

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD WEDNESDAY 14 DECEMBER 2016  
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

**THE MAYOR – COUNCILLOR DAVID SANDERS**

**Present:**

Councillors Aitken, Ali, Allen, Ash, Ayres, Barkham, Bisby, Bond, Brown, Bull, Casey, Coles, Davidson, Dowson, Ellis, Elsey, Ferris, Fitzgerald, Fuller, Fower, JR Fox, JA Fox, Goodwin, Harper, Hiller, Holdich, Hussain, Amjad Iqbal, Azher Iqbal, Jamil, Johnson, King, Lamb, Lillis, Martin, Murphy, Nadeem, Nawaz, Okonkowski, Over, Peach, Rush, Saltmarsh, Sanders, Sandford, Seaton, Serluca, Shaheed, Sharp, Shearman, Sims, Smith, Stokes, Sylvester, Walsh, and Whitby.

A minute's silence was held at the request of The Mayor for James Crowden, CVO, Olympic oarsman and former Lord Lieutenant of Cambridge.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cereste, Clark, Khan and Shaheed.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

The Legal Officer advised that a general dispensation had been granted for all Members by the Audit Committee to enable them to vote on the budget item.

The Mayor requested that any Member who was more than two months in arrears with their Council Tax should declare this to the meeting.

In relation to agenda item 7(c) 'Petitions for Debate – Please Help to Stop St Michael's Gate Residents Being Evicted' Councillor Whitby declared that his wife was a friend of the lead petitioner, though it would not impact on his decision.

**3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 October 2016**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2016 were approved as a true and accurate record subject to the inclusion of an updated list of attendees.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

**4. Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor advised that parts the evenings meeting were being filmed. It was further advised that the Council had a new Democratic and Constitutional Services Manager,

Pippa Turvey, which was to commence with immediate effect.

## **5. Leader's Announcements**

There were no announcements from the Leader.

## **QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

### **6. Questions with Notice by Members of the Public**

Questions from members of the public were raised in respect of the following:

1. The purchase of St Michael's Gate Peterborough; and
2. The presence of ethically sound and social responsible business models within companies the Council has business with.

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

### **7. Petitions**

#### **(a) Presented by Members of the Public**

There were no petitions presented by the public.

#### **(b) Presented by Members**

Councillor Ash presented a petition signed by 117 signatories to request measures were put in place on Eastern Avenue near the Welland School to ensure safe pedestrian crossing during busy periods.

#### **(c) Petitions for Debate - Please Help to Stop St Michael's Gate Residents Being Evicted**

A petition had been received by the Council containing over 500 signatures from people who lived, worked, or studied in the city. This had triggered the right to a debate at the meeting of the Full Council in accordance with the Petitions Scheme.

The petition, "Please Help to Stop St Michael's Gate Residents Being Evicted," called on the Council to take action and not support the deal with Stef and Philips Limited for the use of St Michael's Gate, Parnwell, as interim accommodation for homeless families. A request for a debate at the Council was requested, for the Council to reconsider its position.

Miss Stevic, the lead petitioner, address the Council on behalf of the residents of St Michael's Gate. In summary the key points highlighted included:

- It was believed that the Council had taken too little action too late;
- That the actions of Councillors in taking the decision was felt to amount to the mistreatment of residents;
- Residents of St Michael's Gate felt they had not been kept informed and it was suggested that using newspapers and Facebook was an inappropriate form of communication;

- It was believed that the Council should help residents stay in their homes until alternative local accommodation could be found and that financial assistance could be provided to those residents accumulating legal fees;
- The stress and upheaval caused to tenants faced with losing their homes was significant;
- It was suggested that the Council was not transparent in the manner in which it had made the decision;
- A change in the law was considered necessary in order to prevent repeat occurrence of this situation;
- It was requested that the Council did not repeat this type of business transaction in the future; and
- The Council's business acumen was questioned.

Councillor Holdich introduced the report and moved amended recommendations asking for support in his request for assistance from the Local Government Association. Councillor Holdich advised that a contract had been entered into with Stef and Philips. As such it was now too late to withdraw. It was advised that the Council stood by the original decision. This had been done in the best interests of the city as, in entering the contract, the properties in St Michael's Gate could not be occupied by homeless people from other local authorities. It was noted that any course of action would have resulted in the residents of St Michael's Gate being served eviction notices. Councillor Holdich advised that the decision had released £2 million which could be spent on support services for the homeless rather than hotel rooms. Council officers would continue to support those in need to find new homes as quickly as possible. It was suggested that attention should now be focused on preventing the same situation from arising in the future.

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

An amendment to the motion was moved by Councillor Fower. Councillor Fower questioned the suggestion that Luton Borough Council would have been approached had Peterborough turned down the deal. Concern was expressed that the Cabinet Member had authority to make such a decision, rather than Council.

Councillor Davidson seconded the amendment and suggested that not all the potential options had been sufficiently investigated. It was further suggested that the scrutiny process needed to be utilised more effectively. Councillor Davidson considered that further information should be required from private landlords.

Members debated the amendment and in summary raised the points including:

- The costs incurred to the Council in relation to temporary accommodation were significant and had a subsequent impact on Council taxpayers;
- The area was currently facing a housing shortage;
- It was suggested that the decision was made in the best interests of the largest number of local people;
- Similar situations had occurred in other local authority areas, where homeless individuals from London had been absorbed into other authorities, including 300 in Thurrock and 200 in Luton; and
- These were now putting considerable strain on those authorities.

Councillor Holdich, as mover of the original motion, advised that the first knowledge that he had of the approach from Stef and Philips was at the Cross Party Budget

Group meeting, at the same time as others were told. It was confirmed that Stef and Philips would have approached other authorities should Peterborough have passed on the deal. Nothing that the company had done had been illegal. It was considered that the amendment simply heightened the expectations of the residents of St Michael's Gate without basis.

A vote was taken (21 voted in favour, 28 voted against, 2 abstained from voting) and the amendment was **DEFEATED**.

Members debated the original motion and in summary raised points including:

- It was claimed that the Cabinet had voted against the Council looking into ways to prevent this situation reoccurring in the future;
- Concern was expressed that this situation could re-occur in St Michael's Gate on expiry of the new lease in two years' time;
- More short term accommodation was required to provide decent affordable housing for all;
- It was suggested that the decision was driven by a private company seeking to make a profit. Stef and Philips had used this business model in other areas;
- It was hoped that residents had been contacted by officers to offer alternative accommodation;
- Government policy was believed to have led to this problem arising, as Councils had been required to sell their housing stock;
- It was suggested that Councillors that lobbied the Government and local MP would have little effect until there was change in the housing policy;
- There was a need for more to housing stock, as people had a right to a home;
- Concern was expressed that media coverage had had a negative effect on the national perception of Peterborough;
- Calls were made for the Leader to meet with residents of St Michael's Gate and to apologise;
- Confirmation had been requested from on the start date of the contract with Stef and Philips, however this had not been provided;
- It was noted that legislation for housing benefit had been capped this year, compounding the situation residents found themselves in;
- It was considered that the Council should take responsibility for its actions and put the people of Peterborough first, in order to support its own growth;
- Although Stef and Philips had not acted illegally, it was considered that the Council should not be supporting such business models;
- Concern was raised that the proposal did not take sufficient action, as any housing stock could be sold to Stef and Philips, but a housing association;
- Stef and Philips status as a mutual company was questioned. Examples were given of families being split up in order to allow children to remain in school;
- It was suggested that sending a letter to the Local Government Association was the equivalent of doing nothing;
- Attention was drawn to the prevention of homelessness legislation and the housing white paper currently going through Parliament. This was interpreted to mean that homeless people must be housed within the borough or the travel to work area, in keeping with the spirit of the Act;
- Disappointment was expressed that the matter had not been referred to Scrutiny;
- It was suggested that the motion requested support for something that had already happened and, as such, no immediate change in either the homeless situation or St Michael's Gate would be realised.

Councillor Walsh exercised her right to speak and acknowledged the feelings of the residents and advised that it was not within the Council's power to prevent private landlord evictions. The residents of St Michael's Gate would have been evicted irrespective of the Council's decision. Councillor Walsh confirmed that the owners was acting within the law in seeking vacant possession. An increase in housing stock was required locally to meet the current housing need and further reports were expected in the coming months. Work was underway within the Local Government Association to address the situation.

Councillor Holdich summed up as mover of the motion and reiterated that the residents of St Michael's Gate would have been evicted regardless. Looking forward, it had been reported that Stef and Philips were still looking for properties in the city. It could be possible for the Council to unknowingly place individuals in one of their properties.

It was agreed to suspend standing orders to allow Ms Stevic to address the Council for a second time. Ms Stevic advised the Council that it was not a forgone conclusion that residents would be evicted. She referred to a similar case in Maidenhead where 33 tenants had been served with Section 21 Eviction Notices however they were still in their properties, as the judge had rejected the Possession Orders.

A vote was taken (31 voted in favour, 19 voted against, 4 abstained from voting) and it was **RESOLVED** that Council:

1. Noted the petition and debated the request to take action;
2. Noted the letter sent to the Chair of the Local Government Association from the Leader of the Council on 5 December 2016 (Appendix 1), which outlines the concerns of the Council in relation to homelessness and the prevalence of, in our opinion, unethical business models among private housing investors; and
3. Supported the Leader of the Council in his request for assistance from the Local Government Association to ensure that neither Peterborough City Council, nor other local authorities, are placed in such an impossible situation again and to investigate these issues at a national level.

## 8. Questions on Notice

- (a) **To the Mayor**
- (b) **To the Leader or member of the Cabinet**
- (c) **To the Chair of any Committee of Sub-Committee**

The Legal Officer advised that the order in which questions were asked was determined by ballot.

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

1. Internet broadcasting of council meetings;
2. Steps to encourage the adoption of sustainable school transport plans;
3. A concert hall/arts venue in plans for development on the North Westgate site;
4. The effectiveness of the Child Poverty Strategy and the Neglect Strategy in

- combating child poverty;
5. The regeneration of Millfield and the Lincoln Road corridor;
  6. Bonfires on allotments;
  7. The use of vacant property to house the homeless;
  8. Traffic congestion across the city;
  9. Road safety;
  10. Community skips; and
  11. Transactions between the Council and Athene Communications.

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

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS**

### **9. Executive and Committee Recommendations to Council**

#### **(a) Cabinet Recommendation - Executive Procedure Rules**

Cabinet, at its meeting of 7 November 2016, received a report which requested its approval to the amended Executive Procedure Rules. Cabinet approved the proposed changes to the Executive Procedure Rules (Part 4 – Section 7).

Cabinet recommended that Council noted the changes to Part 4 – Section 7 of the Constitution (Executive Procedure Rules).

Councillor Holdich introduced the report and moved the recommendation.

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

Members debated the recommendations and in summary the points raised included:

- Concern was raised that the proposals had not been fully considered, as when previously presented to Council, the guillotine prevented a full discussion of the item.
- It was noted that the proposals were very similar to those procedures already in place.

Councillor Fitzgerald exercised his right to speak and confirmed that the matter had been through various stages of scrutiny prior to its submission to Council.

Councillor Holdich summed up as mover of the motion and advised that the procedures set out within the Executive Procedures rules had adopted the general principals of pre-decision Scrutiny.

A vote was taken (34 voted in favour, 18 voted against, 2 abstained from voting) and it was **RESOLVED** that Council noted the changes to Part 4 – Section 7 of the Constitution (Executive Procedure Rules).

#### **(b) Audit Committee Recommendation - Appointing Person Arrangements for the ApPOINT of the External Auditor**

The Audit Committee, at its meeting of 21 November 2016, received a report which set out the options available to the Council regarding the adoption of an appointing person arrangement for the appointment of an external auditor for 2018 /2019 and later years.

The Audit Committee recommended that Council agree the adoption of Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) as the appointing person for the Council, subject to receiving a satisfactory invitation to opt into the PSAA's appointing person arrangements, and agree to delegate acceptance of the invitation to the Corporate Director: Resources, as the Council's Section 151 Officer.

Councillor Fuller introduced the report and moved the recommendation. It was advised that the role of appointing person was undertaken by the Audit Commission in the previous year. Under the 2014 Act the Council is required to put in place an alternative arrangement to appoint an external auditor.

Councillor Aitken seconded the report and reserved her right to speak.

Members debated the recommendations and in summary the points raised included:

- With reference to the Cadbury Report it was questioned whether the requirement to change auditors regularly was still the case.
- Concern was raised following the most recent Audit Committee meeting, where it was suggested that the Committee were out of order and did not allow a Member to move an amendment, contrary to Council's Standing Orders.

Councillor Aitken exercised her right to speak and advised that the auditors had recently been changed. It was further advised there was a legal representative present at the Audit Committee meeting.

Councillor Fuller summed up as mover of the motion and advised that the external auditor was independent. Councillor Fuller was not at the most recent Audit Committee meeting due to illness, however offered to discuss the matter further following the close of the Council meeting.

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

1. Adopted of Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) as the appointing person for the Council, subject to receiving a satisfactory invitation to opt into the PSAA's appoint person arrangements; and
2. Delegated acceptance of the invitation to the Corporate Director: Resources, as the Council's Section 151 Officer.

### **(c) Cabinet Recommendation - Budget Phase One Proposals**

Cabinet, at its meeting of 5 December 2016, received a report as part of the Council's agreed two-stage budget process and requested that Cabinet consider the feedback from the consultation undertaken to date with scrutiny, residents, partner organisations, businesses and other interested parties to recommend to Council approval of phase one budget proposals. Cabinet had regard to the consultation feedback to date, noted the timetable for the phase two consultation, and noted that the budget proposals to be considered by Council would note form part of the second stage of consultation.

It is recommended that Council, having regard to feedback, approve the phase one budget proposals, summarised in Appendices 1 and 2, to enable implementation of the

budget proposals to commence. These proposals included a council tax increase of 2%, plus the increase of 2% for the Adult Social Care precept.

Councillor Seaton introduced the report and moved the recommendation, thanking everyone for all their hard work. The Council's finances were carefully managed and it was advised that they had received a clean record and a value for money endorsement from the Council's auditors.

A motion to adjourn the debate was moved by Councillor on the grounds that an announcement from Government was anticipated the next day to alter the 4% cap on increases to Council Tax.

Councillor Ellis seconded the motion and agreed this was an opportunity for reconsideration of the proposals, if extra powers were announced to increase council tax further.

Debate took place around the following points:

- Inadequate time had been allowed to investigate the implications of the removal of the 4% cap.
- It was unknown if the cap would be removed.

A vote was taken (12 voted in favour, 34 voted against, 6 abstained from voting) and the motion was **DEFEATED**.

Councillor Seaton resumed his introduction of the report and confirmed that the team had been fully briefed on many difficult issues and had been working on the proposals for six months. Of the additional revenue created by the proposed 4% increase in council tax, half would be allocated for Adult Social Care. Should the situation change a review could be undertaken by Council in March. Peterborough's council tax had been frozen for the past six years and was currently one of the lowest in the country. It was advised that the budget was balanced last year with no cuts to services and the same was expected this year, though challenges were expected. Councillor Seaton also noted recent improvements and regeneration across the city and highlighted the current successes in local growth and economy.

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

Debate took place around the following points:

- Support was expressed for shrub cutting, park attendant proposals and Westgate development.
- It was considered that Peterborough had a low wage economy.
- Services had been outsourced and it was suggested that, therefore, it was not possible to say there had not been any cuts to services.
- Expenditure appeared to exceed income.
- Following a consultation it had been agreed that Members allowances would remain unchanged however they were subsequently increased. This could not be changed as, within the Standing Orders, items agreed within the last months could not be reversed.
- It was noted that cuts in government grants had forced budget restrictions upon the Council.
- The value of the grants lost, it was advised, was similar to the amount received under the Combined Authority.



- Concern was expressed over highway maintenance which would see a budget decrease of £450,000 in the first phase.
- It was not thought possible to form an opinion on the budget until Phase 2 was available to present a complete picture.
- There was a budget deficit of £18 million, which had been reduced to about £5.5 million.
- It was suggested that the principle of Members voting on their own allowances was flawed.
- Amey's budget would, it was noted, be increased by £250,000 whilst the council had reduced budgets.
- Investment was considered to be needed in the city centre to create a good impression and encourage new business to the city, which would in turn generate wealth.
- Members of the budget working group were not allowed to discuss the budget outside of their meetings and therefore, it was suggested, there was no possibility of items being debated.
- It was considered that no one could have anticipated the 1% in the precept which was announced today, or how this may be spent.
- The budget came as a package, it was advised, and all elements would have to be accepted. It was not possible to pick out any specifics.
- Suggestion was made that the Adult Social Care budget was insufficient.
- Comments were made in relation to the changes in attendance allowance, which was not set by the Council, but by central Government.

Councillor Holdich exercised his right to speak and explained that the reduction in services that had already been made amounted to approximately £60 million. The Council had been subject to a number of reductions in government grants at the same time as taking on approximately £60 million worth of additional responsibilities.

Councillor Seaton summed up as mover of the motion and highlighted the reduction recorded in unemployment levels. He advised Council that they did not have to accept the increase in allowances and confirmed that he agreed with the principle that Members should not vote on their own allowances. Further explanation was provided on highway maintenance and that this was covered by capital expenditure, to which there would be no cuts. The claim that the proposed expenditure on Fletton Quays was £6 million was considered questionable. It was further noted that the Budget Party Working Group consisted of two Members from each group who could present to the Group their ideas for reinvestment in the city.

A recorded vote was taken:

**Councillors For:** Aitken, Allen, Ayres, Bisby, Brown, Bull, Casey, Coles, Elsey, Fitzgerald, Fuller, JR Fox, JA Fox, Goodwin, Harper, Hiller, Holdich, Azher Iqbal, King, Lamb, Lane, Nadeem, Okonkowski, Over, Peach, Rush, Sanders, Seaton, Serluca, Sharp, Sims, Smith, Stokes, Walsh, and Whitby.

**Councillors Against:** Ali, Dowson, Ellis, Ferris, Hussain, Amjad Iqbal, Jamil, Johnson, Martin, Murphy, Shearman, and Sylvester.

**Councillors Abstaining:** Ash, Barkham, Bond, Fower, Lillis, Saltmarsh, and Sandford.

Following the vote (35 voted in favour, 12 voted against, 7 abstained from voting) it was **RESOLVED** that Council, having regard to feedback, approved the phase on budget proposals, summarised in Appendices 1 and 2, to enable implementation of these budget proposals to commence. These proposals included a council tax increase of 2%, plus the increase of 2% for the Adult Social Care precept.

## **10. Questions on the Executive Decisions Made Since the Last Meeting**

Councillor Holdich introduced the report which detailed Executive Decisions taken since the last meeting including:

1. Decisions from the Cabinet Meeting held 7 November 2016.
2. Decisions from the Extraordinary Cabinet meeting 17 November 2016
3. Decisions from the Cabinet meeting 5 December 2016.
4. Call In by Scrutiny Committee or Commission.
5. Special Urgency and Waiver of Call In provisions
6. Cabinet Member Decision taken during the period 1 November 2016 and 5 December 2016.

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

#### The Draft Peterborough Housing Strategy 2016 – 2021

Councillor Ellis asked when the last Peterborough Housing Strategy ended.

Councillor Hiller advised that it was still in place and that the Peterborough Housing Strategy 2016-2021 would replace the current strategy.

Councillor Murphy asked if Councillor Hiller knew the run dates of the last strategy, when it ran out and how long the gap between the Strategies had been.

Councillor Hiller responded that he didn't know the run dates of the last strategy, he did know when it ran out, and he did not know how long the gap had been between the two.

#### Integrated Healthy Lifestyles Service NOV16/CMDN/75

Councillor Murphy enquired about the consultation with the trade unions and how many former NHS workers had been moved to a private company. He also requested details on the tendering process and asked who, other than Solutions for Health Ltd, were considered.

Councillor Lamb advised Members that details were in the report.

Councillor Ferris asked what measures of success would be applied, whether the Council would decide on these, and whether it would be possible to compare those levels of success achieved with the current in-house team.

Councillor Lamb replied this would be announced in due course.

## COUNCIL BUSINESS TIME

### 11. Notices of Motion

Councillor Ash moved a motion to suspend standing order 14.2 so that the meeting be extending beyond the 11:00pm guillotine.

Councillor Jamil seconded the motion.

A vote was taken on the motion (19 voted in favour, 32 voted against, 0 abstained from voting) and the motion was **DEFEATED**.

Concern was expressed that, due to the guillotine, the Council would not be able to discuss the recommendation in relation to the Scrutiny Procedures Rules and any amendments proposed.

### 1. Motion from Councillor Murphy

*That Council acknowledges that many families have been affected by the current housing crisis, homelessness and locally pending evictions and notes:*

- 1) The current housing emergency that is affecting Peterborough and England. Nationally £27 billion per annum is spent on housing benefit and government funding for house-building has gradually moved into subsidies for rents, especially to private landlords; and*
- 2) That there is public concern over Saint Michaels Gate and that some are profiteering out of the misery of homelessness by making people homeless to use dwellings to maximise their profits.*
- 3) The local stories and case histories provided and set out as **Appendix 1** to this notice of motion.*

*That Council believes that there are medium and emergency measures that the city council are and should be taking to resolve the problem. Better solutions such as investing in new build and the provision of social and council housing will be much more cost effective than the use of bed and breakfast and other temporary accommodation.*

*That Council resolves to support:*

- 1) Measures to provide quicker homeless persons decisions, sympathetic assistance and prevention work with and for families in Peterborough faced with homelessness; and*
- 2) The investigation of the installation of prefabricated emergency housing and increased use of leased homes as a short term measure and in the long term increasing the supply of social dwellings and council houses; and*
- 3) The acquisition of empty buildings to convert and refurbish to provide*

*accommodation and the development of the joint venture housing company to focus on the delivery of social housing to eradicate the use of bed and breakfast accommodation.*

In moving his motion, Councillor Murphy advised that the number of houses in the authority area increased greatly after WW1 and again after WW2. This included Council housing which continued until the 1990s although sheltered housing continued after this date. Grants were then given to housing associations to continue building to provide rented housing. Councillor Murphy questioned whether this funding had been used to build St Michael's Gate and requested this be investigated by the regulator as these grants were not intended to be used to build properties which could be sold on to private speculators. He highlighted that errors were included within the amendment.

Councillor Ellis seconded the motion and highlighted the local and national housing shortage and the need to build more homes. It was believed that the joint venture company with Cross Keys Homes would help. Private builders could not, it was suggested, be relied on to alleviate the situation as they were taking too long to bring new homes to the market and their affordable houses were not truly affordable. There were currently 3500 people on the council waiting list and 800 people in urgent need of housing. The choice based letting scheme wasn't not believed to work. Councillor Ellis considered there was an urgent need for more temporary accommodation, affordable and social housing to rehouse people, and to give them the choice to rent or buy.

An amendment to the motion was moved by Councillor Walsh. Councillor Walsh advised that the idea that central government hold a pot of money for housing which had been diverted elsewhere was not accurate. It was expected that business wished to make a profit. Stef and Philips had identified a lucrative business opportunity. Homeless people currently living in hostels and hotels would be rehomed in the refurbished St Michael's Gate which, it was advised, would greatly improve their living conditions. The main problem was considered to be the scale of the evictions which had taken place. Those served eviction notices had been supported by the Housing Team and would be assisted in finding accommodation elsewhere. The number of individuals designated as homeless resulting from the evictions was eight.

Councillor Seaton seconded the amendment to the motion and reserved his right to speak.

Members debated the amendment and in summary raising points including:

- It was suggested the motion be withdrawn and discussed again, involving cross party discussions with the Cabinet Member.
- A solution needed to be reached to solve the problem of social housing.
- Migration numbers in the city had placed pressure on available housing stock.
- It was suggested that the amendment included an error and, subsequently, did not make sense.

At this point the guillotine was reached and in line with standing order 14.2 all debate was ceased Members were directed to move to the vote on the remaining agenda items, where all motions, amendments and recommendations would be deemed formerly moved and seconded.

A vote was taken (29 voted in favour, 19 voted against, 4 abstained from voting) and the amendment was **CARRIED**.

A vote was taken on the substantive motion (27 voted in favour, 18 voted against, 5 abstained from voting) and the substantive motion was **CARRIED** with the amendment as follows:

That Council acknowledged that many households had been affected by the current housing crisis, homelessness and, locally, pending evictions, and noted:

- 1) The current housing emergency that was affecting Peterborough and England as a whole. Nationally, there was £27 billion per annum of revenue expenditure on housing benefit and this had massively increased over the last two decades. In addition, following the financial crisis Government and councils were left with the stark reality of less capital financing at a time when inward migration had continued particularly in this city, putting a huge strain on our housing stock;
- 2) That there was public concern over the situation at Saint Michaels Gate and that, despite the new owners having acted lawfully, they had the ability to charge uncapped rates to this or any other council;
- 3) The local stories and case histories provided and set out as Appendix 1 to this notice of motion.
- 4) There were medium and emergency measures that the city council were taking to resolve the problem.

That Council noted that decisive and proactive steps were being taken to resolve the problems of homelessness in our city including investing in new-build and refurbished temporary accommodation. The Council noted too that a national solution was required to address the issue of the movement of homeless households between Council areas. Finally that Council noted and welcomed the changes proposed in the Homeless Reduction Bill which would require councils to offer assistance to households at risk of becoming homeless far sooner than was currently required.

That Council resolved to support:

- 1) Ongoing measures to provide quicker homeless persons decisions, sympathetic assistance and prevention work with and for families in Peterborough faced with homelessness;
- 2) The investigation of the increased use of private second leased homes as a solution to address the shortage of housing and, in the long term, increasing the supply of affordable dwellings;
- 3) The acquisition of empty buildings and the increased support to owners of empty dwellings to convert and refurbish to provide accommodation; and
- 4) The Local Government Association's work programme to mitigate the impact of homeless placements out of London on Councils in the East of England.

## 12. Reports to Council

### (a) Review of Constitution - Scrutiny Procedure Rules

An amendment to the motion was moved and seconded. A vote was taken (9 voted in favour, 22 voted against, 12 abstained from voting) and the amendment was **DEFEATED**.

A vote was taken (32 voted in favour, 16 voted against, 3 abstained from voting) and it was **RESOLVED** that Council approved changes to the Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules (Part 4 Section 8) and consequential amendments to Article 11 of the Constitution, to take effect from 1 January 2017 (Appendix 1 and 2).

### (b) Report of the 2018 Parliamentary Constituency Boundary Review Working Group

A vote was taken (unanimous) and it was **RESOLVED** that Council agreed the proposed response at Appendix 1 to the Boundary Commission for England consultation in respect of the 2018 Parliamentary Constituency Boundary Review.

The Mayor  
7.00pm – 11:35pm