>
14.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Bull</b></p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing, and Economic Development</p> <p>It is appreciated that Peterborough remains one of the fastest growing cities in the country and that in itself leads to additional income for the council through things like the New Homes Bonus and business rates. Just how successful is the Peterborough Investment Partnership in supporting regeneration of city centre sites in the council's ownership including the South Bank/Riverside Opportunity Area?</p> <p><b>Councillor Hiller may have responded:</b></p> <p>PIP's main focus since its creation in January 2015 has been on bringing forward Fletton Quays, a site that has lain moribund for many years. Within its first year of operation, it submitted and received planning consent for an ambitious city centre scheme, and today, work is onsite to deliver that development. With an estimated gross development value in excess of £120m, delivering much-needed new homes and new office accommodation, Fletton Quays is not just a success for PIP, not just a success for the city, but also a validation of the Council's 'hands on' approach to making things happen in new and innovative ways. PIP will, of course, be looking to its next schemes, but in the short term its focus will remain of finishing what it has begun, and helping co-ordinate the different individual developments that will make Fletton Quays the successful, landmark riverside development we all want it to be.</p>
15.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Fower</b></p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing, and Economic Development</p> <p>At the Elter Walk entrance, adjacent to the cycle barriers, at the Gunthorpe Road end, you'll no doubt be aware of a piece of woodwork, that cost local taxpayer hundreds of pounds to install. One local resident recently said to me, "The safety gate on Elter Walk</p>

	<p>serves no purpose as pedestrians and cyclists just go around causing damage to the green area adjacent,” another described it as “£800+ of taxpayer money completely wasted. Who is accountable?” and one other stated, “Could have been spent on a worthwhile project!”</p> <p>Could the relevant Cabinet Member please let me know as to what the Council plans to do to address this issue, who's decision was it to introduce this wooden barrier and how the damage will now be rectified?</p> <p><b>Councillor Hiller may have responded:</b></p> <p>The length of timber post and steel tube knee rail fencing was installed as a requirement of Road Safety Audit following the installation of a traffic signal controlled pedestrian crossing close to the entrance of Norwood Primary School, Gunthorpe Road. Cyclists using Elter Walk had been observed by-passing the staggered barrier erected in the footway for their safety before reaching the crossing. Unfortunately they have now chosen to by-pass the railing also (for convenience), thereby damaging the adjacent grass verge.</p> <p>The new pedestrian crossing was installed by the Council following a long campaign by the school and local parents to improve pedestrian safety at this location.</p> <p>Representatives from Skanska and Amey met last week to discuss a permanent solution to this issue. It has been agreed to replace the timber knee rail fence with a section of steel bow top fencing with an access gate. This will prevent cyclists by-passing the staggered footway barrier and will enable access to Elter Walk for landscape maintenance purposes. The verge damage will then be repaired.</p>
16.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Sims</b></p> <p>To Councillor Walsh, Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment Capital</p> <p>I would appreciate an update on work the Council is undertaking to address the internal problems within the housing at St Michael's Gate left by the previous landlords.</p> <p><b>Councillor Walsh may have responded:</b></p> <p>To date the council has placed 35 homeless households at St Michael's Gate in properties refurbished by the current owners.</p> <p>The Housing Enforcement Team remains involved with one property dealing with problems not managed by the previous owners. We have rehoused the tenant from this property, and Stef and Philips have addressed the majority of the defects. The property is due for refurbishment prior to the council using the accommodation for temporary housing which will address the remaining defects.</p> <p>A housing officer employed by Stef and Philips is on site most days to deal with any other immediate issues, and, as the council is now using almost half the properties, Stef and Philips will shortly be recruiting a resident site caretaker.</p> <p>Any new complaints about properties at St Michael's Gate will be directed in the first instance to Stef and Philips, and, if not resolved, will be dealt with via the council's normal housing enforcement procedures.</p>
17.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Rush</b></p> <p>To Councillor Walsh, Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment Capital</p> <p>The Green Backyard has recently highlighted the granting of a lease from the council for the piece of land they occupy.</p>

What was the justification for entering into a lease arrangement with the Green Backyard, instead of selling the land for development?

**Councillor Walsh may have responded:**

The Council agreed to allow the Green Backyard time to raise funds to purchase the site on London Road but they were unable to do so. Subsequently, we agreed to give the Green Backyard an opportunity to bring forward a viable business plan to remain in occupation on the site and supported them in doing so. The Council required that this business plan showed a clear social return on the Council's investment in the site to offset the loss of its value for development.

A great deal of time and effort was taken in producing the business plan and the Green Backyard now have a very clear sense of direction and ambition. The document makes links to the Council's strategic priorities and to wider national agendas with a clear governance structure and objectives to take the charity forward.

We recognise and commend the effective use of volunteers and the amount of time devoted to the site to enhance the project. The business plan demonstrates how the site can develop and increase the number of volunteers and participants using the site. Given the significant development taking place in the vicinity including Fletton Quays the site has the potential to offer a significant environmental and community resource for both existing and new residents.

There will no direct cost to the Council arising from the proposal; however there will be a revenue impact of £750,000 in 2016/17 from not achieving the sale receipt factored into the 2016/17 MTFs. This adjustment has been built into the Council's latest financial projections.