

## MINUTES OF CABINET MEETING HELD 15 JUNE 2015

### **PRESENT:**

**Cabinet Members:** Councillor Holdich (Chair), Councillor Fitzgerald, Councillor Hiller, Councillor Lamb, Councillor North, Councillor Scott, Councillor Seaton and Councillor Serluca.

**Cabinet Advisors:** Councillor Casey and Councillor Maqbool.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Elsey.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3. MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 7 APRIL 2015**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2015 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

### **4. PETITIONS PRESENTED TO CABINET**

Councillor Peach presented a petition on behalf of the residents of Broadway Gardens, which sought exploration into issues being faced with regards to noise pollution being created by Peterborough Regional College.

Councillor Casey presented a petition on behalf of the residents of Wild Lake, Orton Malbourne, which requested that more car parking spaces be created for the residents of Wild Lake, due to the current provision being less than adequate.

Councillor Holdich advised that the petitions would be presented to the relevant officers for response.

## **STRATEGIC DECISIONS**

### **5. CUSTOMER STRATEGY**

Cabinet received a report which followed the development of the Strategy as a result of the Customer Experience Programme being agreed within the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The Council's Service Director, Adult Services and Communities, and the Social Inclusion Manager introduced the report highlighting the main issues contained within. The Strategy was the first draft and had been completed to ensure the customer was at the heart of all that the Council did. The Strategy supported the Council's intent to become a commissioning organisation and the Strategy would ensure all Council services adhered to the same principles. If approved, an action plan would be developed to ensure it was embedded across the organisation.

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

- Customer experience was key and needed to be embedded across the Council;
- Not all residents had access to IT solutions. It was important to ensure that these individuals were not overlooked;
- All Partners and Contractors would follow the Council's Customer Strategy;
- Commissioners would need to understand the principles of the Strategy;
- There would not be a 'one size fits all' solution and the more vulnerable members of the public were addressed within the Strategy;
- The success of the Strategy would be measured on customer feedback and engagement through different partners and commissioners;
- If the Strategy was right, fewer people should be seen contacting customer services and officers for routine information;
- A digital solution would provide a 24/7 contact scenario for a number of areas within the Council;
- Training and staff development would be undertaken to ensure the high quality delivery of customer services. This should be at the heart of each staff member's appraisal and council reports as a standard;
- The 'My Peterborough App' was extremely useful. Ensuring people were aware of what support was available was a key part of the approach, and collaboration between services would be required in order to deliver a single outcome;
- The Council's Customer Charter and the Customer Strategy were linked, however the Customer Charter was more about individual service standards;
- Staff retention and recruitment was an important factor, particularly during busy times. There needed to be focus on this as well as on training;
- The Council's Complaints Procedure had always been historically difficult to navigate but from 1 July 2015 a new streamlined procedure was being introduced;
- The call centre had recently been through its annual customer service excellence accreditation and this had gone extremely well. Cabinet passed its congratulations on to those involved in passing the accreditation; and
- Peaks and troughs should be addressed by providing appropriate staff coverage.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to approve the proposed Customer Strategy.

#### **REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

The Strategy provided a framework for ensuring the Council's services were customer focused.

#### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The first option considered was to do nothing, however this may have led to the development of services and delivery of the Customer Experience Programme without an agreed strategic approach, and may not have enabled the most effective and beneficial process for customer service improvements to be achieved.

The second option considered was to delay developing the Strategy until the Customer Experience Programme had been completed. This was rejected because the development of the Strategy and the Customer Experience programme should not be mutually exclusive.

## MONITORING ITEMS

### 6. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FINAL OUTTURN 2014/15

Cabinet received a report as a monitoring item. The report was also to be submitted to Audit Committee on 29 June as part of the closure of accounts process.

The report provided Cabinet with the outturn financial position for both the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme for 2014/15, subject to any changes required in the finalisation of the detailed statutory statement of accounts.

The report also contained performance information on treasury management activities, payment of creditors and collection performance for debtors, local taxation and benefit overpayments.

Councillor Seaton introduced the report highlighting the main issues contained within. He further advised of the difficult financial challenges faced by the Council and the impacts upon the Budget. Work was due to commence on the next years' budget and the report demonstrated the strength of financial management that can tackled pressures faced.

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

- The response to the pressures put on the budget over the year indicated the Council's resilience and ability to respond to such issues;
- Reduction in grant available for public health had been announced, the impact being around £663k to Peterborough, for which representation would be made to Government;
- Cabinet and Members would be briefed following that national budget on 8 July 2015; and
- Nominations for the Cross Party Budget Working Group would be sought.

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

1. The final outturn position for 2014/15 (subject to finalisation of the statutory statement of accounts) of a balanced position on the Council's revenue budget;
2. The final outturn spending of £108.8m under the Council's capital programme 2014/15;
3. The reserves position for the Council, including the use of £0.6m from reserves to support the budget in 2014/15, which was less than forecast as actions have reduced pressures;
4. The performance against the prudential indicators;
5. The performance on treasury management activities, payment of creditors, collection performance for debtors, local taxation and benefit overpayments; and
6. The forecast budget gap of over £10m for 2016/17 was expected to increase with the update of national expenditure plans, and that Cabinet may need to review 2015/16 plans in light of the Budget to be released on 8 July 2015 .

### REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The report formed part of the closure of accounts and decision making framework culminating in the production of the Statement of Accounts and informs Cabinet of the final position.

## **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

There were no alternative options considered or required.

## **7. OUTCOME OF PETITIONS**

Cabinet received a report following the presentation of a petition to Full Council on 15 April 2015.

The purpose of the report was to update Cabinet on the progress being made in response to the petition, this being:

i) Parking along Nottingham Way.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED:**

To note the actions taken in respect of the petition presented to Council (as detailed below).

## **REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

As the petition presented in the report had been dealt with by Cabinet Members or officers, it was appropriate that the action taken was reported to Cabinet, prior to it being included within the Executive's report to full Council.

## **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

There were no alternative options considered.

Chairman  
10.00pm – 10.55am