

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
HELD WEDNESDAY 12 APRIL 2017
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

THE MAYOR – COUNCILLOR DAVID SANDERS

Present:

Councillors Aitken, Ali, Allen, Ash, Ayres, Barkham, Bisby, Bond, Brown, Bull, Casey, Cereste, Clark, Coles, Davidson, Dowson (left at 10.02pm) Ellis, Elsey, Ferris, Fitzgerald, Fuller, Fower, JR Fox, JA Fox, Goodwin, Harper, Hiller, Holdich, Hussain, Amjad Iqbal, Jamil, Johnson, Khan, King, Lane, Lillis, Martin, Murphy, Nawaz, Okonkowski, Over, Peach, Rush, Saltmarsh, Sanders, Sandford, Serluca, Shaheed, Sharp, Smith, Stokes, Walsh, and Whitby

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lamb, Azher Iqbal, Seaton, Shearman, and Sylvester.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

A minute's silence was held in memory of the late Councillor Marcus Sims and for the victims of the Westminster attacks.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 March 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2017 were approved as a true and accurate record.

COMMUNICATIONS

4. Mayor's Announcements

There were no announcements from the Mayor.

5. Leader's Announcements

There were no announcements from the Leader.

QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

6. Questions with Notice by Members of the Public

There were no questions submitted by Members of the Public

7. Petitions

(a) Presented by Members of the Public

There were no petitions presented by members of the public.

(b) Presented by Members

There were no petitions presented by Members.

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. Money owed to the Council;
2. Corporate Parenting Committee;
3. Council Energy Scheme;
4. Nuisance Bikers;
5. Occupation rates of Council owned buildings;
6. Hospital's experience of "bed clocking";
7. 20mph speed restriction zones outside schools;
8. Discarded drug paraphernalia
9. Labelling of cycle and pedestrian tracks; and
10. St George's Community Hydrotherapy Pool

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 – Environmental Policy and Action Plan (EAPs)

Cabinet, at its meeting of 20 March 2017, received a report, the purpose of which was to seek support for the Environment Action Plans (EAPs) by Cabinet. The report enabled Cabinet to consider the Policy and Actions Plans, in order to make a recommendation to Council on 12 April 2017.

Councillor Walsh introduced the report and moved the recommendation. The Environment Action Plans outlined how the city intended to deliver against the 'Creating the UK's Environmental Capital' strategic priority. These new Plans intended to replace all existing Environment related policies and plans. The Environment Action Plan City-wide had been developed with stakeholders from organisations across Peterborough. The Plans comprised achievements to date, interim targets to 2020 and visions to 2050. All of the targets formed a true reflection of what the Council and stakeholders were able to commit to within existing resources and anticipated grant funding. Progress would be monitored quarterly and an annual monitoring report would be made publically available. A consultation took place on the draft plans between 23 January and 12 February 2017 and these were discussed at the Growth Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 16 January 2017.

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

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

- It was noted that the new Manor Drive development had no public transport access.
- It was suggested that the Council should purchase its energy from 100% renewable sources.
- There was concern that the Council would not be able to meet the recycling target for 2020 of 65%.
- It was suggested that the targets within the plan were ultra conservative and did not drive either ambition or achievement.
- Suggestions were made to work with partners regarding flytipping, make household recycling centres user friendly and promote the bulky waste collection service.
- It was suggested the plan grass verges should be preserved

Councillor Holdich exercised his right to speak and explained that the Council's previous contract had failed on the recycling targets but the new contract would redress this and targets would be met in 2020. This had been widely consulted on with most of the observations having been taken into account.

Councillor Walsh summed up as mover of the recommendation and in so doing, stated that the points made were interesting and would be looked into. Views should have been made earlier through the feed-in process via scrutiny public consultation when they could be properly discussed with the appropriate action taken and should not be looked at retro-actively when it was too late.

A vote was taken (unanimous) and it was **RESOLVED** that Council adopt the 'Environment Action Plan: City-Wide' and 'Environment Action Plan: Peterborough City Council' documents.

(b) Cabinet Recommendation – Draft Peterborough Housing Strategy 2016 to 2021

Cabinet, at its meeting of 20 March 2017, received a report, the purpose of which was to seek support for the Peterborough Housing Strategy 2016 to 2021. The purpose of the report was to consider the Peterborough Housing Strategy and recommend its

adoption to Council. Cabinet had endorsed the recommendations and proposed additional minor amendments, including the recommendations to Council.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Hiller stating that the Strategy would be a major policy for the Council. The Strategy set out the Council's priorities and commitments for the period 2016-2021 for a broad range of Housing matters, including rural housing issues. The Housing Strategy had been widely consulted on to ensure that all stakeholders and partners had an opportunity to influence the final report. Councillor Hiller acknowledged the work involved in creating the Strategy, particularly by Anne Keogh, Housing and Strategic Planning Manager and Caroline Hannon, Senior Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer.

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

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

- The Strategy was supported by Members.
- The Council had not had a Housing Strategy for two years which had resulted in issues regarding homelessness and first time buyers
- It was suggested that £1.2m had been spent on hotel rooms and that three quarters of all the bed and breakfast and hotel accommodation used in Peterborough and Cambridgeshire was used by Peterborough City Council although many Councillors disputed this fact. It was later clarified that these were the figures given out on Cambridgeshire radio.
- The Strategy stated the South Bank housing development aimed to be zero carbon but did not commit any other houses in Peterborough to this aim.
- All environmental factors, although covered in other Council documents, should be recognised within this Strategy for it to be a truly comprehensive for the 21st century.
- There was concern regarding housing being bought to let by people who did not live in the city which made it difficult for the ordinary person to buy a property.
- It was suggested that first time buyers should be safeguarded as there was a potential danger of them being mis-appropriately dealt with regarding the first time buyers' incentive scheme.
- There was concern that the strategy did not give much emphasis on social/rented accommodation and there was a need to ensure there was adequate rented accommodation as there were still long waiting lists.
- It was suggested that the Council would need to ensure that there would be sufficient appropriate specialist housing for those that had a form of disability.
- If the property market continues to grow then Peterborough would be able to implement policies that would enable housing associations and private investors to provide desperately needed accommodation for those that have a need.
- It was suggested that the Housing Strategy should state where the Spatial Strategy could be found regarding planning terms.
- Over the last five years Peterborough had achieved 28% affordable housing of all houses built.

- Under the Combined Authority, there would be £100m for Peterborough and Cambridgeshire with Peterborough receiving approximately £25m, which would be a considerable amount of money to be spent on rented accommodation.

Councillor Elsey exercised his right to speak and addressed the comment regarding the Council not having had a Strategy for the last two years and explained the reality was that the Council had deliberately waited until the Government Planning Bill came into effect this year as it would have been a futile exercise to produce a Strategy prior to understanding what the Planning Bill contained.

Councillor Hiller, as mover of the original motion, summed up commenting that the Council needed to build approximately 1,000 dwellings a year to meet the projected population growth to 2036. 4,637 new homes were built in Peterborough between 2011 and 2016, with over 2,000 in the last two years, of which over 28% were affordable and 25% of those were shared ownership which was commendable given the current conditions regarding government funding. Through the new joint venture with Cross Keys Homes, the Council were expected to be able to create new housing of all types or tenures, changing from an enabler to a direct developer of housing. The Council funded refurbishment of Elizabeth Court would provide another 53 units for homeless people in Peterborough, saving tax payers approximately £800k a year for the next five years and providing self-contained accommodation.

A vote was taken (unanimous) and it was **RESOLVED** that Council agreed to adopt the Peterborough Housing Strategy, which incorporates the amendments set out in the supplementary Cabinet report.

(c) Audit Committee Recommendation – Cambridgeshire and Peterborough City Council Combined Authority Questioning Process

The Chairman proposed and it was agreed by Members to suspend standing order 29.2 in order to debate the item for immediate implementation.

Councillor Fuller introduced the report and moved the recommendation stating that at Audit Committee's reconvened meeting of 3 April 2017, a report was received, the purpose of which was to consider the proposed arrangements to require the Council's representatives to the Combined Authority and Overview and Scrutiny Committee to provide a briefing report to each meeting of Full Council, setting out the activities and any decisions of the Combined Authority, and to allow Councillors the opportunity to submit questions on notice to the Combined Authority Council representatives. Audit developed and endorsed the recommendations, including recommending to Council.

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

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

- It was questioned that the change to the Constitution under 17.1 was not included in the recommendations and would this go through as a recommendation.
- It was asked how long the notice would be with regard to submitting questions and if there would be questions without notice.
- There was concern that the questioning process could take a substantial amount of time and push items on the agenda towards the guillotine time.

Councillor Aitken exercised her right to speak and stated that Members would need to take as long as needed at Council meetings to discuss the Combined Authority as there would be many questions asked at the beginning.

Councillor Fuller clarified the recommendations stating that Members were being asked to approve the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough City Council Combined Authority Questioning Process Protocol, as set out in Appendix 1, for inclusion within the Council's Constitution; and approve the amendment to Council Standing Orders, as set out in Appendix 2, to allow for a report to be received by the Council on the actions and decisions of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and to enable questions without notice on these items to be put forward and for 15 minutes to be allowed for questions without notice. If necessary, this process could be reviewed and reconsidered in due course.

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

1. Approve the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough City Council Combined Authority Questioning Process Protocol for inclusion within the Council's Constitution; and
2. Approve the amendment to Council Standing Orders to:
 - Allow for a report to be received by Council on the actions and decisions of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority;
 - To allow Members the opportunity to submit questions on notice to the Combined Authority Council representatives, to be considered separately from questions on notice to the Leader, Cabinet Members, or Committee Chairman, and
 - For fifteen minutes to be allowed for questions on notice to the Combined Authority Council representatives.

(d) Audit Committee Recommendation – Annual Report of the Audit Committee

Councillor Fuller introduced the report and moved the recommendations, thanking committee members and officers that had served the committee over the year and supported him in the role of Chairman. Particular thanks were given to the late Councillor Simms who had served the committee well and with due diligence.

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

A vote was taken (unanimous) and it was **RESOLVED** that Council noted the Annual Audit Committee Report.

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 20 March 2017.
2. Call In by Scrutiny Committee.
3. Special Urgency and Waiver of Call In provisions.
4. Cabinet Member Decision taken during the period 2 March 2017 to 31 March 2017.

Questions were asked about the following:

Management of Rough Sleeping Review

Councillor Murphy was pleased this issue had been taken up with good results. Would an additional outreach worker be employed and when a report comes back to Council in September would a reduction in the numbers of rough sleepers be seen?

Councillor Saltmarsh welcomed the report and recommendations and was pleased to see that the faith and voluntary sector would be involved in the strategic group. The Light Project, which was a faith based organisation and if this scheme was going to be extended then she would like some reassurance that help would be given from the Council.

Councillor Walsh advised that it had been agreed that an additional outreach worker would be employed, subject to funding. Councillor Walsh hoped this would mean that there would be fewer homelessness on Peterborough's streets as there were excellent officers already working on this issue and if additional resources could be found then this would make a huge difference but there was no guarantee that the homeless would accept the help that was offered.

Councillor Walsh thanked Councillor Saltmarsh for accompanying her to visit the Light Project; it had been impressive with great accommodation offered to rough sleepers with dedicated volunteers. Councillor Walsh stated she and her Director were committed to identifying funding to assist the project

Review of Emergency Stopping Place Provision for Travellers within Peterborough

Councillor Murphy was glad to see that the Council was using the appropriate language of unauthorised encampments and wished the Council good luck on the work identifying the stopping places.

Children's Centre Services – MAR17/CMDN/31

Councillor Fower asked if the figures quoted were what the Council paid to the organisations and how this differed from the Council providing the services and what were the key elements regarding the difference in figures.

Councillor Smith confirmed the Council paid this money out but it was public health money, with different centres providing different facilities. Councillor Smith stated she would be happy to give Councillor Fower the breakdown within the Cabinet Member Decision Notice, each centre provided different facilities.

Councillor Khan stated these contracts were only given until April 2018/19 and this gave no confidence to the service provider therefore he asked for assurance that these contracts would be long term rather than short term. Could Councillor Smith give her assurances that no Children's Centres would be closed during this collaborative process?

Councillor Smith explained these were 12 month extensions because the Council had ambition to work in collaboration with Cambridgeshire County Council to commission these services going forward; this was still a work in progress. These were statutory

services and there were no plans to do things differently, just to commission them collaboratively. Councillor Smith explained the providing Children's centres was a statutory provision.

Delivery of the Council's Capital Receipts programme through the sale of surplus farmland at America Farm, Fengate – MAR17/CMDN/35

Councillor Davidson asked why the Council had not used or considered this land as an option to support the travellers' communities.

Councillor Holdich stated he believed that the land was not suitable but he would ensure a written response was given to Councillor Davidson. Councillor Holdich explained this land had been on the Council's disposal list for some time and therefore there had been plenty of opportunity for the question to have been asked earlier. This would good prime agricultural land and should be sold as such in order that it continues to be farmed; there was also no planning policy for a travellers site on this land.

Transfer of Commissioning Responsibility for Healthwatch – MAR17/CMDN/33

Councillor Ash asked for reassurance that the Council would have a say in the Peterborough area if Cambridgeshire have responsibility.

Councillor Holdich explained it was not the Council's intention to be taken over, there was already a shared health officer in place and it was right that the Council and Cambridgeshire work together.

Delivery of the Council's Capital Receipts programme through the sale of surplus farmhouse, farm buildings and paddock at America Farm, Fengate – MAR17/CMDN/36

Councillor Murphy stated that the receipts from the sales may be used to develop the farm strategy but was this now going into the Medium Term financial plan therefore would these sales be used for both?

Councillor Holdich stated he believed this was the agreement with the farmers; that the proceeds would go back into improving their facilities better, particularly the bungalows which were in a poor state.

COUNCIL BUSINESS TIME

11. Notices of Motion

1. Motion from Councillor Murphy

The following motion requests that the Council take action to reverse a previous decision of the Council. This is in relation to the Members' Allowances Scheme, which was agreed by Council on 12 October 2016. This Scheme introduced an increase in the level of Basic Allowance paid to Members and, subsequently, an increase in the level of Special Responsibility Allowance. This decision was taken six months ago, to the date of the meeting on 12 April 2017. As notice of the motion has been received within 6 months of the previous decision, the motion is required to be signed by five Councillors.

The following undersigned Councillors agreed to this motion (in accordance with standing order 22.1).

Date	Councillor
<i>30 March 2017</i>	<i>Councillor Mohammed Jamil</i>
<i>30 March 2017</i>	<i>Councillor Angus Ellis</i>
<i>30 March 2017</i>	<i>Councillor Ed Murphy</i>
<i>30 March 2017</i>	<i>Councillor Richard Ferris</i>
<i>30 March 2017</i>	<i>Councillor Alan Clark</i>

It is requested that the Council:

- 1. Notes the difficult financial times currently faced by organisations within the public sector and the reduction in expenditure required in order to achieve the savings required for a balanced budget.*
- 2. Agrees that saving be made equivalent to or greater than the amount of Special Responsibility Allowance paid to those Members with a Special Responsibility being reverted to a level equivalent to that in place during the 2015/2016 municipal year resulting in a minimum saving of £39,300;*
- 3. Calls upon the Leader of the Council to make savings in excess of £39,300 by reducing the number of Cabinet Advisors and Cabinet Members within the Cabinet and/or reducing the level of Special Responsibility Allowance Payment or a combination of both, in order to reduce the overall amount Special Responsibility Allowance paid up to at least a further £10,700; and*
- 4. Further, calls upon the Leader of the Council to create a discretionary fund with the savings achieved from the reduction in Special Responsibility Allowances to contribute to tackling homelessness in Peterborough and which may be applied where required as discretionary payments to people in severe distress due to homelessness, to the elderly, or to those leaving care.*

In moving his motion, Councillor Murphy asked that those Members that would benefit from voting against this should think about transparency and not vote, as voting against it would be voting for their own increases. If the Council had £50,000 from this to spend on priorities such as homelessness, elderly and those facing severe financial difficulty, then it would go a long way to eradicating many problems, particularly in the urban areas, or these monies could go towards supporting an additional outreach worker. Councillor Murphy suggested that the Council's protocol and agreements should be

looked at as it may not be relevant that those councillors that are not resident in Peterborough for a significant amount of time should receive a monthly payment; if a Councillor was away from Peterborough for two or three months then they were not representing the people of Peterborough although there were exceptions to this like health issues and holidays.

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

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

- Comment was made that Cabinet members regularly worked in excess of 120 hours a month and had already lost allowances for telephones, internet and travelling allowances along with increased parking charges.
- It was noted that Councillors had not received an increase since 2009.
- It was suggested that Councillors should not be deciding how much they should be paid.
- It was suggested that this motion abandoned the Independent Panel's recommendations which should be relied upon as the final decision.
- It was noted that it was each Councillors individual choice as to whether they received their allowances or not.
- It was suggested that a high SRA would attract the right type of person to become a Councillor.
- It was noted that allowances had been discussed at great length in the last three out of four council meetings.

Councillor Ellis exercised his right to speak and commented that all Members were hardworking Councillors but Council workers had only received a 1% pay rise and the Council had shrunk in its responsibility with many services now contracted out. The Independent Panel was there to advise and it was Councillors' choice as to whether that advice was taken.

Councillor Murphy summed up as mover of the motion and commented that it was the Council that decided what the remuneration should be and he expressed disappointment that some Members would not be supporting the motion due to party politics. This motion was not about the basic allowance but the SRA of £39,300 and individual councillors did not have to vote on this motion.

A vote was taken (13 voted in favour, 33 voted against, 8 abstained from voting) and the motion was **DEFEATED**.

2. Motion from Councillor Davidson

There is evidence of an increase in exploitation of migrants in Peterborough, where unscrupulous employers are exploiting vulnerable new arrivals to the area. These employers are isolating migrants from the local community and controlling them by providing overcrowded housing and transport to work in the fast food industry

Subsequently, these victims then gain very little in return for their labour and the traffickers take a large proportion of the wages and sometimes passports in return. Workers then often end up in debt to their rogue bosses, giving them more leverage over the exploited workers and their money. This is often used to perpetrate fraud.

~~Recently convictions and arrests have been made in Peterborough relating to exploitation and trafficking, which have made the headlines. For example, Dutch Bangla Direct Ltd are accused of selling over 100 tonnes of low cost white meat to takeaways and shops.~~

~~This company has allegedly made £250,000 in profit by fraudulent actions and not making correct contributions to HMRC.~~

The Council therefore calls upon relevant Cabinet Members to:

- 1) Work in partnership with the Police and relevant Government and local agencies to protect migrants and others from these forms of exploitation; and*
- 2) To provide Members with a report on this work, as well as providing information on the nature and scale of the problem to fight modern slavery across Peterborough and the progress which is being made.*

In moving her altered motion, Councillor Davidson commented the alteration had been made to ensure that debate remained focussed on the requested action rather than any ancillary matters. Modern day slavery was unfortunately on the increase with victims finding themselves unable to come forward to seek help from the police as they do not see themselves as victims and for fear of reprisal from their abusers.

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

An amendment to the motion was moved by Councillor Walsh. Councillor Walsh commented that the Home Office's determination to flush out organised gangs behind human trafficking and has committed to a renewed effort to tackle this very serious issue. In Peterborough, enforcement agencies were already tackling the issue head-on and there were active ongoing investigations and dedicated multi-agency human trafficking teams that conduct intelligence gathering and prevention work in the most effective areas in Cambridgeshire, including Fenland and Peterborough. This multi-agency approach was supported by the police, council teams, including the prevention and enforcement service and housing officers, the fire services and HM immigration teams. In conclusion, it could be seen that there was already a huge amount of work being done by this Council and partners to tackle the problems associated with modern day slavery and therefore Councillor Walsh moved an amendment to the motion which reflected this existing work and called for a report to members on the success of the efforts being made.

Councillor Goodwin seconded the amendment and reserved her right to speak.

Members debated the amendment and in summary raising points including:

- It was suggested not to accept the amendment as it was an attempt by the administration to claim credit for already addressing this issue when statistics showed that what has already been done had been largely ineffective.
- It was stated that last year police identified 3266 people thought to be victims of modern day slavery.

- It was noted that Cambridgeshire was the most efficient county within the country for dealing with this issue by having very efficient and capable teams working within the police and council and other support services.
- It was commented that there had not been decisive action on this issue.
- It was suggested that this issue be brought back to another All Party Policy meeting in order to update Councillors.

Councillor Goodwin exercised her right to speak and stated that she thought all Members were repulsed by exploitation and trafficking of human beings. Peterborough was already committed to wiping out trafficking and exploitation.

Councillor Davidson, as mover of the original motion, exercised her right to reply and stated she could understand what the amendment was trying to do and did not accept it as she did not feel the Council had done enough to take on board the importance of the motion. She thanked Councillors Sandford and Fower for supporting the motion and acknowledged Councillors Murphy and Jamil. There is an issue of exploitation in Peterborough and this needed addressing as it should not be happening.

A vote was taken on the amendment (33 voted in favour, 20 voted against, 0 abstained from voting) and the amendment was **CARRIED**.

An amendment to the substantive motion was moved by Councillor Murphy, to remove the word “decisive” from the motion in order that all Members could agree with the motion.

Councillor Ash seconded the amendment.

A vote was taken on the amendment (36 voted in favour, 7 voted against, 8 abstained from voting) and the amendment was **CARRIED**.

A vote was taken on the substantive motion (unanimous) and the motion was **CARRIED** as follows:

There is evidence of an increase in exploitation of migrants in Peterborough, where unscrupulous employers are exploiting vulnerable new arrivals to the area. These employers are isolating migrants from the local community and controlling them by providing overcrowded housing and transport to work in the fast food industry

Subsequently, these victims then gain very little in return for their labour and the traffickers take a large proportion of the wages and sometimes passports in return. Workers then often end up in debt to their rogue bosses, giving them more leverage over the exploited workers and their money. This is often used to perpetrate fraud.

That the Council notes the action already taken by the Cabinet and the Police to tackle modern day slavery, including the decision of Cabinet on 27 February 2017 to approve the Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement. Councillor Seaton has also invited Councillor Davidson to sit on the Member Officer and Constitutional Review Working Group, who will review the draft Anti-Slavery Policy currently being developed by officers. The Cabinet has further supported the Prevention and Enforcement Service to work in a multi-agency investigative team with the Police to tackle this issue.

The Council therefore supports the continued effective actions of the Cabinet to:

- 1) Work in partnership with the Police and relevant Government and local agencies to protect migrants and others from these forms of exploitation; and*
- 2) Provide Members with a report on this work, as well as providing information on the nature and scale of the problem to fight modern slavery across Peterborough and the progress which is being made.*

3. Motion from Councillor Ali

In moving his motion, Councillor Ali stated this was to champion the work undertaken by the Council in promoting dialogue, cohesion, integration built on the shared value of mutual respect. The media had an impact in shaping the views and attitudes of people towards each other, particularly those that were different to themselves.

Councillor Fower seconded the motion and stated there were elements of islamophobia in Peterborough. This motion should be supported by all Members to enable a message to go out that as a cross party council, all Members stood together on this issue.

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

- Comment was made regarding the recent Westminster attack and the strong determination to remain united in the face of provocation and forces that sought to divide.
- It was noted that this motion asks for greater resource to be put into dealing with hate crime and to challenge media portrayal and labelling of the perpetrators of terrorist attacks.
- It was suggested that the press should be reporting in a responsible manner that did not affect any faith.
- It was suggested that this was an issue the Council could not influence.
- It was suggested that the Council write to Peterborough's two MPs to support this motion.
- Comments were made that the motion should not have a religious aspect but should be about community.

Councillor Ali summed up as mover of the motion and stated he was grateful for the comments made and asked for Peterborough to take the lead on this and urged Members to support the motion to send a clear message that Peterborough were united in condemning terrorism and ensure there was fair and balance reporting

A vote was taken (26 voted in favour, 2 voted against, 22 abstained from voting) and the motion was **CARRIED**.

The Mayor
7.00pm – 11:03pm

FULL COUNCIL 12 APRIL 2017

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questions were received under the following categories:

<u>COUNCIL BUSINESS</u>	
8.	<p><u>Questions on notice to:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The Mayor ii) To the Leader or Member of the Cabinet iii) To the Chair of any Committee or Sub-committee
1.	<p>Question from Councillor Fower</p> <p>To Councillor Holdich, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University, and Communications</p> <p>Could the relevant Cabinet Member please let me know how much money this authority presently owes, how long the repayment plans are and how much it will cost to actually repay this total amount?</p> <p>Councillor Holdich responded:</p> <p>The Council approves its Treasury Strategy annually, together with an Asset Investment Plan which was in the budget papers that you had at the last meeting. There are strict controls though the Prudential Code that the Council exercises in order to ensure its debt portfolio is tightly managed and reported to Council Members regularly.</p> <p>The Council currently has a debt of £395.4m and repayment of individual loans ranges from 2 months to 49 years. The total interest payment over the life of the outstanding debt is £405m.</p> <p>The value of the Council's net assets in its accounts is £625m.</p> <p>Councillor Fower asked a supplementary question:</p> <p>Yes I am aware that the figures are in the papers but sometimes I do like to be reminded in the Chamber of the details. I wondered as well, with the follow-up question; this figure of £395m, is there a figure for example that we have to try to avoid before we find ourselves in a tricky situation or potentially in dire straits?</p> <p>Councillor Holdich responded:</p> <p>As I said in the opening part of the question, there are strict controls which were outside of our control which are contrived by the Treasury, we cannot go over a certain limit of borrowing, otherwise we will be in trouble and I do not know that that limit is, but I will</p>

	<p>happily give that to Councillor Farrow in writing.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Question from Councillor Rush</p> <p>To Councillor Bisby, Chairman of the Corporate Parenting Committee</p> <p>Ofsted recognised in the last inspection that the council need to improve contacts with the Children in Care Council so that their voice be heard by the corporate parents. Could the Chair of the Corporate Parenting committee please give feedback on how the change from the Corporate Parenting Panel to the new committee is improving contacts with the Children in Care Council?</p> <p>Councillor Bisby responded:</p> <p>After the Corporate Parenting became a committee, our children in Care originally reported to us that they felt like a burden to the Council and an embarrassment as well.</p> <p>Since the Corporate Parenting Panel became a Committee our meetings have been divided into Formal and Informal meetings. The formal meetings are aimed at focusing on single issues such as Education and Leavers. The Informal meetings are dedicated to the children in care as individuals.</p> <p>I have invited the Children in Care Council to have a Co-Chair for the informal meetings. All informal meetings are directed at issues raised by the children and young people. I along with other Committee members attend the meetings of our children in care and help them to target their issues.</p> <p>From that, since becoming a Committee and in response to issues raised, we have contacted Z Cards which have the officer details and issues that the children require and they are in print and will be issued to every child in care once they are ready. We are now acknowledging individual achievements with cards and certificates as they felt that they weren't being acknowledged when they achieved their individual aims. There are more activities planned for different age groups throughout the year. We aim to team up with TACT to involve more of our children and young people in our informal meetings. We are looking to provide mentors for children in care from among their own peers, who will be trained to help them into care.</p> <p>Feedback from our Children in Care is that they now feel we have improved, they feel that they are respected and as well as that they are no-longer a burden or an embarrassment.</p> <p>Committee members have visited London to meet with Westminster Corporate parenting panel to see how they do things to see if we can improve. I and other members of the Committee are having mentors to help us to improve as individuals and to target our work and this is all being provided by the Local Government Association.</p> <p>I would like to take this opportunity to remind every councillor that we are all Corporate Parents and with responsibilities especially belong with us when making all our decisions.</p>

3. **Question from Councillor Allen**

To Councillor Holdich, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University, and Communications

As the winter season retreats and we look forward to the new spring, can the Leader please advise me on the council's progress with Peterborough Empower's environmentally friendly power generation schemes and whether the council's own Peterborough Energy scheme with OVO has been a success?

Councillor Holdich responded:

I would just like to commend the work that Councillor Bisby has done with the looked after children, it's made a really good difference, so thank you for that.

Responding to changes in the Feed-in Tariff, which took effect on 14 January 2016, the Empower Peterborough Free Residential PV scheme has two phases; one from the 14 January 2016 and Phase 2 from 15 March 2016, after a period to reconfigure the commercial model.

1392 applications have been completed from close to 4,000 online expressions of interest and Empower Peterborough has installed free PV on a total of 350 private homes. 221 in Phase 1, and 129 in Phase 2.

Registrations are continuing via the council's website and promoted by word-of-mouth, roundabout sponsorships and Facebook.

Peterborough Energy was launched in conjunction with OVO Energy in April 2015 with a target of 2500 households switching to the new tariff in the first year; the main emphasis being to encourage householders who have rarely or never switched to save money.

Over the first 12 months the original target was exceeded with over 3,000 households switching.

The latest figures show that the Peterborough Energy tariff continues to be a huge success with over 6,700 households now having switched since it was launched.

A recent survey by the Citizens Advice announced that Peterborough now has the highest rate of households switching their electricity provider in England.

Households are saving on average of £220 on their annual energy bill - and this has led to a cumulative saving of around £1.5million. That's money back in their pockets and being spent in our local economy.

The majority of the tariff's customer base is over 45 years old, with the highest take up being in the over 65 year old bracket. These customers are the most likely to be either in fuel poverty or close to it. The tariff therefore supports the council's strategic priority of achieving 'the best health and wellbeing for the city'.

Last month both projects were recognised nationally by the Local Government Chronicle Awards - which showcases best practice across all local authorities.

	<p>The council's energy strategy won the Environment category. The judges praised council initiatives to generate renewable energy alongside projects such as the Peterborough Energy tariff and a scheme run in partnership with Honeywell to reduce the council's overall energy consumption.</p> <p>The council also won the Innovation award for the Empower Peterborough project.</p>
4.	<p>Question from Councillor Ash</p> <p>To Councillor Walsh, Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment Capital</p> <p>Is the Cabinet Member aware of the continued problems and danger to the public from nuisance bikers (mini and quad bikes) riding illegally on footpaths and in parks.</p> <p>We are aware that our PCSO's take the matter seriously and do what they can. We have been told that action is being taken, and that the public should contact 101 to report issues.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member tell us (1) if the PCSO's are getting full support from a high level within the Council, (2) if there is a dedicated number to ring that will result in a faster response time than 101, (3) that assurance can be given to the public that effective action from the department director is being taken to ensure that people can walk in safety, and (4) whether they agree that there may be far more near misses than accidents and that a recording system may not show the full scale of the problem.</p> <p>Councillor Walsh responded:</p> <p>I am aware of the ongoing issue of nuisance motorcyclists and the impact this has on local communities.</p> <p>The Prevention and Enforcement Service, and specifically council and police staff within it, are working together to tackle the problem with the full support of both organisations.</p> <p>101 is the correct number to call to report nuisance motorcycles if a response is required at the time of the event. Alternatively councillors and members of the public can report information through the My Peterborough App, which allows intelligence to be gathered for future patrols and preventative measures.</p> <p>I would like to reassure members that the Service Director has instructed officers in the PES to produce and deliver an action plan to tackle this issue which is a combination of enforcement and education. The plan is based on intelligence held and will be adapted as it develops. The better the reporting and intelligence, the better the responses. I therefore encourage councillors and residents to report all incidents to ensure the best possible outcomes are achieved.</p> <p>Councillor Ash asked a supplementary question:</p> <p>One of the concerns is that Members of the public do not feel that action is being taken and it seems very slow so can she assure me that we can actually convince the general public that people are concerned and are getting sorted and does she also agree that dialling 101 can be a very protracted affair and take sometimes upwards of half an hour or longer to actually get to speak to somebody that will deal with the problem and</p>

	<p>by which time the bikers have gone and they cannot be caught. So does she agree that we do need something faster to actually report it so that action can be taken immediately?</p> <p>Councillor Walsh responded:</p> <p>I will look into these two issues he has raised and that we will check on calls received and we will look into a faster response.</p>
5.	<p>Question from Councillor Peach</p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing and Economic Development</p> <p>It is vital to the wellbeing of the City that shops and commercial units are occupied as this brings jobs and income. Can the Cabinet Member responsible please provide an update on current occupation rates for council owned premises and work being undertaken to attract new business to the city?</p> <p>Councillor Hiller responded:</p> <p>The investment portfolio is very close to a 100% occupancy rate. All properties at Cattle Market Road, Herlington, Bretton Court, Bridge Street and Saville Road are either let or under offer. At Alfric Square, of the 32 units 28 are let with 3 under offer.</p> <p>Councillor Peach asked a supplementary question:</p> <p>That is very good news and congratulations to all the officers particularly in the Property Department that have done obviously such a great job in getting all these units let. I would only just say something to bear in mind and it might even be nothing under the Council control but when we do let a unit, and there is one opposite the Argo Lounge downstairs and I know it is going to be a Steakhouse but it seems to have been empty so long since the Tourist Information place left and whilst obviously there is a lot of equipment and modernisation got to go in, I wonder if there is anything the Council can do to be a little bit forbearing on these companies to get their stuff in, get sorted and get open and so it doesn't look like a building site.</p> <p>Councillor Hiller responded:</p> <p>It is probably more Councillor Seaton's portfolio than mine, from that point of view, but both Councillor Seaton and I work very closely with the Opportunity Peterborough team to ensure that, where possible, vacant units are offered to local businesses especially start-up companies. I do appreciate your concern over the Middletons unit, if I dare term it such, it is a big unit and you are absolutely right, it is in St Peter's Arcade and it is very prominent, so I don't know the answer to your question but I would imagine its part of the scheduling process, they were always keen to get in to that particular unit, it is a huge unit with underground, as you probably know but I will certainly try and find out for you Councillor Peach and I will let you know.</p>
6.	<p>Question from Councillor King</p> <p>To Councillor Fitzgerald, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for</p>

	<p>Integrated Adult Social Care and Health</p> <p>There has been a lot of media attention on adult social care and the problems that hospitals are experiencing with "bed blocking". Can the Cabinet Member provide an update on the position in Peterborough and work being undertaken to prevent it?</p> <p>Councillor Fitzgerald responded:</p> <p>The council is committed to ensuring people do not remain in hospital when they no longer require care that can only be provided in an acute trust. Whilst the media continues to report high numbers of people delayed in hospital nationally waiting for support from Adult Social Care (particularly older people) the local system here in Peterborough reports a very positive position and over a number of years this local authority has reported no delayed transfers of care attributable to Adult Social Care.</p> <p>There is a team of social workers co- located at Peterborough City Hospital to deliver proactive assessment and planning for discharge. The team work in partnership with the acute trust to ensure early notification to alert the social work team if there is likely to be a need for support post discharge.</p> <p>The council has invested in its reablement service to ensure capacity to meet demand and to ensure people are discharged once they are fit to leave the hospital. Reablement is offered to all people who have not received social care support prior to their admission to hospital to support people to regain skills and their independence post injury or illness.</p> <p>If reablement is not appropriate the Care Placement Team (brokerage) work tirelessly with home care providers to ensure care and support is available for when the person is ready to be discharged home.</p> <p>The availability of extra care housing and care home placements (residential and nursing) has also supported timely discharge, although this has resulted in cost pressures as often care homes will increase the fee charged when there is a finite resource.</p> <p>Throughout the winter period care capacity in all areas was limited due to demand. However, with the support from commissioners meeting regularly with providers to galvanise the market and reablement bridging when care was not readily available we were able to continue to achieve timely discharges.</p> <p>It is worth noting that the number of delayed transfers of care at Peterborough hospital remain higher than the system has anticipated but these delays are attributable to the health service for example waiting for a continuing health care assessment or a health interim bed for people who are non-weight bearing or waiting for rehabilitation.</p> <p>I would add, and thank you to Councillor King's timely question, that whilst our team report no delayed transfers of care, it is actually reassuring that on a national survey, Peterborough come top.</p>
7.	<p>Question from Councillor Fower</p> <p>To Councillor Holdich, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Skills</p>

	<p>and University, and Communications</p> <p>Could the relevant Cabinet Member please let me know how many schools there are in Peterborough and how many of them have a 20 mph speed restriction zone outside them?</p> <p>Councillor Holdich responded:</p> <p>There are 85 schools in Peterborough - 60 Primary, 13 Secondary, 9 Special, 3 Further Education Centres.</p> <p>20mph limits are in place outside 20 schools. A number of these limits were implemented as part of wider schemes with traffic calming features such as raised zebra crossings and speed humps.</p> <p>The Department for Transport are in the process of undertaking a major research project into 20mph speed limits, which are due to report later this year. It is at this point that the relevant Scrutiny Committee may wish to request a report from officers on the outcomes of that review.</p> <p>Councillor Fower asked a supplementary question:</p> <p>In our ward, we have 4 schools, we got Welbourne, we got Werrington, we got Norwood and we got Gunthorpe and my question is, and certainly I think I am speaking on behalf of my colleagues as well is, why is the Council's Road Safety Policy not consistent when it comes to such a serious matter as to the safety of our children travelling to school because as far as I am concerned, if 20mph safety zones is good enough for some areas of the city, it is certainly good enough for Gunthorpe, so why, put simply, do we not have a consistent policy?</p> <p>Councillor Holdich responded:</p> <p>I think I have 4 schools with 20mph limits because I did the representation and got them at the time when we got money to achieve it but I have to say to you that they don't work, they simply do not work. People don't stick to the 20mph limit and I think the last part of my reply was, at this point the relevant Scrutiny Committee when the Government have done the research into it, may like to look at it again and see whether we can make them more effective.</p>
8.	<p>Question from Councillor Coles</p> <p>To Councillor Walsh, Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment Capital</p> <p>Over the last two weeks, residents from my ward have volunteered to take part in litter picks on both banks of the River Nene, west of the footbridge from Viersen Platz to Railworld. These publicspirited citizens have done a great service to the city by picking up significant amounts of litter that has been thrown into the bushes on the riverbanks and into the river itself from the public footpaths. A lot of this has been beer cans, bottles and food wrappers, but they have also collected clothing, bedding, suitcases and a lot of packaging.</p> <p>However, they have also found a large amount of drug paraphernalia: more than 150 dirty needles and syringes, more than 70 needle disposal boxes the majority unused,</p>

	<p>dirty drug spoons and packaging from the City's needle exchanges. It is clear that homeless drug addicts are regularly shooting up along both sides of the river and leaving their used, dirty needles in the undergrowth no more than 5 yards away from main pedestrian and cycling routes into the City centre.</p> <p>There is a significant risk to public health with a potential for innocent members of the public to suffer needlestick injuries and risk contact with blood borne diseases. The situation the volunteers found cannot be tolerated. Would the Cabinet member please detail what the Council will do to deal with this problem and what needs to be done to prevent such public health risks long term?</p> <p>Councillor Walsh responded:</p> <p>First of all, I'd like to acknowledge the voluntary efforts made by the local residents in this area, who I know carry out litter picks and other environmental work throughout the year in all weathers.</p> <p>In relation to the specific points raised, our Prevention and Enforcement Service staff have already been alerted to these issues and are focusing their activity in this area as a direct result. The Railworld area has been assessed and a Community Payback team have completed a litter pick in the area already. Amey have collected the rubbish and an arrangement is now in place for Community Payback to revisit the area and conduct additional litter picks, with Amey arranging disposal.</p> <p>The Southern PES Team Supervisor, Sgt Kirsty Hills, has also arranged a walk-around with Councillor Coles to gain a fuller understanding of the issues and draw up a response plan. This will consider short term activity (for example Police patrols and clean-up teams) and longer term activity (for example drugs work and homelessness support) in consultation with Cllr Coles.</p> <p>Councillor Coles asked a supplementary question:</p> <p>I am very grateful indeed to Councillor Walsh for the efforts that have been put in to sort out this problem. I am very happy to maintain my attention to the area and I would be looking really for some additional support from the Cabinet member to make sure that we can come to a long term resolution.</p> <p>Councillor Walsh responded:</p> <p>Councillor Coles has my assurance that I will provide that support.</p>
9.	<p>Question from Councillor Davidson</p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing and Economic Development</p> <p>Can the relevant Cabinet Member please clarify who is responsible for the labelling and markings of the cycle and pedestrian tracks in and around Peterborough, and whether these form part of the highways and byways?</p> <p>Councillor Hiller responded:</p> <p>I take the opportunity to let all Members know these markings are normally put in either</p>

	<p>by the Council or by a developer, either privately by arrangement or when completing a scheme to make it ready for the Council's adoption. They are used to promote walking and cycling which helps to improve people's health and well-being as well as cutting congestion, which clearly has great benefits to our city.</p> <p>Once the markings have been installed and if the path is then adopted by the Council, it is indeed the Council's responsibility to maintain them and repaint them when needed.</p> <p>Councillor Davidson asked a supplementary question:</p> <p>As you can appreciate, the cycle lanes are distinctly marked lanes and I am led to believe they are a safety precaution, are they not?</p> <p>Councillor Hiller responded:</p> <p>The nuances of the Highway Law escape me, I have to admit, if indeed they are a safety provision and indeed legally installed for that purpose, then of course I have to agree with you but as one might expect in the busy, vibrant and successful city we have become under the administration, footway and cycleway markings can often become worn over time and on occasion, the repair schedule can be a victim of that success. That said, we really do put great emphasis on these delineations and I do urge Councillor Davidson and her colleagues to report any defective markings in the usual way for a swift repair as most Councillors do.</p>
10.	<p>Question from Councillor Peach</p> <p>To Councillor Walsh, Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment Capital</p> <p>I and I know a number of other Councillors have over the last few years used part of their Community Leadership fund to go towards St. George's Community Hydrotherapy Pool in Park Ward. This last year being no exception.</p> <p>The pool has been closed for a few weeks as it has a leak. Could I please ask when this will be fixed and the Pool re opened?</p> <p>What are the plans for a replacement pool as everyone accepts the present pool has a very old heating and filtration plant?</p> <p>Councillor Walsh responded:</p> <p>St Georges Hydrotherapy Pool is a wonderful example of how a community can come together to deliver valuable and often life-changing services to our residents, and I know that the pool makes a huge difference to so many people. I am personally committed in that I sit on the Steering Committee and have worked hard to get hydrotherapy recognised as a feasible, if not preferable in some cases, alternative to land based therapy and my efforts continue.</p> <p>Unfortunately the pool is now over 40 years old and is rapidly reaching the end of its life due to the deterioration of both the building and the pool plant and equipment. Over the last few years, the council has had to regularly invest funds to repair and maintain the facilities.</p>

	<p>The inevitable had happened and the pool has now been closed for a number of weeks due to a serious leak, the source of which still cannot be identified in spite of extensive investigations. The investigations however will continue over the coming days. Depending on the scale and seriousness of the leak and its associated repair, we will then need to make a decision about whether or not to approve the works.</p> <p>The pool steering group met with officers last week to discuss the situation, and to identify some alternative options which are now being explored in case the pool repair takes some time or indeed the problem is unrepairable.</p> <p>More positively, and as announced by Cllr Holdich last month, there will be a brand new community hydrotherapy pool in Peterborough which we aim to open in September 2019. This is part of a wider plan to relocate Heltwate Special School to a new site in the city with extra pupil places and modern facilities, which will include the new pool.</p> <p>Councillor Peach asked a supplementary question:</p> <p>Thank you for that news, its particularly good news that the Council is determined to invest in a new hydrotherapy pool. I would just ask Councillor Walsh to do whatever she can to get our maintenance and engineers so that they can get to the bottom of this problem in the pool because I fear that if it is left a lot longer without actually identifying the cause of the problem, it will sort of weather on the vine, and the pool may never in fact reopen before the new one does.</p> <p>Councillor Walsh responded:</p> <p>I assure him I will be, as always, assertive.</p>
11.	<p>Question from Councillor Bull</p> <p>To Councillor Allen, Chairman of the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>We have seen over the winter period an increase in the number of people sleeping rough in the City Centre. We have had a very useful briefing by Council Officers on rough sleeping and homelessness that allowed members to receive information and to visit people sleeping rough in the city centre.</p> <p>Could Councillor Allen please update members on the outcomes of his Committee's task and finish group review, to improve the situation for rough sleepers in Peterborough.</p> <p>Councillor Allen may have responded:</p> <p>The issue of rough sleeping is something which my committee has been anxious to resolve for some time, and I was pleased to receive the recent report from the cross-party task and finish group which we set up to investigate the issue.</p> <p>The group, chaired by Cllr Steve Lane, carried out an immense amount of work in a very short timescale, culminating in 14 recommendations. These were subsequently agreed by my committee and presented to Cabinet, where, with some minor changes, they were formally approved.</p>

	<p>The recommendations ranged from ensuring the council had enough resource to support rough sleepers off the street, through to developing more services with our voluntary and faith sector partners to work with rough sleepers with complex problems.</p> <p>Officers are now making progress to deliver these recommendations and I have asked for a full progress report to come to the committee later this year. Clearly it will take some time to see the full impact of the work that's been carried out, but I and the committee are confident it will make a lasting difference to benefit both rough sleepers and those who visit our city.</p>
12.	<p>Question from Councillor Davidson</p> <p>To Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member for Children's Services</p> <p>Can the relevant Cabinet Member please clarify what the free childcare deal is, and how this will impact on the residents of Peterborough?</p> <p>Councillor Smith may have responded:</p> <p>I understand there are 4 schemes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Free childcare for 3-4 year olds, and some 2 year olds for low income families 2. The new tax free childcare system 3. Existing childcare vouchers, if your employer offers the scheme 4. Child care tax credits (childcare element of the working tax credit) <p>Free childcare:</p> <p>Currently all children are entitled to 15 hours early years funded entitlement from the beginning of the term following their 3rd birthday. This may be taken at an Ofsted registered setting or childminder of the parents' choice (providing the setting is not judged as inadequate).</p> <p>Some children are entitled to 15 hours the term following their 2nd birthday if they meet the eligibility criteria. As with the 3 and 4 year old funding, this can be at a provider of the parents' choice. This funding is linked to income-based benefits and the local authority is provided with a list from the Department for Work & Pensions termly and writes to those parents that are identified as being potentially eligible.</p> <p>From September 2017 some children will be entitled to an additional 15 hours (up to 30 hours funded entitlement) from the beginning of the term following their 3rd birthday. This is linked to family income and identified through HMRC. Both parents have to be working a minimum of 16 hours per week (or financial equivalent at minimum wage) and earning up to £100,000. A single parent must be working the equivalent of 16 hours per week. Couples where one parent has significant caring needs can also be eligible.</p> <p>Parents in the city who are in receipt of income based benefits, if eligible, are able to access early years education for their children from the age of 2.</p>

	<p>All parents in the city, regardless of income or status, can access 15 hours early years education for their children from the beginning of the term after they have turned 3.</p> <p>Working parents across the city will be able to benefit from the additional 15 hours from September if eligible. This additional entitlement may also change parents' current working patterns.</p> <p>Tax free childcare:</p> <p>There is also a Government Scheme being introduced from the 28th April 2017: Tax free Childcare; this is aimed to help parents with childcare costs. Parents are able to open an on-line account (with NS&I) that they pay into to cover the costs of their childcare. The scheme will be available for children under 12. For every 80p the parent (or relative) pays in the Government will top up an extra 20p. The government will top up the account with 20% of childcare costs up to a total of £10,000 - the equivalent of up to £2000 support per child per year. To qualify, parents will have to be in work and each earning at least £120 a week and not more than £10,000 each per year.</p> <p>The advantage of the new scheme is that everybody who is working is eligible; employed and self-employed. Again, this must be used for Ofsted registered Childcare (or equivalent in other parts of the UK).</p> <p>The existing childcare voucher scheme:</p> <p>This is where your employer offers a salary sacrifice in exchange for vouchers. This scheme is ending so must be joined by 2018 if you want to take advantage of this.</p> <p>Childcare tax credits:</p> <p>This is free money and on average £3k per year. Who is eligible? If a single parent working 16 hours a week, or a couple each working 16 hours per week, but less than £40k combined. If residents fit these criteria then they should apply.</p> <p>I hope this helps answer your question.</p>
13.	<p>Question from Councillor Saltmarsh</p> <p>To Councillor Goodwin, Cabinet Member for City Centre Management, Culture and Tourism</p> <p>During the festive season of 2016 there were hardly any activities in Cathedral Square, not even at Christmas or on New Year's Eve. At this time when we are trying to make the City Centre more vibrant, could the City Council give consideration to holding a German style Christmas market in Cathedral Square to bring some life to the city centre, and ensure that visitors to the city feel that Christmas is being celebrated here?</p> <p>Councillor Goodwin may have responded:</p> <p>We have been unable to host as many events as we would like over the year (such as the City Street Cycle Race and New Year's Eve Public Celebrations) due to capacity and funding issues.</p> <p>We are looking at options for Christmas Markets and we will stage one if one can be</p>

	<p>found that is of sufficient quality and that would not adversely impact on traders.</p> <p>We are currently looking at different ways of operating the service to ensure we can secure the funds and resource necessary to deliver a wider programme of events in the city.</p>
14.	<p>Question from Councillor Over</p> <p>To Councillor Holdich, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University, and Communications</p> <p>The Council has been developing commercial opportunities to bring in meaningful additional income, so that plans for important services can be implemented.</p> <p>May the Leader update Members on progress so far?</p> <p>Councillor Holdich may have responded:</p> <p>In previous years the Council has included a number of income generating proposals, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing services (from sharing a Chief Executive through to sharing planning and legal services) • Investing in Vivacity assets to increase return • Development of Clare lodge to increase income <p>Lending to organisations such as Axiom and Empower – generating a return but also delivering benefits for residents</p> <p>The current budget includes income generating schemes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking income from academies for the costs of transfer • Negotiating a rebate from the schools PFI provider for insurance • Seeking income from schools for services • Income from sale of surplus assets <p>The Council also looks to benefit from the proceeds of driving forward growth in the city, including additional business rates.</p> <p>Increasingly the Council also plays a direct role in some of the growth, for example in the Fletton Quays development (see response to question below). As part of this approach the MTFs includes an acquisition strategy looking to consider buying commercial assets to generate a return.</p>
15.	<p>Question from Councillor Sandford</p> <p>To Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing and Economic Development</p> <p>Could the relevant Cabinet Member tell me what steps he is taking to improve the speed of repair of street lights across the city? Can he also ensure that defective street lights at pedestrian crossings, in underpasses or in other areas where the lack of light poses a serious safety risk are repaired as a matter of priority?</p> <p>For example, on Gresley Way, Westwood, five lighting columns, have been out of</p>

action for over two months. Two of these are adjacent to a pedestrian crossing across a busy dual carriageway, thus creating as a serious public safety hazard when they are not working. In Walton, some of the lights on the Rhubarb Bridge are often not working and in Bretton, for many months, a large number of street lighting columns on Bretton Way were out of action.

Should the Council not be expecting a substantially better level of service from its street lighting contractor?

Councillor Hiller may have responded:

In October 2016 the Council embarked on a programme of work to upgrade 17,000 street lights to LEDs. The replacement programme is being rolled out one ward at a time across the whole city with the initial upgrades taking place in North, Park and Central wards. This programme will improve lighting levels by directing the light downwards on to the road, reduce the level of light pollution into properties and produce less carbon than conventional street lighting. However, another key element of this programme of works is that it allows the infrastructure, including lighting cables and columns, to be replaced. Many of these cables are reaching the end of their serviceable life and are often the reason lighting columns fail.

Normally street lighting repairs are attended to within 7 days of report, where no traffic management is required. The Council aims to inspect the unit and carry out repairs to fix the fault in one visit if possible. If however, particular difficulties have arisen, such as an electricity supply cable fault, or if we have problems accessing the column for example, the repair may take longer. If the issue is deemed to be a safety risk then this should be reported as an emergency. We aim to respond to search reports within the hour.

I will ensure that Cllr Sandford is kept updated about progress on repairs and replacement at Gresley Way, Bretton Way and Rhubarb Bridge.

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