

**MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD  
17 DECEMBER 2014**

**The Mayor – Councillor David Over**

**Present:**

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

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors Allen, Day, Davidson, Fletcher, Knowles, Lamb, Lee and Walsh.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

The Mayor advised that in November 2012, the Audit Committee had granted a general dispensation for all Members, should they have any disclosable interest that enabled them to debate and vote on the budget item.

Councillor Khan stated that in relation to item 13(a), he did not take the Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for being Chairman of the Strong and Supportive Scrutiny Committee, however he did take the SRA for being leader of the Labour Group. The Legal Officer clarified that there was a general dispensation within the Members Code of Conduct for Members with regards to discussing allowances.

Councillor Nadeem declared an interest in item 10, Care and Repair Framework Agreement (decision) in that he was managing director of Nadeem Construction Limited, as mentioned within the decision, and therefore he would not take part in the debate on that item.

Councillor Maqbool declared that she owed two or more months of council tax, this being due to an administration error, and she would therefore not take part or vote on item 9(e),

The Mayor advised that the Employment Committee Recommendation was in relation to the Senior Manager Pay decisions. The officers advising and attending the meeting had declared a conflict of interest in relation to their pay and were required to leave the room at the appropriate time.

The Mayor further advised that he had agreed to vary the order of the agenda to take item 9(c) as the last item of business to allow the officers to leave the meeting. Officers would also be required to leave the Chamber should issues regarding the Senior Manger Pay arise during the course of the meeting.

**3. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2014:**

The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 8 October 2014 were approved as a true and accurate record.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### 4. Mayor's Announcements

Members noted the report outlining the Mayor's engagements for the period commencing 6 October 2014 to 14 December 2014.

The Mayor further announced that the Civic Award winners would be announced at the Council meeting in January 2015.

### 5. Leader's Announcements

There were no announcements from the Leader.

### 6. Chief Executive's Announcements

There were no announcements from the Chief Executive.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### 7. Questions with Notice by Members of the Public

There were four questions submitted by a member of the public, these were in relation to:

1. Graffiti, and the costs attributed to its removal;
2. The 'Be Active' sports campaign;
3. The sale of the Green Back Yard; and
4. A further question on the sale of the Green Back Yard.

The questions and responses are attached at **APPENDIX A** to these minutes.

### 8. Petitions

#### (a) Presented by members of the public

A petition was presented by Mr Bernard Barker, on behalf of the Bushfield Bowls Club, containing 354 signatures, requesting that the Council support the Bowls Club as the only lawn bowling club in the whole of the Ortons.

#### (b) Presented by Members

Councillor Sylvester presented a petition, containing 537 signatures, on behalf of the Friends of Bretton Library opposing the further cuts in library opening hours, and staff, or the closure of Bretton Library.

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS

### 9. Executive and Committee Recommendations to Council

#### (a) Cabinet Recommendation – Homelessness Strategy

Cabinet at its meeting of 24 November 2014, received a report following approval from the Strong and Supportive Scrutiny Committee on 3 September 2014.

The purpose of the report was for Cabinet to review and comment on the information contained in the Homelessness Review, to comment and agree on the broad strategic aims of the Homelessness Strategy and to recommend the Strategy be taken forward and adopted by Council.

Councillor Hiller introduced the report and moved the recommendations contained within. He further highlighted key points including, the re-draft of the document to ensure its relevance to the city's current situation following a number of comments made by the Scrutiny Committee; the update to the draft Strategy to ensure it included the work of the whole of the Strategic Housing Team, reinforcing the principle that Homelessness Prevention was an important issue at the forefront of the authorities work; the Strategy taking the form of an action plan to be reviewed on a quarterly basis until 2018; the four strategic aims contained within the action plan; the new Housing Allocations Policy which had been adopted two years ago and the resulting changes for applicants; the number of apparent live applications which had been on the housing register in January 2013, this being in the region of 10,000, there now being only 3,000; the number of times that the service had been contacted during 2013/14, this being in the region of 25,000 times and the numbers of individuals who had gone on to have face to face interviews, this being around 5,500; from April 2013 to March 2014 nearly 1,000 new applications having been registered and 1,200 properties having been allocated through the Choice Based Letting Scheme.

Councillor Hiller further advised that the Council had a statutory responsibility for genuinely homeless people and there had been a dramatic reduction in the numbers of homelessness applications in the city. Continued support was offered to rough sleepers and the situation had much improved, with the numbers of known rough sleepers having reduced by 85% in the last five years. It was also to be noted that as well as the good work undertaken by the Council, good work had and was being undertaken by the One Service resettlement staff at the prison.

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

Members debated the recommendations and in summary raised points including:

- Concern was raised as to what had happened to the 7000 individuals that had been on the housing waiting list;
- What was being done in relation to the 'Second Night Out Policy' and the work to decrease the numbers of rough sleepers, as the report did state that there had been an increase in these numbers;
- The Strategy did not go far enough to address the root causes in order to eradicate homelessness;
- Concerns were raised that bed and breakfast was still being used as an option for the Council;
- The issue around the licensing of private landlords in the city needed to be progressed;
- The Strategy needed to be reviewed to take account of the changes coming in April 2015 with regards to direct payments to landlords and to make facilities available for individuals who did not wish to manage money, to ensure they were assisted by the authority to guarantee their rent was paid; and
- There was no obligation to house rough sleepers from other cities and it was stated that the Council offered to pay their fare back to the city from which they came from. What if individuals did not wish to return? Were we doing enough to help them? Assurance was sought that they would not be criminalised by the Council.

Councillor Holdich did not wish to exercise his right to speak as seconder of the recommendations.

Councillor Hiller summed up as mover of the recommendations and stated that as of last month, there were 14 known rough sleepers in the city and given comparable figures for other similar cities, this was not a particular high figure. The importance of the Strategy was paramount to tackle the issues faced and the numbers of rough sleepers which had been reduced was commendable, with thanks to be extended to the officers. The concerns raised by Members were fully appreciated and Councillor Hiller would be happy to liaise with them on an individual basis to talk through these issues.

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

That Council adopts the Homelessness Strategy.

**(b) Cabinet Recommendation – Peterborough City Centre Development Plan Document (Version for Adoption)**

Cabinet at its meeting of 24 November 2014, received a report following Council's decision on 4 December 2013 to approve the Peterborough City Centre Development Plan Document (DPD) (Proposed Submission Version), also referred to as the City Centre Plan, 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 on 1 April 2014. Subsequently, an independent Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State had carried out a public examination into the document. The Inspector had sent her report to the Chief Executive setting out her conclusions on the Plan.

The purpose of the report was for Cabinet to note the conclusions of the Independent Inspector and subsequently, to seek Cabinet's approval to recommend the City Centre Plan to Council for adoption.

Councillor Hiller introduced the report and moved the recommendations contained within. He further highlighted key points including the Plan having been found sound by the Inspector subject to the minor amendments as detailed within the appendix to the report; the document forming part of the Council's Statutory Plan should it be adopted; its utilisation as part of the determination process for planning applications in the heart of the authority area and the Plan outlining a clear and cohesive vision for delivering future growth in the city centre.

Councillor Hiller further advised that the adoption of the document would mean that the city had a full and up to date Local Plan, there being very few councils in such a position. Thanks were extended to the officers for their work and if any newer Members required more a more in depth view of the document, Councillor Hiller would be happy to discuss this with them in due course.

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

Members debated the recommendations and in summary raised points including:

- Peterborough City Council was one of the finest authorities in the country for providing Plans, but not for implementing them;
- The city centre vision for public transport had not been realised. How was the vision for the Plan to be realised with the continued restrictions placed on cyclists within the city centre;
- Positive comment was made with regards to the access and accessibility into the city centre for disabled individuals;

- The accessibility for those with blue badges, and to address the additional provision of blue badge on-road parking going forward;
- In relation to the railway station policy area, the vision was not being met within the document, particularly in relation to a lack of cycle or crossing routes from the west. This link needed to be made;
- There had been a lack of coordinated development in relation to the railway development;
- If the plan developed Westgate, that was a positive. This area was desperate for redevelopment;
- It was disappointing that the Green Back Yard had not been designated as an asset to the community;
- Cyclists did need to take safety more seriously but there also did need to be a better system for separating pedestrians and cyclists;
- Peterborough did not fare well for public transport and this needed to be expanded within the city centre;
- The Plan would only be successful if the 'shoulds' within the document turned into a reality; and
- The Plan was well presented, however going forward the Council needed to be selective with regards to development, in order to achieve the best for the city.

Councillor Cereste exercised his right to speak and commended the officers for the work undertaken on such a well presented document. If delivered, it would make Peterborough one of the best places to live and work in the UK.

Councillor Hiller summed up as mover of the recommendations and reiterated that the Council was not desperate for development at any cost, hence the development plan, and any future developments in the city centre would be undertaken appropriately. The improvements made in the city over the past years were something to be proud of and the Plan was commended for adoption.

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

That Council adopts the Peterborough City Centre Development Plan Document, incorporating modifications as recommend by the Inspector (Main Modifications) and other minor editorial modifications (Additional Modifications).

**(c) Employment Recommendation – Senior Manager Pay**

**Taken as last item of business on agenda.**

Employment Committee, at its meeting of 20 November 2014 received a report following a referral from Council on 16 April 2014.

The purpose of the report was for the Committee to revisit the decision it made on senior officer's salaries at its meeting on 3 February 2014 and to make any recommendations on changes, as it saw fit, including reducing senior officer pay.

Councillor Nadeem introduced the report and moved the recommendations contained within. He further highlighted key points including the pay structure which had been built upon the Council's well respected job evaluation methodology, provided by the HAY Group and used extensively in both the public and private sectors; how each senior manager post had been assigned to a pay band through the independent evaluation of job descriptions undertaken by HAY experts; the overall cost reduction objective of the restructure; the restructure achieving a cost reduction goal of 750k; and the further restructure planned for the near future.

Councillor Nadeem further advised that the Employment Committee was satisfied that appropriate rigour had been applied to the design and that the Councils pay position in the market was placed at the appropriate level. The Committee subsequently recommended no changes to senior pay, taking into account all factors discussed.

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

Members debated the recommendations and in summary raised points including:

- Senior officers were paid too much and disproportionately so in relation to care workers;
- The Directors did not have to take their back pay, this was not in the best interests of the city and did not set a good example;
- Employment Committee meetings had been held in private unnecessarily;
- It was not acceptable to increase an individual's pay by such a scale;
- Over 2000 council employees in the UK were earning over £100k per annum;
- What sort of review had the Employment Committee carried out? Had the Committee had any powers to change the situation even if it had wanted to?
- The Council had to act in its best interests and within Employment Law;
- The review had found that the previous decision had been found right and proper;
- £750k had been saved by the restructure of senior officers; and
- The person receiving back pay had been legally entitled to it.

Councillor Elsey exercised his right to speak and advised that the pay policy had been adhered to and the restructure had saved £750k, with those Directors remaining taking on different responsibilities and their pay being set by an independent body.

Councillor Nadeem summed up and stated that the pay structure had been carefully put together using advice from the HAY Group who had significant experience in developing pay structures for public sector clients.

Following debate, a vote was taken (29 for, 18 against, 2 abstentions) and it was **RESOLVED** that Council:

1. Notes that the decision of Employment Committee at its meeting on 3 February 2014 on senior officers' salaries had been revisited, and the review process and outcomes found to be satisfactory; and
2. Make no changes to senior officers' salaries.

**(d) Cabinet Recommendation – Solar Panels on Roof Tops**

Cabinet at its meeting of 15 December 2014, received a report which sought its approval to enter into a strategic partnership with Empower Community Management LLP (EC), a social enterprise that would, as its primary purpose, deliver the installation of solar PV on residential properties in the city and deliver a community benefit scheme to Peterborough.

This would be the first scheme of its type in the UK and in particular, the first of its kind that involved a Council.

The report further sought Cabinet's recommendation to Council for approval of an amendment to the existing treasury management strategy.

Councillor Cereste introduced the report and moved the recommendations contained within. He further highlighted key points including that the scheme would deliver

numerous benefits to the community and the first pilot would be delivered on approximately 1500 houses within the central ward; homeowners not having to pay towards the panels and saving between £180-£200 per year on their energy bills; specific areas of the city being prioritised in order to help tackle fuel poverty and the Council providing short term financing to support the construction until a private term funding solution for the longer term was in place; the update to the Treasury Management Strategy that was being requested to enable the scheme to be progressed; the £100 bonus that every resident would receive every five years and the community fund that would be available, with a value of approximately £1m.

Councillor Cereste further advised that if the scheme could be rolled out to the whole city, each 1500 houses would save a substantial amount and the Council would receive approximately £6m. This was an incredible bonus for the residents of the city.

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

Members debated the recommendations and in summary raised points including:

- Clarification was sought as to whether the families living in rented accommodation would benefit, and not the landlord;
- The country was too reliant on important fuel;
- Solar energy in this part of the country was beneficial due to the dry climate;
- The scheme empowered individual householders by them producing their own power;
- Why had the scheme not been through the Council's scrutiny process?
- Would it not have been better to have targeted those areas where it had been proven that there was high take up of this kind of technology?
- It was hoped that the scheme would be rolled out across the city;
- Assurances needed to be given that the scheme could be scrutinised and open and transparent;
- Who owned the solar panels when the resident sold their property?
- The area chosen had a high transient population, and eleven times more rented accommodation than in the rest of the city. How would the scheme be applied to those in private rented accommodation?
- The city had a bad history with regards to solar panels;
- The scheme was welcomed in Central Ward, and the people were looking forward to working with the Council to make successful;
- Any scheme which assisted residents was a positive thing. The question was whether the scheme got off the ground or not. Had the scheme really been thought out and would it work;
- If the scheme became too over ambitious, the Council may wind up with the costs if a private investor could not be found;
- Anything that saved fossil fuels and benefitted the community had to be for the best; and
- There were concerns that a consensus had not been built. The decision had come from nowhere, there had been no financial information provided.

Councillor North exercised his right to speak and stated that one of the more important aspects of the scheme was that it assisted the poorest in the community and they would benefit the most. The money would stay in Peterborough and would help to encourage wealth in the city. It would be the bill payer that would benefit, therefore the renter and not the landlord. It was an important scheme for the city moving towards becoming environment capital.

Councillor Cereste summed up and stated that there were a number of good schemes across the city and it this scheme would be rolled out as quickly as possible. It would be good news for all communities and would assist people to save money.

A vote was taken (44 for, 4 against and 1 abstention) and it was **RESOLVED**:

That Council approves an amendment to the existing treasury management strategy to enable a Special Partnership Vehicle (SPV) between Empower Community Management LLP and Empower Community Foundation to be added to the list of external bodies that the Council is able to undertake capital investment in.

**(e) Cabinet Recommendation – Phase One Budget Proposals**

Cabinet at its meeting of 15 December 2014, received a report as part of the Council's agreed two stage budget process as outlined in the report considered by Cabinet on 24 November 2014.

The purpose of the report was to enable Cabinet to consider the feedback from consultation undertaken to date with Scrutiny, residents, partner organisations, businesses and other interested parties and to recommend to Council approval of phase one budget proposals.

An addendum document was circulated prior to the meeting of Cabinet which contained revised recommendations and at the meeting, following debate, a further amendment to the recommendation was also agreed.

The Mayor advised that there had been a request received from the Budget Working Group to waive Standing Orders in relation to the length of speeches on the item, to allow unlimited time for speeches. In order to allow this, at least one half of those present at the meeting must agree.

A vote was taken to approve the suspension of the standing orders (for 20) and it was **not** agreed to suspend the standing orders.

Members expressed disquiet at this result and it was requested that standing orders be revisited to include the provision for unlimited speeches on the budget in future, due to the complexities of the issues. The Legal Officer advised that this point would be explored by the joint Member Officer and Constitutional Review Group.

The Mayor advised that recently circulated government guidance had suggested that all votes on budget issues should be recorded votes, therefore a recorded vote would be moved to automatically.

The Mayor further advised that there had been an amendment submitted by Councillor Peach and consent was sought from Council to permit Councillor Seaton to introduce the item incorporating the amendment. This amendment was not agreed by all Members and its validity was queried.

Councillor Seaton introduced the report and moved the recommendations contained within. He thanked all those involved with the budget process and advised that an overall £44m cut in grant was faced, with £13m of this being in 2015/16 alongside demand in services, this would increase the challenge to £25m.

Further key points highlighted included the strategic priorities which had been outlined to Members at the joint Budget Scrutiny meeting and the cross party agreement that they were correct; the strategy for meeting the budget challenges being faced and the work that had been undertaken in line with this strategy to produce a balanced budget;

the cross party budget working group that had been in place ensuring opposition colleagues had input and openness and transparency; the wide ranging budget conversation which had been undertaken since the proposals were published and the various meetings that had taken place; Cabinet being kept up to date on the emerging issues; the proposals for shrub and grass cutting being deferred to phase two to allow further discussions to take place; the proposals to charge blue badge holders for parking and the discussions arising from the Disability Forum identifying that the availability of accessible spaces was a bigger issue than the charging; the deferral of the proposals around bowls clubs and the work that would be undertaken with the clubs to identify if there were any alternative ways that the services could be provided going forward; comments received relating to Council tax support, which did not form part of the proposal and would be subject to a specific Council meeting in January; a proposal for companion bus passes that was being explored and the comments received relating to saving money with many of these being progressed already.

Councillor Seaton further advised that the proposals struck the right balance between tackling the financial challenges faced and ensuring a bright future for the city and all its residents.

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

Councillor Peach moved an amendment to the recommendations which sought the removal of the savings relating to the paddling pool in Central Park, it having only been reopened in the summer following significant investment by the Council. The facility was much used by all residents of the city.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Saltmarsh who confirmed that the facility was utilised by many residents, including those living in Dogsthorpe.

Members debated the amendment and in summary raised points including:

- There were a number of items identified within the phase one budget proposals and a number had been moved to phase two for further consideration. What was so special about this particular issue that it needed to be removed from the proposals completely rather than being referred to phase two?
- Many Members were not aware that the paddling pool was even under threat;
- The facility was well supported, it gave a lot of pleasure to many people;
- It was important that young people did have opportunity for early development through play;
- Although the pool had been renovated, the work was poor and would have to be completed again; and
- There needed to be thorough oversight of the laying down of the floor of the pool and confirmation was sought that members of the public would not be charged for the use of the pool.

Councillor Seaton exercised his right of reply as mover of the original motion and stated that he was in support of the amendment.

A recorded vote was taken on the amendment.

**Councillors For:** Arculus, Ash, Brown, Casey, Cereste, Elsey, Ferris, Fitzgerald, Forbes, JR Fox, JA Fox, F Fox, Harrington, Harper, Herdman, Hiller, Holdich, Jamil, Iqbal, Johnson, Khan, Lane, Martin, Murphy, Nadeem, Nawaz, North, Okonkowski, Over, Peach, Rush, Saltmarsh, Sanders, Scott, Seaton, Serluca, Shabbir, Sharp, Shearman, Stokes, Swift, Sylvester, Thacker and Thulbourn.

**Councillors Abstaining:** Miners, Fower, Sandford and Shaheed.

Following the vote (44 for, 0 against, 4 abstentions) the amendment was **CARRIED**.

Councillor Khan moved an amendment to the budget proposals on behalf of the Labour Group. In moving the amendment, Councillor Khan advised that there were two sections to the amendment, those proposals to be removed from the budget and those to be deferred to the second phase. In terms of the savings aspect, the proposals were £400k back into the Adult Social Care budget; an additional £100k from the communications budget to be achieved by a restructure; an additional £100k into Foster Care to allow for better payments to foster carers; £40k to be put back in to street scene services to allow for one or two members of staff for street cleaning to reach the areas that would not be able to be reached by the mechanical cleaners and £100k reinvestment back into the bus service.

Councillor Thulbourn seconded the amendment and reserved his right to speak.

Members debated the amendment and in summary raised points including:

- Although the Labour Group had proposed their amendment en block, Members should be given opportunity to vote on each item individually;
- The public transport budget had been cut by almost 50% and no Council service had been hit as hard in such a short period of time;
- Certain aspects of the overall budget proposals represented money being put back into services that, following review, could not be saved therefore money being put back into adult social care was a prudent view;
- There were areas of concern at some of the proposed deferrals into phase two, putting back some of the proposals to phase two would make those decisions harder;
- The proposed cut to Communications already represented almost a 40% cut in the services. This service was needed to ensure residents were made aware of all issues in a timely manner;
- The proposed reduction to Communications of £200k, would still allow for the service to operate effectively;
- It was unclear as to what the additional £40k for street scene was intended to buy or be used for;
- A number of new foster carers had been recruited. A lot had been learnt from the recruitment programme and there was already impact on the number of children placed by other agencies. There were six fewer children placed with agency foster carers;
- The cost difference between an agency placement and in house placement was on average £22k per year;
- The Adolescent Intervention Service was part of the Council's young people's service which supported young people aged eight to 19, it was responsible for delivering support directly to young people and their families. The service was to be delivered slightly differently but with no detrimental impact;
- The deferral of the closure of bowling greens was welcomed, it was not just bowls clubs that used the greens but also members of the public;
- There was concern as to whether the new regime for litter collection was going to be adequate and whether the new machinery would do the job properly;
- There was concern around improving public health awareness, and that the proposal was based on the loss of staff numbers;
- There was no point to the proposal for deferring the adult social care demography, officers had recalculated the need for those funds;
- In the high cost of care packages, where did the £400k come from, there had been no officers consulted on this;

- Adult Social Care budget had decreased substantially, but this was due to better management and redesigning of services and innovative. Need was being prioritised due to the budgets available;
- With regards to the reinvestment in bus services, it was an investment proposal which would need to be subject to a detailed appraisal;
- The current subsidised network resulted in a comprehensive review and it would not be possible to try and replicate one of the services replaced. It was not possible to have supported services compete with commercial services;
- There was concern at the depth of the cuts to high cost placements, reassurances had not been given at Scrutiny committees to the nature of 'driving down costs';
- Why had the Labour Group amendment only come through now, and not during the budget working group?
- With regards to deferring parking venues the increases were only in the Council's busiest car parks;
- The blue badge proposals would be subject to additional specific consultation to implement any changes. Part of the consultation would review options for increasing the number of disabled spaces across the city;
- The amendments should have been brought to the cross party budget working group. It could have been debated properly beforehand;
- It was for the Council to set the budget and not the working group;
- The proposed cuts to social services, predominantly the elderly, it was a critical area in the city with a growing elderly population. Private provision was not safe in the city;
- Younger people needed care, and the provision to one provider was not ideal; and
- None of the ideas had been put forward at the budget working group.

Councillor Cereste exercised his right to speak as seconder of the amendment and stated that there had been active involvement with the budget working group and conversations had been held around the adult social care and fostering issues. The majority of the proposals represented deferrals in order to obtain further information, and they were not opposing the proposals. He further advised the four main savings proposals and reinvestments had all been looked at in detail throughout the process.

Councillor Seaton summed up as mover of the original motion and stated that the cross party budget working group had been working well together but none of the issues highlighted during debate had been raised during the group meetings. Detailed briefings had been given on all of the issues and it was frustrating that concerns had only just been raised at such a late stage. The cross party group and Scrutiny Committee would be utilised to monitor activity in more detail as work progressed. This would provide the additional consultation and discussion that was being requested.

A recorded vote was taken on the amendment.

**Councillors For:** Ash, Ferris, Forbes, F Fox, Harrington, Herdman, Jamil, Johnson, Khan, Martin, Miners, Murphy, Okonkowski, Saltmarsh, Shabbir, Sharp, Shearman, Swift, Sylvester and Thulbourn.

**Councillors Against:** Arculus, Brown, Casey, Cereste, Elsey, Fitzgerald, Fower, JR Fox, JA Fox, Harper, Hiller, Holdich, Iqbal, Lane, Nadeem, Nawaz, North, Over, Peach, Rush, Sanders, Sandford, Scott, Seaton, Serluca, Shaheed, Stokes, Thacker,

Following the vote (20 for, 28 against, 0 abstentions) the amendment was **DEFEATED**.

The Legal Officer advised that the substantive motion was now the motion proposed by Councillor Seaton and inclusive of the amendment move by Councillor Peach.

There was no debate on the substantive motion.

Councillor Cereste did not wish to exercise his right to speak as mover of the motion.

Councillor Seaton summed up as mover of the original motion and thanked all Members for their contributions. He further advised that the budget proposals had by and large been agreed upon and the cross party working group had been successful. Consultation had been undertaken widely, and responses had been listened to and thanks were extended to all groups for their contributions.

A recorded vote was taken on the substantive motion.

**Councillors For:** Arculus, Brown, Casey, Cereste, Elsey, Fitzgerald, JR Fox, JA Fox, Harper, Hiller, Holdich, Iqbal, Lane, Nadeem, Nawaz, North, Over, Peach, Rush, Sanders, Scott, Seaton, Serluca, Stokes and Thacker,

**Councillors Against:** Ash, Ferris, Forbes, F Fox, Harrington, Herdman, Jamil, Johnson, Khan, Martin, Miners, Murphy, Okonkowski, Saltmarsh, Shabbir, Sylvester and Thulbourn.

**Councillors Abstaining:** Fower, Sandford, Shaheed, Sharp and Swift.

Following the vote (25 for, 17 against, 5 abstentions) it was **RESOLVED**:

That Council:

1. Defer some phase one budget proposals to phase two of the budget process to enable Cabinet further time to conclude the specific issues raised on certain budget proposals. The proposals to be deferred being:

<b>Issue</b>	<b>2015/16 £k</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
Parks, trees and open spaces	-168	-168	-168	-168	-168

Comprising of the partial deferral of the parks, trees and open spaces, this being:

- Cutting of parkway verges will be reduced by around 20 per cent, however visibility for traffic will be maintained at all times. This proposal makes a saving of £10,000.
- Grass cutting will be reduced from ten cuts a year to eight. This proposal makes a saving on £38,500.
- Shrubs which are ageing or have reached the end of their life will be removed. This proposal makes a saving of £83,000.
- Four of the city's seven bowling greens will be closed. Currently there are bowling greens at Bushfield in Orton, Central Park (2), East Community Centre, Itter Park, Ringwood in Bretton, Stanground and Werrington. In addition, six grass tennis courts at Central Park and five at Itter Park will

be closed. Clay tennis courts at both parks will remain open. This proposal makes a saving of £36,000.

2. Approve the phase one budget proposals, as summarised in appendix 1 to the Cabinet report, subject to the deferral of the proposals as outlined in recommendation (1), to enable implementation of these budget proposals to commence.

Council further **RESOLVED** to:

Take out of the savings the cost of the Paddling Pool in Central Park, as per the amendment moved by Councillor John Peach and further asking that Council looks to other people/community groups and/or companies taking on the servicing of the paddling pool if it is found that they can provide a better and cost effective service than Amey.

The meeting was adjourned for a ten minute comfort break.

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

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

1. Decisions from the Cabinet meeting held on 24 November 2014;
2. Decisions from the Cabinet meeting held on 15 December 2014 (detailed within a supplementary document to Members);
3. Use of the Council's Call-In mechanism, which had been invoked one since the previous meeting, this being in respect of the decision taken by the Cabinet Member for Resources published on 18 November 2014 relating to 'Council Tax Support Scheme 2015/16 Consultation – NOV14/CMDN/96';
4. Special Urgency and Waive of Call-In Provisions, which had not been invoked since the previous meeting; and
5. Cabinet Member Decisions taken during the period 24 September 2014 to 28 November 2014.

### **Questions were asked about the following:**

Petition objecting to the proposed planning application of development of a garage site behind 18 Acacia Avenue, Dogsthorpe, Peterborough

Councillor Miners queried whether this was the correct title, as it did not appear to relate to the petition in question. Councillor Cereste advised that this would be looked into.

## **COUNCIL BUSINESS**

### **11. Questions on Notice**

**(a) To the Mayor**

**(b) To the Leader or Member of the Cabinet**

**(c) To the Chair of any Committee or Sub-Committee**

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

1. The Roundabout off Lincoln road, between Werrington Fisheries and the Cock Inn public House;
2. The length of time Officers from Amey were taking to respond to Councillors;

3. Caxton Court, and the score it was given as a potential Emergency Stopping location;
4. Support for the trustees of the Green Back Yard in their fundraising campaign;
5. The electronic clocking in system used by carers; and
6. The deductions faced by health as detailed within the budget proposals

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

## **12. Motions on Notice**

### **1. Motion from Councillor John Fox**

1. That the Council acknowledges the work which has already been carried out by Annette Joyce, Assistant Director for Commercial Operations and Pep Cipriano, Commercial Operations Communications Manager, working in conjunction with one of the Beadles, Ernest Mensah-Sekyere, in building up a sporting and cultural link with Kumasi, a city located in the Ashanti region of Ghana; and
2. That in light of the work already undertaken, the Council considers the formation of a 'Friendship Link' with Kumasi in order to allow for further exchanges to take place around areas such as education and to promote friendship between the two cities.

Councillor John Fox moved his motion and it was seconded by Councillor Sharp.

There was no debate on the motion and a vote was taken (unanimous) and the motion was **CARRIED**.

### **2. Motion from Councillor Nabil Shabbir**

This Council welcomes and notes the recent decision by MPs in Parliament to recognise the state of Palestine. Recent events have shown that there is a strong feeling in the city across all communities about the plight of the Palestinian people, therefore we request that the Leader of the Council or the Chief Executive to write to the Prime minister and ask him to join in recognising the Palestinian state.

In moving his motion, Councillor Shabbir advised that it was more than twenty years since the Oslo Accords and peace was further away than ever before in Palestine. He further highlighted key points including an entire generation of young Palestinians growing up witnessing a worsening situation on the ground; the significant expansion of illegal Israeli settlements, restrictions on Palestinian movement, economic decline, a humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the construction of an illegal annexation wall through Palestinian land; Israel failing to meet clear legal obligations as an occupying power; the deliberate decision to annex Israeli land and build Palestinian settlements on it and the injustices inflicted on the residents of Palestine.

The motion requested involvement in order to increase pressure, as the only viable solution was a two state solution. Failure to resolve the conflict would have far reaching safety implications, both in the Middle East and further afield.

Councillor Shabbir further advised that an amendment had been proposed from Councillor Nadeem and he was agreeable for this to be incorporated into his motion.

Councillor Forbes seconded the motion and reserved her right to speak.

Following debate, a vote was taken (unanimous) and the motion was **CARRIED** with the amendment as follows:

This Council welcomes and notes the recent decision by MPs in Parliament to recognise the state of Palestine. Recent events have shown that there is a strong feeling in the city across all communities about the plight of the Palestinian people, therefore we request that the Leader of the Council or the Chief Executive to write to the Prime minister and ask him to join in recognising the Palestinian state **and its peace loving people to live in harmony alongside their neighbours of all religions and ethnic groups.**

### 3. Motion from Councillor Ed Murphy

That Council:

1. Notes the difficult financial circumstances in Peterborough and the work undertaken by the cross-party working party on the budget to commence savings as early as January;
2. Believes that Members can play their part in making savings through policy development and by making a reduction in the amount being received in special responsibility allowances;
3. Requests that those Members receiving a special responsibility allowance voluntarily agree to surrender that allowance from December 2014 as this will make a saving in the last remaining quarter for this financial year in effect these Members will receive three quarters of the allowances that were budgeted for and that the Leader considers reducing the number of Cabinet Members and Cabinet Advisors.

In moving his motion, Councillor Murphy stated that the motion requested Members in receipt of a special responsibility allowance to not take any further payment for the remainder of the year, equating to a 25% pay cut. In view of the difficult financial situation, this would go towards easing the significant pressures faced within the budget for the current year and would not set a precedent for future years. It was also requested that the Leader look at the number of individuals in receipt of an SRA.

Councillor Murphy further advised that he sat on a Scrutiny Commission for which the Chair of the Committee was paid in excess of £1k per meeting. There were additional responsibilities, but these responsibilities were not worth that amount of money.

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

Members debated the motion and in summary raised points including:

- The all party group had been tasked with looking into the issue, therefore the motion was premature;
- Were Members aware of all of the work involved? Particularly in relation to Cabinet Members and the Leader;
- Did the Council want to attract the best people to be Councillors? The motion told young people that if you had to take unpaid leave from your job you would not be paid;
- There seemed to be very little comprehension of what other Members did and the commitment given to the roles;
- Cabinet Members had given two week to the budget discussion alone;
- Cabinet Members gave time to the role as well as to being ward councillors;
- The city needed diverse educated individuals within the roles;

- There was an Independent Allowances Panel, why was there a separate motion submitted?
- The role of Scrutiny Committee Chairs and Cabinet Advisors should be further explored;
- Discussions had been undertaken in the cross party working group and there had been consensus that the role of committee chairs would be looked into going forward;
- The motion would not save a great deal of money and the comments should have been raised during the debate on the independent allowances panel report;
- Should Cabinet Members be expected to work below the minimum wage?
- Members had not taken a pay rise in a number of years;
- The Cabinet did need to be reduced and the number of Cabinet Advisors addressed;
- All Councillors could choose not to accept their allowances; and
- The Independent Remuneration Panel did not state that the allowances were generous.

The Mayor advised that the guillotine was drawing near and therefore he moved a motion to suspend standing orders and extend the guillotine to 12.00am. This was seconded by Councillor Murphy.

A vote was taken (24 for, 20 against, 0 abstentions)

Debate on the motion moved by Councillor Murphy continued and in summary points raised included:

- Some Councillors did choose not to accept their allowances;
- The allowances were high in some regards but it was unreasonable to expect Members to undertake their roles for nothing;
- Scrutiny Chairmen did undertake more work than appeared on the surface, with a vast amount of preparation work being undertaken before meetings and at other times outside of the standard meetings;
- The criticism of Cabinet Members was unreasonable, they worked hard as did senior officers of the Council;
- There did need to be exploration into the disparity between back bench Members and Cabinet Members;
- It was impractical to request Members to forego their allowances so late in the year. To progress the issue through the cross party working group was the best way forward; and
- There was scepticism around the working group and how the issue would be progressed.

Councillor Ferris exercised his right to speak and stated that there was no question as to whether individuals worked hard, moreover he expected that all Members would work hard, it was just a request for a small step towards budget savings.

Councillor Murphy summed up as move of the motion and stated that certain previous Councillors had never taken an allowance and had paid for their own travel. It was to be queried whether all Councillors were in the position for the right reasons.

Councillor Cereste moved a motion that the Member be not further heard and this was seconded by Councillor Scott.

A vote was take (23 for, 24 against, 0 abstentions) and the motion was **DEFEATED**.

Councillor Murphy continued his summing up and stated that the motion was not party political, difficult financial circumstances were being faced and the motion was to request that Members voluntarily gave up the remainder of their allowances. The right message needed to be put over to the public.

Following debate, a vote was taken (13 for, 30 against, 4 abstentions) and the motion was **DEFEATED**.

#### **4. Motion from Councillor Frances Fox**

Councillor Fox moved the following motion:

That Council agrees to reduce the number of costly consultants in order to make savings to support vulnerable public services.

In moving her motion Councillor Fox stated that a lot of money had been lost particularly in regards to the Freemans solar panels for which consultants had undertaken work, some consultants did not appear to be doing their jobs properly.

Councillor Sharp seconded the motion.

A vote was taken (unanimous) and the motion was **CARRIED**.

#### **5. Motion from Councillor Nick Sandford**

Councillor Sandford moved the following motion, with an amendment from Councillor Ash as highlighted. The inclusion of the amendment was unanimously agreed by Council.

This Council notes that:

1. Currently 1.5 million 16 and 17 year olds are denied the vote in public elections in the UK;
2. That the campaign to lower the voting age is supported by thousands of young people across the UK and that the Votes at 16 Coalition consists of a wide range of youth and democracy organisations;

This Council believes that:

1. **Many** 16 and 17 year olds **can be** are knowledgeable and passionate about the world in which they live and are as capable of engaging in the democratic system as any other citizen;
2. Lowering the voting age to 16, combined with strong citizenship education, would empower young people to better engage in society and influence decisions that will define their future;
3. People who can consent to medical treatment, work full-time, pay taxes, get married or enter a civil partnership and join the armed forces should also have the right to vote.

This Council resolves;

1. To join the Votes at 16 Coalition;

2. To ask the Chief Executive to write to our local MPs to inform them of this decision and ask them to support the campaign in the House of Commons.
3. To promote this policy through its communications;
4. To work with local schools, our Youth MP and the Peterborough Youth Council to raise awareness among young people of the UK system of Government and the role of active citizens in our democracy

In moving his motion, Councillor Sandford stated that having the right to vote was something that many people took for granted, however not so for every country in the world. Individuals had been denied the right to vote for various reasons over the years, and there was still one group denied this right, the 1.5m 16 and 17 years olds in the country.

The Votes for 16 Campaign sought to engage 16 and 17 year olds who already held responsibilities within society; to empower them by giving them a democratic right to influence decisions which would affect them; and to inspire them to get involved in the democratic process. Many younger people were capable of engaging and if given the vote would raise issues pertinent to them. A number of other countries had chosen to give younger people the vote including Scotland during the referendum, 80% of them casting their vote. There were many willing to engage and participate and the Council needed to give support to the campaign.

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

Members debated the motion and in summary raised points including:

- Some 16 year olds would not know the fundamentals of how the Council or the country worked;
- Giving 16 year olds the vote would have a positive impact on the declining numbers of people choosing to vote;
- By engaging with individuals at a younger age, this would instil a pattern of voting which would stay with them throughout their lives;
- If you were old enough to work and pay taxes then you were old enough to vote;
- The reduction in the voting age in Scotland had only been in relation to the one issue, that being the referendum on independence;
- There were many 16 and 17 year olds who still relied on adults for help and parents and teachers were still a big influence in their lives;
- If young people did join the armed forces, they were not allowed to join the front line;
- The number of voters had declined steadily over the years, a lot of 18 year olds did not make the effort to vote;
- Young people were already being encouraged through the Youth Parliament and the Local Democracy Week, they did need to take an interest;
- Younger people should be encouraged to vote and they should be encouraged to take an interest;
- Being physically mature, did not make you mentally mature. 16 year olds did not have the life experience;
- It takes people a long time to mature and to be politically aware;
- It was not believed that 16 or 17 year olds would be upset at not receiving the vote;
- There were many young people who were very mature and would make good decisions;
- Current affairs and politics were discussed in schools and it would be more

- relevant to pupils if they had the vote;
- It was a difficult balance, 18 was about the right age, 16 was perhaps too young;
- Age was not an indicator of common sense or intelligence;
- If younger people were given the opportunity to think through issues and to make a decision they would make informed, good decisions; and
- There were many older people who were not interested in politics, younger people needed to be engaged at a younger age.

Councillor Shaheed exercised his right to speak and stated that people from the age of 16 were able to do many things, having an active contribution to a society in which they had no say. They should be allowed to have a say in their future by being permitted to vote.

Councillor Sandford summed up and stated that there had been good comments arising from the debate and those supporting the motion were doing so from an optimistic point of view. Those concerned around education the motion did state that there was further work to be done in order to engage younger people.

Following the debate, a vote was taken (34 for, 13 against, 4 abstentions) and the motion was **CARRIED**.

### **13. Reports to Council**

#### **(a) Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel 2014**

Council received a report from the Independent Members' Allowances Panel which requested it to note the recommendations arising from the Panel, as contained within its report, and to determine what action, if any, it wished to take in response to those recommendations.

Councillor Cereste introduced the report and thanked the Panel for the hard work undertaken on the report and for the recommendations made. However, the recommendations contained within the Panel's report would add in excess of £120k to the budget, and this was considered to be unacceptable in the current financial climate. Councillor Cereste moved a motion that there be no change to the current allowances scheme for 2015/16 and further proposals from the working group could be considered at a later date. This was seconded by Councillor Holdich who reserved his right to speak.

There was no debate on the item and it was **RESOLVED**:

That the Council notes the recommendations of the Independent Members' Allowances Panel, as summarised at paragraph 3 of the report, and that there should be no increase in the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2015/16.

#### **(b) Update from the Alternative Governance Arrangements Workshop**

Council received a report from the Chair of the Alternative Governance Working Group, which sought Council's agreement to defer any decision on an alternative form of governance until March 2015, allowing the Alternative Governance Working Group in the interim to begin consultation with Councillors on the Committee System and Hybrid model of governance.

Councillor Sharp introduced the report and moved the recommendation contained within, he further outlined the meetings that were due to take place and requested that Members take time to attend. This was seconded by Councillor Hiller who reserved

his right to speak.

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

To agree to defer any decision on an alternative form of governance until March 2015.

The senior officers of the Council left the Chamber prior to debate on item 9(c) and Mr Phil McCourt

The Mayor  
7.00pm – 12.00am

## FULL COUNCIL 17 DECEMBER 2014

## QUESTIONS &amp; ANSWERS

Questions were received under the following categories:

<b><u>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</u></b>	
<b>7.</b>	<p><b><u>Questions from members of the public</u></b></p>
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Question from Mr Steve Allen</b></p> <p>To Councillor Elsey, Cabinet Member for Street Scene, Waste Management and Communications</p> <p>In connection with the Love Peterborough campaign, may I urge the City Council to investigate the possibility of putting in place arrangements with the various utility companies whereby the Council clean or paint over offending graffiti on vandalised boxes and apparatus, and then pass on the cost to the respective organisation.</p> <p>This practice has been successfully adopted by other authorities, and if implemented here in Peterborough I believe would help ensure our urban environment can be more efficiently kept free of the blight of graffiti.</p> <p><b>Councillor Elsey responded:</b></p> <p>Thank you for the question relating to one the biggest blights on our city.</p> <p>Peterborough City Council in partnership with its partner Amey Peterborough, has in place an effective process for the removal of graffiti on any Council owned buildings and assets, but as you have rightly identified graffiti prevention and removal is one of the core principles of the newly launched Love Peterborough initiative.</p> <p>Our challenge comes when mindless individuals, deficient of the necessary intellect to restrict writing their names on paper, take it upon themselves to scrawl upon private property, especially the street furniture owned by our utility companies.</p> <p>We have to seek the permission of the property owner to remove the graffiti in the first instance and get agreement relating to any potential damage which could be attributed to the removal process. You can be assured that we as an authority are reviewing how we can use all the powers available to us to take action to rid the city of this menace.</p> <p>You are correct in that there are other authorities who have agreement with the utility companies for the removal, painting and re-charging of expenses</p>

	<p>incurred, however this is negotiated on an area by area basis. Equally, specifically regarding utility boxes, there are areas of the country who have adopted an approach of creating graffiti art carrying authority messages on these boxes which would appear to deter others from meaningless scrawl.</p> <p>I can assure Mr Allen that we are in the process of holding discussions with the various utility companies across the greater Peterborough area, but we have yet to reach agreement to remove or paint over graffiti and charge back the costs.</p> <p>We will be continuing to pursue this until such time as we reach an agreement or we see clear evidence that the said utility companies are removing graffiti from their assets in a timely manner.</p> <p><b>Mr Allen asked the following supplementary question:</b></p> <p>That is a comprehensive response, thank you. I am pleased to hear that something is in process and I think it should actively be progressed as best we can. We are talking about graffiti, not just as an art form we are talking about it as pure vandalism and that is what we should regard it as and we should rid our city of it.</p>
<p><b>2.</b></p>	<p><b>Question from Mr Bernard Barker</b></p> <p>To Councillor Serluca, Cabinet Member for City Centre Management, Culture and Tourism</p> <p>In view of the proposed closure of sports facilities in the City, why has the Council not sought to emulate the 'BE ACTIVE' sport and leisure scheme run by Birmingham City Council in partnership with Birmingham Public Health? As the scheme includes all residents and is designed to improve health outcomes for everyone, why are Cabinet Members <b>not</b> seeking to learn the lessons and bring health funding and goals to bear on the provision of sport and leisure facilities?</p> <p><b>Councillor Serluca responded:</b></p> <p>Cabinet Members, officers and Vivacity have engaged with the Be Active programme in Birmingham, as part of a best practice visit last year to understand the partnership between the Council and public health. A report was taken to the Health and Wellbeing Programme Board, which recognised the synergies between Vivacity's work and the health and wellbeing needs of our residents. Following discussions at the Health and Wellbeing Programme Board, Vivacity were asked to consider proposals that would deliver health and wellbeing outcomes alongside the management of facilities in the city, using centres as Health and Wellbeing hub, as per the Be Active model.</p> <p>The Council are currently in discussions with partners such as Vivacity and Sport England to form proposals which will form the base of the new active lifestyles strategy for the City due to be presented to Council in the New Year.</p> <p><b>Mr Bernard Barker asked the following supplementary question:</b></p> <p>The supplementary question concerns timescales, those of us who are caught up in the bowling controversy at the moment are conscious that many of our members are actually at risk of losing the only sport they can realistically play</p>

	<p>and ongoing consultations that may or may not lead, it doesn't sound like we are very close to Birmingham so can you give us any reassurance on timescales and likely outcomes please?</p> <p><b>Councillor Serluca responded:</b></p> <p>Three weeks ago we did have a meeting with Vivacity and Sport England with reference to the Be Active that Birmingham is currently holding. I know that in January we are bringing something as a sports strategy to Cabinet and we will be discussing it further. I can assure you I am working on it and I will be more than happy to keep you and all Councillors updated with the progress as it goes along.</p>
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>Question from Mr Jay Gearing</b></p> <p>To Councillor Cereste, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Housing, Economic Development and Business Engagement</p> <p>At the Full Council meeting on October 8<sup>th</sup> this council unanimously agreed a motion to recognise the benefits that the charity The Green Backyard provides to the city, to help the charity identify external sources of funding in order to purchase the land they are currently located on, and to consider a discounted price that reflects the social benefits their work provides.</p> <p>In November the site was listed for sale, with a bid submission deadline of January 16<sup>th</sup>, almost 2 full months before the end of the moratorium period afforded under the Localism Act (2011).</p> <p>PCC's Fundraising Officer has now identified external sources of funding that could assist the charity in purchasing the land, but states that the timeframe of the sale makes it virtually impossible for the charity to raise the required funds. He recommends that a minimum of a year is needed to successfully raise the capital, something the charity's fundraising committee is in accordance with.</p> <p>In light of the motion agreed in October, and given that the charities fundraising campaign has already received significant local and national support, raising £11,000 in 10 days with the backing of 2 knights of the realm, does this council agree that the sale of the allotment land at London Road should be delayed in order to allow the Green Backyard the proper opportunity to purchase the site?</p> <p><b>Councillor Cereste responded:</b></p> <p>The Green Backyard has had and continues to have proper and fair opportunity to purchase the site under the Localism Act provisions.</p> <p>Initially in 2012 Green Back Yard were quoted a price and the site was offered by the Council, to them, for sale, on an "off market" basis and their fund raising was to commence then. This was prior to it being registered as an ACV, but they were not able to raise sufficient funds.</p> <p>The Act prescribes a specific process providing a 6 week moratorium period to confirm their interest in purchasing the site and a further 20 weeks to get their financial arrangements in place before a sales contract is issued.</p> <p>The Council has embarked on a sale process with offers due by 16<sup>th</sup> January 2015. This will give us a fair indication of the market value of the site. A contract</p>

cannot be issued to the front runner bidder until after 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015 (after the ACV 6 month moratorium period).

**Mr Jay Gearing asked the following supplementary question:**

When the Green Back Yard was first notified of the Council's intentions to sell the land it was a relatively newly formed organisation, entirely run by volunteers and with a legal status that didn't allow for fundraising.

Since learning of the intention to sell, a great many changes have taken place in order to get the project into the position which it is now in to purchase the site.

Following community consultation at every stage, the group is now a registered charity with a highly skilled and committed board of trustees, a growing national profile and a clear ambitious vision for the future and a fundraising campaign already in operation.

This summer the board of trustees approached PCC officers to see how they could best work together to purchase the site. We approached them.

It was only after we had requested this meeting that we were told the site was being sold this financial year. Having been brought forward ahead of many other potential sites for disposal. Can I therefore asked Councillor Cereste given that he and a number of other Councillors in this room have personally donated to the fundraising and given the motion at last full Council does it not make sense for a city that inspires to be an environment capital to delay the sale to see how fundraising progresses? Why are PCC officers pushing so hard to sell this particular bit of land when there are many other sites on its books also available for disposal?

**Councillor Cereste responded:**

As Mr Gearing is aware, I am very much a supporter of the Green Back Yard, I believe in what they are doing and what they are trying to do and I believe in their existence. I did sanction a proposal brought to me by my officers offering them a third of the present site so they could continue doing all the wonderful education work that they are doing, they could open their coffee shop, they could do their teaching and education and we offered them a further two acres plus somewhere else in the city where they could do their environmental growing. I don't make any comment as to whether that is the right thing for them or not but it is important that the public understand that the Council is doing everything it possibly can to be reasonable and to see if there is a way that we can keep the Green Back Yard functioning in our city.

If Mr Gearing is saying that an extension would help them raise the money then I think all would agree to that, but it has to be something firm and it has to be something that we can see is going to happen. There is no point in having delays for the sake of a delay.

We all support what you are doing in our city, I would have thought that the proposal brought to you by the council officers and giving you a firm 25 year lease so you knew exactly what you were doing, giving you a city centre site for you to do all the things you say need to be done in the city centre, giving you another two acre plus to do all the growing and the organic and environmental

	<p>work that you do, which we much value because we wouldn't have made the offer to you if we didn't value it, I don't think is unreasonable.</p> <p>However, if you are so committed to that site that you are not willing to listen to the offers that the Council has made to you so that your organisation can survive, we will be prepared to listen to proposals for a small sale extension if you can demonstrate that you can genuinely find the money to buy it. otherwise my advice to you is that you have been made a good offer by the Council, it costs you nothing, you can still deliver all the things that are important to you and you can have 25 years which is absolutely rock solid with no issues that someone is going to turn you out. What is wrong with that?</p>
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Question from Ms Sophie Antonelli</b></p> <p>To Councillor Cereste, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Housing, Economic Development and Business Engagement</p> <p>The Green Backyard is located on allotment land at London Road. In 2012 PCC stated that they believed its value to be in the region of £900,000 and that they would be willing to sell the land to The Green Backyard for £750,000. Despite repeated requests the basis for this costing has never been disclosed. In September 2014 The Green Backyard commissioned Savills Estate Agents to provide a valuation on the same piece of land. For the land that is currently being marketed for sale, three quarters of the site, the suggested value was £425,000, less than half that originally suggested. This assumes that there is no planning permission attached to the site, which there is currently not. Should planning residential planning permission be granted the value would increase to £635,000.</p> <p>Under the General Disposal Consent (2003) of the Local Government Act (1972), local authorities have the expressed consent of the Secretary of State to sell assets at below market value up to a total discount of £2 million if the land is likely to contribute to the promotion or improvement of social, economic or environmental wellbeing.</p> <p>The land is currently being sold through a blind tender process that gives no opportunity for negotiation or for social and environmental benefits to be considered. In light of the motion agreeing to consider a discounted price for The Green Backyard, and PCC's obligation to seek best value for its assets in all senses, rather than just financial, does the Council agree that the land should be withdrawn from sale to allow full and fair negotiations to take place with the charity prior to any sale taking place.</p> <p><b>Councillor Cereste responded:</b></p> <p>I value the work you do in the Green Back Yard and we need to find a solution which enables you to continue that good work in the city. But you know yourself the difficult situation that we as a city find ourselves in.</p> <p>Going out to tender fixes the valuation, it takes away all the issues. When we go out to private tender, some people who are interested in the site will decide what they want to pay for it in an open market situation then there will be a value that no one will dispute. At that point, there is no reason why as a Local Authority we will not be able to negotiate with you, but then there is a clear valuation on the site which cannot be disputed, and from that point if we can possibly help, we will do, if you can demonstrate that you can raise the money</p>

within a specific agreed period of time we will even give you an extension.

**Ms Antonelli asked the following supplementary question:**

Considering that since launching our fundraising campaign, we have had unsolicited offers of interest free loans from members of the public. Therefore I would like to ask whether Councillor Cereste would be prepared to meet with the Board of Trustees from the Green Back Yard to discuss how long a delay we could expect in the sale and also whether on submission of the bids which will be due in January, whether the Council would allow the Green Back Yard to see those bids so that we could understand the valuation being placed on the site by the market.

**Councillor Cereste responded:**

I'm quite happy to do whatever is legal, we want to support you as much as we possibly can but my advice to you is to think very carefully about the offer that has been made to you by the Council, it is a really good offer and you are getting three to four hundred thousand pounds worth of value that lots of other people in this city and lots of other associations and community groups in this city would really prefer to have themselves. So I do support what you do, but remember that what you have been offered is more than fair.

## COUNCIL BUSINESS

### 11. Questions on notice to:

- a) The Mayor
- b) To the Leader or Member of the Cabinet
- c) To the chair of any Committee or Sub-committee

### 1. **Question from Councillor Davidson**

To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Services

Could the Cabinet Member please ensure that the relevant officer is tasked with conducting an inspection at the Roundabout off Lincoln road, between Werrington Fisheries and the Cock Inn public House. In the last month, there have been two near misses with vehicles and the site warrants further inspection for the provision of improved signage, such as '20 is Plenty' or even traffic lights in order to improve the situation and to promote safer driving.

#### **Councillor Hiller responded:**

Last year pedestrian access was improved here with the installation of crossing points between the pub and Carron Drive. I will ask our officers to look at this location and to assess if any additional improvements to signage or road markings are required.

Often the perception and reality of a traffic hazard at a busy junction can be dissimilar and it is a matter of fact that the incidents of problems at this location is low, over the past five years there have only been two slight personal injury accidents recorded at this junction, both in 2011. This compared with the actually hazardous multi-incident David's Lane junction in Werrington, where the promised junction improvements, championed by Councillor John Fox are currently underway.

### 2. **Question from Councillor John Fox**

To Councillor Elsey, Cabinet Member for Street Scene, Waste Management and Communications

When contacting AMEY via their main link Anne, I have to say that I find her to be an excellent ambassador for the company, she is professional, polite and very efficient in the way she helps Members.

Sadly on some recent occasions she has been let down by officers not responding to complainants and I find myself more frequently chasing up requests for them to make contact.

Would the Cabinet Member reassure me that this matter will be brought to the attention of officers, as a quick phone call can save a lot of work and man hours in the long run.

	<p><b>Councillor Elsey responded:</b></p> <p>I have spoken to Amey Peterborough about this and it is clearly unacceptable for Councillors to endure a heavier burden as a result of ineffective communication. Amey have checked their records and fully acknowledge there have been some unacceptable delays on certain occasions, these are far and few between but are none the less unacceptable.</p> <p>Notwithstanding your kind remarks about Anne, with which I concur, Amey have asked me to apologise to you for the shortcomings and have asked me to take the opportunity of answering this question to reassure you and all other members that they place the very highest emphasis on effective engagement and communication with members as that is an essential prerequisite of a successful partnership.</p> <p>They will be looking at their reporting and communication chain of command to ensure these incidents are not repeated, I trust this is acceptable.</p> <p><b>Councillor Fox did not have a supplementary question.</b></p>
3.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Rush</b></p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Services</p> <p>The cross-party advisory group identified Caxton Court, off Coneygree Road, Stanground, as a potential location for a Traveller Emergency Stopping Site. This site was scored as the 8th possible site on the list.</p> <p>In the criteria it says that no sites would be picked if it was close to built up areas, playgrounds or other recreational sites.</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member tell me why this site scored so highly when it is in a built up area, at the bottom of residents gardens, close to allotments and next to an open play recreation area and will this site ever be recommended by officers for an Emergency Stopping Site?</p> <p><b>Councillor Hiller responded:</b></p> <p>The cross-party advisory group looked in detail at 75 different locations across Peterborough, from which their recommended shortlist was established. This shortlist was based on the criteria relevant at the time the group considered the locations, and the three sites initially proposed and accepted by this Council would still be the three uppermost in that process today.</p> <p>That said, it was always my intention and direction in creating the independent advisory group nearly three years ago for it to remain live and therefore able to revisit any of the current and shortlisted sites, should local topographical, demographical or other relevant circumstances change or facts relevant to the initial recommendation be brought to my or the group's attention which would indeed warrant a re-evaluation.</p> <p>Given the points you've raised I will discuss the matter with the Chair of the cross-party advisory group and determine if this site should be referred back to the group for consideration to be given as to whether it should remain at the position it currently is.</p>

	<b>Councillor Rush did not have a supplementary question.</b>
4.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Ferris</b></p> <p>To Councillor Cereste, Leader of the Council and</p> <p>Following the unanimous support that this Chamber gave to my motion on the Green Backyard at the previous Full Council meeting, can the Leader of the Administration inform me of any practical steps the Council has taken to support the Trustees in their fundraising campaign?</p> <p><b>Councillor Cereste responded:</b></p> <p>Contact has been made between the Green Backyard and the Council's Funding Unit on the 14<sup>th</sup> November following the Council motion.</p> <p>The Green Backyard were seeking support in terms of identifying external funding to support their objective of transferring the land to them and also how the Council could potentially support them with their own fundraising activities.</p> <p>The Council has identified grants may be available to Green Back Yard and bidding process but the Council's Funding team was not confident that these would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Fund all the money; and</li> <li>b) Be awarded by 16<sup>th</sup> January 2015.</li> </ul> <p>There are potential issues in providing support over and above general advice and in supporting one party in a tender process. Doing so could prejudice or invalidate the tender process or at least be unfair to other bidders who would undoubtedly have committed significant amounts of time and resource into preparing their bids.</p> <p><b>Councillor Ferris did not have a supplementary question.</b></p>
5.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Davidson</b></p> <p>To Councillor Fitzgerald, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care</p> <p>An electronic monitoring system, for carers clocking in and clocking out, has been rolled out to some adult social care service users. I have witnessed this monitoring equipment not being utilised to its full capacity and therefore its effectiveness is to be questioned. Can the Cabinet Member confirm the cost of this new system and whether its usage is to be monitored going forward?</p> <p><b>Councillor Fitzgerald responded:</b></p> <p>The use of Electronic Call Monitoring (ECM) systems was introduced for all homecare providers in September 2012. Homecare providers were required to meet the cost of putting systems in place so there is no cost to the Council.</p> <p>An internal audit of Electronic Call Monitoring was carried out in June 2014, this highlighted a number of issues, in summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homecare call data from ECM systems may not give an accurate reflection of homecare delivery.</li> <li>• Not all homecare agencies provide all the required information.</li> </ul>

	<p>As a result of the audit report a number of actions to address the issues were agreed including systems to check data and invoices to be agreed and put in place.</p> <p>As a result of the audit and engagement with homecare providers the Adult Social Care Commissioning team will be reviewing the use of ECM as part of a broader review of homecare contract monitoring and commissioning due to be completed by April 2015.</p> <p><b>Councillor Davidson was not present to ask a supplementary question.</b></p>
6.	<p><b>Question from Councillor Davidson</b></p> <p>To Councillor Fitzgerald, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care</p> <p>As highlighted within the Phase One Budget proposals, all components of health have deductions attached to them. Could the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care confirm whether these deductions will affect the Council's ability to meet the standards within social care legislation and how the proposals would impact on effective service delivery and in particular the Council's ability to meet individual care packages for the aged population.</p> <p><b>Councillor Fitzgerald responded:</b></p> <p>Since Adult Social Care services returned to the council the Department has worked hard to modernise and transform the way we deliver care and support to ensure we care well for those in the greatest need by wherever possible providing support and interventions that maximise opportunities for work and skills in daily living. This has meant major change to how we organise:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Our staff and services</li> <li>2) A new approach to replace traditional day care for under 65's</li> <li>3) More emphasis and investment in prevention and community based care.</li> </ol> <p>This has been to ensure we are well placed to implement the Care Act from 2014.</p> <p>The savings proposals before you are a combination of sound investment into areas of support which promote this approach and reduce reliance on ongoing statutory support.</p> <p>These include extending reablement and assistive technology and further uses of options such as extra care housing. Our reablement service locally has had some excellent results and as a result is seen as a major area for further investment through the Better Care fund.</p> <p>We have been able to do this without any reductions to the standards of care provided. We have systems to monitor our performance and regularly benchmark what we do against our regional comparators. We also have an initiative called 'raising the bar' designed to improve the quality of safeguarding. Our approach to prevention includes measures to support older people and carers and to reduce isolation wherever possible. Increasingly we are working with partners to achieve good results.</p> <p>One example of this is the dementia Resource Centre which opened in September and is being recognised locally, regionally and nationally as a model</p>

	<p>of best practice. It is apartness hip between Peterborough City Council , The Alzheimer's Disease Society and the mental health Trust. We have already started receiving letters from carers saying what a positive impact it has had on their lives.</p> <p>We have also worked with health colleagues to ensure that people who should have been receiving support free are doing so. This is why we are continuing to make savings on Continuing health care entitlement and working to agree a joint funding tool.</p> <p><b>Councillor Davidson was not present to ask a supplementary question.</b></p>
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