

**MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD
23 JULY 2014**

The Mayor – Councillor David Over

Present:

Councillors Allen, Arculus, Ash, Brown, Casey, Cereste, Davidson, Day, Ferris, Fitzgerald, Fletcher, Forbes, Fower, F Fox, JR Fox, JA Fox, Harper, Herdman, Hiller, Holdich, Iqbal, Jamil, Johnson, Khan, Knowles, Lamb, Lane, Lee, Maqbool, Miners, Murphy, Nawaz, Nadeem, North, Okonkowski, Over, Peach, Rush, Sanders, Sandford, Scott, Seaton, Serluca, Shaheed, Sharp, Shearman, Stokes, Swift, Sylvester, Thacker, Thulbourn and Walsh.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Elsey, Harrington, Martin, Saltmarsh and Shabbir.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the meetings held on 16 June 2014:

(a) Annual Council Mayor Making Meeting

The minutes of the Annual Council Mayor Making Meeting held on 16 June 2014 were approved as a true and accurate record.

(b) Annual Council Meeting

The minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 16 June 2014 were approved as a true and accurate record.

4. Mayor's Announcements

Members noted the report outlining the Mayor's engagements for the period commencing 16 June 2014 to 20 July 2014.

The Mayor stated that the beginning of his term of office had been an extremely busy one, having attended a number of events. He had had a good start to his year and looked forward to the year ahead and thanked members of the public for their support.

5. Leader's Announcements

Councillor Cereste stated that there had been two major events recently held in the city, these being the Willow Festival and the Portuguese Festival.

He read out a letter from members of the public which congratulated the organisers of the Portuguese Festival; the staff working during the event; commended the success of the event and upon the acceptance of Portuguese people within the city of Peterborough. Councillor Cereste further expressed gratitude at the Willow Festival organisers and attendees.

Councillor Sandford stated that the cultural diversity of the various communities in the city made it a great place to be a part of.

Councillor John Fox stated that the Willow Festival had been a great event. He also stated that many attendees of the Portuguese Festival has expressed gratitude at how the event was handled and further noted the cultural diversity at the event itself.

Councillor Cereste responded thanking the Group Leaders for their comments and further stated that the events had been a great success and congratulated the staff on facilitating the events.

6. Chief Executive's Announcements

There were no announcements from the Chief Executive.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

7. Questions with Notice by Members of the Public

There were no questions submitted by members of the public.

8. Petitions

(a) Presented by members of the public

There were no petitions submitted by members of the public.

(b) Presented by Members

Councillor Miners presented a petition signed by 44 residents of Dogsthorpe opposing the redevelopment of the garage site to the rear of 18 Acacia Avenue.

Councillor Fower presented a petition signed by over 460 residents calling for the reinstatement of the 406 local bus service.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS

9. Executive and Committee Recommendations to Council

(a) Cabinet Recommendation – Community Infrastructure Levy

Cabinet at its meeting of 30 June 2014, received a report which enabled it to consider and recommend to Council the Peterborough Draft Charging Schedule. If approved by Council, the Schedule would be published for public consultation and then submitted to the Secretary of State who would appoint an Independent Planning Inspector to carry out an Examination in Public.

Councillor Hiller introduced the report and moved the recommendations contained within. He provided an overview of the current developer contribution system and the differences in relation to the new Draft Charging Schedule and the way it would operate. It was further advised that Peterborough was one of the fastest growing cities in the UK and many of the growth aspirations set out within the Core Strategy were being delivered under the current administration; over 850 homes had been built in 2013, with 8000 more having planning consent or currently in development and the necessary infrastructure was required in order to support this growth such as new schools, improved roads, community healthcare provision and open space many other things; the developers would be required to pay a new non-negotiable set fee per square metre of the development; the new charging system would be

much clearer and more transparent; the proposed fees for the city reflected viability and proposed a zero rate charge for new businesses; the Sustainable Growth and Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet had been supportive of the document; if agreed by Council the document would go for public consultation during August and September and then to Secretary of State for examination and if successful the new system would be in place by April 2015.

Councillor North seconded the recommendations and reserved his right to speak.

Members debated the recommendations and in summary raised points including:

- The supplementary document, which highlighted indicative proposals, stated that £40 million would go towards an idea to create a sports village on the embankment. There had been criticism of the authority in the past that projects had not been clear and deliverable;
- The document was a refresh of one prepared in 2009;
- There should be a focus on long term growth in the city;
- Why was there to be no public consultation on the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule, identifying infrastructure projects? This would most likely be the area upon which the public would wish to comment;
- How would the CIL money, reserved for local areas, be spent in the areas with no Parish Councils and what was the Council's strategy for introducing Parish Councils within these localities or for finding another adequate mechanism whereby the community could have a say on how the money was spent?
- Clarification was sought on a number of areas including the proposal CIL funding split; explanation of the meaning of social marketing/research and the proposed substation in Werrington, both the reasons for this and the location;
- Concern had been previously highlighted to officers by Members that the CIL money would be spent in areas of growth only. It had therefore been suggested that in areas of no growth the mainstream funding could be utilised and the CIL money utilised for the areas of growth. This point was not mentioned within the document, assurance was sought that this would be explored;
- Would the non-charging of business rates affect housing development costs and the housing market?
- All proposed projects and infrastructure would be subject to public scrutiny as part of the planning process;
- Several areas within the low-value draft charging schedule zones were judged to be deprived with issues around social and economic etc. under the schedule, would they not miss out on once again on financial resources whilst more affluent areas would benefit?
- In order to attract new business development into deprived areas there should be no requirement on new developments to pay Section 106 money or CIL money. Could this suggestion be reconsidered;
- Was the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule breakdown list accurate or a work in progress? As for example St George's School was detailed but Members had been advised that this development was no longer proceeding;
- The proposed CIL funding split proposed 5% for emergency services and 5% for health and wellbeing. Was this considered a proportionate amount?;
- Scrutiny of planning applications was restricted in that planning applications could only be looked at from a limited planning point of view; and
- Assurance was sought for consultation to be wider on larger developments.

Councillor North exercised his right to speak and in doing so stated that new businesses should be supported as they were essential for jobs and the future of the city, therefore the lack of charge for new businesses was encouraged. With regards to parishing, work was

being undertaken to progress this arena. The Leader of the Council supported parishing within the city and a number of meetings had been held with residents groups.

Councillor Hiller summed up a mover of the recommendations and in so doing stated that the document before Council was the schedule only and did not reflect the process, which was a legal process which had to be followed by the Authority as a Local Planning Authority; the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule was a work in progress and would be updated regularly, it would be subject to ongoing scrutiny and the planning process and ongoing business rates were not to be confused with the payments from CIL. Councillor Hiller further advised that he would be happy to clarify any ward specific issues, or further questions on the document, via email.

Following debate, a vote was taken (51 for, 0 against, 1 abstention) and it was **RESOLVED** that:

Council approved the Peterborough Community Infrastructure (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule for the purposes of public consultation and submission of the Draft Charging Schedule and associated material to the Planning Inspectorate for examination in public.

10. Questions on the Executive Decisions made since the last meeting

Councillor Cereste introduced the report which detailed executive decisions taken since the last meeting including:

1. Decisions from the Cabinet Meeting held on 30 June 2014;
2. Use of the Council's call-in mechanism, which had not been invoked since the previous meeting;
3. Special Urgency and Waiver of Call-in provision, which had not been invoked since the previous meeting; and
4. Cabinet Member Decisions taken during the period 3 April 2014 to 9 July 2014.

Questions were asked about the following:

Outcome of Petitions

Councillor Shearman requested that an overview of the outcome of petitions be included within the report going forward. Councillor Cereste stated that this would be possible subject to any legal restrictions, to which the Legal Officer confirmed that there were none, as the information was already published within the Cabinet papers.

Budget Monitoring Report Final Outturn 2013-14

Councillor Murphy queried how it had come to be that there was an underspend on the budget despite the Council being told that there was to be a significant overspend and necessary cuts to be made. Councillor Cereste responded stating that Council was heading for around a £300k underspend at the end of the financial year on a budget of hundreds of millions of pounds. The Council had been praised for the keeping of its books and with the dealings of its finances. Councillor Seaton was to provide detailed numbers if he so wished.

Integrated Community Equipment Services Contract

Councillor Fower queried what sort of equipment and benefits would the contract bring, who previously provided the service and how did the cost of the new contract compare. Councillor Fitzgerald responded that the contract had been running for a considerable time and had tendered and scrutinised accordingly, with the contractor providing the best value. The contract was to provide adaptive aids in the home primarily for individuals with long or short term needs, such as sticks and bath assistance.

Appointment of Representatives to the new Development Company (MAY14/CMDN/41 and MAY14/CMDN/42)

Councillor Sandford questioned whether in light of the change in political circumstances, would the Leader reconsider the appointments made in order to ensure some, if not all, of the political groups were represented on the development company. Councillor Cereste responded that there would be no changes to the representatives at the current time, as the two Councillors appointed had the best knowledge and were best placed to serve the city at the present time.

Councillor Murphy sought clarification as to whether appointments to outside bodies, including appointments to the Joint Venture Company, should be agreed by Full Council at its annual meeting. Councillor Cereste stated that he was not aware of such a process.

Councillor Sandford sought clarification as to rationale behind the two separate decisions being made, but with two different names mentioned. The Leader stated that he would seek further advice and the Legal Officer advised that following the initial report to Council on the Joint Venture Company, the Constitution had been amended in order to allow the Leader to appoint individuals to the development company via CMDN. The CMDN published on the 12 May 2014 was an amendment to the one published earlier and was lawful as Councillor Hiller had been unable to take up the position.

Discretionary Rate Relief from Business Rates on the Grounds of Hardship

Councillor Murphy sought clarification as to the work being undertaken in order to prevent young people and families ending up on the streets and further questioned whether money was best placed being spent on preventative action rather than on bed and breakfast provision. Councillor Seaton responded stating that the question went across wider work being undertaken with the homeless people across the city and he was happy to meet with Councillor Murphy in order to further explore his concerns.

Financial Systems Services

Councillor Fower sought confirmation of what alternative software options had been explored, what had been used before, what made the new system better and was there an agreement to review the contract after a period of time. Councillor Seaton responded that there were several options considered, which he outlined, there was a review period within the contract of approximately 10 years and the spend was not just for software but also for ongoing training and support. The current Oracle system was old and not supported anymore by Oracle, but rather by an independent company. Oracle had quoted and this had been more expensive.

Dogsthorpe Junior School Academy Conversion

Councillor Miners queried why Councillors were asked for their input regarding school conversions when this had little or no effect on the outcome of the decision. Councillor Holdich responded that it was a governor's decision to transfer to an Academy and further advised that he would research whether Ward Councillors could be informed at an earlier stage of the intention to transfer into an academy.

Councillor Shearman sought confirmation as to whether parents were consulted over the academy conversions, if consideration had been given to the fact that there was an infant school on the site, which shared some of the playing fields and provisions and when was consideration to be given to making the school an all through primary school. Councillor Holdich responded stating that he would answer this question in writing.

Affordable Housing Capital Funding Award for a Scheme Proposed at Maskew Avenue

Councillor Ash queried whether approval had been given of £300k on a site that had yet to obtain permission to build. Councillor Cereste responded stating that he was unsure whether the site had planning permission, however if planning permission was not forthcoming then the monies would not be available. On a later point of explanation, Councillor Cereste stated

that the site did not require planning permission as it was office accommodation and did not require permission for change of use.

Councillor Fower queried whether the capital funding award given to Axiom was proper, it being a not for profit organisation, not publically owned and not connected to the city council. As per their own annual report of 2012/13 they had made in excess of £3m surplus and the Council did not have anyone on their board. Councillor Cereste stated that there was a special fund which had arisen from the sale of the Council's housing stock, and through ongoing sales. Non-profit organisations could apply for grants where they could demonstrate that the conversion for the provision of social housing would not add up financially if they did not receive a grant from the local authority. Since it was the policy of the local authority to build and have social housing within the city, it was something that was looked at if a grant was applied for.

Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) Consortium Agreement

Councillor Fower sought clarification as to why Leicestershire had left the consortium. Councillor Holdich responded that Leicestershire had left in order to spend more money locally.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

11. Questions on Notice

- (a) **To the Mayor**
- (b) **To the Leader or Member of the Cabinet**
- (c) **To the Chair of any Committee or Sub-Committee**

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

12. Motions on Notice

1. Motion from Councillor Davidson

That this Council:

1. Endorses the election of Councillor David Over as Mayor for this municipal year, believing that he is a popular and long serving councillor and hence very deserving of this appointment.

However, the council is in no overall control, and therefore it is no longer tenable for the nomination of Mayor to be solely in the hands of the Conservative Group;

2. Therefore requests the various groups on the Council to get together, through the Constitutional Review Group; and find a formula to enable opposition Councillors to take the post of mayor in some Future years.

This could be through the post going to the most long serving councillor or some other mechanism based on the proportion of seats which each party holds on the council. What we must do is to avoid the Post of Mayor becoming a political football or something in the sole gift of the council leader; and

3. Requests that a report be submitted to a Full Council Meeting no later than December 2014, Outlining proposals for change to a New System for electing our city mayor.

In moving her motion, Councillor Davidson stated that the Mayor was a figurehead for all citizens of Peterborough and should be, and often are, above party politics. The motion was

seconded by Councillor Fower, who reserved his right to speak later in the debate.

As there was no debate on the matter a vote was taken, (unanimous) and the motion was **CARRIED**.

2. Motion from Councillor Fower

That this Council notes that:

1. Peterborough City Council recently received millions of pounds, partly funded from the EU, to improve roads and safety in our city;
2. In the last decade there have been further grants of millions of pounds for various schemes, received directly as a result of our country's membership of the EU to help improve city standards;
3. Nearly 10,000 jobs in this city are reliant upon our connection and trade with Europe;
4. We are a city that has, always, included a variety of communities consisting of immigrants from various countries, such as Polish, Ukrainian, Italian etc.;
5. We are twinned with the following European cities, Viersen, Forli and Vinnitsa; and

Therefore we believe that it is time this Council showed a more respectful and less immature stance, by re-erecting the flag of the European Union in this chamber to show and promote an image of a local authority that recognises the roles and responsibilities of the European Union, celebrates diversity and the need to secure the safety of future generations.

In moving his motion, Councillor Fower stated that it was important to recognise the multiculturalism of the city and the fundamental importance that the different communities played with regards to education and enhancement of culture, festivals, history etc. Support was received from the European Union, and it should be recognised that the UK was part of the union and did benefit from it. The motion was seconded by Councillor Sandford who reserved his right to speak later in the debate.

Members debated the motion and in summary raised points including:

- The European flag was not a national flag and why should it be picked for display over other flags, such as NATO or the Commonwealth;
- Many immigrant communities in Peterborough were from countries outside the EU. It would therefore be disrespectful to place only the EU flag in the Council Chamber. Therefore to remain respectful to all, the current flags should just be kept;
- The Chamber should remain a bastion of British-ness;
- The country got back less than it put into the EU. The UK imported far more from the EU than it exported to it and 10,000 new jobs were not as reliant on EU trade as suggested within the motion;
- Peterborough was a cosmopolitan city and did not need to fly flags to prove so;
- The supposed 10,000 jobs were an imprecise figure and it was unclear where they were coming from;
- The city celebrated its diversity every day. The attitude of the Council was 'respectful' to all nations and it was unnecessary to display a flag to show that;
- The EU was unlikely to last, the British public had lost faith in it and it was not necessary to honour it by displaying its flag; and

- The East of England was a vibrant science and technology hub. A vast amount of EU funding was for innovative projects which attracted people to work in the East of England.

Councillor Sandford exercised his right to speak and advised that the Council had previously displayed the European flag and the decision not to display it had been a political one; many citizens of Peterborough identified with being European as well as being British and the EU had guaranteed security, freedom and human rights and the flag should be displayed as a celebration of that.

Councillor Fower summed up as mover of the motion and stated that the display of the flag was a show of respect to an organisation which offered benefits to the United Kingdom.

Following debate, a vote was taken (13 for, 35 against, 1 abstention) and the motion was **DEFEATED**.

3. Motion from Councillor Fower

That this Council:

1. Notes that the year is 2014, the city has a population of 186,000, it is likely over 50% are in some way online, whether that's via social media or simply surfing the net;
2. Believes therefore, that it is time we started communicating with the people of Peterborough in a way that suits them, and not solely in a way that benefits the Council; and
3. Agrees to set up working group to look at costs and ways to establish live broadcasting of Full Council meetings for people to watch at their leisure and at a time of their choosing.

In moving his motion, Councillor Fower stated that the broadcasting of meetings was important in order to ensure both transparency and openness; all meetings should be broadcast, not just the Council meeting, and there was a potential for revenue streams from broadcasting online. The motion was seconded by Councillor Shaheed, who reserved his right to speak later in the debate.

Members debated the motion and in summary raised points including:

- Other councils had similar systems and some Councillors considered it 'a waste of money and a vanity project';
- It was reasonable to look into the subject, however the motion should not be supported as the issue was already under consideration by the Constitution Review Group;
- The subject should be taken up at the cross party budget working group in order to discuss prioritisation of funding. Other sacrifices would need to be made in order to implement this;
- There was concern that it would cost a lot of money for not many people to benefit from;
- If there was money to be made it was for a commercial operator to finance the system and not the Council;
- There was no evidence that there would be an audience for the system in order to support demand;
- The issue had been taken up five years ago, and a promise had been made that the feasibility would be explored, but this had not been taken up; and
- The issue was one of democracy and openness and to assume that since

there was poor attendance that there was a lack of interest was arrogant.

Councillor Shaheed exercised his right to speak and advised that there had been no public survey to gauge interest in the scheme, however it should be trialled to see if it was successful. It was further advised that people wishing to view the meetings may also come from further afield than the city itself.

Councillor Fower summed up as mover of the motion and stated that the issue was one of openness and the motion was simply to look into the feasibility of the scheme as it was believed that the webcasting could be achieved for a reasonable price.

Following debate, a vote was taken (14 for, 33 against, 3 abstentions) and the motion was **DEFEATED**.

13. Reports to Council

(a) Local Government Pension Scheme Discretionary Policy

Council received a report that requested it to agree the revised Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Discretionary Policy, which had been updated to take account of the April 2014 changes to the pension scheme. Councillor Seaton moved the recommendations in the report and this was seconded by Councillor Cereste who reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Sylvester questioned if there had been negotiations with the trade union and did they agree. Councillor Seaton responded that it had been agreed by the trade unions.

Following debate, a vote was taken (50 for, 0 against, 1 abstention) and it was **RESOLVED**:

That Council agrees the revised copy of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) discretionary policy, which had been updated to take account of the April 2014 changes to the pension scheme

The Mayor
7.00pm – 9.00pm