

**MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING
HELD AT 2:00PM, ON
MONDAY 11 MAY 2020
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM**

Cabinet Members Present: Councillor Holdich (Chair), Councillor Allen, Councillor Ayres, Councillor Cereste, Councillor Farooq, Councillor Fitzgerald, Councillor Hiller, Councillor Walsh

69. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bashir.

70. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

71. MINUTES OF MEETINGS HELD ON:

a) 27 January 2020 – Shareholder Cabinet Committee

The minutes of the Shareholder Cabinet Committee meeting held on 27 January 2020 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

b) 3 February 2020 – Cabinet Meeting

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 3 February 2020 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

c) 25 February 2020 – Budget Meeting

The minutes of the Budget Cabinet meeting held on 25 February 2020 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

STRATEGIC DECISIONS

72. PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCILS RESPONSE TO COVID-19

The Cabinet received a report in relation to Peterborough City Council's response to the impact of the Coronavirus.

The purpose of this report was to update the Cabinet on the Council's response to the current Coronavirus pandemic, the progress made on assessing financial, service and community impact, and the Council's initial approach to recovery.

The Chief Executive introduced the report and advised that this was the first report to Cabinet in relation to Covid-19. It was advised that the Influenza Pandemic Plan in the middle of February, which required a strategic coordination hub. The report covered the local resilience forum, which comprised the category one responders and dealt

with planning for emergency situations. Immediate responses included discharging individuals from hospital and arrangements to look after shielded individuals. The Peterborough Hub considered matters such as vulnerable children, ensuring that key workers' children could attend school, and ensuring that rough sleepers could be placed in accommodation.

The Council was still considered to be in the response phase, however, was now also beginning to plan for coming out of lockdown. Working with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority the Council would be focused on recovering well from the situation.

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

- Members were advised that the Household Recycling Centre had opened again for the first time on 11 May 2020, between 8.00am and 6.00pm for essential waste only. There had been some queueing in the morning and officers were kept to stress that the public should not arrive any earlier than 8.00am.
- Currently the Centre was not open for trailers or vans.
- Members were pleased to note the high level of volunteers within communities. Work was being undertaken to link these individuals with existing organisations, as appropriate training was considered to be vital. It was hoped that these connections could be continued going forward.
- The work undertaken in order to ensure rough sleepers were found accommodation was noted. Members were advised that this work would continue in order to find long term homes for those in temporary accommodation.
- In relation to those moving from hospital in communities and care homes, Members were advised that the Council was working with the Clinical Commission Group to purchase 300 additional beds. This had been sufficient so far. It was further noted that all those discharged from hospital would have a Covid test and would be provided with an individual 'Covid Plan'.
- Independent care homes were responsible for procuring their own Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). If they are unable to source PPE, then the Council can provide emergency equipment from its central hub.
- It was emphasized that individuals who were experience emergency medical situations, such as heart attacks, strokes or meningitis should still seek health care through 111 or 999 and go to hospital if advised.
- Members sought further information what the recovery plan would be for non-Covid outpatients, and the Director of Public Health would ask for this.
- Members were advised that, in relation to infection control in care homes, if there was a potential outbreak, care homes were advised to contact NHS England. These would then be considered on a case by case basis.
- Work was ongoing with disability forums, to provide support in relation to shopping, medication, and other services. A lot of calls had been received by the hub in relation to those with sensory impairments, with consideration being given to any technology available to allow for greater independence.
- Members noted that further funding had been provided nationally to support domestic violence services, which had seen a rise in reports.
- It was advised that there was sufficient burial space within the Peterborough area.
- It was confirmed that investigations were currently being made in relation to how ensure that cycle lanes within Peterborough were being used to their best ability.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to note the progress made to date in responding to the impact of the Coronavirus.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

To keep Cabinet up to date on the latest situation in relation to Covid-19 and the action taken by the Council in response to the emergency.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

If Cabinet were not updated in a formal meeting this would mean that information would not be available to the public and that Cabinet Members would not be able to question officers of debate relevant matters in relation to the Council's Covid-19 response in a transparent manner.

73. PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCILS FINANCIAL POSITION

The Cabinet received a report in relation to Peterborough City Council's financial position.

The purpose of this report was to provide an update on the financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the work that Peterborough City Council is undertaking, in liaison with its wider Peterborough and Cambridgeshire partners, to address the challenges faced.

Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report and advised that while the report focused on the financial pressures of the Council following the Covid-19 emergency, this would remain secondary to the work of the Council to save lives. It was advised that the Government had provided substantial financial support, in the form of a direct £2.6 billion grant, rate reliefs for retail and nurseries, support to rural and small business, and support for council tax.

The cost to the Council was felt across all departments, with £7 million in direct costs, and a loss of £6.8 million in commercial income. Many savings that had been outlined within the budget were now expected to be difficult to achieve. £7.3 million was to be drawn from reserves, leaving £6.3 million in usual reserves, in order to continue to provide services and balance the budget. All previous financial assumptions would need to be reviewed.

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

- Plans were in place to lobby the Government for further funding, in order to avoid having to use reserves to balance the Council's budget.
- Officers were working closely with the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government to determine what costs the Council had incurred in relation to its Covid-19 response.
- It was noted that a lot of the information within the report was based on estimate figures. Members were advised that these figures were being checked against actual expenditure on a regular basis.
- There was some indication from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is that any remaining funds from its grant could be used to fund the local economy.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to consider on a monthly basis the financial implications of Covid-19 on the Council in the short, medium and long term and note:

- the significant financial implications that COVID-19 is having on the Council, including the current estimated cost of £18.3m in 2020/21 which exceeds the current £11.0m of funding made available from Government (£5.3m originally and £5.7m on the 18th April);
- the likely ongoing financial implications in future years, and that current savings plans must continue to be delivered where possible to prevent further deterioration in the financial position;
- the lobbying already underway with Government over the financial position;
- the financial packages being delivered by the Council and approves the proposed financial support to communities; and
- the arrangement in place with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Commissioning Group for people coming out of hospital and into care.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The requirement to monitor the Council spending and ensure that effective control mechanisms are in place to fund and report on emergency situations.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

There were no alternative options considered.

At the close of the meeting the Cabinet held a minute's silence in memory of Councillor Louise Coles.

Chairman
1.00pm to 2.17pm
11 May 2020