

**MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING
HELD AT 10:00AM, ON
MONDAY 10 JULY 2023
BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOM, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

Cabinet Members Present: Councillor Coles (in the Chair), Councillor Cereste, Councillor Simons

Cabinet Advisor Present: Councillor Hussain, Councillor Moyo, Councillor Nawaz, Councillor Over, Councillor Sainsbury, Councillor Tyler

14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Due to apologies for absence being received from the Leader and the Deputy Leader, it was necessary to elect a Chair for the duration of the meeting.

Councillor Simons nominated Councillor Coles as Chair, which was seconded by Councillor Cereste. With no other nominations, Councillor Coles was duly elected chair for the duration of the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Fitzgerald, Councillor Steve Allen, Councillor Jackie Allen, and Councillor Ayres.

Councillor Coles welcome John Gregg, Executive Director for Children and Young People's Service, to his first meeting of Cabinet.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations interest received.

16. MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETINGS HELD ON:

(a) 7 NOVEMBER 2022 – SHAREDHOLDER CABINET COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Shareholder Cabinet Committee meeting held on 7 November 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

(b) 19 JUNE 2023 – CABINET

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19 June 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

17. PETITIONS PRESENTED TO CABINET

There were no petitions presented to Cabinet.

STRATEGIC DECISIONS

18. NEW ALL AGE CARERS STRATEGY

The Cabinet received a report in relation to a new all-age Carers Strategy.

The purpose of this report was for Cabinet to endorse the strategy to enable to Council to provide clear strategic direction for supporting carers across Peterborough.

The Cabinet Advisor for Adults Services introduced the report and provided an overview of the key points.

Cabinet Members debated the report and in summary responses to questions raised included:

- Members commented on the possibility of working with school support groups and officers confirmed that they would ensure that all relevant information was shared with these groups.
- It was noted that the Council web page that provided information on the Carers Strategy was not to a high standard.
- Following queries around what the Council did to ensure that the different providers operating within the Carers Strategy were able to work together, officers confirmed that referrals were made between the two providers and that further partnership working could be included in the retendered.
- Members expressed interest in the work carried out to identify 'hidden carers'. Officers advised that this was a one-off piece of work the officers would then build from within assessment process and carers conversations.
- Members were advised that carers under the age of 18 could be as young as 9, and that the strategy applied to all young carers.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Approve and adopt the new Carers Strategy.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

By adopting the strategy Peterborough City Council would give a clear statement to the city's carers on what to expect from the Council.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Let the current strategy expire without any renewal – This would be detrimental to carers, leaving a gap or a strategy that is out of date and not aligned with current national policy or local authority strategic intentions.

Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council create a separate strategy – This option would leave an unspecified period of time where the current strategy was out of date/expired and would present a risk to the quality, resource allocation etc. of the recommissioning of the All Age Carers service.

19. PETERBOROUGH LOCAL PLAN - ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

The Cabinet received a report in relation to the Issues and Options consultation document for the Peterborough Local Plan.

The purpose of this report was to approve the draft Issues and Options version of the Local Plan for public consultation.

The Cabinet Member for Growth and Regeneration introduced the report and provided an overview of the key points.

Cabinet Members debated the report and in summary responses to questions raised included:

- Officers advised that the intention of the consultation was to hear from as many residents as possible, including those who were traditionally difficult to reach. As such, a summary document and social media video had been prepared.
- Members noted that there were several opportunities for public comments to be fed into the Local Plan determination process, including at the Issues and Options consultation stage, the consultation of the draft version of the Local Plan, the consultation on the 'submission version' of the Local Plan and during consideration by the Planning Inspector.
- It was advised that the Local Plan was required to comply with any adopted Local Neighbourhood Plan, and vice-versa. Whichever document had been adopted most recently would be the plan that all planning decisions must adhere to.
- Officers expanded on plans for the public consultation and advised that schools would also be approached as well as a range of community groups.
- Members commented that the budget simulator had recently been praised when used for the budget consultation. Officers confirmed that similar tools, such as an interactive map, were to be used for the upcoming consultation, as well as an online poll which would put the final question of the consultation out to the public in isolation.
- It was further noted that all parish councils were approached by officers to share details of the consultation on community Facebook pages, bulletin boards and any other relevant routes for dissemination. If Members knew of any other ways to reach communities, they were asked to approach officers.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Approve the draft Issues and Option version of the Local Plan for public consultation in July, August and September 2023 included at Appendix 1 to the report.
2. Delegate authority to the Executive Director for Place and Economy to make minor, inconsequential amendments to the draft Issues and Option Version of the Local Plan.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Cabinet resolved to approve the draft Issues and Options Consultation document so that public consultation could be carried out on the document.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The alternative option of not preparing a new Local Plan was rejected by Full Council in January 2023 as part of the approval of Local Development Scheme.

The Issues and Options consultation document set out the various option considered for each policy/topic.

The alternative options for each policy would be assessed as part of the Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Report process and would be published alongside the Draft Local Plan for public consultation in summer 2024. Consultation would also help inform the council of options which could be considered as the plan progressed.

20. DIGITAL STRATEGY FOR PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL

The Cabinet received a report in relation to the Council's Digital Strategy.

The purpose of this report was to approve the Digital Strategy for the Council and the related Data, Technology and Cyber Strategies.

The Cabinet Advisor for Corporate Services introduced the report and provided an overview of the key points.

Cabinet Members debated the report and in summary responses to questions raised included:

- It was advised that the aim of the strategy was to set out the key objectives for the Council and to leave the technical complexity of implementation to the expert officers.
- Members noted that the Digital Strategy had a key role to play in engaging with harder to reach communities.
- Comment was made that digital services in the Council were enabling services, and as such should be based on the need of users.
- The need to futureproof the Digital Strategy was highlighted as a key priority, noting that the digital landscape was evolving at a rapid pace. Members were advised that the strategy aimed to take a more holistic approach that would allow it to evolve with technological developments, rather than being left behind.
- Members discussed the importance of data handling, particularly around personal or sensitive information, and it was noted that a separate piece of work was ongoing in relation to cyber security and raising awareness.
- It was commented that financial benefits as well as practical benefits could be gleaned from reducing the level of competing companies' software being used in different departments.

Members further noted that it was Sam Smith's, Service Director for Digital Services, last day and thanked her for all her hard work during her time with the Council.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to approve the Council's Digital Strategy and the related Data, Technology and Cyber Strategies.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

To ensure that the Digital Strategy for the Council and the related Data, Technology and Cyber Strategies were up to date.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

In terms of the Digital strategy, and the decoupling of People Service from Cambridgeshire County Council, the alternative option was to retain the status quo and

continue with a strategy of continued and increasing convergence. This option had been rejected due to the need for a Digital Strategy that supported the key priorities of the Council.

21. DISPOSAL OF PETERSCOURT, ECO INNOVATION BUSINESS CENTRE

The Cabinet received a report in relation to the disposal of Peterscourt, Eco Innovation Centre.

The purpose of this report was to seek approval to dispose of the freehold interest of Peterscourt, Eco Innovation Business Centre and the grant of necessary rights to support the Asset and Disposal Review Plan.

The Cabinet Member for Legal, Finance and Corporate Services introduced the report and provided an overview of the key points.

Cabinet Members debated the report and in summary responses to questions raised included:

- Members were advised that, subject to agreement, the CCTV was to be relocated to Sand Martin House.
- It was noted that the disposal was in relation to the building of Peterscourt, along with the right to use a number of the car parking spaces.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Approve the disposal of the freehold interest of Peterscourt, Eco Innovation Centre in the terms set out in the report and in the exempt Appendix 1 and the grant of necessary rights for the area of land shown on the attached Title Plan.
2. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Corporate Services and Director of Law and Governance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Legal, Finance, and Corporate Services to take all necessary steps to facilitate the decision in recommendation 1 including approving the final terms of the disposal and entering into any necessary agreements.
3. Note that the CCTV service, which is currently located in the Peterscourt, Eco Innovation Centre will be relocated to an alternative Council owned property prior to the completion of the sale.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The Council needed to secure capital receipts in the financial year and up to 24/25.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Council could continue to let the property using agents; however, this would not enable PCC to fulfil its requirement for significant capital receipts. There would be continued and ongoing liabilities, including capital expenditure on the building and its infrastructure which had not been budgeted for.

22. DISPOSAL OF FORMER TK MAXX AND NEW LOOK BUILDING, 62-68 BRIDGE STREET

The Cabinet received a report in relation to the disposal of the former TK Maxx and New Look building at 62-68 Bridge Street.

The purpose of this report was to request approval for the disposal of the former TK Maxx and New Look building at 62-68 Bridge Street.

The Cabinet Member for Legal, Finance and Corporate Services introduced the report and provided an overview of the key points.

Cabinet Members debated the report and in summary responses to questions raised included:

- It was confirmed that Vine would be relocated to Peterborough Central Library and one other location, with procurement documentation currently being drafted.
- Members noted that a developer had made an offer for the site and that this was at a higher value than the Council had originally purchased the site for.
- Members expressed a desire for accessibility issues to be taken into consideration for the future development of the site and it was confirmed that any proposal would be required to go through the planning application process, where all such matters would be taken into consideration.
- Members were advised that the money from the sale would be fed back into the Towns Fund, with a number of other projects ongoing that would benefit. It was, however, noted that the time limit for Towns Fund projects was approaching.
- The Council were in discussion with the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to determine whether the profit from the sale would also be required for Towns Fund projects.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Approve the disposal of the former TK Maxx and New Look Building, 62-68 Bridge Street.
2. Delegate authority to the Executive Director for Place and Economy, in consultation with the Executive Director for Corporate Services, the Director of Law and Governance, and the Cabinet Member for Legal, Finance and Corporate Services to take all necessary steps to facilitate the decision in Recommendation1, including approving the final terms of acquisition and entering into any necessary agreements.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The receipts from the sale were intended to be recycled into the Towns Fund programme and the current financial liabilities associated with holding the building would be extinguished.

The currently unoccupied building/site would either be occupied or re-purposed and therefore contribute to the animation of Bridge Street.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

To do nothing – This option was discounted as the building was currently unoccupied and therefore a blight on the physical environment. There was also grant funding tied up in the building that needed to be recovered and recycled. The holding costs for the building were also a financial liability.

23. ACQUISITION OF HOMES

The Cabinet received a report in relation to the acquisition of 25 homes.

The purpose of this report was to consider the acquisition of up to 25 homes to support the refugee resettlement programme.

The Cabinet Member for Legal, Finance and Corporate Services introduced the report and provided an overview of the key points.

Cabinet Members debated the report and in summary responses to questions raised included:

- Members noted that the funding received for the acquisition of these homes was currently ringfenced for supporting refugees.
- The Council was, it was advised, taking external advice on whether these tenancies would become secured tenancies and whether they would trigger a right to buy for residents.
- It was clarified that the acquisitions of these homes were being part-funded by central government. The Council also had other plans in place to increase the number of houses available more generally.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Approve the acquisition of 25 houses (full details of the individual properties will be developed as the acquisitions progress in due course) as set out in the exempt Appendix 1 for ownership by the Council to support the refugee resettlement programme.
2. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Corporate Service and Director of Law and Governance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Legal, Finance and Corporate Services, to take all necessary steps to facilitate the decision in Recommendation 1 including approving the final terms of each acquisition and entering into any necessary agreements.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Following the acquisition of the homes, this would enable the Council to continue to support the refugee resettlement programme.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Council could choose not to accept the grant funding and therefore decide not to proceed with the acquisition. However, this could have a detrimental impact on the Council with any further bidding opportunities and would also increase the Council's costs relating to providing housing for refugees.

MONITORING ITEMS

24. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2024-2027 QUARTER 1 UPDATE

The Cabinet received a report in relation to the quarter 1 update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-2027.

The purpose of this report was to provide an update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy for the first quarter.

The Cabinet Member for Legal, Finance and Corporate Services introduced the report and provided an overview of the key points.

Cabinet Members debated the report and in summary responses to questions raised included:

- Members expressed concern over the inflation forecast assumptions, though it was noted that these were based on the Bank of England forecasts.
- Questions were raised as to how the Council could keep its finances in line and Members noted that substantive work would begin on 11 July 2023 in relation to the forthcoming years' budget. This would involve consideration of "big ticket items".
- It was advised that it was often difficult to separate the Council's statutory services from its non-statutory services, as many were combined at an operational level.
- Members were reassured that the current year's budget was still strong, though pressures were arising in Children's services that would require mitigation.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the revised financial assumptions included within this Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024- 2027 Quarter one update.
2. Approve the revised disposal plan.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

This report provided an update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and supported the delivery of the Council setting a lawful and balanced budget for 2024/25.

The Disposal Plan outlined in Appendix B was an updated version of the plan presented to Cabinet in September 2022, and was in line with the Council's outline Asset Management Plan, approved by Council on 22 February 2023.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

No alternative option had been considered.

Chairman
10.00am to 11.06am
10 July 2023