

**MINUTES OF THE ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
MEETING HELD AT 7PM ON  
TUESDAY, 14 JANUARY 2020  
BOURGES / VIERSEN ROOM, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

**Committee Members Present:**

Councillors: N. Simons (Chairman), S. Bond, R. Brown. (Vice-Chairman), A. Coles, J. Fox, J. Howard, C. Harper, J. Howard, J. Howell, H. Skibsted, I. Yasin.

Co-opted Member: Parish Councillor N. Boyce

**Officers Present:**

Sarah Ferguson	Assistant Director, Housing, Communities and Youth
Mohamed Hussein	Director of Housing Needs and Supply
Sean Evans	Head of Housing Needs
Charlotte Black	Service Director, Adults and Safeguarding
Tina Hornby	Head of Integration
Caroline Townsend	Head of Commissioning Partnerships and Programmes
Adrian Chapman	Service Director, Communities and Safety
David Beauchamp	Democratic Services Officer

**Also Present:**

Councillor Steve Allen - Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture and Recreation  
Councillor Wayne Fitzgerald – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Public Health

**38. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jamil (Councillor Skibsted in attendance as substitute), Councillor Bisby (Councillor Harper in attendance as substitute), Councillor Aitken (Councillor A. Coles in attendance as substitute) and Councillor Fower.

**39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest or whipping declarations.

**40. MINUTES OF THE ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON**

**40.1 – 28 October 2019 – Call-in Meeting – Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2019 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

#### 40.1 – 12 November 2019 – Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee

The Democratic Services Officer requested that the Committee approve an amended set of minutes to reflect the fact that Parish Councillor Neil Boyce was in attendance at the 12 November meeting. This was UNANIMOUSLY agreed.

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2019 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

#### 41. CALL IN OF ANY CABINET, CABINET MEMBER OR KEY OFFICER DECISIONS

There were no requests for call in to consider.

#### 42. DEVELOPING A CULTURAL STRATEGY FOR PETERBOROUGH

The report was introduced by the Assistant Director, Housing Communities and Youth, accompanied by the Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture and Recreation which briefed members of the Committee on current arrangements within the Council and with Vivacity to develop and deliver future cultural and leisure opportunities within the City, to note the direction of travel to develop a Cultural Strategy for Peterborough and to seek comments from Members on key aspects of the proposed strategy with a view to informing the next stage of its development.

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Some members felt that the city's cultural output had not been particularly successful with Vivacity performing inadequately in this area, while praising the contributions made by Metal Arts. Some members felt that no improvements were proposed in this report and sought reassurance that this was not the case while acknowledging the financial constraints faced by the council.
- The Cabinet Member agreed that the city's cultural output had not been good enough. A refresh of the relationship with Vivacity was essential to improving this and there was optimism that this could be achieved. Other partners such as Metal and the Arts Council were also important. Officers added that the process of developing the Cultural Strategy had only just begun and this was a good opportunity to take the comments of Committee Members into account.
- Members were pleased that the Cultural Strategy now fell within the remit of the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee.
- The Committee requested that the Assistant Director, Housing Communities and Youth, provided the Committee with a briefing note informing them of the number of professional librarians employed in Peterborough. The Cabinet Member stated that he valued the work of library volunteers. Peterborough used an 'open-plus' model with no libraries closing. Libraries were not just repositories for books and the work underway with Civic would help to explore additional uses for libraries in the future.
- Members requested further clarification on the future of the library service. The Cabinet Member responded that the partnership work with Civic would give Libraries access to funding they did not currently. The Council needed to take action to ensure that Libraries were community hubs providing a wide range of cultural services. Officers added that Civic could provide a national and

- international evidence base that the Council did not currently have access to and potential access to additional funding streams via partnerships. Any partnership with Civic would extend across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
- Members praised the current state of Flag Fen. Officers stated that a contractor had just been commissioned to upgrade bridges to allow pedestrians to cross the site. Must Farm was a site of particular importance and work was ongoing to secure funding.
  - Members requested information on how rural communities were being consulted with as part of development of the Cultural Strategy. Officers responded that rural areas had formed an important part of early discussions with consultants to develop the strategy. A variety of stakeholders would be engaged with to see how to expand the cultural offer across both the urban and rural areas of Peterborough. The Committee were invited to make suggestions for the best way to achieve this. The Cabinet Member added that as a Vivacity Trustee, he regularly raised the issues of rural areas at board level. Village halls could potentially contribute to the City's cultural offer and cultural provision should not be exclusive to the City Centre.
  - Members noted the importance of rural transport to improving access to cultural services in rural areas.
  - Members referred to section 4.2.5 on page 23 of the reports pack regarding the lack of conferencing facilities in Peterborough and noted that such facilities were available at the East of England Showground. Members asked if there were plans to provide such facilities near Peterborough Railway Station. Officers responded that this would link to the Business Improvement District (BID) and 'Stronger Towns' work being undertaken. Some plans for the station quarter, embankment and Broadway focused on developing a 'Civic Core' which would include conferencing facilities. Members' request for conferencing facilities would be noted as part of future plans.
  - Members asked for an explanation as to why Peterborough was currently considered to be a 'Cultural Cold Spot'. The Cabinet Member responded that the City had been identified as such by the Arts Council and close coordination was needed with partners to improve matters. Peterborough was considered a priority by the Arts Council East, who had helped to develop this Scrutiny Committee report, with an extensive vision in place and a desire to maximise external funding.
  - Peterborough would soon have two cinemas although there was no independent cinema. Both Stamford and Cambridge had cinemas clubs for more obscure films, unlike Peterborough.
  - The Committee felt that the report contained little information on digital services and requested that the Assistant Director, Housing, Housing Communities and Youth pass on Members' concerns regarding the lack of emphasis on Digital Services in the Cultural strategy to the stakeholder group.
  - Darren Henley of the Arts Council England would be visiting the city in February 2020. Members would be given the opportunity to meet him.
  - The Cabinet Member felt that Peterborough's new University would contribute positively to cultural provision in the City, though this could depend on the subjects taught there.
  - Officers planned to follow examples from other cities of how investment in culture had driven development.

#### **ACTIONS AGREED:**

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note and scrutinise the direction of travel to develop a Cultural Strategy for Peterborough in partnership with Vivacity, Arts Council England and cultural leaders across the City
2. Comment on key aspects of the proposed strategy with a view to informing the next stage of its development
3. Request that the Assistant Director, Housing Communities and Youth, provides the Committee with a briefing note informing them of the number of professional librarians employed in Peterborough.
4. Ask the Assistant Director, Housing, Housing Communities and Youth to pass on Members' concerns regarding the lack of emphasis on Digital Services in the Cultural strategy to the stakeholder group

#### **43. PORTFOLIO PROGRESS REPORT: HOUSING, CULTURE AND RECREATION**

The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture and Recreation, accompanied by the Assistant Director, Housing Communities and Youth, the Head of Housing Needs and the Director of Housing Needs and Supply. The annual report from the Cabinet Member set out his achievements and challenges, as well as opportunities that fell within the remit of the Scrutiny Committee.

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members praised the work done to help rough sleepers in both the Housing Needs team and the charitable sector.
- Members asked to what extent it was possible to help the small number of entrenched rough sleepers that chose to live that lifestyle. The Cabinet Member responded that this was a considerable challenge and help was needed from the faith and voluntarily sectors. There was no single solution identified but encouraged members to contact him regarding concerns about specific people or areas.
- The Director of Housing Needs and Supply added that there had been a focus on reducing the number of people staying in bed and breakfast accommodation. Once this had been achieved, he would focus more closely on the rough sleeper prevention work already underway, including focussing on entrenched rough sleepers. No matter how difficult it was to engage with them, this work must continue and people should never be dismissed as being beyond the Council's ability to help. The Director's experiences working in Eastbourne could be utilised, which included forming a meeting of senior strategic officers, (CCG, police probation etc.) to ensure the authority is in place for ideas to be implemented.
- The Head of Housing Needs added that funding to tackle rough sleepers continued to be received from the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The outreach team now consisted of 5 officers who were based at the Light Project. They helped to ensure rough sleepers were offered a complete package of support including healthcare as well as housing. Although helping two rough sleepers per month to leave the streets might not seem like a large achievement, the team also worked to prevent people rough sleeping in the first place. The team were excellent at managing the 'flow' of rough sleepers but tackling those who were entrenched was more difficult.
- Members praised the work of the Housing Needs team and the Garden House.

- Members commented that those on the streets pretending to be homeless made it harder to help those in genuine need of support.
- Members referred to the issues created by rough sleepers in St. Peters' Arcade. The Cabinet Member responded that he regularly raised these issues with officers. The police were reluctant to get involved. Rough sleepers would often move back after being moved on. Potential solutions could include closing off the arcade, playing loud music or introducing extra lightning. Officers added that tackling non-genuine rough sleepers required cooperation with community safety teams and the police. Enforcement and by-laws might be required as well as an understanding of who was genuinely homeless.
- Officers acknowledged that it could be frustrating that no matter how many people the housing needs team helped, two people sleeping the Arcade could create the perception that rough sleeping was not being tackled. The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) had no involvement as these rough sleepers were not benefit claimants. As support had been offered, the only remaining option was enforcement. Injunctions had been put in place but it might be necessary to put gates on this area. Information on rough sleeping was available on the Safer off the Streets Website.
- A dedicated Armed Forces Housing Outreach Officer to work across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough had been appointed to help prevent veterans becoming homeless.
- Members inquired if background checks were conducted on those being provided with accommodation to ensure there was no negative impact on the community. Officers responded that the needs of each individual client would be assessed and stated that there was no point in providing a placement if the tenancy was likely to fail. Criminality and alcoholism were found in every community, these issues were not exclusive to homeless people. Once a tenancy failed for a 'single vulnerable person', the chances of finding alternative accommodation were remote. Officers had meetings with the Homelessness Forum to ensure that all interested parties followed their responsibilities and no tenants were failed by the system. Additional support for tenants might be required in some locations.
- Members requested clarity that checks were completed on prospective tenants, so that the public could be reassured. Officers responded that these checks formed part of the assessment process. A Risk Assessment and Support Needs Evaluation was embedded in the Homelessness Reduction Act.
- Members expressed disappointment that there was not better engagement with the police on this issue. Officers responded that inspiration could be drawn from their experience in Eastbourne, where a forum had been set up upon the advice of a representative of the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government (DHCLG). Officers were due to meet a representative of the DHCLG in January to further discuss this idea. Officers emphasised the importance of partnership working.
- Members referred to section 4.5.4 on pages 32 and 33 of the reports pack and requested an update on the progress of developing a new sports centre in Werrington. The Cabinet Member stated that he was in favour of the project but acknowledged progress had been variable. Officers responded that project was going ahead. The reason the feasibility study had only just begun was that the original specification was considered insufficiently ambitious and needed to be amended to better suit the requirements of local residents. The feasibility study was close to 'final draft' form and work was underway to include a commercial model. The proposition was viable and officers intended to progress the scheme.

- Members requested that the Service Director, Communities and Safety set up a working group for Members to be kept informed regarding the progress on building a leisure centre in Werrington.
- Members congratulated the Music Hub on their 'Snow Band' production. The Cabinet Member endorsed these comments.
- Members suggested that a 'Park Pedal' scheme could be pursued to encourage people to cycle, who would not otherwise have considered it, via the use of four-wheeled cycles. Officers responded stated that they would table this suggestion at upcoming 'hub meetings'
- Members asked if the increase in the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) interest rate would affect the ambition of Peterborough City Council to set up a Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The Cabinet Member responded that it had indeed had an impact and the Council would need to reevaluate whether HRA would be viable. The MCHLG were still permitting the setting up of new HRAs.

#### **ACTIONS AGREED:**

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Consider and scrutinise this report and endorse the approach being taken under the portfolio of the Cabinet Member
2. Ask the Service Director, Communities and Safety to set up a working group for Members to be kept informed regarding the progress on building a leisure centre in Werrington.

#### **44. PETERBOROUGH ADULT SOCIAL CARE ANNUAL PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATE AND SELF ASSESSMENT**

The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Public Health accompanied by the Service Director – Adults and Safeguarding, the Head of Integration and the Head of Commissioning Partnerships and Programmes. The report allowed the committee to consider and scrutinise the approach being taken under the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Public Health and the service areas of the Service Director for Adults and Safeguarding.

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members referred to section 4.14.1 on page 25 of the reports pack and asked for further information on the challenges of staff recruitment. The Cabinet Member responded that there was an acute skills gap across the whole country which posed a major challenge. Officers added that the shortage of personal assistants (PAs) was a national issue. Care work was challenging and required staff with the appropriate motivations to complete the work. However, the situation in Peterborough had improved in recent years and Peterborough was outperforming regional and national averages. The recommissioning of the direct payments contract with the Peterborough Council for Voluntary Services (PCVS) had improved the situation.
- In response to a members' query, the Cabinet member stated that there was a global issue across the healthcare sector with regard to Delayed Transfers of Care (DETOCs) but there were no DETOC cases involving adult social care in

Peterborough. The social care team were aiming to learn from this and apply solutions to Cambridgeshire.

- The Cabinet Member emphasised that the integration of Social Care and Health was a key part of his portfolio.
- Members asked officers to identify areas of improvement within the Cabinet Member's Portfolio. Officers responded there was a focus on improving technological care solutions and helping people to live independently for longer. Officers felt that the portfolio was performing well considering the resources available.
- The Cabinet Member added that greater strategic thinking was needed and the Government and NHS needed to invest more money in to preventative care, before improvements could be made. The investment needed to be made at the primary care level, e.g. district nurses to help people before they needed to go to hospital, which was much more expensive. Admissions to A&E were increasing and there were now more people accessing healthcare services due to an aging population.

#### **ACTIONS AGREED:**

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to

1. Consider and comment on the annual update for Adult Social Care, including the self-assessment for Peterborough Adult Social Care and the public facing summary for inclusion on the Council website.

#### **45. ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICE USER SURVEY 2019**

The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Public Health accompanied by the Head of Integration and the Service Director – Adults and Safeguarding. The report allowed the committee to scrutinise the results of the Service User Survey undertaken in February 2019 and published in October 2019.

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members asked how older people were encouraged to embrace new technology as part of their care. Officers responded that the technology used was designed to be highly intuitive and would not be thought of as a 'computer' by the older person, e.g. a talking pill box. In addition, some forms of technology were sensor based with no interaction required by the older person. It was important to consider that older people may be comfortable with some forms of technology but not others. The Cabinet Member made reference to the 'smart flat' video played at a previous Scrutiny Committee meeting and stated that the Council were constantly evaluating how new technology could be deployed. Peterborough City Council performed well in this area, e.g. big button telephones and this work needed to improve further, e.g. by using pressure mats.
- Members asked how officers helped people while ensuring that they did not feel like a burden. Officers felt that it was important to acknowledge that people did not want to have to be cared for and wanted to feel independent and in control of their care. The Council worked with providers to ensure that personal

care was delivered in such a way that the service user felt in control. Direct Payments helped with this by giving service users control over who was involved in their care.

- The Cabinet Member re-emphasised the importance of preventative healthcare and keeping nursing home placements to a minimum to maintain people's independence and dignity for as long as possible. Typical times for placement should be 2.5 years in a residential home.
- Members asked how voice-based technology (e.g. Alexa) would help people stay independent in their own homes for longer. Officers responded that this was being looked at all the time as many people had a visual impairment. As the technology market expanded, the challenge was how to deploy this to best help service users.
- Members added that it was important to ensure the technological solutions were futureproof. Officers added that work was underway with the Local Government Association (LGA) to ensure that best practice in technology-enabled care was pursued.

#### **ACTIONS AGreed.**

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to

1. Note the results of the Service User Survey undertaken in February 2019 and published in October 2019.

#### **45. MONITORING SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which enabled the committee to monitor and track the progress of recommendations made to the Executive or Officers at previous meetings.

The Service Director, Communities and Safety, requested that the Recommendations Monitoring Report be updated to reflect the fact that the Youth Justice Plan was due to be approved by Cabinet on 3 February 2020 and Full Council on 4 March 2020. It was agreed that the Democratic Services Officer would do so.

#### **ACTIONS AGREED:**

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to consider the responses from Cabinet Members and Officers to recommendations made at previous meetings as attached in Appendix 1 to the report and requested that the Democratic Services Officer update the report to reflect the fact that the Youth Justice Plan was due to be approved by Cabinet on 3 February 2020 and Full Council on 4 March 2020.

#### **46. FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

The Democratic Services officer introduced the report which invited Members to consider the most recent version of the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions and identify any relevant items for inclusion within the Committee's work programme or to request further information.



There were no further comments made.

**ACTIONS AGREED:**

The Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to consider the current Forward Plan of Executive Decisions.

**47. WORK PROGRAMME 2019/2020**

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which gave the committee the opportunity to review the work programme and suggest any additional items to be considered.

It was noted that the Work Programme would be discussed at the next Group Representatives Meeting.

**ACTIONS AGREED;**

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to note the latest version of the work programme.

**37. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

12 February 2020 – Joint Scrutiny of the Budget

3 March 2020 – Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee

Chairman  
7pm – 8:30pm

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