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MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD 5 December 2012

The Mayor – Councillor George Simons

Present:

Councillors Allen, Arculus, Ash, Casey, Cereste, Davidson, Elsey, Fitzgerald, Fletcher, Forbes, JA Fox, JR Fox, Goodwin, Harper, Harrington, Hiller, Holdich, Jamil, Johnson, Khan, Kreling, Lamb, Lane, Lee, Maqbool, McKean, Miners, Murphy, Nadeem, Nawaz, Over, Peach, Rush, Sanders, Saltmarsh, Sandford, Scott, Seaton, Serluca, Shabbir, Shaheed, Sharp, Shearman, Simons, Stokes, Swift, Sylvester, Thacker, Thulbourn, Todd and Walsh.

Following prayers, a minutes' silence was held for Mr Bob Burke, a former Councillor.

The Mayor stated that a request to take photographs during the meeting had been received. This request was approved by Council.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dalton, Day, Fower, Knowles, Martin and North.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Meetings Held on 10 October 2012

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2012 were agreed and signed as an accurate record.

4. Mayors Announcement Report

The Mayor stated that there had been a correction made to the report. This was to show the Deputy Mayor as in attendance at the Full Council meeting held on 10 October 2012.

Members noted the updated report outlining the Mayor's engagements for the period commencing 2 October 2012, including the correction as outlined.

The Mayor addressed the meeting and stated that the homecoming of the First Battalion of the Royal Anglia Regiment and the Remembrance Service events had been a great success. Thanks were also extended to Members of the Disability Forum who had volunteered to pilot the new seating arrangements in the Council Chamber.

The Christmas Lights switch on had also been a great success and over 3000 smile badges had been sold to help the Mayor's charities.

Christmas wishes were extended to all present and the Mayor's Chaplain, the Reverend Gill Jessop of All Saints Church Paston, was congratulated on the civic services undertaken at Church throughout the year.

5. Leader's Announcements

The Leader addressed the meeting and had the following announcements:

- Ms Estelle Thain, a Social Worker from Peterborough, had been pronounced Social Worker of the year for her outstanding dedication and commitment to helping vulnerable children and in particular for her handling of sensitive protection child cases.

Full Council congratulated Ms Thain on her achievement and for all her hard work undertaken on behalf of the children of the city.

- The Leader expressed his gratitude on behalf of all Members to Mr Malcolm Newsam, the Interim Director of Children's Services, for all of the work he had undertaken throughout the year. Mr Newsam was due to leave the Council on 21 December 2012 and Ms Sue Westcott had been appointed as the replacement Director of Children's Services.
- The Primark store opening had been a huge success and the Christmas decorations located in Cathedral Square, and across the centre, were a credit to the city.
- Discussions were underway in relation to filling the remainder of the empty shops situated along Bridge Street and in Cathedral Square.

Group Leaders replied to the Leader's announcements and the following points were raised:

- Councillor Khan queried when the changes to Bridge Street were due to take place.
- Councillor Shearman stated that Ms Jodie Wallis, a second Social Worker from Peterborough, had been shortlisted for the newly qualified Social Worker award and although Ms Wallis had not won the award, the nomination was further credit to the Children's Services Department.
- Councillor Sandford endorsed the positive comments made in relation to the Children's Services Department and the Social Workers who had been nominated and won awards. Councillor Sandford further stated that the Primark store would be a positive boost for the city and that the Christmas decorations in Cathedral Square enhanced the area well and asked that the Leader look to ensure that the Square looked attractive all year round.

In response to comments and queries raised by the Group Leaders, the Leader stated that the upgrade to Bridge Street was progressing well. All of the maintenance work had been completed and resurfacing work had commenced and was due for completion around June 2013. Furthermore, focus would remain on Cathedral Square to ensure it remained a vibrant and attractive place within the centre. If Members had any specific ideas for the Square then these could be considered.

6. Chief Executive's Announcements

There were no announcements from the Chief Executive.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT TIME

7. Questions with Notice by Members of the Public

Three questions had been raised by members of the public, these were in relation to:

1. The suitability of the contractor for the wind/solar farms;
2. The returns on the investments on the wind/solar farms; and
3. The future plans for the remaining 2100 acres outside of the 900 acres being consulted upon.

A summary of the question and answers raised within agenda item 7 is attached at **Appendix A** to these minutes.

Councillor John Fox sought clarification as to how the order of questions was determined. The Solicitor to the Council advised that the order was determined by a random ballot, of which all Councillors were notified and able attend if they so wished.

8. Questions with Notice by Members of the Council Relating to Ward Matters to the Cabinet Members and to Committee Chairmen

Questions relating to Ward matters were raised and taken as read in respect of the following:

1. Measures being taken to alleviate traffic levels around the Brotherhood Retail Park;
2. The road crossing point at Norwood School;
3. The future of the land and building at Welland House;
4. The replacement of food waste bins due to damage; and
5. Flooding at Tescos on Welland Road.

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

6. Support for Werrington Neighbourhood Council;
7. The state of the lease transfer of John Mansfield to Innova;
8. The use of a bus lane for congestion on Goodwin Walk;
9. Why some rubbish bins were not collected until 7.00pm at night and what could be done to resolve this;
10. The procurement process and value for money for the wind and solar contracts; and
11. Updates on the Smart car being used to identify parking offences.

A summary of all questions and answers raised within agenda item 8 are attached at **Appendix A** to these minutes.

9. Questions with Notice by Members of the Council to representatives of the Police and Fire Authorities

There were no questions received for the Council's representatives of the Fire Authority.

The Solicitor to the Council advised Members that the current provisions within the Council's Constitution allowed for questions to the Council's representative on the Police Authority. With the election of a Police and Crime Commissioner this situation had changed and work was due to be undertaken to determine appropriate arrangements going forward. Members would be updated in due course.

Councillor Lee stated that questions should be asked and responses issued from the new Police and Crime Commissioners Office. The Solicitor to the Council advised that she was happy to take this request back.

Councillor Khan queried whether the Police and Crime Commissioner could be called to one of the Council's Scrutiny Committees and if so, what was the process for doing so.

The Solicitor to the Council advised that the issues raised were still under consideration and updates to Members would follow in due course once procedures had been finalised.

Councillor Sandford requested the Solicitor to the Council make a specific request to the Police and Crime Commissioner that a mechanism was to be put in place so that Members of the Council had an opportunity to put questions forward. Councillor Lee supported this request.

10. Petitions Submitted by Members or Residents

Councillor McKean submitted a petition containing 465 signatures, requesting traffic calming and deterring measures along the entrances to Eye, namely Thorney Road, Crowland Road, Eyebury Road and past Eye Primary School, to stop the rat run traffic passing through the village rather than using the A47 bypass.

Following the submission of petitions, Councillor Khan moved that two procedure rules be suspended relating to the time allowed for questions during the Executive Business Time item on the agenda. It was requested that the Council agreed to:

1. Suspend the time limit of 20 minutes for questions with notice to the Executive, which could be found at procedure number 14.2;
2. Suspend the time limit of 40 minutes for questions without notice on the Record of Executive Decisions which could be found at the procedure rule 14.3.1;
3. Allow a total of 90 minutes for these items to be considered; and
4. Authorise the Solicitor to the Council to amend the Constitution going forward to reflect this change.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Jamil.

Councillor Sandford moved an amendment to the motion to delete the wording at part 4, authorising the Solicitor to the Council to amend the Constitution going forward. This amendment was seconded by Councillor Lane.

During debate it was commented that it would be more suitable to discuss such changes to Standing Orders between Group Leaders outside of the meeting. Councillor Sandford withdrew his amendment.

Councillor Khan withdrew the motion to amend the times allowed for questions during the Executive Business Time.

EXECUTIVE BUSINESS TIME

11. Questions with Notice to the Leader and Members of the Executive

Questions to the Leader and Members of the Executive were raised, with all of the questions, being taken as read in respect of the following:

1. Continuing the legacy of the Bob Burke music awards;
2. Remuneration paid by Blue Sky Peterborough to Council appointed Directors;

3. Ensuring the standards were maintained for Welland House residents, following transferral to the private sector;
4. Webcasting Council meetings;
5. The future of building services in Enterprise;
6. How many people would be affected by the Council Tax Scheme change?
7. How to deal with the waste that was causing blight to allotments; and
8. Could charging for care homes be made cheaper?

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

9. Application details for the local mortgage scheme;
10. Why were some areas still subject to weekly bin collections?
11. Should primary schools remain the responsibility of the Authority and their Governors;
12. Should ICT equipment be removed if it was not being utilised properly?
13. Should more support be given to Armed Forces Day?
14. Changes to the current system of governance;
15. What proportion of the £740k extra money, put into the trees budget for the forthcoming year had been allocated for tree and woodland planting?

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

12. Questions without Notice on the Record of Executive Decisions

Members received and noted a report summarising:

1. Decisions taken at the Cabinet Meeting held on 5 November 2012;
2. Use of the Council's call-in mechanism, which had not been invoked since the last 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 5 October 2012 to 16 November 2012.

Questions were asked about the following:

Older People's Accommodation Strategy – 2012: Consultation Report on the Proposal to close Greenwood House and Welland House

Councillor Murphy requested clarification as to why the Council had chosen not to take up an independent clinical psychologists report on the possible effects the closure would have on the elderly residents and the potential for early deaths. Councillor Fitzgerald advised that the Director of Adult Social Care had taken the appropriate course of action and individuals had been assessed on a case by case basis by both Social and Healthcare professionals.

Councillor Miners sought clarification as to how many Councillors had managed to exercise their vote when reaching the decision to close the two care homes. Councillor Cereste stated that the proper due process had been followed which had involved all Councillors.

Councillor Shearman queried whether one of the reasons for closing the homes was due to the changes in the eligibility criteria. Councillor Fitzgerald stated that the two issues were not related.

Councillor Davidson sought assurance that the individuals concerned would be appropriately assessed and that their progress would be monitored and regular inspections carried out. Councillor Fitzgerald confirmed that all assessments and monitoring would be undertaken as a matter of course.

Development of Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Panels (Solar Farms) and Wind Turbines

Councillor Lane sought clarification as to whether the contract was likely to be awarded to Mears, or whether the contract would be going out to tender. The decision notice also stated that the contract was for panels/systems up to 5mw only. Councillor Cereste responded that negotiations were currently being undertaken with Mears and in relation to the wattage of the panels, Councillor Cereste could write to interested Councillors providing further clarification on the flexibility of the contract.

Councillor Ash queried whether the utilisation of industrial sites had been considered, rather than using agricultural land. Councillor Cereste responded that opportunities for placing solar panels onto buildings were being explored. Twenty schools had been commissioned for panels already, and more were being looked into. All council buildings had photovoltaic panels where it was commercially viable.

Councillor Sandford queried how the community fund would be calculated, ensuring it was both reasonable and proportionate. Councillor Cereste stated that a sum would be calculated that would go directly towards the community. Meetings had already been undertaken with Members of the Parish Council and further work would be undertaken with the Parish Council and members of the community to set up a board which would be responsible for looking after any funds directly paid to the community.

Collective Energy Switching Scheme

Councillor Peach questioned how many people had registered for the scheme. Councillor Cereste advised that around 3500 people had registered for the scheme in Peterborough.

Councillor Shearman queried whether a communication could be sent out to the elderly residents of the city to ensure they were aware of the scheme. Councillor Cereste stated that this was an important issue that needed to be dealt with and discussions had taken place as to how more people could be reached.

Management and Operation of Dogsthorpe Household Recycling Centre

Councillor Ash queried whether the contract incorporated the recycling of shredded paper. Councillor Lee responded and stated that this had not been part of his consideration when signing the decision notice, however he would discuss this point further with Councillor Ash following the meeting.

Organic and Food Waste Treatment Services Contract

Councillor Murphy queried whether there was an expectation that government departments' money could be used in order to introduce the weekly bin collections for the food waste bins. Councillor Lee stated that a bid had been submitted but there had been no answer to date. However, this would not have formed part of the decision.

Councillor Ash sought clarification of how the lots within the contract would be affected if a food digester was built locally. Councillor Lee stated that in awarding the contract the possibility of a future facility being available would not have been considered. However the contracts were for a time limited period for that very reason enabling new operators to have the chance to bid for future contracts.

All Saints Junior School – Extension of Age Range

Councillor Shearman queried whether the Cabinet Member was aware that the contractor, Carillion, and/or their sub-contractors, had been referred to a black list before employing staff on their sites and could he ensure that they would not continue such practices going forward in Peterborough. Councillor Holdich requested that Councillor Shearman provided the question to him in writing and stated that he would follow the query up.

Willow Festival 2013

Councillor Murphy sought confirmation from the Cabinet Member that the money would be spent improving infrastructure, particularly in relation to the toilet facilities and furthermore and whether the Cabinet Member as aware that there were external funding sources available for the provision of such events. It was also to be noted that council offices had been made available in the Chief Executives Department for young people who were planning a festival next year and that cross working between these various organisations should also be explored. Councillor Seaton advised that the Willow Festival was an important event and he would pick up the issue of toilet facilities to ensure that they were appropriate. In relation to grant funding, he would look into this further and he would also be happy to look into the possible synergies between the young people planning their festival.

13. Executive Recommendations

(a) Peterborough Planning Policies Development Plan Document (DPD)

Cabinet, at its meeting of 5 November 2012, received a report following Council's decision on 7 December 2011 to approve the Peterborough Planning Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) (Proposed Submission Version) for the purposes of public consultation and submission to the Secretary of State. Such consultation had taken place and the DPD had been submitted to the Secretary of State in April 2012. Subsequently an independent Planning Inspector, appointed by the Secretary of State, had carried out a public examination into the document. The Inspector had sent his report to the Chief Executive setting out his conclusions on the DPD. The report had sought Cabinet's approval to recommend the Planning Policies DPD to Council for adoption. After considering the report, Cabinet had agreed the recommendations.

Councillor Hiller, the Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning moved the recommendation that Council adopt the Peterborough Planning Policies Development Plan Document, incorporating modifications as recommended by the Inspector and other minor editorial modifications. This was seconded by Councillor Serluca, who reserved her right to speak.

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

Council adopt the Peterborough Planning Policies Development Plan Document, incorporating modifications as recommended by the Inspector (Main Modifications) and other minor editorial modifications (Additional Modifications).

COUNCIL BUSINESS TIME

14. Committee Recommendations

(a) Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles

Councillor Thacker introduced the report and moved the recommendation that Council approve and adopt the Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles as Peterborough City Council's formal three year Statement under Section 349 of the Gambling Act 2005. This was seconded by Councillor Harper, who reserved his right to speak.

Members debated the recommendations and it was noted that the report stated that there was no official definition of 'vulnerable people' which was incorrect and furthermore the document referenced the 'Disabled Persons Forum', which was also incorrect.

Councillor Thacker stated that the queries would be looked into and the document amended accordingly.

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

Council approved and adopted the Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles as Peterborough City Council's formal three year Statement under Section 349 of the Gambling Act 2005, with any amendments to be made accordingly.

15. Notices of Motion

1. Councillor Harrington moved the following motion:

Given the absence of any detailed alternative illustrated schemes being presented to the Council, other than to install wind turbines and Photovoltaic Panels on 900 acres of prime agricultural land, I ask that this Council urges Cabinet to overturn its outline strategy of July 2012 to develop renewable energy parks at 3 council owned agricultural sites and replaces that strategy with an alternative scheme which includes sites not requiring the use of grades 1&2 agricultural land, which could produce the same financial and environmental outcomes for the Council without the consequences of the loss of livelihoods for tenant farmers and without having a damaging effect on a viable local industry.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Sanders, who reserved his right to speak.

Following a query from Councillor Sandford in relation to Councillor Harrington's motion being of a similar nature to one previously submitted within a six month period, the Mayor advised that he had taken advice and had allowed the motion.

Councillor Seaton addressed the meeting and outlined a number of facts relating to Cabinet's decision of July 2012 to approve the outline strategy.

Members debated the motion and raised points including:

- The Council had a duty to ensure that high quality agricultural land was used for that particular purpose;
- Would the lifespan of these installations be as long as the tenant farmer leases for the land?
- The Council did not have to use this particular land, there was other land available;
- Renewable energy alternatives needed to be explored;
- The land was owned by the Council and it had a duty to provide the best services to the residents of Peterborough;
- Grid connections were available at all three sites, with the Newborough site only needing to be upgraded;
- The first priority for the Council was to provide services for all residents of the city;

Following debate, Councillor Sanders exercised his right to speak and stated that the land was valuable Grade 1 and Grade 2 food growing land and the use of this land for anything other than this purpose went against the Local Plan and question whether the scheme would demonstrate value for money. There had been no parallel scheme to

consider and certain financial information had been withheld throughout the scrutiny process.

Councillor Harrington exercised his right of reply as the mover of the original motion and in so doing stated that the removal of a prime asset, to be replaced by another prime asset, was wrong and that the future of food production was a priority.

Following debate, all Members agreed to a recorded vote being taken. Members voted as follows:

Councillors for: Ash, Fletcher, Forbes, JR Fox, JA Fox, Harrington, Jamil, Johnson, Khan, Lane, Miners, Murphy, Saltmarsh, Sanders, Shabbir, Sharp, Shearman, Swift, Sylvester and Thulbourn

Councillors against: Allen, Arculus, Casey, Cereste, Davidson, Eley, Fitzgerald, Goodwin, Harper, Hiller, Holdich, Kreling, Lamb, Lee, Maqbool, McKean, Nadeem, Nawaz, Over, Peach, Rush, Sandford, Scott, Seaton, Serluca, Shaheed, Stokes, Thacker, Todd and Walsh

Councillors abstaining: Simons.

The motion was **DEFEATED** (20 for, 30 against and 1 abstention).

2. Councillor Sandford moved the following motion:

That this Council:

1. Notes that the Localism Act (2011) has given local authorities much more freedom to adopt systems of governance which suit their needs, including an option to revert to a committee system;
2. Notes that the current leader and cabinet model (such as that operated in Peterborough) has been criticised for putting too much power in the hands of a few councillors, under utilising the skills and experience of councillors not in the cabinet and making it difficult to effectively challenge decisions; and
3. Asks the Council Solicitor to convene a meeting of the Constitutional Review Group (including representatives of all groups on the Council) to consider the benefits or otherwise of changing to a committee system or some other model and to report back to a meeting of Council on its findings not later than April 2013.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Shaheed.

Members debated the motion and raised points including:

- The current system allowed for all Members to have input prior to a decision being made by Cabinet or a Cabinet Member;
- The decision making process would be slowed if the committee system was implemented;
- The return to a committee system would mean better democracy and better outcomes for Peterborough;
- The Scrutiny Committee Officer support was professional, accurate and helpful and the scrutiny system had improved;
- It was felt that democratic debate was stifled on certain items;
- The committee system was a more beneficial system and there was more inclusion;
- The Cabinet System worked more efficiently;

- There were many opportunities for Members to challenge decisions and a number of additional meetings had been convened to further discuss contentious issues.

Councillor Sandford exercised his right of reply as the mover of the original motion stating that the motion was to investigate proposals only and in doing so, make an informed choice as to how to progress the system forward.

A vote was taken (7 for, 27 against and 9 abstentions) and the motion was **DEFEATED**.

16. Reports and Recommendations

a) Updates to the Constitution – Authority to Issue Fixed Penalty Notices

Councillor Walsh introduced and moved the recommendations that Council approve an amendment to the Constitution to permit the Executive Director of Operations to enter into arrangements with Cambridgeshire Constabulary, permitting its Officers to issue fixed penalty notices on behalf of Peterborough City Council in respect of littering offences. This was seconded by Councillor Harper, who reserved his right to speak.

Members debated the recommendations and it was noted that the inclusion of further enforcement issues such as parking on grass verges and dog fouling, had not been incorporated into the amendments.

Councillor Hiller commented that the recommendations had come directly from the Police; the recommendations had not been imposed by the Council.

Councillor Harper exercised his right to speak and stated that the community needed to partly take responsibility.

Councillor Walsh stated that further discussions would be held with the Police in order to explore the possibility of granting them further enforcement powers.

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

Approve the amendment to the Constitution to permit the Executive Director of Operations to enter into arrangements with Cambridgeshire Constabulary, permitting its Officers to issue fixed penalty notices on behalf of Peterborough City Council in respect of the relevant offences.

b) Peterborough Children and Families Joint Commissioning Board

Councillor Scott introduced and moved the recommendations that Council agree to amend the Major Policy Framework and remove the Children and Young People's Plan, which was no longer a statutory requirement, and to replace the Peterborough Children's Trust Board with a Children and Families Joint Commissioning Board. This was seconded by Councillor Goodwin, who reserved her right to speak.

Members debated the recommendations and concerns were highlighted regarding the meeting not being held in public.

Councillor Scott stated that the Children's Trust Board had previously met in private, however she was committed to openness and she would write to Members in due course about transparency of the new Board and how it could interact with Scrutiny.

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

That Council agreed:

1. To amend the Major Policy Framework and remove the Children and Young People's Plan, which was no longer a statutory requirement; and
2. To replace the Peterborough Children's Trust Board with a Children and Families Joint Commissioning Board.

c) Additional Meeting of Full Council – 30 January 2013

Councillor Seaton introduced the report and moved the recommendation that Council agree for an additional ordinary meeting of Council to be held on 30 January 2013. This was seconded by Councillor Holdich, who reserved his right to speak.

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

That Council agreed for an additional ordinary meeting of Council to be held on 30 January 2013.

The Mayor
19.00 – 22.20

FULL COUNCIL 5 DECEMBER 2012

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questions were received under the following categories:

<u>COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT TIME</u>	
7	<u>Questions with notice by members of the public</u>
1.	<p>Question from Alex Terry</p> <p>To Councillor Cereste, Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Business Engagement and Environment Capital:</p> <p>Has the cabinet ensured that the ambitious plans for Peterborough Energy Farms are going to be built by a firm who have the experience to best minimise the impact upon the local community and to offer best value for council tax payers?</p> <p>Councillor Cereste responded:</p> <p>With regards offering best value for the Council, the Council let an installation contract to the market at the relevant time in accordance with the OJEU Process. This was open to the entire market and it was openly stated that it would apply to ground mounted opportunities. The Council only went to the market in October 2011 and it considers it an inappropriate use of Council funds to re-bid or let a new installation contract at this stage, given that it is only a year old.</p> <p>Furthermore, as part of the Value for Money condition of the OJEU process and taking into account the falling price of solar panels globally, Council is re-negotiating with Mears the installation prices for the various solar projects that are pending. The actual cost of the solar farms proposed, as stated in the October Cabinet report, is within the limits stated in the OJEU contract. Indeed the fact that Council can realise solar farms with larger capacity for the same cost a year on, is a testament to the Council's pursuit of value for money. In terms of Mears' financial solvency, the contract value of the project represents only some 6% of their total turnover.</p> <p>The build out of any schemes by Mears will be in accordance with the specification of the Council. It will be designed to minimise the impact on the local community.</p> <p>Alex Terry asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>Can the Cabinet explain why do they think it acceptable to use for their three new, huge, energy farms the successful bidder from the October 2011 procurement process for rooftop solar installations rather than seeking a new tender considering that the maximum wattage mentioned in the Council's contract with Mears is five megawatts and £200m is allocated for the contract and in the most recent 5 November report to Cabinet, it is claimed that an 84 megawatt installation by the same contractor will only cost £340m?</p> <p>Councillor Cereste responded:</p> <p>I have already said specifically that the contract was also for ground mounted</p>

	<p>installations and that within the contract it enables us to renegotiate the costs, so there isn't any way that it will cost £3.36b and you can be absolutely certain that this Council will do absolutely everything it can to get the very best value for this city and we will continue to do so.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Question from Chris Stirling</p> <p>To Councillor Cereste, Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Business Engagement and Environment Capital:</p> <p>On the basis of the figures the Council have supplied the return on investment of the scheme being put forward for planning permission would attract less return than putting the money in a high street bank account. On the basis of this, how can the Council justify the financial justification that was presented to Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees in the past month?</p> <p>Councillor Cereste responded:</p> <p>In accordance with the Council's Treasury Management Strategy (TMS), approved each year as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the Council has been running down its cash reserves in order to fund its Capital Programme. This means that surplus cash arises from cash flow movements only, and therefore investment activity is at a minimum. The Strategy was implemented in context of the continuing Eurozone crisis and uncertainty within the UK economy, which has seen British banks having their credit ratings downgraded, which in turn has affected the Council's lending list. The Council is operating a restrictive lending list, where surplus cash is only invested for the short term with Barclays (maximum £5m), other Local Authorities, and the Debt Management Office (DMO). This Strategy has been adopted in order to maximise the security and liquidity of the Council's cash deposits, rather than investment returns.</p> <p>It should also be noted that it is unlawful for the Council to borrow monies purely to invest and make a return, and as such the Council will not engage in such activity.</p> <p>Therefore in answer to the above question in order to mitigate treasury risk the Council is investing its cash balances to fund the capital programme, and borrowing is only undertaken when required to fund the capital programme. Thus there is no opportunity for the Council to invest in high interest savings account as this would involve borrowing for revenue purposes which is unlawful, but also against the Council's agreed investment strategy.</p> <p>Given the bank failures of recent times and continued uncertainty around banking regulation and solvency, I question whether the high street really would be less risky.</p> <p>Chris Stirling asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>Given the differences in investment in the wind turbine scheme and solar scheme, would the Councillor agree that if planning permission for the wind turbines is not granted next year, that this scheme would be no longer financially viable?</p> <p>Councillor Cereste responded:</p> <p>No I don't agree.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Question from Dawn Clipston</p> <p>To Councillor Cereste, Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Business Engagement and Environment Capital:</p>

	<p>Councillor Cereste, in your report of July 2012, you originally identified 3000 acres for this proposal. The October 2012 report now details 900 acres. Could you please clarify exactly what are your short, medium and long term plans for the agricultural land totalling approximately 2100 acres outside of the 900 acres currently being proposed and consulted upon?</p> <p>Councillor Cereste responded:</p> <p>There are no other plans to develop out the rest of the council's agricultural land. We will work with the tenant farmers if they wish to work with us to help them find investment opportunities so that they can improve their sustainability and profitability, because the council recognises that they are a valuable part of the local economy. However as a Council we continually review our property holdings including Farm Land and assets to identify a suitable future. In some cases this could include disposal.</p> <p>Dawn Clipston asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>Does the Local Authority not already have enough ongoing responsibility to its tenant farmers both in statute and morally as well as a responsibility to the council tax payers, it is increasingly recognised that that the best outcome for tenant farmers and council tax payers are achieved when local authorities manage their farm estates within the context of robust and comprehensive asset management plans? What is the city council going to be doing to develop such a plan for Peterborough and if nothing, surely that indicates that the city council is failing both its tenant farmers and council tax payers?</p> <p>Councillor Cereste responded:</p> <p>I am quite happy for me to write to you and confirm that there are no other plans to develop out the rest of the Council's agricultural land and yes I accept everything you say about us having to do the best for our assets and tenant farmers and the people of this city. And one of the things we also have to do for the people of this city is try to make sure that we buffer them from the increases in energy costs that we are seeing on a regular basis. The average family spends £67 per week on energy in this country and this local authority can do something to mitigate that problem, to stop people from being energy poor and try to help every single resident in this city live a better life and spend less money, and even have energy, as there is always the possibility that if they don't build all the plants they are supposed to build we will be having blackouts and we won't have the energy that we need. It may very well be that the planning authority decides that it is not to go ahead and that is something to be decided, but we as an authority have a duty of care not only to the tenant farmers but to everybody else in this city. I am very concerned about the tenant farmers and we will do everything that we can to do the very best by them.</p>
8	<p><u>Questions with notice by Members relating to ward matters to the Cabinet Members and to Committee Chairmen</u></p>
1.	<p>Question from Councillor Shaheed</p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Housing , Neighbourhoods and Planning:</p> <p>The new retail park at brotherhood has recently opened and, while providing a great shopping experience and economic boost, it has resulted in complaints from residents regarding the traffic issues. I've been quoted as saying that the levels of traffic have been exaggerated due to it being new and with it being near to Christmas. My quote stated that towards January/February time we should have a more accurate idea as to what the level of congestion might be. Should it remain to be the same as it is now are</p>

there any contingency plans to look at alternative road plans to alleviate those levels?

Councillor Hiller responded:

As Councillor Shaheed is quoted as stating in the local paper, it's not unusual for short term problems to occur when a large new retail development opens, and I agree with him completely. All Members will remember the Peterborough Garden Park, Eye, where we had traffic issues for the first few weekends after opening, traffic volumes however were soon substantially lower and there are currently very few problems there at all. The Member for Walton is also quoted as saying that he hasn't personally had any complaints regarding the traffic and neither have I or any of our Officers actually, if traffic problems do occur at specific times I imagine they will be problematic for vehicles exiting the park rather than drivers being inconvenienced along the main road. It should also be remember of course that we are in the Christmas shopping period.

Our Officers will review the situation in February, when I imagine that traffic levels generally will have returned to what they were before the new development. I will of course share that data with all the Walton ward Members.

It has to be remembered that this was indeed a large retail park before the new shops opened and whilst we have problems currently, we haven't had any at all over the last short period whilst the construction work was ongoing.

Councillor Shaheed asked the following supplementary question:

I believe the developer paid around £1m with regards to the POIS for the development, if it were to be found that the traffic situation did remain, would part of that funding be used in order to address that?

Councillor Hiller responded:

I can't guarantee that, however what I would guarantee is that we will look at the traffic level in February, well into the new year, and I'm more than happy to share that consultation and observations with the Ward Member.

2. Question from Councillor Fower

To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Housing , Neighbourhoods and Planning:

Gunthorpe Road continues to see year on year increases in traffic and problems of speeding, for example one police report showed one vehicle had been recorded travelling at 70 mph. With the housing development at Norwood, can the cabinet member please let me know whether there are any plans to introduce a crossing between Norwood School and the shops and if there are no plans, why not and what actions should local residents take to secure such a sensible road safety measure being introduced?

Councillor Hiller responded:

Firstly, let me reassure Councillor Fower that the safety of our children is paramount.

Nearby traffic counters indicate that traffic levels in the area have remained relatively static since 2006. The largest demand for a crossing here is at either end of the school day, when a safe crossing facility is provided by a school crossing patroller.

I am sure Members will appreciate that during these times of unprecedented financial austerity the Council's funds are limited and that decisions about where to prioritise

	<p>investment in highway improvements has to be based on robust and factual data. Decisions for engineering intervention are normally based on the 85th percentile (the speed at which 85% of people travel at or below) and not the highest recorded speed. Speed data shows that the 85th percentile at this site is well within the speed limit. Using this well tested methodology, other sites within the city have a greater safety need. However, should further funds become available then this request will be considered and I will ask the Neighborhood Manager to look at any potential alternative funding sources.</p> <p>When proposals are submitted for the Norwood development we will of course investigate that highway development improvements using POIS, or in the future CIL.</p> <p>There was no supplementary question as Councillor Fower had submitted his apologies for the meeting.</p>
3.	<p>Question from Councillor Saltmarsh</p> <p>To Councillor Seaton, Cabinet member for Resources:</p> <p>Noting Cabinet decision to close Welland House Residential Care Home can the Cabinet Member advise me of the future plans made regarding the use of the building and the site in view of the fact that the other residential care home in Dogsthorpe Ward "The Peverels" still remains empty and unused after its closure two years ago?</p> <p>Councillor Seaton responded:</p> <p>Now that the closure of Welland House has been confirmed, the Council will initially consider options for its use in support of Council objectives. Should it be decided that there is no internal use then the Council will look at suitable disposal options. Ward Members will be kept informed as to the options that are being considered.</p> <p>With regard to the sale of The Peverels, I believe Councillor Saltmarsh is aware that we also looked at whether that site should be used internally before deciding to sell it. She will know that options for redevelopment have been more limited than usual in view of the setting amongst existing supported housing and the many older or vulnerable people residing in this cul-de-sac. We have therefore had to be very sensitive and careful in our approach. However we have kept the Liberals fully advised of developments with disposal action now at an advanced stage and we hope to bring it to a conclusion shortly.</p> <p>Councillor Saltmarsh asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>£2m had been set aside for redundancy payments to adult social care staff, why was this money not used to refurbish Welland House, as the cost of this was put at £1.44m? This centre could have also then become the new centre for the new specialist dementia unit. Surely this would have made a saving of around £6.56m?</p> <p>Councillor Seaton responded:</p> <p>I'm sure if Cllr Saltmarsh addresses her queries to Councillor Fitzgerald separately he will be happy to address those issue with her yet again.</p>
4.	<p>Question from Councillor Lane</p> <p>To Councillor Elsey, Cabinet Advisor to the Deputy Leader:</p> <p>Since delivery of the new food waste bins and caddies, it has been reported to Members</p>

for Werrington North that some of these bins have been found blown around the streets after collection vehicles have left. One was reported as having a damaged handle because of its vulnerability with being exposed to all kind of elements. Can the complainants and all Werrington residents be assured that there will be no charge for any replacement of broken or lost bins that are, after all, helping to create an income for the Council?

Councillor Elsey responded:

The City Council and Enterprise Peterborough will replace lost and broken bins that have occurred through no fault of the resident, e.g. being blown by high winds into the road on collection day.

It is unfortunate that such severe weather as we have experienced in recent weeks has coincided with the new service, too soon for a regular 'working pattern' to have become settled into by both crews and residents.

I would like to make clear that, the service is not "creating an income for the Council" but helping the Council, as Waste Disposal Authority, to save money by paying significantly less to send the food for Anaerobic Digestion rather than continuing to bury it in ever increasingly expensive landfills.

Furthermore, all equipment, whether bio-degradable liner, recycled plastic caddy or whole new collection vehicle, has been funded by Enterprise Peterborough in the spirit of partnership and the provision of a modern, comprehensive and efficient first class waste collection service, which, whilst currently in 'settling in' stage, we in Peterborough should be proud to have.

Councillor Lane asked the following supplementary question:

I would like for Councillor Elsey to pass on my thanks to Officers from Enterprise for responding in the way they did to this issue, I understand that the collection officers have been receiving further training and I must say that despite the opinion we have on Enterprise Peterborough and on how they are managing the landscape around the city, Officers have always responded to me personally in a good way and I'm very grateful for that help thank you.

Councillor Elsey responded:

Thank you for your kind comments Councillor Lane. It will be my pleasure to pass them on.

5. Question from Councillor Miners

To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Housing , Neighbourhoods and Planning:

Referring to a recent letter received from a local resident concerning a local issue which has been raised by myself and others previously, could the Cabinet Member please advise council why nothing has been done to address the flooding problem outside the Tesco Express Garage shop on Welland Road, adjacent to the raised pedestrian crossing, as on arrival of even fairly heavy rain the drainage system is obviously not adequate to prevent flooding across the road having a knock-on effect to other small road junctions nearby?

Councillor Hiller may respond:

Thank you Councillor Miners for bringing this matter to my attention.

	<p>There is a gully located to the left of the Tesco vehicular entrance which is designed to take all surface water flows within its catchment. During heavy rainfall this gully fills quickly and causes localised standing water. The Council's drainage contractor ADC has made a number of visits to remove the surface water, with the last visit being on Wednesday 21 November 2012. On this and an earlier site visit, when the surface water was being withdrawn the gully pot refilled quickly suggesting a back up in the main Anglian Water surface water sewer. This could be due to either a capacity issue or minor blockage within the main line.</p> <p>Anglian Water has been notified and will investigate and undertake any necessary action required to their main surface water sewer. Our officers will have a meeting with Anglian Water on 12 December to discuss this and other surface water issues in relation to main sewers that are either blocked or at capacity resulting in the public highway suffering from localised standing water.</p> <p>I will ensure that Councillor Miners is updated after that meeting regarding a resolution to that particular problem that he has raised.</p> <p>Councillor Miners asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member be willing to meet with Local Councillors and local residents on the site to discuss the issues and solution, if it becomes necessary and if a solution isn't found?</p> <p>Councillor Hiller responded:</p> <p>I would of course be more than happy to meet the Ward Councillors.</p>
6.	<p>Question from Councillor John Fox</p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Housing , Neighbourhoods and Planning:</p> <p>Werrington Neighbourhood Council has recently had its Community Association Grant stopped thereby putting them in a financial dilemma and their future looking in doubt. The reason given is that they do not own property, which has been the case since their foundation several years ago.</p> <p>Werrington Neighbourhood Council are unique in their operation serving and representing over 6,500 householders in Werrington and at no direct expense to the residents other than around £700 a year to run.</p> <p>Can this administration assure me that they will look into ways of supporting Werrington Neighbourhood Council as a special case and provide them with the relevant funding necessary, as they do for the Residents Associations which WNC basically is.</p> <p>WNC is a prime example of what this government is trying to achieve through the Localism Act, putting "People before Politics" and giving the public more input into what happens in their area.</p> <p>They are a shining beacon of success, so what real reasons are there to extinguish this beacon.</p> <p>Councillor Hiller may have responded:</p> <p>The council has worked with Werrington Neighbourhood Council for a number of years, and has provided financial support in the past.</p>

	<p>For this current year however a means-tested approach was adopted by the council, primarily to ensure that the limited funding available was invested in the most appropriate way.</p> <p>The aim of the Community Association Grant was detailed in the application process as being to 'provide financial support to constituted Community Associations who run or manage community centres on the Council's behalf in the Peterborough Local Authority area'. This approach means that Associations that are running council-owned centres are supported, those centres being important places for accessing information, services, education and social activities for the whole of their community.</p> <p>Werrington Neighbourhood Council does not run or manage a Community Centre and thus does not fall within the criteria for a grant. It is for this reason that we are unable to award a grant to them for this year. However, there is no reason why the Ward Councillors may not support Werrington Neighbourhood Council from their Community Leadership Fund allocation, if they consider it to be worthy of such funding.</p>
7.	<p>Question from Councillor Miners</p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Housing , Neighbourhoods and Planning:</p> <p>Could the Dogsthorpe community be updated as to the current state of the Lease Transfer of the John Mansfield Centre to the Innova Trust, and confirm that something is being done to make the Western Avenue frontage of the whole site more appealing and attractive to the eye, than the current eyesore?</p> <p>Councillor Hiller may have responded:</p> <p>The council has invested significant sums into the redevelopment of the former John Mansfield School, including foregoing the capital receipt for the site on which it is located.</p> <p>A new, modern facility for the whole of Peterborough has now been created which accommodates services delivered by City College Peterborough, and which provides a local base for the Neighbourhood Police team and space for the community and others to hire.</p> <p>The council also remains committed to entering into a long lease arrangement with a third party to manage the facility on behalf of the council and the residents of Peterborough, thereby demonstrating our commitment to the Localism agenda.</p> <p>The land to the front and rear of the Centre is due to be marketed for sale for the construction of up to 140 dwellings.</p> <p>The land to the front of the site in question will provide approximately 15 to 18 building plots, and when complete will resolve the issue of maintenance of this part of the site.</p>
8.	<p>Question from Councillor Davidson</p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Housing , Neighbourhoods and Planning:</p> <p>Given the expected re-development of the Werrington Centre, can the cabinet member please tell me if there are any plans to help reduce rising traffic congestion along Fulbridge Road and David's lane by making use of the bus route that runs along Goodwin Walk past the entrance to Welbourne?</p>

	<p>Councillor Hiller may have responded:</p> <p>The impact on the local highway network as a result of the redevelopment of Werrington Centre had been assessed and as a result a roundabout will be implemented at the junction of Staniland Way and Davids Lane improving capacity at this junction. No further mitigation was found necessary and it was not considered necessary to open up the busway in Goodwin Walk to all traffic. Opening up Goodwin Walk would not only require numerous junction improvements to allow vehicles to manoeuvre in to and out of Goodwin Walk, cause delays to the existing bus services that use this prioritised route and is likely to discourage passengers from using the services. Opening up this public transport corridor is at odds with PCC's aspirations to become an environmental capital.</p>
9.	<p>Question from Councillor Davidson</p> <p>To Councillor Elsey, Cabinet Advisor to the Deputy Leader:</p> <p>Enterprise staff that work on the waste collection lorries have a general working shift of 6.30am to 4.30pm. However, I am aware that some shifts can continue until 7.00pm and the staff have no choice but to work these longer hours. This also affects residents who are requested to leave their bins outside their properties for collection by 6.45am but don't have them collected until the evening. Could this situation be resolved by returning to a five day collection routine to ensure a more timely collection of bins and thereby also saving money paid in overtime?</p> <p>Councillor Elsey may have responded:</p> <p>Enterprise Peterborough entered into this partnership on the basis of planned round efficiency improvements and the introduction of a weekly food waste collection service. With the recent purchase of a specialised, purpose-built fleet of 13 vehicles they were now able to bring those round efficiencies into place. These efficiencies are not only financial, but also result in significantly reduced environmental impact from improved recycling.</p> <p>Furthermore the logistics of route-planning, undertaken by Enterprise's dedicated team of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Analysts was a highly detailed task, working with the very latest housing data to ensure no properties in Peterborough are missed by the collection teams.</p> <p>It will, naturally, take a number of weeks to "settle", particularly as, until this week, vehicles have been involved in a "data capture routing programme" for the benefit of the IT systems on which they now operate, a recycling and refuse "Sat-Nav" map if you like.</p> <p>It is due to that much needed work that Enterprise were sure the collection times residents were used to <i>would</i> change, hence the communication of the 6:45am time for presentation of bins. Better a bin to be out in time than only put out once the crew have passed.</p> <p>Enterprise Peterborough shared all this with the unions who put it to their members, the Enterprise crews, who unanimously chose to remain on the Four-day week, working longer hours if necessary. Since the introduction of the new rounds – only 3 wks ago – Enterprise have identified potential improvements which they are taking to the unions, and those, combined with an initial "bedding-in" period would see times return towards the more accustomed working hours.</p>
10.	<p>Question from Councillor Harrington</p> <p>To Councillor Cereste, Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning,</p>

	<p>Economic Development, Business Engagement and Environment Capital:</p> <p>Considering that only one company submitted a final tender for the contract earlier this year for the supplying and installing of solar panels and wind turbines on approximately 900 acres of prime farm land, can the Leader reassure the council that he is completely satisfied that the correct procedures for procurement were followed and when considering the magnitude of the scheme and the huge sums of money involved, does he not think it would have been prudent to re-advertise and re-issue the invitation to tender to guarantee better value for money for the taxpayers of Peterborough?</p> <p>Councillor Cereste may have responded:</p> <p>With regards offering best value for the taxpayers of Peterborough - the Council let an installation contract to the market at the relevant time in accordance with the OJEU Process. This was open to the entire market and it was openly stated that it would apply to ground mounted opportunities. All potential candidates had the opportunity to submit a bid, however, Mears were the only entity to submit a valid bid which was in accordance with the Council's criteria (under the terms of the procurement). The Council only went to the market in October 2011 and it considers it an inappropriate use of Council funds to re-bid or let a new installation contract at this stage, given that it is only 1 year into that 4 year framework.</p> <p>Furthermore, as part of the Value for Money condition of the OJEU process and taking into account the falling price of solar panels globally, the Council is re-negotiating with Mears the installation prices for the various solar projects pending. It should be noted that the capital cost of the project stated in the October cabinet report include operating costs and finance costs over the 25 years of the project.</p>
11.	<p>Question from Councillor Fower</p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Housing , Neighbourhoods and Planning:</p> <p>I continue to receive complaints relating to cars parking irresponsibly or illegally outside of Schools like Norwood and Werrington Primary. Last year I raised this issue with the leader who assured me that the new small car with a camera on the top would be used to address such problems, but to date I and my colleagues have received no such updates or indication that such action has occurred. Is this car being used in the South Werrington and North Gunthorpe ward and if it is how many fines has it issued?</p> <p>Councillor Hiller may have responded:</p> <p>The council's parking enforcement Smart Car has very positively supplemented our work to make our streets safer and to identify those people that choose to ignore the law.</p> <p>The car is able to enforce parking restrictions in an automatic 'drive-by' mode, where it can enforce all 'no-stopping' restrictions such as clearways, bus stops, taxi ranks, school zigzag markings, pedestrian crossing markings, and cycle tracks and lanes. The on-board GPS system monitors the car's location enabling the camera to work unattended by simply being driven past the restricted area, and the camera will capture evidence as it does so for a trained officer to review later.</p> <p>As more and more councils have purchased similar enforcement vehicles, the Department for Transport has issued guidance that states that the Smart Car should only be used where enforcement is difficult or sensitive, and where foot patrols by enforcement officers is not practical. This has placed more restrictions on its use than we had originally intended, albeit that the car is still fully actively used during daylight hours.</p>

	<p>With specific reference to the two schools mentioned there have been no complaints recorded in respect to parking on the school zigzag markings. However since the introduction of the car a total of eight penalty notices have been issued in Amberley Slope and one in Gunthorpe Rd.</p>
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9	<u>Questions with notice by Members to Council representatives of the Police and Fire Authorities</u>
	None.

EXECUTIVE BUSINESS TIME

11 Questions with Notice to the Leader and Members of the Executive

1. **Question from Councillor Casey**

To Councillor Holdich, Cabinet member for Education, Skills and University:

One of the legacies left by the late Councillor Bob Burke was the annual music awards in his name. Could the Cabinet member for Education please inform Council how this legacy is continuing?

Councillor Holdich responded:

The Bob Burke Music Awards have previously been awarded to young musicians by the Peterborough Youth Bands and Orchestras (PYBO), this was until recently managed by the Cambridgeshire Instrumental Music Agency on behalf of PCC

The recently established Peterborough Music Partnership (PMP) has established the City of Peterborough Youth Ensembles (CPYE). Plans to hold a Bob Burke Music Awards Ceremony are included within the PMP business plan for the Spring Term. Bob Burke's family are to be invited to attend. This is supported by the CYPE Parents Association.

Vivacity, working in partnership with the Peterborough Music Partnership has also suggested the possibility of establishing a prestigious awards event for the arts, including music, and it might be desirable to link the two events in the future.

Councillor Casey asked the following supplementary question:

Following the Henley review, which was published at the end of last year, the city was successful in gaining £750k to be spread over three years for the development of music and education. The Peterborough Music Partnership aims to introduce as many children as possible to the subject in a practical way. Does the Cabinet Member for Education agree with me that whilst the successful grant application is to be welcomed, the true success of this initiative will only be able to be judged in ten years time and beyond and that an all encompassing music strategy for the city needs to be developed to realise the creative potential for Peterborough?

Councillor Holdich responded:

The music partnership got a £750k grant for three years, but the huge cost of it is the infrastructure in buying the equipment, the musical instruments and so on. That is a one off cost and at the end of the three years the costs of the infrastructure will be paid for and a small charge will be made to the schools to continue the musical partnership.

Councillor Lee stated that as the Cabinet Member for Cultural Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education, assurance was given that an all inclusive Music Strategy was to be brought forward as part of the city's Arts Strategy.

2. **Question from Councillor Fletcher**

To Councillor Cereste, Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Business Engagement and Environment Capital:

As the council appointed directors of Blue Sky Ltd are two elected members, plus one PCC officer, can it be clarified exactly what level of remuneration they presently receive from that company and if it is a nil amount, is it envisaged these directorships will remain unpaid and that all shares in the company will remain 100% owned by PCC?

Councillor Cereste responded:

I can confirm that there is no remuneration paid by Blue Sky Peterborough for the individual directors appointed by the council to Blue Sky Peterborough. There has been no suggestion that this position will change. Similarly there has been no discussion around any change to shareholdings by the council in Blue Sky Peterborough. If this were to change in the future then this matter would be subject to a decision by Cabinet.

Councillor Fletcher did not have a supplementary question.

3. **Question from Councillor Harrington**

To Councillor Fitzgerald, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care:

In light of the recent report from the Care Quality Commission stating that there are serious shortcomings in the care provided for elderly and dementia patients and that up to 50% of dementia patients who receive their care from private sector providers are receiving care which is below recognised minimum standards in terms of nutrition and personal hygiene, can the Cabinet Member assure my group and other councillors that the patients currently residing at Welland House will not befall the same fate when they are transferred to privately run homes?

Councillor Fitzgerald responded:

CQC check that the essential standards of quality and safety are being met. They focus on 16 standards that most directly relate to the quality and safety of care. Of the 17 independent providers in Peterborough, 14 have been inspected. 93% of the standards have been met.

The CQC comments in their recent report that “while residential care homes and domiciliary care agencies performed relatively well on providing respectful and dignified care, with 93% and 95% of services meeting the standard in 2011/12 (5,984 and 1,680 inspections respectively), the performance of nursing homes was less positive at 85% (2,502 inspections)”.

In Peterborough of the 14 independent care homes that have been inspected by CQC 100% have achieved this standard. The standard that relates to Councillor Harrington’s comment regarding nutrition is “Food and drink should meet people’s individual dietary needs”. Again in Peterborough we are achieving 93%

All independent sector providers of residential care in Peterborough are reviewed on an annual basis by the Council’s own contracts and compliance team. These reviews use the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) toolkit and are based on best practice.

Our processes are in addition to those used by the Care Quality Commission inspection and those implemented by our Health colleagues, and the LINK.

Councillor Harrington asked the following supplementary question:

Are you aware that the quality of training for staff within the private sector fell well below

	<p>recognised standards and that the homes in the public sector fared much better?</p> <p>Councillor Fitzgerald responded:</p> <p>I'm aware of many factors concerning CQC and their reports, but Councillor Harrington is inferring that somehow people in the private sector or homes in the private sector fair better elsewhere. I wouldn't agree with that case and in fact perhaps Councillor Harrington should review our own CQC inspection rather than the selective CQC reports you seem to have picked upon because I think you might find some amazing reading.</p>
4.	<p>Question from Councillor Sandford</p> <p>To Councillor Cereste, Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Business Engagement and Environment Capital:</p> <p>Could the Leader of the Council tell me what action he is taking to make Council meetings and Council services more accessible to members of the public?</p> <p>In particular a number of councils now have internet broadcasting of full council and/or committee meetings and the cost of the technology needed for this has dropped considerably in recent years.</p> <p>Will he investigate the feasibility of introducing internet broadcasting of Peterborough City Council meetings?</p> <p>Councillor Cereste responded:</p> <p>In 2010, a substantial amount of research was undertaken into the feasibility of webcasting council meetings. At that stage, it was considered too expensive to implement a system. However, I am happy to commission further research in recognition of advancements in technology and potentially reduced charges.</p> <p>Councillor Sandford did not have a supplementary question.</p>
5.	<p>Question from Councillor Thulbourn</p> <p>To Councillor Elsey, Cabinet advisor to the Deputy Leader:</p> <p>Can the deputy leader give assurances that the building services division of Enterprise will continue to be a local and significant contributor to the local economy with the skills and jobs to be maintained within Peterborough? My concern is the apparent running down of this service which when with the council was a net contributor to the council and continues to be a profit silo within enterprise despite the continual move to other suppliers from outside the area which has had an effect on local businesses. Can you give me these assurances on behalf of the staff of building services and the local business community?</p> <p>Councillor Elsey responded:</p> <p>The Council remains fully committed to the Strategic Partnership with Enterprise.</p> <p>We continue to work closely with Enterprise Peterborough to support its own clearly stated ambition to grow its business locally and to encourage the use of local suppliers and businesses wherever and whenever appropriate.</p> <p>Peterborough City Council is not in itself in a position to offer guarantees of future work in respect of Enterprise's building services: Enterprise needs to continue to demonstrate its ability to provide high-quality and cost-effective services that meet the needs of all its</p>

customers, including the Council. Whenever it is in the best interests of the city, the Council has committed and remains committed to using Enterprise's services - as envisaged by the contract that underpins the Strategic Partnership.

Enterprise Peterborough is currently consulting its own workforce on how it needs to reshape itself to meet current and future challenges. In doing so, it is right that it both take account of the likely demand for its services and restate its commitment to Peterborough as a city.

Councillor Thulbourn asked the following supplementary question:

How can I tell the bricklayer watching a company across the road building in Peterborough, and them not getting any work, and they used to get their work through building services?

Councillor Elsey responded:

I'm not sure I can add anything other than the answer I have already given, only that Enterprise Peterborough will use local people whenever and wherever possible and that Enterprise Peterborough need to demonstrate to us that they are competitive in every respect.

6. **Question from Councillor Martin**

To Councillor Seaton, Cabinet Member for Resources:

The "Council Tax Support Scheme" is due to replace "Council Tax Benefit" from 1st April 2013. It is clear even with the Government's "transitional grant scheme", that over 70% of residents currently receiving 100% council tax benefit and the remainder of residents receiving partial support will have to find a significant amount of extra money each week to pay their council tax from 1st April 2013. Is the Cabinet Member aware of, and can he tell me, how many Peterborough residents this will impact upon and will inevitably be in a worse financial situation from April 2013?

Councillor Seaton responded:

Yes, I am aware of the answer to his question as I would hope are all members because this analysis was in the report to Cabinet on the 24 September, when we launched our proposals for consultation. It was also presented to Scrutiny on the 8 November – a meeting at which I believe Councillor Martin was present. Councillor Martin may also recall that the Medium Term Financial Strategy approved by Council in February this year included a requirement that the new council tax support scheme must be cost neutral i.e. any reduction in grant should be covered by a reduction in the costs of the scheme. I believe this principle was supported in the opposition's alternative budget.

I will let Councillor Martin have another copy of the Cabinet report but to formally answer his first question, I would confirm the figures are:

- 8,437 households who previously received 100% council tax benefit (i.e. they had all of their bill paid) now have something to pay; and
- 2,226 households will be paying more council tax than before

I should stress that Pensioners are exempt from these changes.

With regards the second part of the question, the total bill for Council Tax benefit in Peterborough is around £8m and if the proposals are implemented as planned, the average household receiving benefit will in future pay around £5 per week extra.

	<p>I would add that I recognise the impact this will have. Indeed the Cabinet report outlined a number of areas where the Council already has plans in place to help people on low incomes, and we are revisiting all of these to make sure that we support those affected as much as possible.</p> <p>However we should also reflect on why we have this issue. Since 1997 the bill nationally for Council Tax Benefit has more than doubled and it is claimed by one in four households. So not only did the last Labour Government fail to tackle the fundamental issue that it is better for people to be in work than on benefit, they allowed the cost of welfare to rise massively at the same time as they borrowed massively during the boom years.</p> <p>This Council takes a different view – we believe the biggest difference we can make is to help people off benefit and into work. One of the key priorities of this Cabinet is to deliver growth to our city, increasing opportunity and employment prospects for all. It is essential that we continue this drive, and in turn enable as many as people as possible to have the chance to come off benefit.</p> <p>Councillor Martin was not present at the meeting, therefore there was no supplementary question.</p>
7.	<p>Question from Councillor Davidson</p> <p>To Councillor Eley, Cabinet advisor to the Deputy Leader:</p> <p>Considering that blighted crops should not simply be sent to landfill due to the risk of blight spreading, why are allotment holders being advised that they can no longer burn this waste but must instead put it in black bin bags for landfill?</p> <p>Councillor Eley responded:</p> <p>Allotment holders have not been advised that they can no longer burn this waste, however as part of the terms and conditions of their tenancy they are not permitted to burn anything at the allotment site.</p> <p>Bagging their blighted crops before taking them home to put in their landfill bin has been suggested as a way to deal with the waste whilst managing the risk of airborne movement.</p> <p>Councillor Davidson did not have a supplementary question.</p>
8.	<p>Question from Councillor Harrington</p> <p>To Councillor Fitzgerald, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care:</p> <p>Noting the discrepancy in the residential fees paid to private care homes by those who qualify for a means tested subsidy and those who do not; can the Cabinet Member commit to make available to any resident the council's negotiated residential care fee levels in order to provide a better deal for residential placements?</p> <p>Councillor Fitzgerald responded:</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Councillor Harrington asked the following supplementary question:</p>

	<p>Does the Cabinet Member agree that the residents who do not qualify for any means tested funding are being put at a disadvantage by the possibility of not being able to access the care home of their choice because the places are being taken by Council funded residents and therefore elderly residents who have been prudently financially all their lives, are now being discriminated against because the Council have taken advantage of the private sector?</p> <p>Councillor Fitzgerald responded:</p> <p>No. The eligibility criteria for care is carefully laid down as to who is eligible and who is not, so the Council have strict criteria about that. I don't think it is unfair, because if you have assets of more than £233k (there about) then you don't qualify for certain benefits and nor should you.</p> <p>The Council will, where it can, contract with any residential care home to agree the most favourable care fee level both on behalf of residents that it has a responsibility to fund, and on behalf of residents who are able to meet the cost of their own care. However, care homes are not obliged to contract with a local authority, and can freely enter into their own contractual arrangements with privately funding clients. The Council cannot compel care homes to contract with it and nor can it insist that residents are placed only in care homes that contract with the Council, as to do so would be in breach of the "Choice Directive" statutory direction which gives care home residents the freedom to make their own choice of care home.</p> <p>Those that we have to take care of, we will do, those that can fund and have the will to do so, we will do everything that we can do to help. It is not disadvantaging those people and there is plenty of capacity in the market.</p>
9.	<p>Question from Councillor Fower</p> <p>To Councillor Seaton, Cabinet Member for Resources:</p> <p>It is nearly a year since the City Council introduced the 'Local Lend a Hand' mortgage scheme - aimed at helping first time buyers secure a mortgage. With the present number of applicants on the local housing waiting list well over 9,000, can the cabinet member please inform me how many applications for the 'Local Lend a Hand' have been received, how many have been successful and what the cost has been to the city council?</p> <p>Councillor Seaton may have responded:</p> <p>I am delighted to advise Cllr Fower that by the end of October, 27 first time buyers had bought a home using the scheme, with another 7 buyers having a mortgage approved and looking for a home. A further number of applications are being considered. To date the indemnity stands at £660k rising to £721k if all outstanding applications were approved. We committed £1m to this indemnity.</p> <p>With regards to cost, that is another positive benefit of the scheme. The Council receives interest income from Lloyds on the sum it deposits with them to underwrite the scheme. This interest income to the Council is currently £44,000 per year.</p> <p>So not only does the scheme support first time buyers, it also makes the Council money.</p> <p>I can confirm that the scheme remains open, and the Council has committed to extend the scheme when the first allocation is used. Any first time buyers in the Peterborough should look at our website, or contact their local Lloyds branch to find out more.</p>
10.	<p>Question from Councillor Davidson</p>

	<p>To Councillor Elsey, Cabinet advisor to the Deputy Leader:</p> <p>I understand that it is now normal practice to have a fortnightly bin collection. Why therefore is one area of Peterborough, Taverners Road and adjoining roads, still receiving a weekly bin collection, when other residents are left to fortnightly collections, even now the new kitchen caddy has been introduced?</p> <p>Councillor Elsey may have responded:</p> <p>The whole of Central Ward has, in the last three weeks, now been moved onto the City wide Alternate Weekly Collection system. This method of collection has been in the news nationally and I am pleased to inform Council this is significant contribution towards driving recycling tonnages up. This transition to the common scheme has been planned for some time and it made sense to do this when the new collection vehicle fleet was being delivered and other changes were being made.</p> <p>Our partners at Enterprise Peterborough have been working hard to inform residents of the change, a letter going to every property, supplemented with door-to-door calls by members of their 'Community Engagement Team' advising on methods of waste minimisation, what can be recycled and the like.</p> <p>To follow that up extra refuse capacity was laid on yesterday to clear any bagged side waste and our own Enforcement Officers are due to be going out over coming weeks to work alongside Enterprise's staff to give the resident's help in both reducing their waste <i>and</i> ensuring it is not put out on the streets to create a nuisance.</p>
11.	<p>Question from Councillor Jamil</p> <p>To Councillor Holdich, Cabinet member for Education, Skills and University:</p> <p>Peterborough Children's Services Department has an excellent record in working with its Primary Schools to raise standards. In view of this, will the Cabinet Member give assurances that he believes that if the drive to raise standards is to continue to be effective, our Primary Schools should remain the responsibility of the Authority and its Governors?</p> <p>Councillor Holdich may have responded:</p> <p>It is our aim that all Peterborough schools should provide a good education for our children.</p> <p>There are different options available to schools should they wish to become an Academy. Good or Outstanding schools (as judged by OfSTED) can convert to become an Academy, or less successful schools can become a Sponsored Academy, with sponsorship and governance provided externally. In Peterborough we have had one converter Academy, with another to convert in January 2013. Where a school is under performing we will look actively at the solution of a sponsored academy if we are confident that this will bring the required capacity and improvement.</p> <p>Across both phases we currently have eight (soon to be nine) academies plus one Free School. Irrespective of the type of school, I believe the Local Authority will continue to have a key role in offering leadership, support and challenge and encouraging strong partnerships with all our schools to deliver effective teaching and learning to the children and young people of the city.</p>
12.	<p>Question from Councillor John Fox</p>

To Councillor Seaton, Cabinet Member for Resources:

Was the issuing of expensive IT equipment to members, such as iphones and ipads, done to make them more accessible to the public and officers alike and if this is the case, then why is it that some of these members remain difficult to contact via email or phone and should this equipment therefore be removed from them if they are not using it to its full potential, thereby saving tax payers money?

Councillor Seaton may have responded:

With regards the upgrade of equipment to members, this took place as part of a wider renegotiation of Council contracts which saved the authority around £50,000 over 3 years.

Benefits included free or reduced call charges, better support provision, more robust audit controls and an app that allows the iPhone to be traced if mislaid. As Cllr Fox suggests, it made members more accessible by allowing us to be contacted by e-mail whilst out and about in our wards or at the Town Hall. I find carrying a laptop can be inconvenient and so use an iPhone for this purpose. In addition Council equipment has high levels of encryption to avoid information being accessed. I know some members still like to use their own equipment and e-mail addresses, on the basis it saves the Council money. I would remind members that if such equipment is accessed and data lost, they are personally liable as registered data controllers and can be subject to fines up to £500k.

There have also been wider benefits to the Council from these changes such as Neighbourhood teams utilising the camera on the iPhone instead of needing a separate camera, together with an app that allows the photo's to be time and date stamped. We are also looking at an app that lone workers can use that alerts team members if a user hasn't entered a code to say they are safe. Visiting officers will find this particularly useful, including Children's Services.

On the point about members being difficult to contact, there are clearly a wide range of ways of doing this. For example I personally receive direct telephone calls, e-mails, texts, letters to my home or through the Council, attendance at Neighbourhood and police committees, my Parish Council, through being a school governor and at my local Community Centre. I am even stopped in the street and people knock on my door. If Cllr Fox is having problems contacting a fellow member has he therefore spoken directly to that individual about the issue as I believe that should be the starting point.

13. **Question from Councillor John Fox**

To Councillor Cereste, Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Business Engagement and Environment Capital:

Does the Leader agree that more support should be given for planning and staging events for the Armed Forces Day celebrations held in June to positively recognise our armed forces veterans?

Councillor Cereste may have responded:

Since 2009, the Council has participated in celebrations to support Armed Forces Day. The Council flies the Armed Forces Day flag at 10.30am and leaves it *in situ* for one week. We also hold a service on the Town Hall steps, which is led by the Vicar of St John's Church and supported by the Royal British Legion, Peterborough Veterans' Association and local armed forces groups. A number of planning meetings are held prior to these events with representatives from all of the above. The Council is already in discussion with other associations, such as Supporters of Combat Stress, to plan for forthcoming

	<p>events. Furthermore, the Civic Office has proactively contacted 51 other Civic Offices to ascertain what arrangements are in place to recognise Armed Forces Week. Responses are summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 hold a flag raising ceremony • 17 do not make any formal arrangements although in some cases, groups of local ex-services personal arrange events • 3 hold events such as Veterans' badge presentations and services to celebrate the event. <p>I would be happy for more support to be given to our armed forces. Perhaps Cllr Fox would like to make some suggestions.</p>
14.	<p>Question from Councillor Miners</p> <p>To Councillor Cereste, Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Business Engagement and Environment Capital:</p> <p>Recently both Cllr Harrington and I attended a conference relating to Governance Issues; how the Localism Act enables councils to choose the system they want locally and not have it imposed upon them by Central Government. Therefore, noting that the Cabinet system fails to be inclusive in its decision making, isn't it about time this local authority gave notice that it will consider the introduction of alternative forms of local governance and consign the Peterborough Cabinet system to the history bin?</p> <p>Councillor Cereste may have responded:</p> <p>I have no plans to recommend any changes to the current system of governance.</p>
15.	<p>Question from Councillor Sandford</p> <p>To Councillor Elsey, Cabinet advisor to the Deputy Leader:</p> <p>Peterborough City Council and Enterprise have just announced the first phase of plans for felling of a significant number of trees across the city including over 200 in Bretton Park.</p> <p>The social, economic and environmental benefits of trees are well recognised and the Peterborough Trees and Woodland Strategy calls for maintenance and expansion of the city's tree population.</p> <p>In view of this, could the cabinet member tell me what proportion of the £740,000 extra money put into the trees budget for this year has been allocated for tree and woodland planting and how many trees are scheduled to be planted by the Council or by Enterprise in the current tree planting season?</p> <p>Councillor Elsey may have responded:</p> <p>The capacity bid for £744,000 has been secured to deliver a detailed surveying and maintenance programme of Peterborough tree stocks. Enterprise Peterborough has been commissioned to carry out this additional work and to date they have started surveying trees and developing maintenance plans to ensure that the City's trees are maintained in a safe and healthy condition.</p> <p>The £744,000 secured by Operations is specifically for delivering the maintenance programme and as such this money is not for tree planting. However the Council has budgeted approximately £58,000 for tree planting and will be working with Enterprise to develop a green open spaces strategy which will include plans for intelligent tree and shrub planning.</p>

<p>In reference to the comments about Bretton Park, Enterprise Peterborough will be submitting plans to increase the tree cover in Bretton Park where trees are due to be removed.</p>
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