

<b>STRONG AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 5</b>
<b>9 NOVEMBER 2011</b>	<b>Public Report</b>

## **Report of the Executive Director of Operations**

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### **COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS**

#### **1. PURPOSE**

1.1 To provide members with an overview of Commercial Operations.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 The Committee is recommended to note and comment on the work of Commercial Operations and propose further scrutiny in relation to its business fields.

#### **3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

3.1 Peterborough's Sustainable Community Strategy is the plan for the future of our city and the surrounding villages. It sets the direction for the overall strategic development of Peterborough. Commercial Operations remit directly links to the council's strategic priorities;

- Creating Opportunities – Tackling inequality.
- Creating strong and supportive communities.
- Delivering substantial and truly sustainable growth.
- Creating the UK's Environment Capital.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

4.1 Commercial Operations provides a framework for the day to day operations of the city and to focus strategic efforts to enhance the city in the long term. The department's vision is to provide a high quality, safe and easily accessible environment that underpins commercial and social success. The following areas of business make up Commercial Operations:

##### **4.2 The Enterprise Centre**

The Enterprise Centre has been designed to provide an overarching structure to support the Social Enterprise Sector in Peterborough. Its specific aim is to increase the number, sustainability and growth of new and existing social enterprises in Peterborough. The centre is located within St Peters Arcade.

Intensive business planning courses, introductory workshops and Barclays sponsored events continue to run at the centre. Since April 1<sup>st</sup> client engagement was exceptionally strong with 202 pre-start clients and 26 existing businesses supported. Compared to target figures, this equates to 153% over performance of unemployed and economically inactive individuals being engaged by the centre.

##### **4.3 Parking Services**

Commercial Operations are responsible for ensuring that the parking provision in Peterborough is used correctly, responsibly and that the best use is made of on and off street car parking space to the maximum benefit of the local community. We also ensure that the Council's car

parks are maintained to an appropriate standard within the constraints of the available budget.

There are 12 car parks currently containing 3094 parking spaces and 473 Pay & Display spaces, managed by Commercial Operations.

On-street charging went up by 10% in 2010 to £1.10, the first price increase in 5 years.

Off-street charging went up by an average of 12% from 2008 to 2010, and an average of 10.6% (from May 2011). Off-street season tickets increased in each of those changes on average 3%.

#### 4.4 **CCTV**

CCTV Improves the safety and security of residents, visitors and the business community.

Peterborough's CCTV service is managed by Commercial Operations and comprises 144 cameras, with surveillance 24 hours a day.

Additional cameras have been added in recent years and further cameras are to be installed at Stanground. We also upgraded existing cameras (x11) to newer technology this current financial year, financed from capital budgets

#### 4.5 **General Market**

The General Market supports local business and creates significant employment in the city. Managed by Commercial Operations, it is an integral part of the local community, providing an assortment of goods, from furniture and clothing to fresh fruit and vegetables.

There are 55 individual traders occupying 112 market stalls on the Market which is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 8.30am to 4pm.

#### 4.6 **City Centre Management and Tourism**

Commercial Operations via its Visitor Destination Centre promote Peterborough as a place to visit and enjoy and manages Tourism in the city.

The Visitor Destination Centre and Bus Station located service are both open Monday to Saturday 9.30 – 5.00pm. Both sites sell a combination of the following.

- PCard
- Local event ticket sales
- Key Theatre tickets
- Bus Station tickets
- National Express tickets
- Railcards
- Bus Passes
- Holidays
- Shaws Holidays
- Maps
- Gifts

City centre management host a business forum for local businesses each month, at which 60 to 80 businesses and or city centre stakeholders attend to discuss issues, including marketing plans and overall performance of the city.

#### **Resilience Services**

Providing Emergency Planning and Business Continuity support.

## **Passenger Transport**

Providing members of the public with travel information for nationwide bus, coach and train services, as well as walking and cycling options in Peterborough. Peterborough City Council was highlighted by the House of Commons' transport select committee as an example of good practice in protecting and maintaining its subsidised bus services in the face of challenging funding cuts. The transport select committee was investigating 'Bus Services after the Spending Review'.

**Concessionary Fares:** 2,694,943 concessionary journeys made in Peterborough authority area in 2010/11 using concessionary passes.

**Public Transport:** 11,728,783 passenger journeys made on public transport in Peterborough in 2010/11, an increase of 2.67% on the previous year. This is against the national trend of declining bus passenger journeys nationally (places like London, Brighton, Cambridge and ourselves etc are bucking the national trend).

The above equates to around 68 trips per head of Peterborough's population. The trips per head of population are also increasing, so the increase in passenger journeys is not just down to Peterborough's increasing population.

**School Transport:** Arrange transport for 1450 mainstream students

Arrange transport for 601 SEN students

Number of students on public transport – 478

On average arrange 2307 journeys per month for children in the care of the authority (on average 25% transported by employed drivers, 17% with taxis and 58% with volunteers).

**Community Transport:** 268 Community Link members

474 Community Link journeys made in October 2011

1152 passenger journeys made on WRVS, which PCC supports by a small grant

2611 passenger journeys made on Octane rural dial a ride, which PCC supports by a small grant.

**Park and Ride:** For 2011 the service is operating free of charge. It will operate for 15 days (9 Saturdays and 6 Sundays: Saturday from 29 October to 24 December and Sunday from 13 November to 18 December), from 2 sites (Lynch Wood Park and Perkins), with buses operating every 12 minutes.

**Awards:** Winner of National Transport Awards 2011 – Improvements to Bus Services  
Shortlisted for UK Bus Awards 2011 – Transport Authority of the Year – Winner announced 29 November 2011.

## **Events**

Creating high quality events, creating a vibrant atmosphere, as well as a memorable and positive visitor experience. As well as organise small scale events, such as Jazz on the Square, Classical music recitals and street markets.

**2010 Christmas Lights Switch On:** Once again the Christmas Lights switch on proved a very popular event, with Westgate House staging an afternoon fashion parade before the lights switch on. This was the first to be held in the revamped Cathedral Square, which allowed more people to safely view the event. At its peak we estimate that over 5,000 people were either in the square or the surrounding streets to witness the switch on. This was a completely trouble free event.

**2010 New Years Eve Party:** The first NYE party since 2001 was held in Cathedral Square with an ABBA tribute band and an 80s Experience Band providing the entertainment. As this was the first event for 9 years, it was difficult to forecast how many we could expect to turn up, but we were not disappointed, as around 5,000 people witnessed the count down to the turning of the year at midnight.

**Halford Cycle Tour:** This was the third time this event had been staged in Peterborough and once again it was very well supported by the public with around 12,000 people taking part in the pre race activities and watching the race itself.

**Italian Festival:** The third Italian Festival was held in September and each year this festival increases in size and was again very well supported throughout the day into the early evening. The flag throwers attracted a very large crowd, as did celebrity chef Antonio Carluccio. Over the whole day, the estimate is that around 7,500 people enjoyed the day.

**Perkins Great Eastern Run:** The 2011 Perkins Great Eastern Run was the sixth race since its relaunch in 2006. Record numbers in both the Half Marathon and Fun Run were achieved. In the Half Marathon 4106 entered and in the Fun Run 1347 entered. It is estimated that over 50,000 people turned up to watch the event, at either the start, finish or on the course.

### **Key Strategic Objectives**

Objective 1 - Promoting the city

- Broadening the visitor offer of the city by extending the events diary and marketing existing attractions more extensively.

Objective 2 - Managing the City

- To communicate and co-ordinate the work of all city stakeholders and monitor outputs.
- To communicate and engage effectively with businesses.

Objective 3 - Improving the Environment and the public spaces

- To encourage and facilitate improvements to the environment and public spaces that is inviting, clean, and is safe environment to be enjoyed.

Objective 4 - A Prosperous City

- Diversifying and strengthening the economic base. The city should be the catalyst for encouraging the growth of both new and existing business within the city.

## **5. KEY ISSUES**

5.1 This is not an exhaustive list of Commercial Operations activity but areas that will be of interest to this Committee.

### **Redevelopment**

Urban design determines the very shape of the streets and public spaces which make up our city. It influences how easy and pleasant it can be to move from area to area. During 2012, both Bridge Street and Cowgate will undergo redevelopment.

The proposed works provide an opportunity to emphasise the historic character of Cowgate and help revitalise Bridge Street. Both areas are viewed as main commercial parts of the city centre. Commercial Operations will work closely throughout with the Cowgate Traders Association and City Centre Business Forum to keep disruption to a minimum. It is envisaged that we will help to bring some of the open space element of the scheme alive by expanding the events, street market and trading offers to both schemes.

### **Olympic Torch 2012**

An iconic moment for Peterborough has been confirmed. Peterborough will be the first stop in the region for the Olympic Flame, when it makes its journey around the UK as part of the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay. The last few months has seen this department developing a route, programming entertainment throughout the route and planning the logistics for the arrival and exiting of this event.

The flame is due to arrive in the city at approximately 7.20pm on 3 July 2012, as it makes its way around the country over the course of 70 days. A welcome event will be held on the Embankment that evening, to celebrate the arrival of the flame, which will feature a range of

entertainment, showcasing Peterborough's cultural and heritage offerings.

Hosting the Olympic Torch is an incredible platform to showcase our city. Peterborough has managed to secure the BBC regional televised hour special. It is imperative that we maximise every promotional opportunity. We are therefore currently producing a marketing strategy that capitalises on tourism to Peterborough.

### **Street Activity Strategy**

With the redevelopment of the city and its public spaces, it is envisaged that we will look to formulate a Street Activity Strategy early next year. The aim is to assist all individuals and organisations involved with street activity within the city centre to reach a vision for creating a dynamic city centre environment, which is diverse and vibrant, adding value to the economic, social and cultural fabric of Peterborough. This includes a review of tables and chairs licensing, street trading and visiting markets and commercial activity.

### **The Enterprise Centre**

We plan to redesign the course content at The Centre to offer more generic courses, whilst seeking long term funding to ensure sustainability. Also looking for a tenant mix, such as a recruitment agency and café operator.

## **6. IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Securing sponsorship for projects and events during the current economic climate could prove challenging.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 Cowgate and Bridge Street redevelopment schemes have undergone public consultation.

## **8. NEXT STEPS**

- 8.1 Any recommendations from the Committee for changes should be referred to the Cabinet Member Tourism, Business and International links.

## **9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

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

None

## **10. APPENDICES**

- 10.1 None

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