

**MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD
15 APRIL 2015**

The Mayor – Councillor David Over

Present:

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

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Allen, Fower, Harrington and Thacker.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the meetings held on 4 March 2015

3.1 Extraordinary Council Meeting 4 March 2015

The minutes of the extraordinary Council Meeting held on 4 March 2015 were approved as a true and accurate record.

3.2 Council Meeting 4 March 2015

The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 4 March 2015 were approved as a true and accurate record.

COMMUNICATIONS

4. Mayor's Announcements

Members noted the report outlining the Mayor's engagements for the period commencing 3 March 2015 to 12 April 2015.

5. Leader's Announcements

Councillor Cereste announced that Councillor Nick Arculus had resigned his position as West Ward Councillor. He thanked Councillor Arculus for all the work he had undertaken over the years, particularly in relation to Scrutiny.

The Group Leaders echoed Councillor Cereste's comments and wished Councillor Arculus well for the future.

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 from members of the public.

(b) Presented by Members

Councillor Shearman presented a petition on behalf of the residents of Nottingham Way. The petition was in relation to concerns about the increasing numbers of vehicles parking in Nottingham Way, particularly in the stretch close to Newark Avenue. The petition called for the Council to extend the current parking restrictions further along the road.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS

9. Executive and Committee Recommendations to Council

(a) Cabinet Recommendation – Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Cabinet at its meeting of 7 April 2015, received a report which followed the Examination in Public of the Peterborough Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule (PDCS). The report explained the outcome of the Examiner's report on the Draft Charging Schedule, the proposed modifications to the final charging schedule and associated policies and proposed a formal adoption date of 24 April 2015.

Cabinet endorsed the recommendations contained within the report and recommended the adoption of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to Council.

Councillor Hiller introduced the report and moved the recommendations contained within. He further highlighted the positive strides made across the city relating to housing, schooling, jobs provision and healthcare, to name a few, and summarised how the CIL would work.

Councillor Serluca seconded the recommendations and reserved her right to speak.

Members debated the recommendations and in summary raised points including:

- There were concerns that CIL had not been implemented to coincide with the cessation of the Planning Obligation Implementation Scheme (POIS);
- The charging levels did appear quite high;
- The CIL had to be agreed in its entirety otherwise it could not be approved at all;
- Parished areas would receive 25% of funds collected. For those areas unparished, the funds would go directly to the Council. The Cabinet needed to make the parishing of all urban areas a priority.

Councillor Serluca did not wish to exercise her right to speak as seconder of the recommendations.

Councillor Hiller did not have anything further to add in summing up.

A vote was taken (50 for, 1 abstention) and it was **RESOLVED** that:

1. The Examiner's Report into the Draft CIL Charging Schedule is considered and the recommendations and conclusions that underpin them are accepted;
2. The Peterborough Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule is adopted, with CIL to come into effect for all planning applications approved on or after 24 April 2015;
3. The Council's CIL Supporting Policies Document (including Regulation 123 List, Instalment Policy, Payment in Kind Policy and Statement of Exceptional Circumstances Relief) be adopted and published;
4. Delegated authority be given to the Director of Growth and Regeneration (a) to take all steps necessary to implement the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended), and (b) to take all necessary enforcement action under the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended);
5. Local Validation Requirements be amended to require the submission of CIL liability details from 24 April 2015;
6. 5% of CIL is retained for the administration and governance costs incurred by the Council, in accordance with the CIL Regulations; and,
7. The Community Infrastructure Levy is added to the Council's Major Policy Framework and to approve the consequential Constitutional amendments resulting.

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 20 March 2015;
2. Decisions from the Cabinet meeting held on 1 April 2015;
3. Use of the Council's Call-In mechanism, which had not been invoked since the previous meeting;
4. Special Urgency and Waive of Call-In Provisions, which had not been invoked since the previous meeting; and
5. Cabinet Member Decisions taken during the period 12 February 2015 to 30 March 2015.

Questions were asked about the following:

Transforming Day Opportunities for Adults Under 65

Councillor Murphy queried why the service had not been out to tender and whether reviews would be undertaken in order to ensure those with the most needs would not be let down. *Councillor Fitzgerald stated that consultation had been undertaken widely in the public sector, however no service providers had come forward. No tender had been undertaken subsequently as the College was part of Peterborough City Council. With regards to the needs of individuals, there was not a 'one size fits all' approach to the service and the most vulnerable would be provided for accordingly.*

Hampton Gardens Secondary School – Collaboration Agreement

Councillor Khan queried whether the local authority would be responsible for financing should the school fall on hard times. *Councillor Holdich advised that it would be the responsibility of the Department of Education.*

Sale of Greenwood House

Councillor Murphy queried why Greenwood House had been sold for less than market value, and why it had been sold as there was a lack of residential home provision in the city. *Councillor Seaton advised that the Council was under a legal*

obligation to obtain the market value for the property. The bid received had been higher than any developer bids for the site.

Street Scene Services

Councillor Ash queried whether alternative bin provisions were being explored. *Councillor Elsey advised that alternative provisions were being explored, namely the replacement of a number of lamp post bins with larger floor mounted bins the capacity of which was much larger.*

Councillor Ferris sought confirmation of when the new bins were to be rolled out. *Councillor Elsey advised that roll out had already started. Many bins were made to order and there were different style bins for different locations.*

Councillor Khan queried whether an alternative was to be explored for mechanical cleaners which did not work as well down narrow streets. *Councillor Elsey advised that there were alternative machines being implemented called 'The Glutton', which were effective in any road.*

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

Questions (b) to the Leader or Member of the Cabinet were raised and taken as read in respect of the following:

1. Dukesmead underpass redecoration;
2. One way system, Robert Avenue;
3. Development plans for the market;
4. Road works on Bourges Boulevard;
5. The impact of library and culture cuts;
6. Street obstacles and dangerous crossings; and
7. Increase in Stagecoach bus fares.

Owing to the time limit being reached for this item, questions on the following were to be responded to in writing:

Question eight was withdrawn prior to the meeting;

9. Sufficient secondary school places;
10. The pay for the Chief Executive of Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals Trust;
and
11. Rubbish collection along the city's roads.

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 Richard Ferris

That this Council notes the aspiration of the Council for Peterborough to become the Environment Capital of the UK, and resolves to:

- (1) *ensure that all public realm works and infrastructure developments it undertakes or commissions are Carbon neutral;*

(2) *develop a sustainable transport strategy which puts health improvement at its heart; and*

(3) *embraces fully the 6 principles set out in its own 2006 Green Grid Strategy.*

In moving his motion, Councillor Ferris advised that, going forward, it was vital that cities were designed appropriately for future needs. Cost effective alternatives needed to be explored and green infrastructure embraced, such as green walls and green roofs. More needed to be done in order to address the principles set out in the Council's Green Grid Strategy.

Councillor Shearman seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

Members debated the motion and in summary raised points including:

- Concerns were expressed at the ability to ensure 'all public realm works and infrastructure developments' were carbon neutral. This would raise costs of development significantly and the authority would not be able to reclaim this from central government;
- Detailed consideration was given to impacts of all public realm works undertaken and where possible the schemes had positive environmental impact. It was difficult to deliver a scheme which was entirely carbon neutral;
- There was not sufficient understanding of the impacts of 'entirely carbon neutral' developments upon the city and therefore the motion needed more thought and further exploration needed to be undertaken into the points included and options available to the Council;
- Was there a defined target for carbon neutral and did this include waste disposal?
- The city should be aspiring to be carbon neutral within a sensible timeframe;
- The transport user hierarchy, contained within the Sustainable Transport Strategy, within the Local Transport Plan, was not being adhered to and implemented; and
- The management of available resources was missing within the Green Grid Strategy.

Councillor Shearman exercised his right to speak and advised that in order to become environment capital the city needed to do more. There were quick fixes, however the more difficult issues needed to be addressed for the long term. The city needed to be designed better and in turn this would encourage individuals to adopt healthier lifestyles.

Councillor Ferris summed up as mover of the motion and advised that the changes outlined within the motion were possible and overall it was about the commitment to the aspiration to become environment capital. Many measures that could be implemented would save money in the medium to long term.

A vote was taken (19 for, 28 against, 4 abstentions) and the motion was **DEFEATED**.

2. Motion from Councillor Nick Thulbourn

That this Council notes that social housing was transferred to partners in 2003 and the strategy of the Council has not been reviewed since.

I respectfully ask that this Council creates a cross party review of the present strategy and to consult and create a new fit for purpose strategy recommendation that reflects our changing city to enable a future proof and resilient strategy going forward.

The provision of social housing has changed significantly since 2003 and update of what social housing could and should be achieving, and delivering, is long overdue.

In moving his motion Councillor Thulbourn advised that one of the common threads in the city was around housing. An overarching Strategy was required in relation to social housing and would enable the issues faced to be addressed and to look at alternative ways of delivering social housing. A review was required in order to identify the direction of travel in relation to the issue.

Councillor Jamil seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

Members debated the motion and in summary raised points including:

- The Council's Housing Team ran an effective service and their Strategy was constantly under review;
- With regards to housing associations making profit, i.e. by selling to the private sector, the profits went back into the sector;
- There had been issues with regards to the numbers of social houses;
- A working party was a good proposal, however individuals with knowledge of the issue should sit on the party and social landlords should also be invited to attend;
- Housing stock had been lost to housing associations and these houses could now be sold to their tenants. This was a concern and the Council should claw back the money put into these properties;
- There used to be an excellent housing system which was no longer in place;
- Selling houses to tenants meant that these houses were no longer available as social housing. A review was required;
- Was an additional working group required when there was due to be a five yearly review undertaken on the Housing Strategy?; and
- The number of people in social housing in the last ten years had remained the same however costs had quadrupled.

Councillor Jamil exercised his right to speak and advised that housing was important for all parties and it was important that a review of the Strategy be undertaken.

Councillor Thulbourn summed up as mover of the motion and advised that a change to the current Strategy was not sought, rather a holistic approach to the issue as a whole and an overarching approach to how social housing was run. The proposal to incorporate social landlords into the discussions was welcomed.

A vote was taken (48 for, 0 against, 3 abstentions) and the motion was **CARRIED**.

13. Reports to Council

(a) Local Government Pension Scheme Discretionary Policy

Council received a report from the Head of Human Resources which requested it to agree approve the revised copy of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) discretionary policy.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Seaton who advised that there were two proposed changes to the scheme as outlined within the report. The recommendation was seconded by Elsey.

A vote was taken (unanimous) and it was **RESOLVED**:

That Council agrees the revised copy of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) discretionary policy.

(b) Alternative Governance Arrangements

Council received a report from the Chair of the Alternative Governance Working Group which requested it to defer a decision regarding an alternative form of governance until the new civic year and to note that the preferred model was a hybrid model of executive decision making involving a greater deal of pre-scrutiny decision making.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Sharp who advised that there had been a number of models explored however the working group had agreed on a bespoke model for Peterborough. The recommendation was seconded by Councillor Holdich.

A vote was taken (unanimous) and it was **RESOLVED**:

That Council:

- (1) Agrees to defer a decision regarding an alternative form of governance until the new civic year; and
- (2) Notes that the preferred model of alternative governance is a hybrid model of executive decision making with a greater involvement of pre-scrutiny decision making (a Peterborough model).

(c) New Contract Regulations and Amendment to Contract Rules

Council received a report from the Director of Governance which requested that Council agree to amend the Constitution to include the revised Contract Rules following legislative changes.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Seaton who advised that the changes were in line with changes to legislation and a larger review of the rules would take place later in the year. The recommendation was seconded by Councillor Casey.

A vote was taken (unanimous) and it was **RESOLVED**:

That Council amend the Constitution to include revised Contract Rules following legislative changes and that the Council approves the rules to ensure appropriate oversight in the exercise of that discretion.

(d) Annual Report of the Audit Committee

Council received a report from the Chair of the Audit Committee which requested it to note the work carried out by the Committee in improving the governance arrangements across the Council. The recommendation was moved by Councillor Lee who advised that the Committee had had a good year and thanks were extended to Members and Officers for their hard work and commitment. The recommendation was seconded by Councillor Harper.

A vote was taken (unanimous) and it was **RESOLVED**:

That Council notes the work carried out by the Audit Committee in improving the governance arrangements across the Council.

(e) Appointment of Chairman to the Sustainable Growth and Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee

Council received a report which requested that it appoint Councillor Yasmeen Maqbool as Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the municipal year 2015/16.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Cereste and seconded by Councillor Serluca.

A vote was taken (unanimous) and it was **RESOLVED**:

That Council appoints Councillor Yasmeen Maqbool as Chairman of the Sustainable Growth and Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the municipal year 2014/15.

(f) Programme of Meetings 2015/16

Council received a report which requested it to approve the programme of meetings for 2015/16 and to approve, in principle, the draft programme of meetings for 2016/17.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Rush and seconded by Councillor North.

Comments were made with regards to the lack of uniformity relating to Councillors receiving diary invites for Committee meetings. It was advised that this issue would be explored for the forthcoming municipal year.

A vote was taken (unanimous) and it was **RESOLVED**:

That Council approves the programme of meetings for 2015/16 and approves, in principle, the draft programme of meetings for 2016/17.

(g) Variation to Standing Orders

Council received a report requesting that Council's Standing Orders be varied and adopted, along with related protocols and schemes, and that the proposed variation be postponed without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of Council, in accordance with Standing Order 10 of the General Standing Orders. Councillor Seaton moved the recommendations in the report stating that the proposals were tabled and would be brought back to the next appropriate meeting for debate. Councillor Seaton further thanked the officers and the cross party working group for the work undertaken.

This was seconded by Councillor Cereste and he endorsed the comments made by Councillor Seaton.

A vote was taken (unanimous) and it was **RESOLVED** to:

Postpone the proposed variation without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of council, in accordance with Standing Order 10 of the General Standing Orders.

The Mayor
7.00pm – 9.10pm

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Questions were received under the following categories:

<u>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</u>	
	There were no questions received.
<u>COUNCIL BUSINESS</u>	
<u>Questions on notice to:</u>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Mayor b) To the Leader or Member of the Cabinet c) To the chair of any Committee or Sub-committee
1.	<p>Question from Councillor Davidson</p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Services</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member confirm if the Dukesmede Underpass could be considered for re-painting, with anti-graffiti paint in a lighter shade and if so, could this work be carried out before the end of the current year?</p> <p>Councillor Hiller responded:</p> <p>I can confirm that the underpass will be considered for re-painting and I have requested that should any funding remain available this financial year after our scheduled programme of structural repairs to subways and bridges then the Dukesmead subway will be painted with a lighter coloured anti-graffiti paint.</p> <p>Councillor Davidson did not have a supplementary question.</p>
2.	<p>Question from Councillor Sharp</p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Services</p> <p>I am currently and have been for some time deeply concerned about the one way system in Robert Avenue which is currently being abused, with many drivers now driving in both directions in this one way street.</p> <p>Councillor Swift and I have raised this matter with highways on numerous occasions, the white lining on the road has been carried out on a couple of occasions, however this has not done much to deter road users from abusing this one way system.</p> <p>This current situation is a danger to the elderly population who reside in Robert Avenue who are now deeply concerned about crossing this road for fear of a car travelling in the wrong direction.</p> <p>When vehicles travel the wrong way down this road it means they are coming out very close to the Fulbridge Loop and the majority are turning right to go into the loop,</p>

	<p>this is a dangerous junction to negotiate which is one of the reasons Robert Avenue was changed to one way originally.</p> <p>If some enforcement measures are not carried out soon there is going to be a serious road accident takes place in Robert Avenue or at the junction with Fulbridge Road.</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member responsible please take a close look at how this one way system can be enforced or look at alternative ways to make sure this practice of travelling the wrong way in a one ways system stops.</p> <p>Councillor Hiller responded:</p> <p>This is clearly a very important issue and I have asked the Corporate Director of Growth and Regeneration to convene a meeting with senior highway officers and Councillors Sharp and Swift to help identify a permanent solution to the problem.</p> <p>Councillor Sharp did not have a supplementary question.</p>
3.	<p>Question from Councillor Ferris</p> <p>To Councillor Cereste, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning and Business Engagement</p> <p>Will the Leader tell this Chamber what development plans he has for the market, and how he intends to ensure that the views of both the general public and market traders will be taken into account?</p> <p>Councillor Cereste responded:</p> <p>The Peterborough market is a very old and enduring feature for the city, it is extremely important to the residents of Peterborough, and the Charter dates back before the present Cathedral. So it is, in my opinion an essential part of our community. We've got a current market recovery plan in place and we are in constant regular contact with the Market Traders Forum and with the market traders and nothing gets done without their involvement and them being consulted.</p> <p>One of the things that is changing is the sort of product and produce that is wanted at markets and there is a big shift towards food, fresh fruit and vegetables and we are trying to encourage that on the market.</p> <p>Occupation rates are up about 6% which is very good and our rents, if you take inflation, are about 14% below the average in the UK so I would recommend the market to anybody, we are constantly reviewing how we can improve it and we are talking with the forum to see what can be done and how to do it best. I can assure Councillor Ferris that the market is in good hands.</p> <p>Councillor Ferris did not have a supplementary question.</p>
4.	<p>Question from Councillor Ash</p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Services</p> <p>The scheme on Bourges Boulevard by Queensgate seems beset with delays, can the Cabinet Member give a firm indication when we can expect completion, the likely final cost of construction and the impact on the city caused by traffic queues and travel delays?</p>

Councillor Hiller responded:

Let me firstly remind Members that the Bourges Boulevard improvement scheme is a central part of the regeneration of the city centre and Station Quarter to benefit not only us but generations to come. This hugely significant scheme is now and always was an integral element of the Council's Local Transport Plan, adopted by this very Chamber. These improvements will help to reconnect the city centre with the station for visitors to Peterborough, for pedestrians and cyclists whilst at the same time fundamentally upgrading the appearance of this key route into the city, especially along the recently gentrified Cowgate to St Johns Square. Alongside this scheme we've seen the creation of a brand new cutting edge Waitrose store on what was derelict land, a highly energy efficient housing development on Midland Road transforming a dreadfully run down abandoned brownfield site and work is underway to regenerate the old hospital site providing many new homes of all types and a much needed new school. Plans for the long awaited regeneration of North Westgate have been announced and I'm pleased to say our planners are currently working with developers before the initial plans are submitted for appraisal. This Administration's vision and commitment to improving the city centre assets is clearly acting as a major catalyst for private sector investment.

A civil engineering exercise, the magnitude of Bourges Boulevard works, in a busy city centre was never going to happen overnight. The contractors have encountered engineering and ground works challenges, not least of which was the Anglian Water services replacement, massively underestimating the scale of their pipe work replacement programme and contractual issues with their own work force half way through.

We are scheduled to complete the works by the end of July this year. The construction cost overall will be £4m and the Council's contribution is £1,285,725 – less than a third of the total - as we have successfully secured contributions of a £2.1m grant from the Local Enterprise Partnership and a S106 contribution of £614,275 from the Waitrose development.

Businesses in the city centre have been updated on progress on a weekly basis by the contractor's liaison officer and we have received very little negative feedback from them. My impression from our dialogue is that they understand the wider benefits the scheme brings for the long term prosperity of the city and their viability thereafter. I would remind members of our exceptional road network around the city and traffic delays when they do occur are a big deal. Whilst of course there have been delays these are far less than most cities experience on a daily basis.

Councillor Ash asked the following supplementary question:

I wouldn't dispute the needs for a lot of the work and I agree too about people's perception of the delays, however they are just not used to it. Is the Cabinet Member not getting feedback from people in his ward in particular that they are concerned about the delays on Bourges Boulevard and they wonder why it is so expensive and knowing the problems with the water main it was advisable to put trees down the middle, instead perhaps reviewing a different position for them that wouldn't have caused so much extra work.

Councillor Hiller responded:

Yes I do get commentary from residents and businesses that aren't as supportive as perhaps some other businesses are, but I can assure this Chamber and Councillor Ash in particular that the supportive dialogue I have far out ways any negative commentary and regarding Anglian Water, if we hadn't allowed them to do the works that they wanted to do when they wanted to, it would have probably meant that in 18

	<p>months or two years' time the whole of the road network in that area would have had to have been ripped up for Anglian Water to have done that work anyway, so it was expedient to do the work at the time.</p> <p>Regarding planting trees, they are completely self-contained, they will not interfere with any services underneath.</p>
5.	<p>Question from Councillor Shearman</p> <p>To Councillor Serluca, Cabinet Member for City Centre Management, Culture and Tourism</p> <p>How will the Cabinet Member responsible for Culture ensure that we capture the impact of the changes in Library services on users, and the impact of cuts on the quality of and engagement with the arts and heritage services more generally in the city?</p> <p>Councillor Serluca responded:</p> <p>The Council's consultation seeking people's views on a new delivery model for library service closed on the 20th March. The Council received 1847 responses.</p> <p>Of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% supported the proposal put forward; and • 40% opposed it. <p>Therefore Cabinet has approved the new model. This is not to say the process has finished, we will be monitoring the progress of the new model every month for the first six months, and then we will move to our normal contracted four month review of Vivacity services, which included arts and heritage.</p> <p>I will also be monitoring the progress of the changes, as a Vivacity board member and through the Councils internal partnership meetings with Vivacity which take place one a month.</p> <p>I will of course keep all Councillors informed, as I have throughout the consultation, on the progress of the new library model and when it will be going live in your area.</p> <p>Councillor Shearman asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>Would you consider taking action if the results of the changes are not what you anticipated and would you have access to additional funds to put into practice that remedial action?</p> <p>Councillor Serluca responded:</p> <p>As I stated it will be a month on month review on how it is going, I would hope that the model we have put forward is the best that we can strive for. If something was not successful, then I would sit down with the officers that have helped throughout the process to see what can be done. All the work that has been brought forward and saving the libraries from closing, that thought hasn't been in my mind, but I can personally guarantee you and everybody in this Chamber, regardless of what happens after May I will personally keep looking at this, monitoring and answering questions and sending out details to all. The libraries are an integral part to all communities and education.</p>

6.	<p>Question from Councillor Murphy</p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Services</p> <p>New research by the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) has highlighted the growing problem of street obstacles, dangerous street crossings and 'shared space' developments.</p> <p>Survey results published in RNIB's 'Who put that there' report (www.rnib.org.uk/onmystreet) revealed that a third of blind and partially sighted people across the UK had injured themselves when walking around their local areas. Overall, 95% of people said that they had collided with an obstacle.</p> <p>Challenges are also faced in the way local authorities communicate information affecting the street environment to blind and partially sighted residents, often this is not accessible resulting in people with sight loss having little chance to contribute.</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member support the RNIB call for local authorities to develop 'street charters' with blind and partially sighted people and ensure a review of our policies in relation to the built environment is undertaken?</p> <p>Councillor Hiller responded:</p> <p>I would fully support this initiative. We already place great emphasis on ensuring that our public spaces are safe and accessible for all users, there is always more we can do. We work closely with DIAL Peterborough and involve them in scheme design. For example, both DIAL and the RNIB helped to shape the design of the public realm works in Long Causeway to ensure that it was safe and accessible for blind and partially sighted people.</p> <p>The Leader has been actively involved with the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association and last year carried out a blindfolded walk through the city centre to better understand the challenges that blind and partially sighted people face on a daily basis.</p> <p>We have a Walk Friendly Report which has reviewed a number of key pedestrian routes around the city and provides recommendations for improvements, which we are implementing year by year. Through our rolling capital programme of works we also allocate funding towards schemes such as dropped kerbs, mobility improvements and crossings and we are always happy to meet with any concerned individuals or groups.</p> <p>I support Councillor Murphy's call and will ask officers to look deeper into our planning policies for any improvement that we might be able to make.</p> <p>Councillor Murphy asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>Will you bring an action plan to Council?</p> <p>Councillor Hiller responded:</p> <p>I haven't considered that, but I will consider bringing an action plan to Council yes.</p>
7.	<p>Question from Councillor Sandford</p> <p>To Councillor North, Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment Capital</p> <p>Could the relevant cabinet member give me his opinion on the recent increases in</p>

fares imposed by the Stagecoach bus company in Peterborough. Given that fuel prices have fallen significantly in recent months, what can be the justification for a significant increase in fares? Was the Council informed in advance about the increases and what representations did they make to Stagecoach about them?

Councillor North responded:

Stagecoach is a privately operated business which controls its own fare structure and timetable. The Council has no control over the setting of fares but was notified in advance of the proposed increase in fares.

For example, the cost of a Peterborough Day Rider has increased by 2.5%, from £4 to £4.10 and the cost of a Weekly Peterborough Megarider by 3.7%, from £13.50 to £14. By comparison, some rail fares increased by up to 3.79% in January.

Stagecoach advise that fuel accounts for only 11% of their operating costs and like all major commercial fuel users they fix the price of their fuel well in advance to protect their customers and their business from the regular fluctuations in the price of oil. This is known as 'hedging'. Stagecoach's biggest cost is employee cost, which accounts for around two thirds of total operating costs.

Councillor Sandford asked the following supplementary question:

Every time in the past when Stagecoach have put prices up they have always blamed the fuel costs so it seems odd now that the fuel costs are plummeting and they are putting prices up again. isn't the problem that Stagecoach have a virtual monopoly on bus services in Peterborough and would the Cabinet Member take on board what the government is doing in relation to Greater Manchester, where the authority is going to be given powers to determine both the services that are provided in Greater Manchester and also the fares. Can he not argue with central government that we should be given those similar powers?

Councillor North responded:

As I reiterate, Stagecoach is a private company and any private company could come to Peterborough and compete on any of the routes offering a far lower cost if they were able to do so within their remit. There is nothing to stop another company coming to Peterborough if they feel there is money to be made. From experience and what I've seen, some of the routes are subsidised by the Council as are the evening services, I'm happy to keep a good eye on how the process works in Manchester to see if that would be a suitable model for Peterborough, but I can't comment on that at this time.

8. Question from Councillor Sylvester

The question from Councillor Sylvester was withdrawn.

9. Question from Councillor Ash

To Councillor Holdich, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University

A recent news report highlighted the need for more primary school places in Peterborough. Noting that good secondary schools such as the former John Mansfield have been closed and most of the site has been approved for housing, can the Cabinet Member give assurances that there will be sufficient secondary school places, not only for those currently in primary schools but also for youngsters moving into the City?

	<p>Councillor Holdich may have responded:</p> <p>We have successfully met the challenge of primary school places and we continue to invest in supporting our aspiration for local places for local children. In 2002, we had over 2000 surplus secondary school spaces in crumbling buildings. We now have a completely modernised secondary estate and it is only since 2009 have we seen an increase in numbers in secondary school after 7 years of decline. We have been planning for this increased and actions we have taken include re-opening the former Hereward site as a free school and we have also recently had a successfully bid for a free school for Hampton Gardens. These two schemes will create up to 2,100 new secondary school places for pupils aged 11 to 16. We are currently working with 2 secondary schools in the City to increase their intakes and I am confident we have sufficient places to meet the current demand but also allow for further migration to the City. New developments in the city at Great Haddon and Norwood have proposals for new secondary provision. We have to balance the cost of creating new school places against the risk of having empty schools in the future – I think we have played this well and met our aspiration for local places.</p>
10.	<p>Question from Councillor Sandford</p> <p>To Councillor Cereste, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning and Business Engagement</p> <p>According to the Times on Friday 3rd April, a report by pay analysts E-rewards.co.uk has shown that over one fifth of top bosses in hospital trusts in England earn more each year than the Prime Minister. The report states that “the interim chief executive of Peterborough and Stamford hospitals trust registered a sum of between £405,000 and £410,000”.</p> <p>Would the cabinet member for health agree with me that such salaries are grossly excessive and what representations is he making to the hospitals trust to urge them to spend more money on patient care and less on senior officer salaries?</p> <p>Councillor Cereste may have responded:</p> <p>As members will be aware there are a number of factors that can influence the level of salary paid to any public servant. As the Council is not aware of the many and various factors which went into the salary review of the chief executive for the Peterborough and Stamford hospital NHS trust, I do not consider it appropriate for the Council to comment.</p> <p>Expressions of opinion by the Council on matters of which it has limited knowledge ought to be avoided in my view.</p>
11.	<p>Question from Councillor Davidson</p> <p>To Councillor Elsey, Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Waste Management</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member please confirm how often rubbish is collected from the city's road network? The A47 roundabout on Paston Parkway is becoming more like a tip and the road is thick with rubbish in between the central reservation. The amount of discarded rubbish which has been allowed to accumulate is substantial and is unsightly to all the road users.</p> <p>Councillor Elsey may have respond:</p> <p>Residential roads and parkways, including this roundabout, are scheduled to be cleared of litter every four weeks.</p>

The last cleanse of this roundabout was undertaken 2 weeks ago.

The next cleanse is scheduled w/c 20th of April.

The very busy nature of roads such as these mean there are additional traffic management requirements for health and safety reasons.

Amey cannot cleanse on high speed roads without prior agreement for and co-ordination of road closures from the Council's Highways Department.

If we have evidence that the accumulating litter originates from the Dogsthorpe Landfill site, we can and will instruct additional cleansing by the operators of that site.