

**MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING
HELD AT 10:00AM, ON
MONDAY, 13 JANUARY 2020
BOURGES/VIERSON ROOM, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

Cabinet Members Present: Councillor Holdich (Chair), Councillor Allen, Councillor Ayres, Councillor Cereste, Councillor Farooq, Councillor Fitzgerald, Councillor Hiller, Councillor Seaton, Councillor Walsh

Cabinet Advisors Present: Councillor Bashir

51. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

52. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

ITEMS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

53. REPORT OF THE TASK AND FINISH GROUP TO INFORM THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN AIR QUALITY STATEMENT AND ACTION PLAN

The Cabinet received a report from the Air Quality Task and Finish Group.

The purpose of this report was to present the findings of the Air Quality Task and Finish Group and recommendations made.

Councillor Sandford, Chairman of the Air Quality Task and Finish Group, introduced the report and advised that the group had been commissioned in late 2018 to undertake the review. The work had taken longer than expected, but Members felt that for such an important piece of work this was necessary in order for the review to be thorough. The review was led by Members in a truly cross-party manner. It was noted that Peterborough did not currently have any exceedances in any aspects of air quality, though with the city's rapid expansion this could change. It was also noted that for some types of pollution, there was not considered to be any safe level.

The Members of the Task and Finish Group noted that they had wished to liaise with the Road Haulage Association, however, the Association had not elected to attend any meetings of the Group, instead providing a brief paragraph for the report. This was felt by the Group to be a missed opportunity.

It was felt by Members of the Group that the review had been comprehensive and, should the recommendations set out in the report be implemented, would provide benefits not just in relation to air quality but to the Council's ongoing Climate Emergency goals as well.

Cabinet debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- The Task and Finish Group were congratulated on their work, which was felt to be very thorough and valuable.
- As well as the Climate Change, the recommendations put forward had synergies with the Council's Active and Healthy Lifestyles programme.
- Idling taxis were noted as a specific problem. It was advised that the Task and Finish Group did discuss this, however, it was felt that there was little power to enforce any restrictions that could be imposed.
- Members suggested that a further recommendation be included into the report in relation to investigating the problem of idling taxis.
- It was noted that should the matter of pedestrianisation be pursued, additional parking would need to be provided, particularly within the central city area.
- Comment was made that more work should be carried out with planning developers to ensure that more trees were planted in urban areas.
- Members were advised that tree planting was considered in relation to larger planning applications and that tree planted would be considered as a whole within the Climate Emergency work.
- It was noted that pollutants contributing to decreases in air quality had changed in the past 50 years, from more industrial pollutants that were now more regulated, to becoming more about individual behaviour.
- Members were pleased with the work being carried out with schools, which was felt to be the best was to change future behaviours.
- It was advised that Travelchoice benefited from a range of funding sources, including the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority for the 'Bike It' scheme, the Department of Transport for 'Bikeability', and from the Council and local businesses. Therefore, work continuing depended on such funding streams also continuing.
- Walking buses were identified as one of the interventions schools could take up, however, these often depended on volunteers and maintaining momentum was difficult.
- Officers advised that the intention of recommendation four was to undertake a standalone piece of work on developing a licensing policy, which could then be reviewed by the Licensing Committee.
- Questions were raised on how the Council should balance it's prioritise and it was felt that the Climate Emergency work was of high value. However, if actions could be taken that would benefit more than one area these would be of key importance.
- It was noted that action taken in Bristol – which had several exceedances in its air quality levels – were set by an expert panel, based on observed effects.
- The Carbon Management Plan was to be presented to Council in March and while the initial focus of the plan would be on the Council itself, this would be extended to Peterborough as a whole.
- Suggestion was made in relation to using the river for travel in a more sustainable manner.
- Further comment was made in relation to investigating the use of 'living walls' in order to absorb air pollution.

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

1. Note the Task and Finish Group report at Appendix A.
2. Endorse the report and recommendations.
3. Request officers to continue to investigate and report back to the Climate Change Working Group:
 - i) whether any further progress can be made in relation to reducing air pollution caused by taxis idling at the station or at ranks elsewhere.

- ii) The level and type of tree and hedge planting which is included on new developments in the city and the potential use of 'living walls' to combat pollution.
- iii) whether greater use could be made of the city's river through, for example, the use of water taxis for commuting.

STRATEGIC DECISIONS

54. COUNCIL TAXBASE 2020/21 AND COLLECTION FUND DECLARATION 2019/20

The Cabinet received a report in relation to the Council Tax Base for 2020/21 and the Collection Fund declaration for 2019/20. The purpose of this report was for Cabinet to consider the tax base and Collection fund balances in order for council tax and business rates balances to be used in setting the Council's overall budget, and to notify other affected authorities for the same purpose.

The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report and advised that the report was an annual statutory report, with major precepting bodies to be notified of proposals by 31 January. It was advised that Peterborough City Council had seen a significant increase in the collection of council tax. It was noted that the council tax base would be a key contributor in any local government funding review.

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

1. Propose the calculation of the Council Tax Base for 2020/21 set at a level of 59,093.47 Band D equivalent properties based on the existing council tax support scheme uprated to 32%;
2. Note the estimated position on the Collection Fund in respect of Council Tax as at 31 March 2020 being:
£0.556m surplus
3. Note the estimated position on the Collection Fund in respect of Business Rates as at 31 March 2020 being:
£1.960m surplus
4. Delegate to the Acting Corporate Director Resources authority for approving the final estimated position on the collection fund balance as at 31st March 2020 for both council tax and business rates.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The Council Tax Base could be set at a higher or lower level. However, this could have the effect of either inflating unnecessarily the amount of Council Tax to be set or setting the tax at a level insufficient to meet the Council's budget requirements. A similar position could arise if the surplus or deficit were set at a higher or lower level.

The calculation and return of the information included in the NNDR1 is a statutory requirement which can be formally delegated to an officer. As with council tax if the amount of business rates estimated to be collected is increased or reduced or the surplus or deficit is set at a higher or lower level then the amount of income available to the council will change with the consequent effect on service provision or council tax levels.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

This report covers calculations that are all prescribed by regulations with the effect that no other options need to be considered.

55. **ASSET INVESTMENT ACQUISITION STRATEGY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Cabinet received a report on the Councils Asset Investment Acquisition Strategy and Asset Management Plan.

The purpose of this report was to set out how the Council ensured its assets were properly maintained and the rules by which the Council can purchase assets in the future. These strategies were updated on a yearly basis as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report and advised that once the Asset Investment Acquisition Strategy and Asset Management Plan were in place they would fall within the remit of the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Commercial Strategy and Investments. However, currently they were to be included as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The two documents ensured that the Council's assets were maintained properly and set out rules for purchasing new assets. The documents had also been updated to reflect changes to legislation in relation to how local authorities can make investments. Further updates were expected in order to address the Climate Emergency declared by the Council.

Cabinet debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- It was advised that one of the matters considered when making an investment was how long the Council would hold it and what the exit strategy would be.
- Such investments were often financed, Members were told, from the public loans board, for which the interest rate increased this year. Other funding streams would be considered for future investments.
- It was noted that Government guidance limited investment in property to within 22 miles of the local area, though a small percentage of authorities invested in properties outside of this zone. It was felt that the public loans interest increase was an attempt to stop such investment.
- Members were advised that the 'one public estate concept' related to the manner in which Peterborough City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire district councils, Cambridgeshire Clinical Commissioning Groups, and local hospital trusts came together to organise their assets in a joined up approach.
- The expected return on investments was considered at the business case stage. It was advised, however, that this was difficult for certain classes of investment at the current time.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to note the Asset Acquisition and Asset Management Plan before they are approved as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) at Full Council in March 2020.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

This report and Strategy are presented to the Cabinet to provide the opportunity to review the approach being applied in the Asset Acquisition Strategy and Asset Management plans in advance of it being presented to Full Council in March 2020. In addition on the 27th January 2020, in line with best practice, it is presented to Audit Committee to consider these strategies prior to full approval by Council.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

These strategies have to be updated on a yearly basis. This report is part of that update process.

MONITORING ITEMS

56. OUTCOME OF PETITIONS

The Cabinet received a report in relation to the outcome of the submission of e-petitions, the presentation of petitions to Council officers, and the presentation of petitions at Council meetings.

The purpose of this report was to update the Cabinet on the progress being made in response to petitions submitted to the Council.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to note the actions taken in respect of petitions.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

As the petitions presented in the report had been dealt with by Cabinet Members or officers, it was appropriate that the action was reported to Cabinet.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

There had been no alternative options considered.

Chairman
10:00am – 11.02am
13 January 2020