

**MINUTES OF THE SHAREHOLDER CABINET COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT 10:00PM ON
WEDNESDAY 15 DECEMBER 2021
VIA ZOOM**

Members Present: Councillors Allen, Councillor Coles, Councillor Ayres, Councillor Cereste, Councillor Howard

14. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Walsh, with Councillor Howard attending as substitute.

15. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received

16. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 13 September 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2021 were noted as a true and accurate record, subject to the correction of “University Peterborough” to “Opportunity Peterborough” at Minute Item 7 ‘Declarations of Interest’.

17. NPS Peterborough 2021/22 Business Plan

The Shareholder Cabinet Committee received a report in relation to the NPS Peterborough Limited Business Plan for 2021/22.

The purpose of this report was to provide the Committee with the NPS Peterborough Business Plan. The report provided the strategic plan for NPS Peterborough and considers how it would support the financial challenges ahead.

The Alex Gee, Operations Director, NPS Property Consultants, addressed the Shareholder Cabinet Committee and presented the information contained with the slideshow at Appendix 1 to the report.

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

- Properties on Saville Road and Northminster House would be reviewed in order to bring this arrangements to an end, as they did not benefit the Council.

At this point, Councillor Cereste left the meeting.

- Members were advised that, in the confines of operating as a Teckal company, NPS Peterborough could only carry out certain work for outside of the local authority arena. To do so would require a fundamental change in structure, as part of the Norse Group, rather than NPS Peterborough.
- When referring to moving away from a Joint Venture model, this specifically related to managing risk should the Council wish to stop work with the Joint Venture.
- Members were advised that the retail units owned by the Council were

operating at 98% fully let.

- It was confirmed that work was currently ongoing to establish priorities within maintained schools to aid in decarbonisation. The Council may also have responsibilities in relation to academy schools where the freehold for the site was Council-owned.
- In relation to the Council's farm estate, for which conversations were now ongoing to agree its disposal, discussions were being had with the university to provide some form of education on some of the sites going forward.
- Members were advised that a large amount of work was going on in relation to strategic asset management, both carefully and in consideration of the Council's financial position. There was no rush to divest the Council's assets, but valuations would be progressed in order to formulate a cohesive strategy and to ensure that any future divestment was carried out in the proper manner.

The Shareholder Cabinet Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the contents of the NPS Peterborough Ltd Business Plan 2021/22.
2. Note the comments on the Corporate Director Resources in respect of the future direction of the overall Property function in respect of the Council budget position.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The Committee were asked to note the report and associated documents and raise any queries or comments.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The council had a complicated property setup with delivery of various aspects by NPS Peterborough, Aragon, Housing Services, Regeneration and Schools Property. The whole service area would be reviewed as part of the 2022/23 budget process to test if the present range of delivery options were fit for purpose and could deliver the Council's requirements within the reducing resources envelope.

18. Peterborough Limited Strategic Report 2020-2021

The Shareholder Cabinet Committee received a report in relation to Peterborough Limited and its strategic report for 2020-2021.

The purpose of this report was to update the Shareholder Cabinet Committee on the Peterborough Limited Business Plan 2020-2023, through the company's annual strategic report 2020/21. The report would also set out the company's key achievements and milestones over the last eight months.

The Kitran Eastman, Managing Director Peterborough Limited, addressed the Shareholder Cabinet Committee and advised that the Business Plan had previously been agreed two years ago, just prior to the first COVID-19 lockdown. Throughout the challenges of lockdown, Aragon kept running, and kept service and vehicles running. Members were advised that the organisation's financial position had improved from losses in the first year, to be able to report a £400,000 profit and to be able to pay off a significant amount of the set up loan from the Council.

The Committee were further advised that staff levels at the leisure facilities had increased from 350 to 650. It was emphasised that Peterborough Limited operated as one company, with staff from all areas supporting essential services throughout lockdown. Members' attention was drawn to the challenging wage market, with Peterborough Limited moving away from minimum wage. Training for staff was

ongoing, however this was a long-term programme, and it was recognised by staff that Peterborough Limited offered a wide range of benefits.

Finally, the new fleet of waste collection vehicles had been purchased, which would reduce maintenance costs in the upcoming years. There were no electric vehicles available in the specific type required, though Peterborough Limited had committed to purchasing a fully electric fleet by 2030.

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

- Members noted that levels of fly-tipping had increased nationally since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. While clean-up services were efficient for the resource levels available, public expectations would need to be managed.
- It was advised that work was being undertaken to increase levels of enforcement in this area.
- In relation to the introduction of an electric waste collection fleet by 2030, Members noted that no decision would be taken on precisely what type of vehicles until two 2028, in order for the new vehicles to be as up to date as possible.
- It was considered the autotomised vehicles may be useful, though may not be appropriate for some of the local road networks.
- It was further noted that, when the authority was working with developers, emphasis should be made on the use of underground waste collection banks, which would save a significant amount of money for the Council in the long-term.
- Concern was raised about a potentially aging workforce, with a number of retirements in the future. Members were reassured that the training programme for new staff was ongoing, though was approximately a year behind where wanted to be.
- Comment was made that education through the school system about fly-tipping would be beneficial.
- It was noted that the leisure services side of the Peterborough Limited had been brought on as an annual management fee for the past and current year.
- It was expected that leisure centre membership figures would be back to original levels in January 2023, seven months ahead of plan, though it was acknowledged that much depended on January 2022.
- Members were reassured that the new Operations Director appointment had the commercial experience to take the business forward, alongside an experienced and focused team.

The Shareholder Cabinet Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the information within the report and Appendix 2, Peterborough Limited Strategic Report 2021/22.
2. Note the appointment of a New Operations Director for Peterborough Limited.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

It was recommended that the Shareholder Cabinet Committee noted the information within the report, and the appointment of the new Operations Director, as part of its governance function for the Company.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Committee may have wished to request additional information or give additional feedback in key areas.

Chairman
10:00am – 11:18am
15 December 2021