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| Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee | AGENDA ITEM No. 5 |
| 10 January 2023 | PUBLIC REPORT |

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| Report of: | Cllr Steve Allen, Cabinet Member for Communication, Culture & Communities | |
| Cabinet Member(s) responsible: | Cllr Steve Allen, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communication, Culture and Communities | |
| Contact Officer(s): | Adrian Chapman, Executive Director – Place and Economy | Tel. 07920 160441 |

PORTFOLIO HOLDER PROGRESS REPORT

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| RECOMMENDATIONS | |
| FROM: Cllr Steve Allen | Deadline date: N/A |
| <p>It is recommended that the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Considers and scrutinises this report, and endorses the approach being taken under the portfolio of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communication, Culture & Communities. | |

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is presented at the request of the Committee.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 This report is being presented to the Committee to allow them to scrutinise the work being undertaken under the portfolio of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communication, Culture and Communities, Councillor Steve Allen, that falls within the remit of this Committee.

2.2 This report is for Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. Part 3, Section 4 – Overview & Scrutiny functions, paragraph No 2 Functions determined by the Council. These functions are as follows:

1. Housing need (including homelessness, housing options and selective licensing);
2. Neighbourhood and Community Support (including cohesion and community safety);
3. Equalities;
4. Libraries, Arts and Museums;
5. Tourism, Culture & Recreation;
6. Adult Learning and Skills;
7. City Centre Management;
8. Economic Development and Regeneration including Strategic Housing and Strategic Planning;
9. Transport, Highways and Road Traffic;
10. Strategic Financial Planning;
11. Partnerships and Shared Services;
12. Digital Services and Information Management

Of those, functions 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7 fall within the responsibility of the Cabinet Member and are therefore included in this report.

3. **TIMESCALES**

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| Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan? | NO | If yes, date for Cabinet meeting | NA |
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4. **BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

4.1 **Neighbourhood Engagement**

The first part of this report provides an overview of the work overseen by the Cabinet Member in relation to our work with communities and relates to functions 2 and 3 as set out in section 2.2.

In February 2022, Peterborough City Council agreed a memorandum of understanding with Good Neighbours Rural Peterborough (GNRP) to improve parish council liaison and joint working. Through re-energised engagement, we have redefined how local issues are raised and responded to.

Good examples of where communication and our joint working relationship with parish councils has been improved include:

- Clear communication regarding protocol and activities relating to the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth
- Budget briefing and Introduction with Matt Gladstone
- Information about the response to the war in Ukraine and how parish councils can help
- Developed key links with our information technology service to support parishes to host their own email servers
- Development and trial of the parish bulky waste collection scheme to support the reduction of fly-tipping.
- Trialling the use of glyphosate alternatives in Orton Longueville and Peakirk Parish Councils
- Funding of GNRP to support the development of Warm Hubs in parish areas and to ensure information on key schemes reaches vulnerable households
- Connection with the Local Energy Advice Partnership to support low-income households living in energy inefficient houses to get support

GNRP also organised this year's parish conference with the key theme being the environment, which was attended by the PCC Executive Director and where Peterborough City Council were able to set out our climate change ambitions and take questions on future policy.

4.2 Our small communities team continues to champion and support the fantastic work of our voluntary and community sector partners in helping the city to face some of its most difficult challenges. Examples include:

- The Safer Peterborough Partnership Delivery Group, which has continued as the key governance point through this period adapting its response from Covid 19 and vaccine hesitancy work through to Ukraine Response and now the cost-of-living focus. Attendance at this multi-agency group has remained high, highlighting the value that members place on our information sharing, networking, and joint problem-solving and prevention approach.

- Community Vaccine Support, where, through external funding, the council commissioned Peterborough Council for Voluntary Service to work with 10 local community groups in key areas across the city where vaccine uptake was low and where health inequalities remain high, using trusted community voices and community events to proactively promote health protection messages and provide up to date information and access to childhood immunisations, covid and flu vaccine, breast, cervical and bowel screening as well as well-being checks. While it has been a challenge to break down entrenched views around vaccine hesitancy this work contributed to 548 Covid vaccinations between March – November 2022 of people who may not have otherwise taken up the offer.
- The cost-of-living focus has led to the support from Citizens Advice Peterborough and Age UK Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, who have supported the council to reach out to thousands of vulnerable households to disseminate our food, energy and essentials voucher support scheme coordinated through the communities team. This partnership has delivered the following:

Voucher Scheme Delivery Between April – September 2022

| Household Type | Volume |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| With Children | 50,223 |
| Pensioner | 3,366 |
| Other Vulnerable Households | 2,494 |
| Support Type | Volume |
| Energy and Water | 3,483 |
| Food | 52,368 |
| Essentials | 232 |

Additionally, in November 2022 we commissioned 20 community groups to act as winter support centres using Government-provided Household Support Funding in an innovative way to connect with residents through existing community provision offering food, fuel and essential supplies alongside a warm space. Community officers delivered training to community groups to help them access wider support and worked with other services such as the Local Energy Advice Partnership, social prescribers, and health services to ensure access to services.

A Cost-of-Living Co-ordination group has been set up with internal partners from housing services, adults and children's early help services, and the council's contact centre to connect residents who contact the council to community support alongside our other services.

- A Community Training Offer. To build community capacity and help other services to work in a more community-oriented way we have introduced 'Asset Based Community Development' (ABCD) training. This supports residents to take their positive ideas and look to develop them as well as helping officers to support community development. This year the team have delivered to 20 groups and more than 30 Social Prescribers, as well as 15 council staff. 10 groups provided seed funding via an existing Charity who identified small groups in the Millfield and Paston area. 20 community builders have been identified to work at ground level.
- Support at Events. Community officers have supported over 30 local community events in key parts of the city to promote cohesion, the profile of the council and identify new opportunities for community support. The team have also helped forge deeper links with community and residents and local health partners through representation at Central Thistle Moor and Thorpe Integrated Neighbourhood Board.
- Support for Ukraine Welfare Response. In February we led on the initial response to the Ukraine crisis linking with our local Ukraine community to add capacity to their efforts to send aid to their country. Over the period of months council officers supported with

coordination in the areas of storage, volunteers, donations as well as showing our civic support for the people in Ukraine. As well as this, we supported the Homes for Ukraine scheme by helping to undertake welcome visits to support integration into our city offering support and advice around key issues such as gaining employment.

4.3 Additionally, although technically within the remit of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Skills and the University, the following work will be of interest to this committee as it has been directly supported by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communication, Culture and Communities:

- Building Youth Citizenship and Supporting Life Skills. The National Citizenship Team have delivered 161 places to young people in Peterborough including focused delivery for 13 SEND students from Marshfields helping young people to develop life skills, learn about the local community and deliver a community action projects in the city. Alongside this, 140 places of our Skills Booster scheme will have been delivered this year aimed at those who may be at risk of not being in education, employment or training (NEET) but also to develop life skills, similar to the NCS (National Citizen Service) programme but without staying away from home.
- Youth MP Elections. In February, the UK Youth Parliament vote took place in Peterborough with a total of 5634 votes cast from 10 schools. Eva Woods (16) was elected to serve a two-year term, alongside Tomiwa Alabi (17) as deputy. Eva has since been progressing on each of her campaign priorities including:
 - Increasing public engagement by building a presence via social media, the press and radio, building relationships with youth groups across the city and holding monthly Youth MP drop-ins at the Town Hall.
 - Producing an inclusive curriculum for use in all Peterborough schools to help students understand what eating disorders are, how they can impact people, who they can impact (everyone), and the landscape of support available.
 - Conducting focus groups within Nene Park Academy to better understand how sexual harassment and bullying affect students in Years 9 and 10. A similar peer research project will soon be launched across Peterborough secondary schools, with £8000 funding from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership. Findings will be compiled into a report and recommendations submitted to Peterborough City Council and senior leads in all secondary schools.
 - Maintaining contact with ARU (Anglia Ruskin University) to ensure youth voice is present in the development of the university.

4.4 **Engagement Review**

We have reviewed engagement links with all communities and developed a new model for working with partners. This has included:

- Reviewing and identifying minority group community contacts to ensure all ethnicities are represented
- Enhancing our understanding of community group needs and expectations. We completed a targeted survey and ran a focus group to find out which ways of engagement were preferred and how they wanted to work with us going forward
- Identifying key forums for partner engagement. This included an independent advisory group, the Black Leaders Forum, Community Champions Network, Joint Mosque Group, the City of Sanctuary steering group, Inter-faith Support Group, Inter-faith Council, Multi-Agency Forum, Peterborough Christians for Social Action, and Churches Together in Central Peterborough
- Our cohesion service working alongside the police to enable a dialogue between community stakeholders and leaders and the local police force and to link constabulary

colleagues to community events in aid of promoting greater mutual trust. This has assisted tension monitoring and dialogue.

A paper has been previously presented to this Committee regarding this approach and it's been agreed that ongoing focus will be given to involving seldom heard voices, the voice of students, representation geographically across communities, and engagement with new voices where possible to mitigate against an 'echo-chamber' effect.

4.5 **Commissioning**

One of the primary ways that we work with communities is through community commissioning, and we have delivered three major projects to support community resilience and foster awareness raising activity within communities:

4.5.1 **The DLUHC (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) Community Champions Fund** : was used to engage community organisations and individuals involved in the community and voluntary sector with notable influence within key demographics and delivered six awareness raising events focussed on Covid-19 vaccine promotion and broader health and wellbeing themes. Twenty champion projects were engaged and a total of 90 events have been carried out between June and December within the Ukrainian community, Black community, Roman Catholic community, Lithuanian community, South Asian community, Hindu Community, and in the Millfield, Bretton, and Hampton areas. Awareness raising topics have ranged from domestic abuse awareness to cost of living advice, with HealthyYou health MOTs offered at many events and Covid-19 vaccine awareness has been weaved throughout these events to build vaccine confidence within these communities.

4.5.2 **The ICS (Integrated Care System) Tackling Prevention fund** : focussed on health and wellbeing promotion, and we have partnered with PCVS (Peterborough Council for Voluntary Service) to deliver this funding with a view to standardise practice around community health projects in terms of the framework for tracking impact and evaluation. Within this work we intend to map activity across the Local Authority, Health and voluntary sector partners in terms of key roles for community engagement and develop an overview and approach for how these roles work together to maximise impact and avoid duplication.

4.5.3 **Household Support Fund / Winter support** (as described in paragraph 4.2).

4.5 **City of Sanctuary membership**

Following the successful City of Sanctuary motion at full council in July, we have finalised the City of Sanctuary Action plan with the steering group and formally attained City of Sanctuary status in September. The focus now is on developing the signposting approach with partners so that the offer across voluntary sector organisations in the city is clearly captured and available for sanctuary seekers.

4.6 **Civic Engagement**

Throughout the year, the council has facilitated and supported civic events that promote community cohesion by bringing different communities together and/or which develop greater understanding of minority cultures. The support provided ranges from obtaining external funding for events and planning and hosting the events to speaking at events. Key events have included:

- Holocaust Memorial (January)
- International Women's Day at the Museum (March)
- Peterborough Celebrates Festival (May) - supporting Nene Park Trust with community engagement to engage 40 community organisations in the food and interactive stalls at the event and create the thank you film
- Peterborough Pride Festival (August)
- Community Cricket Cup (September)
- Hindu community events, including Diwali (September – October)

- Marking the 50th year anniversary of the Ugandan Asian Arrival - one commissioned exhibition, one community event (with one more event to follow) and recognition of key players (September to October)
- Black History Month (October)
- Inter-Faith walk (October)
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Moreover, we have agreed a civic calendar with Members' services which captures annual cohesion-focussed events that we plan to mark going forward.

4.7 **Hate crime**

We are committed to promoting the importance of reporting hate crime and have supported the development of an innovative policing hate crime intervention tool which focusses on rehabilitation of low-level offenders. In addition:

- The new joint council and police Independent Advisory group is attended by representatives of diverse communities and has provided a valuable space for dialogue regarding low confidence in reporting within key communities and data sharing on hate crime rates by the police.
- At the Black History Month celebration, we invited the Constabulary Hate Crime Lead to ensure that hate crime awareness was featured at the event.
- We have promoted the resources about anti-Islamophobia month on the council's website and via the council's social media.
- The council is taking the lead nationally on developing and piloting a new hate crime intervention which provides the constabulary with a targeted option for offender rehabilitation for the first time. The pilot concludes in January and is planned to be made available to local authorities across the country. Alongside the work on the intervention, we are working with the neighbourhood police team to understand the barriers that officers experience when referring hate crimes for rehabilitation interventions to increase rehabilitative outcomes for offenders.

4.8 **Community Safety**

This part of the report provides an overview of the work overseen by the Cabinet Member in relation to our work on community safety and relates to functions 2 and 7 as set out in section 2.2.

4.8.1 **Problem Solving Group (PSG)**

The Safer Peterborough Partnership Problem Solving Group continues to meet on a monthly basis, to discuss cases in relation to victims/vulnerable persons, perpetrators, locations and youth-related anti-social behaviour. The Peterborough Problem Solving Group was recognised for the work it had undertaken on a complex case and the positive outcomes at the Cambridgeshire Problem Solving Awards.

Key PSG activity includes:

- A total of 91 case discussions having taken place this year, centred around protecting the vulnerable, supporting victims and identifying appropriate interventions against perpetrators that are proportionate to the extent of their anti-social behaviour and crimes. This has included closure orders, managed transfers and referrals to support services, Public Space Protection Orders for gating, landlord enforcement of tenancy breaches associated with ASB as well as patrols/enforcement at hot spot locations.
- In May of this year the development and launch of a cuckooing pathway. Information was made available for professionals, public as well potential victims to help prevent and identify cases of cuckooing and provide multi-agency support to victims of exploitation. Cuckooing is where people take over a person's home by exploiting them and using the property for several possible reasons. These can include dealing or storing drugs, sex working, using it as a place for a group to live, or to financially exploit the tenant - or a combination of these. Since the launch there has been an increase in public reporting and professional referrals which has resulted in several vulnerable victims being

supported through safeguarding, referrals and enforcement action against their exploiters.

- Submission of bids to the Police and Crime Commissioner's Community Fund which have been successful; these include funding for trial fly-tipping enforcement cameras to use in urban areas, and funding for the taxi marshal scheme which is run over the festive period.

Up and coming PSG workstreams include pursuing a car cruise injunction, and the introduction and renewal of public space protection orders.

4.8.2 **Safer Streets 4**

As part of a multi-agency bid, the council received £282,000 Safer Street 4 Home Office funding in July 2022. Funding was awarded for a variety of projects which aim to increase community safety in the city centre and nearby area. Projects include the purchase of 6 mobile CCTV cameras which will be used in hot spot locations, enhanced CCTV monitoring capacity, a dedicated city centre anti-social behaviour officer for 18 months, and a mixture of physical environmental improvements in the Burghley Road area. These projects will be delivered over the next 18 months.

4.8.3 **City Centre**

Following on from complaints and calls for service around anti-social behaviour in the city centre, the council contracted the services of CSS Ltd to provide four enforcement officers in a city centre pilot to provide a reassuring visible presence and enforce the PSPO (Public Space Protection Order), with a focus on the impact of street drinking, cycling on Bridge Street and aggressive begging.

Officers engage daily and move on individuals found drinking in areas of the city centre where their behaviour is causing or is likely to cause anti-social behaviour and conduct weekly joint patrols with the city centre Neighbourhood Policing Team. Positive feedback has been received since the introduction of these officers who work closely with our city centre anti-social behaviour officer. The city centre remains a standing item on the agenda of the PSG and is a priority for all agencies.

The city centre PSPO is due to expire in May 2023 and work will commence in the new year for its renewal.

Since the introduction of the Business Improvement District earlier in the year, an operational working group has been established. The group works in partnership to address the day-to-day issues impacting on businesses and visitors to the city centre to make it a safe, clean and vibrant place to visit. The group is currently working together on anti-social behaviour and will look at events and other activities in the coming months.

4.9 **Parking and Environmental Enforcement**

Since the start of April 2022 officers have attended, investigated and issued enforcement notices for the following:

- 123 fixed penalty notices for fly tipping or householder duty of care breaches, with 24 cases being sent to legal officers for prosecution
- 51 fixed penalty notices for abandoned vehicles
- 363 rubbish accumulations and 81 fly posting incidents.
- 14,586 penalty charge notices for vehicle offences, (13,178 relating to on-street and 1,408 car park offences)
- 756 individual calls for service into the parking team relating to reports of parking restrictions being breached across the city
- 288 school patrols, tackling dangerous and illegal parking outside schools for the safety of pupils and parents on the school run
- Over 3,000 blue badge applications which includes renewals and fresh applications, to support residents with mobility issues and those with hidden disabilities

- 7,000 parking permits issued to residents, businesses, workers, commuters and visitors generating £268k gross income

In addition, the team manage 10 off-street carparks which have dealt with nearly half a million parking events/transactions and generated £1.4m gross income across 3 channels including cash, card and phone/app. As well as our car parks we are managing on-street parking provisions which have also generated £200k gross income.

Going forward officers are seeking to utilise new legislative powers and technology to solve traffic issues such as enforcement of moving traffic offences - a public consultation is currently open on applying for new powers from the Secretary of State. They will also implement new technology to manage our car parks in the future including pay on foot / barrier solutions and ticketless parking.

4.10 **CCTV**

From 1 January to 31 October 2022, the CCTV service has maintained 100% service delivery across the 24/7/365 period. As a result, we have been able to respond to 2,666 incidents across our city including incidents relating to anti-social behaviour, criminal damage, violent crime, illegal drug use, possession of weapons and theft.

As a result of CCTV intervention between January to October 2022, 700 arrests have been made and fines issued by Cambridgeshire Police. This highlights the work CCTV services do to support the council and partners in responding to crime and disorder and helping to make our communities safer and reduce the fear of crime.

The CCTV service also provides the councils 'out of hours' telephone contact services. From 1 January to 31 October 2022, the CCTV service has responded to 1,294 service requests out of hours.

Going forward the CCTV service will look for opportunities to provide cost efficiencies to our internal teams which includes ways we deliver services during the out of hours periods with the use of the CCTV control room.

4.11 **Regulatory services, including Trading Standards, Food Safety and Licensing, and the functions of the Weights and Measure Authority**

This part of the report provides an overview of the work overseen by the Cabinet Member in relation to our work across regulatory services and relates to function 2 as set out in section 2.2.

4.11.1 **Protecting the public**

During the last 12 months teams across Regulatory Services continued to protect the public through programmed inspections, reactive and preventative interventions, and enforcement. Engagement with businesses has both helped secure regulatory compliance as well as support the local economy. Working closely with partner agencies has been a key theme throughout the year. Examples include the following:

4.11.2 **Food Standards and Safety**

In response to the pandemic, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) implemented a national recovery plan which sets out targets for local authorities in relation to food hygiene and food standards. Both Environmental Health and Trading Standards have achieved all milestones set out by the FSA, completing 638 food interventions since January 2022.

The implementation of 'Natasha's Law' in October 2021 has brought in more stringent legislation for pre-packed items for direct sale products, requiring a full list of ingredients to be shown in addition to information about allergens. The service has contacted local businesses involved in the manufacture, importation and packing of food to advise them of these changes, as well as carrying out local sampling of products, and monitoring any issues identified during routine food hygiene inspections.

4.11.3 **Statutory Nuisances**

A record high number of statutory nuisance cases have been seen this year, with figures reaching 133 by the end of October 2022. In one instance, this has seen officers successfully bring a case to Magistrates Court for breach of a Community Protection Notice served against an individual causing substantial disturbance to their neighbour by playing loud music. The resident was issued the maximum fine, as well as costs and a victim surcharge. Officers have also obtained warrants to seize equipment.

As well as disturbance from neighbours, there has been an increase in cases relating to noise from pubs, especially during the summer months. A high volume of complaints was received regarding one pub who were holding several music events outside, causing disturbance to residents. Following investigation, the premise was served with an Abatement Notice, requiring them to cease the disturbance. The Notice was breached on several occasions, resulting in prosecution. At court, the License Holder pleaded guilty, receiving a fine, costs and victim surcharge. Following prosecution officers worked with the License Holder to help minimise the chances of further breaches

4.11.4 **Events**

The last 12 months has seen events such as Truckfest, Burghley Horse Trials and concerts on the embankment returning to the city and surrounding area. Officers have worked closely with event organisers and partners to ensure such events can operate safely, comply with the appropriate licensing conditions, and do not cause a disturbance to nearby residents

4.11.5 **Taxi Renewals**

As part of the three-year taxi renewal cycle the Licensing Team have seen a 400% increase in applications and have processed 868 up to the end of November 2022. To assist those in the trade who have applications outstanding, weekly drop-in sessions have been set up

4.11.6 **Safety at Sports Grounds**

The service was audited by the Safety at Sports Grounds Authority and received positive feedback from the auditors. They commented that “the benefit to the local authority of Trading Standards being the lead department is exemplified by the attention to detail by the lead officer.” A recommendation was made in relation to building greater resilience through developing additional resource with this specific expertise, which has been acted upon.

4.11.7 **Supporting Businesses**

In response to situations of reduced compliance and lapsed good practices in food businesses, the food safety team have reinstated their food hygiene and safety training offer to businesses. Officers highlight good practices whilst addressing non-compliance by supporting the business through education and practical suggestions to promote compliance, training can be tailored to specific business needs. The training has been well received by those that have taken up the offer.

There has been an increase in the number of new food businesses, officers have engaged with these businesses to provide them with advice on how to comply with legislation, ascertain their understanding of food compliance and assess their risk. Any gaps in knowledge and higher risk businesses were visited and provided with additional guidance and support.

The service has a nationally recognised Primary Authority advice team, providing chargeable advice to businesses ranging from major national household names to small start-up businesses, with over 100 partnerships in place. The team were asked to present at national events, both alongside the Government body that regulate Primary authority, the Office of Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), and at trade conferences. This year the team has also liaised with Government departments on market barriers to cutting edge technologies in the food retail sector, and legislative inconsistencies in certain markets – an important role in helping to ensure regulation is not a barrier to growth.

4.11.8 **Animal Welfare and Disease Control**

Officers from across the service worked together in a combined effort to inspect and issue animal welfare licenses, ensuring the appropriate conditions are in place at animal boarding establishments, pet shops, breeding and riding establishments. Inspections include site visits to witness the welfare of the animals and review all the necessary paperwork with the owner, followed by writing a detailed inspection report.

Trading Standards is a primary on-the-ground responder in the case of notifiable animal diseases supporting the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) with the tracing, containment, and eradication of disease. High cases of Avian Influenza (bird flu) continue to increase, with record high case numbers in the UK. A nationwide Avian Influenza Prevention Zone was introduced in recent months, meaning there is a legal requirement for all bird keepers to follow strict biosecurity measures to help protect their flocks from the threat of bird flu. The Communications team has supported with a social media campaign informing the public, as well as encouraging bird keepers to provide details of their flocks.

4.11.9 **Partnership Working**

The Service continue to work with partner agencies such as the Police, HMRC and DVSA among others to tackle non-compliance. During the summer Trading Standards worked with Police and local licensing teams to test purchase alcohol, tobacco and e-cigarettes. Operations investigating reports of illicit tobacco have also been carried out. In instances where premises are found to sell illicit tobacco or make an underage sale, the premise licence can be reviewed and revoked.

Licensing, HMRC, DVSA and the Police undertook a multi-agency day of action to monitor taxi vehicle compliance. The agencies were looking for red diesel, roadworthiness and compliance with vehicle and driver licenses in which vehicles were identified as unroadworthy, and therefore should not be operating as a taxi vehicle.

4.11.10 **Future of the City**

Following an 8-week public consultation the revised taxi policy was adopted and implemented in the summer. Changes in vehicle restrictions require the local trade to move towards ultra-low and zero emission vehicles in order for the council to achieve its 2030 carbon neutral target.

There has been a huge amount of residential and commercial development seen across the city, for which Environmental Health are a key consultee at the planning stage. Environmental Health have received 388 planning applications to date for comment, this is compared to 318 in 2021, the highest number in 5 years. Applications indicate there is more demand for housing in the city as many applications are to convert the space above shops into flats, as well as wider housing developments such as the Great Haddon developments, for which officers have provided comments on how to mitigate noise from traffic, as well as other environmental matters relating to the development.

The service is now offering pre-planning advice to developers, by doing so at the planning stage developers will be fully informed of the work required to ensure they comply with legislation from an environmental health perspective. This advice is charged for, offsetting core budget pressures.

Officers have also been working on complex planning reports for consideration of environmental effects from proposed developments including noise from the night-time economy affecting residential development at Northminster, pre-application advice on the North Westgate Development in relation to assessing the impact of residential amenity associated with a nearby premises music events and proposed landfill operations at Eyebury Road / Willow Hall Drive following quarrying operations

4.11.11 **Coroner Service**

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Coronial Jurisdiction was formed in 2015, with a joint Senior Coroner judicially appointed. The jurisdiction is one of the more complex nationally in terms of its cases, with four main hospitals and three prisons. Many of the cases are complex and time consuming due to the nature of the jurisdiction.

In the past year the service has focused on recruitment of both coronial officers and additional Coroners, in order to reach full establishment, and increase the availability of Coroners to hear Inquests. This has bought in a high level of knowledge and expertise. Staff training and development has also been a key focus in order to maximise service performance and job satisfaction.

Following the pandemic, the service now offers those attending an Inquest the option to attend in person or remotely. Most professional attendees, such as legal representatives and medical experts continue to attend remotely in order to save time in traveling and waiting in court. Most families still attend in person, but the option is available should they prefer to attend remotely. The service has worked hard to reduce expenditure on external venue hire and now maximises use of council owned venues across the county, including Peterborough Town Hall.

4.12 **Culture and Recreation**

This part of the report provides an overview of the work overseen by the Cabinet Member in relation to our work on culture and recreation and relates to functions 4 and 5 as set out in section 2.2.

4.12.1 **Peterborough Museum and Flag Fen**

The Museum continues to deliver exhibitions working in consultation with the BID, Cathedral and council. Examples this year include:

- Exhibition to recognise the Windrush Community
- Exhibition to celebrate Ugandan Arrivals
- Exhibition of Peterborough United Football Club
- Christmas Fete / Festival
- Arts Focused events (E.g., Banksy Exhibition)

Arts Council England (ACE) and Historic England funding has continued to support the Must Farm Boat conservation work. The conservation is due to conclude in 18 months after which time the boats will go on display. Proposals for this are still to be defined but further information will be shared with this committee when this is known.

Arts Council emergency funding has been secured to replace bridges and secure out-buildings at Flag Fen. This includes improvements to the walkways and children's play areas to make the facility much more inviting for young families.

At the Museum, works on the flooring and on the roof have taken place to upgrade and future-proof the facility.

It has been agreed that the Museum team will take a co-ordination role in citywide events management. The team are developing a rolling calendar of activities designed to promote the city as a whole and link up with the activities of our partners to really promote and maximise Peterborough's attractions over the coming years.

4.12.2 **Libraries & Archives**

Our libraries have an important role to play in the support they can provide to the city, however despite the significant growth within the city in recent years visitor numbers are declining (when taken as a percentage of the number of residents living here). We have not seen a return to pre-pandemic footfall.

Our vision is to maintain an effective library offer that serves not just as a bookstore, but as a community hub that helps support people and provide prevention against crisis. Libraries are considered a safe space; a place where people can turn to trusted staff for help or advice and sanctuary. As the cost-of-living impacts deepen, our libraries will have an important role to play in protecting the most vulnerable, offering preventative advice and signposting to services before crisis hits.

For this reason, a transformation programme has begun which is seeking to review the library offer and ensure it evolves to meet the needs of the city. A project team is developing proposals for this and will update this committee in the new year with more detail.

In the interim, we have carried out a review of the current Library offer and have sought ways in which to expand community reach. This includes:

- Introduction of 'open plus' software to maximise accessibility. This allows residents to use the library outside of normal hours
- Improved use of the Mobile Library bus to reach remote areas
- Drop-in sessions for families to improve literacy, in conjunction with the Literacy trust
- Operating a 'Business and Intellectual Property Centre' to give advice to start-up businesses and entrepreneurs.

4.12.3 **The Arts**

The Cultural Alliance is now fully established to bring together city organisations to deliver a long-term strategy for Peterborough. To help develop this further, we have applied for £265k funding from the 'Shared Prosperity Fund' and are awaiting confirmation of the award. We have also successfully received a £30k grant from the Arts Council to support the development of the Cultural Alliance. Combined, this will lead to a much improved cultural and arts oversight for our city and help drive future activities to enrich the Peterborough offering.

4.12.4 **Sports Strategy**

Gym membership is back to pre-covid numbers at Premier Fitness and the Regional Pool, but our community facilities have yet to fully recover. Local competition from the budget gym providers has caused an impact that the community sites are struggling to react to.

Swimming lessons have recovered well and currently there is a waiting list for sessions across the 3 sites. To mitigate this, Peterborough Ltd are exploring ways to support Stanground Academy and Jack Hunt School with regards to managing their booking services.

The Peterborough Active Lifestyles and Sports Strategy will be updated in Spring 2023 to reflect the change in the leisure sector post covid and considering the ongoing challenges around cost of living, energy crisis along with a focus on health and wellbeing not just physical activity.

Living Sport is working with the partners to align our strategy with Sport England's 10-year strategy, Moving Communities. This will be a shared strategy and help build and strengthen relationships and partnerships.

4.13 **City Centre Management**

This part of the report provides an overview of the work overseen by the Cabinet Member in relation to our work on city centre management and relates to function 7 as set out in section 2.2.

4.13.1 **City Market**

The new market and food hall has opened in its new location in Bridge Street. This central location offers a great vibrant offering to Bridge Street and we are seeing good footfall to the new stalls.

We are providing additionality through pop-up stalls which are being used to great success with small independent retailers. We have also expanded this through the addition of travelling vegan and continental markets to help enhance the offering.

Our vision for the future is to build upon this further to enhance the offer. This will include extending the temporary / pop-up stalls as well as building on the fixed structures as and when there is sufficient demand for this (subject to planning approval).

4.13.2 **Events**

A number of city centre events have been held this year, including:

- a successful Diwali festival in Cathedral Square
- The Kings 'Proclamation', which was a significant civic event and was well supported by residents and key community leaders. We received praise from the Lord Lieutenant at the success of this and the work of the council to mark this occasion
- The Christmas Light switch on which was a great success and attended by a high number of Peterborough residents
- The real ice rink, in partnership with a local business, which we introduced to Cathedral Square for the Christmas period at zero cost to the council. It has been well received and combined with many other festive attractions.

We are now actively working with the Peterborough BID to look at both more events in the City Centre, improved facilities and working on next year's Christmas offering.

4.13. **Café culture and the Business Improvement District (BID)**

We continue to promote cafe culture in the city and encourage businesses to utilise outside space for seating. This year 21 businesses have been granted a licence under the government scheme to help establish a welcoming 'continental' vibe to our streets.

Free public access to CambWifi is now live in Peterborough city centre streets to support businesses, keep residents connected and allow shoppers and visitors to make the most of cafe culture. This is available in:

- Bridge Street
- Broadway
- Cathedral Square
- Cowgate
- Long Causeway
- Westgate

Street stickers to promote this are due to be installed early in the new year, alongside targeted press communications.

The 'Business Improvement District' (BID) is now well established, having secured the support of local stakeholders to push ahead with the 5-year scheme to improve our commercial centre. The council is responsible for collection of the levy. The Cabinet Member is a board member and he and lead officers continue to help shape this development in partnership with other city leaders.

Under the 'Peterborough Positive' branding the BID has committed to the following city centre vision:

- **Creating Events** – Developing a city-wide collaborative approach to entertainment and events, creating a number of high-quality flagship events for all age groups – celebrating the city, its heritage, arts, culture and youth. Driving footfall and adding value to events already scheduled across the city, creating momentum to promote Peterborough as a destination city.
- **Welcoming, safe and secure** – Introducing city brand ambassadors to welcome and support tourists, assist visitors and report on refuse and breakage issues, collaborating with the Council and Police to monitor incidences of crime and anti-social behaviour ensuring greater

effectiveness in identifying, deterring, reporting and taking enforcement action on issues that give rise to public concern about safety, crime and security.

- **Attracting investment to the city** – Creating a robust marketing campaign that promotes the Peterborough Positive Brand across the city and beyond, attracting shoppers, tourist and business investment opportunities.
- **Signposting and interpretation** – Signposting and navigation to help those new to the city to find their way and highlight key attractions and areas. Both digital and static, signing with the opportunity to create ‘city quarters’ to build the city’s credentials for heritage, culture, retail and hospitality.
- **Consulting on public transport services** – A communication piece to build better relationships with providers to understand demand across the city, taking into account seasonal adjustments and events.

Successes this year include:

- Introduction of 2 x City Ambassadors. These officers are a visible resource in the city centre to engage with shoppers and business to promote the city and offer help / advice
Employed by ‘Peterborough Positive’ they will work closely with our council city centre enforcement team to share information and ensure timely intervention where needed to maintain a safe environment
- Promotion of the Café Culture – supporting business applications for libraries
- Sponsorship of the Christmas light switch on
- Promoted council initiatives to gain support for new activities (e.g., Moving traffic Offences / Public Space Protection Area renewal)
- Supporting the development of an events calendar
- Introduced ‘DISC’ - a localised intelligence sharing system to help link up traders and share crime concerns / issues with partners.

4.9 Tourism

This part of the report provides an overview of the work overseen by the Cabinet Member in relation to our work on tourism and relates to function 5 as set out in section 2.2.

A new Tourist Information offer will be launched in December, operating from the Museum. New signage to promote this is being installed and a face-to-face offer will be made available during normal opening times, delivered by the front of house team.

Additionally, the Town Hall is offering light touch Tourist Information support as it is recognised that this location will always generate enquiries. Signage will also be displayed to highlight the full service at the museum.

The BID, Opportunity Peterborough and key stakeholders have been consulted and fully support this approach, and we will work closely with them to ensure the new facility promotes a wide variety of attractions for Peterborough.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Consultation relevant to each aspect of the portfolio has been carried out as part of ‘business as usual’ operations.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

- 6.1 Following debate and discussion at committee, it is anticipated that Members will be fully informed as to the progress and priorities of the portfolio holder, and the portfolio holder will be able to consider suggestions that come forward during that debate.

7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 Scrutiny committees in Peterborough receive an annual report from all portfolio holders, as part of their responsibility to scrutinise key areas of work.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 Not applicable.

9. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

9.1 None

Legal Implications

9.2 None

Equalities Implications

9.3 None

Rural Implications

9.4 None

Carbon Impact Assessment

9.5 The report contains no proposals for changes to service delivery and therefore there is no decision to take which may impact carbon emissions for the council or the city.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

11.1 None

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