

<b>CABINET</b>	AGENDA ITEM No. 11
<b>11 JUNE 2018</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>

Report of:	Fiona McMillan, Interim Director of Law and Governance	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Seaton, Cabinet Member for Resources	
Contact Officer(s):	Pippa Turvey, Democratic and Constitutional Services Manager	Tel. 452460

## OUTCOME OF PETITIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: <i>Directors</i>	Deadline date: <i>N/A</i>
It is recommended that Cabinet notes the actions taken in respect of petitions.	

### 1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is submitted following the submission of E-Petitions, the presentation of petitions to Council officers, and the presentation of petitions at Council meetings.

### 2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on the progress being made in response to petitions submitted to the Council.
- 2.2 This report is for Cabinet to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 3.2.3, '*To take a leading role in promoting the economic, environmental and social well-being of the area*'.

### 3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	<b>NO</b>	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	<b>N/A</b>
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### 4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

#### **Petitions Presented at the Council or Cabinet Meetings**

##### Bretton Water Park

This petition was submitted by Mr Warren at the Cabinet Meeting on 26 February 2018. The petition contained 245 valid signatures and called on the Council to not cut the £18,000 funding for Bretton Water Park.

Three further petitions were received by the Council on the same matter and have been combined into one petition. The combined number of valid signatures was 481.

The Culture and Leisure Development Manager responded and confirmed that various options had been looked into to keep this facility open. It was advised that Vivacity Culture and Leisure

who operated Peterborough City Councils Culture and Leisure provision across the City had agreed to take over the operations and liability of the park moving forward.

Vivacity were currently in communication with Peterborough City Council officers to understand the current practices and operations ready for the summer opening as usual. The Culture and Leisure Development Manager advised that he was sure Vivacity would be promoting the water park through spring ready for a busy summer season.

#### John Clare Recreation

This petition was submitted by Councillor Rush on behalf of Ms Lilley at the Council meeting on 7 March 2018. The petition contained 67 valid signatures and called on the Council to improve facilities at the John Clare Rec.

The Head of Environmental Partnerships responded and confirmed that work to improve John Clare Rec was already proposed, once agreement from the Ward Councillors was received the Council would place the order with Amey for the new play equipment. This included a new seesaw, roundabout, refurbishment of the existing bench and the addition of a new bench, plus more.

The Council would not be providing shading at plays areas and it was advised that playhouses were not something the Council normally installed.

#### Grass Verge Parking - Southfields

This petition was submitted by Councillor Rush at the Council meeting on 7 March 2018. The petition contained 24 valid signatures and called on the Council to take action to eliminate the problem of grass verge parking in Southfields.

The Network and Traffic Manager responded and advised that the Council had recently introduced a Verge and Footway Parking Policy, and requests to prohibit such parking that result in damage to the verges were being dealt with through Adam Payton of the Prevention and Enforcement Service. A copy of the petition had been provided to him for his attention in accordance with the new policy, for which the necessary legal order was being drafted and advertised at present.

It was advised that a request had been made that the area Highway Inspector review the damage caused and ensured that any works to restore the verge to a safe condition were undertaken.

### **E-petitions**

#### Change Your Mind Mr Mayor Re: Public Gallery

The e-petition was submitted by Councillor Fower on 7 March 2018. This same petition was also presented at the Council meeting on 7 March 2018 by Councillor Davidson on behalf of Councillor Fower. The petition contained 27 valid signatures and called on the Council to 'get the Mayor of Peterborough to repeal his decision to not allow members of the public to sit in the gallery in the chamber, during meetings of Full Council'.

The Interim Director of Law and Governance responded and explained that the decision to close the public gallery was made following a council meeting on 19 July 2017 because of a significant disturbance which made it impossible for the council to conduct important business, including the approval of a plan to tackle crime and disorder in the city. Before the meeting was adjourned, an attempt to clear the public gallery was made by council officers, assisted by the police. This was unsuccessful due to the disturbances taking place.

Following the adjournment, the police voiced concerns about the safety of the public gallery. Specifically, that if any further disturbances were to take place, the current layout and design of

the public gallery made it unsafe to attempt to clear the area. Having received this advice, the public gallery was temporarily closed.

Since then, a full survey has been undertaken and we have commissioned a structural engineer to make improvements. It is expected that the public gallery will reopen in the next few months. Public attendance is welcomed at council meetings, whether to support, protest or simply to observe proceedings. However, when a protest of other actions leads to the disturbance of a meeting to the extent where business cannot be conducted, our rules of procedure require us to remove any individual(s) causing that disturbance. It is vital that this can be done, while ensuring the safety of all.

In the meantime, we have made arrangements for the public to view the proceedings live via a video link to the Bourges Room in the Town Hall or to view the discussions and debate via Facebook Live. This has proved incredibly popular and has made Full Council accessible to a far greater number of residents who would otherwise be unable to attend each meeting and each video is available to watch again and again, rather than just at a set time and day. The average number of views for each meeting is over 5,000, far more than we could actually fit in the public gallery. Due to the success of the live recordings we will be proposing to keep this service once the public gallery is open again.

#### Petitioning Peterborough City Council to Implement New Strategies to Reduce the Number of Discarded Needles Being Found in Public Places

The e-petition was submitted by Bernadette Gibbons on 4 April 2018. An additional paper petition was submitted on the same day and was combined with the e-petition and called on the Council to discuss and implement better, safer practices to reduce the amount of discarded used needles and other drug paraphernalia across the city. We want to find a solution which works for all, including those who are battling with addiction, in order to make Peterborough's streets safer for everyone. The combined petitions contained 550 valid signatures.

The Assistant Director for Community Safety responded and advised that the Council fully supported this proposal and were already commencing activities to address this problem. The progress made in recent weeks was outlined as follows:

- 22nd February 2018 - A public meeting was held in Woodston with lead officers to hear concerns.
- 27th February 2018 - A presentation was put before our Council Cabinet to report on the extent of the problem.
- 7th March 2018 - A cross party meeting was held with councillors / lead council officers to gain support for a multi agency response.
- 7th March 2018 - A formal motion presented to full council by Cllr Andy Coles. This was supported by members, and as a result officers were asked to examine the issue in detail and seek a resolution.
- 7th March - Present. A multi-agency Taskforce was formed - bringing together partners to deliver problem solving solutions

It was explained that the Taskforce had met twice since 7th March and was overseeing the delivery of an action plan aimed at really getting to the root of this problem. Membership of this Taskforce included Council Community Safety Officers, Public Health, Environmental teams (Amey), ASPIRE drug misuse treatment service, Police crime prevention officers, Pharmacies and the Homeless Outreach team.

The group were overseeing actions that were intended to balance enforcement with prevention and support. Some example activities:

- Improving our abilities to monitor, analyse and respond to this issue.
- Setting up return schemes for pharmacies.
- Communications campaign for drug users / surgeries / pharmacies to promote safe needle use.
- Improve collection / clean up ability. To include focus on private land.
- Prevention measures - Needle bins / increase sharp collection points.

- Design out solutions. Target hardening hotspot areas.

The petitioner was invited to become a member of the Taskforce, as their knowledge of this issue was considered to prove invaluable to help grip the challenge.

#### Stop the Close of the Manor, Respite Home for Children and Young People with Disabilities

This combined e-petition paper petitions was submitted by Helen Habour on 26 February 2018 and was also submitted by Councillor Davison at the Council meeting on 7 March 2018. The petition contained 930 valid signatures and called on the Council to stop and reconsider the proposed closure of the Manor Children's and young people's home with special needs and disabilities.

The Executive Director of People and Communities for Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Councils responded. This responses is provided in full at **Appendix 1**.

#### Stop Speeding in Park Ward

The e-petition was submitted by Councillor Peach on 16 April 2018 and called on the Council to put measure in place to reduce speeding in Park Ward. The petition contained 72 valid signatures.

The Principal Sustainable Transport Planning Officer responded and advised that the Council had analysed 3 months of speed data for all of the major roads within Park ward. The data showed that the average speed for all major routes was within the speed limit. The Council also analysed accidents throughout the city and investigated areas that had a cluster of accidents to see if speed or the construction of the road was a factor at all and what solutions could be implemented. Although there were a number of accident cluster sites within Park ward these had already been identified and various schemes and junction improvements had been implemented to tackle this problem. Officers were confident that the improvements which had been made would reduce the number of accidents moving forward.

As the average speed for the major roads within Park ward was within the speed limit a reduction measures could not be justified, as the Council had to have a consistent approach across the whole Peterborough area.

### **Petitions Presented to Councillor Officers**

#### Introduce a 20mh Zone in Hawksbill Road and Beluga Close

The petition was submitted by Christian Hogg on 12 March 2018. The petition contained 180 valid signatures and called on the Council to introduce a 20mph zone in Hawksbill Way and Beluga Close.

The Network and Traffic Manager responded and advised that the Council had undertaken an initial covert speed survey of vehicles from 8am to 9am on the stretch of Hawksbill Way near nrs 160-176. This showed average vehicle speeds of approx. 22mph heading towards Beluga Drive and 24mph heading towards London Road. This showed excellent compliance with the existing 30mph speed limit and of the eight vehicles exceeding 30mph only two were recorded as being in at or in excess of 34mph, which is the ACPO (Association of Chief Police Officers) threshold.

It was considered that the traffic using the roads would be residents of the area, rather than through traffic, and the results suggested that the majority of residents were driving at appropriate speeds in line with the existing road geometry. The reduction of a speed limit independently of other measures to reduce speeds had been shown to have little additional reduction on vehicle speeds and any reduction achieved would not be noticeable to non-motorised road users using the road.

Given the low and compliant speeds that had been recorded, reducing the speed limit to 20mph would likely raise unrealistic expectations that action would be taken to achieve further reductions either through engineering measures or enforcement action, which could not be justified or sustained from within existing resources.

#### Partially Convert Local Green Spaces on Avon Court to Car Parking Spaces

The petition was submitted by Councillor Bond on 26 April 2018. The petition contained 28 valid signatures and called on the Council to partially convert local green spaces on Avon Court to car parking spaces.

The Head of Environmental Partnerships responded and advised that he fully appreciated the concerns raised and was aware of similar issues in other areas of the City. Unfortunately with limited budget for Grounds Maintenance across the City the Council did not have sufficient funds to turn current green spaces in to parking spaces that would be to highways standard.

It had also been noted that there were a number of trees growing on the green spaces, under Peterborough City Council Trees and Woodlands Strategy the Council did not look to fell a healthy tree without good reason.

#### Closure of Northminster Multi Storey Car Park Conveniences

The petition was submitted by Mrs Woolfenden on 10 April 2018. The petition contained 264 valid signatures and called on the Council to reverse the decision to close Northminster Multi Storey Car Park Conveniences.

The Leader of the Council responded and advised that, taking into consideration the concerns raised and having looked at the matter further, he had ordered the public convenience to be reopened during the opening hours of the Market.

The toilets were closed mainly due to concerns and issues raised around anti-social behaviour and the Leader would be monitoring this situation closely over the next few months.

## **7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 7.1 As the petitions presented in this report have been dealt with by Cabinet Members or officers, it is appropriate that the action taken is reported to Cabinet.

## **8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 8.1 There have been no alternative options considered.

## **9. IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no legal, financial, or equalities implications arising from the issues considered.

## **10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 10.1 Petitions presented to the Council and responses from officers.

## **11. APPENDICES**

- 11.1 **Appendix 1** - Response to Petition 'Stop the Close of the Manor, Respite Home for Children and Young People with Disabilities'

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