

**MINUTES OF THE SHAREHOLDER CABINET COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD AT 10:00AM, ON  
MONDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2020  
VIA ZOOM**

**Members Present:** Councillor Fitzgerald (Chair), Councillor Allen, Councillor Cereste, Councillor Seaton

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Walsh.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

**3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2 MARCH 2020**

The minutes of the Shareholder Cabinet Committee meeting held on 2 March 2020 were referred to Cabinet for approval.

**4. REVIEW OF VIVACITY TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS**

The Shareholder Cabinet Committee received a report in relation to the progress of the Vivacity transition arrangements.

The purpose of this report was to set out the process made to date relating to the transition of Vivacity services to Peterborough Ltd and City College Peterborough.

The Acting Corporate Director for Resources, addressed the Shareholder Cabinet Committee and advised that the date of transfer for Vivacity Services to the City Council had been deferred to 1 October 2020. Within the report it was identified what services would be open, when. It was considered that the services would need to run for at least a year before the Council could have a full understanding of the running costs. Additionally, further time would be needed to understand the significant impact of the Coronavirus on the industry. It was advised that a high number of third party services across the country remained closed.

The Committee were advised that 'Lost World' would transfer to the Nene Park Trust, rather than the Council. Plans were also afoot for the Key Theatre to open over the winter period.

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

- The Acting Director of Resources would circulate an update on the opening of football pitches in the area ahead of the football season.

- A third party had been brought in to provide valuations on all fixtures and fittings, including equipment, ahead of the transfer of services. Such details were covered within the funding management agreement.
- It was advised that the deferment of the transfer for a further two weeks was to enable a smoother transfer for staff, for example, to avoid the issuing of two separate payslips.
- It was considered that Members would need to see evidence that the transfer of services back to the Council would be beneficial.
- It was noted that Coronavirus restrictions were significantly curtailing income in these services areas.
- Queries were raised as to why 'Lost World' was transferring to the Nene Park Trust and not the Council, if this was a reliable income generator, and Members were advised that 'Lost World' was outside the funding management agreement. Further detail would be circulated to the Committee following the meeting.

The Shareholder Cabinet Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to note and commented upon the progress being made to secure the safe transition of services from Vivacity, specifically referencing any points that need to be considered as part of the transition or following transition, relating to the other services overseen by Shareholder Cabinet Committee.

#### **REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

The process to transfer services from Vivacity to the new arrangements was complex and dynamic, and the decision, and the verbal update which was provided at the meeting, sought to ensure that the Shareholder Cabinet Committee members were fully appraised and reassured of the process being followed.

#### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

No alternative options were considered.

### **5. OPPORTUNITY PETERBOROUGH**

Councillor Cereste left the meeting at this point.

The Shareholder Cabinet Committee received a report in relation to the activities of Opportunity Peterborough.

The purpose of this report was to provide an update on the activities and achievements of Opportunity Peterborough, to provide an overview of the opportunities and challenges that face the company in the very near future, and to provide information to the Committee for its consideration regarding the continued funding of the company.

Tom Hennessy, the Chief Executive of Opportunity Peterborough, addressed the Shareholder Cabinet Committee and gave an overview of the 2019/2020 year, and introduced the business plan for the current financial year. With the past year Opportunity Peterborough had made a successful bid for a smart manufacturing association within the area. The company had also been instrumental in working with the Council and the Combined Authority in disseminating business grants and information to local business, the Committee were advised. Additionally, following the closure of schools in the area due to the Coronavirus pandemic, Opportunity

Peterborough had extended its work with schools around digital infrastructure, and were looking to roll out a programme on a national level.

The Committee were informed that the company had created 338 jobs in 2019/20, contributing £10 million to the local economy. It was therefore felt that the Council's investment was worthwhile. Opportunity Peterborough was currently working towards a bid for a growth services contract with the Combined Authority. This contract would replace much of the work currently undertaken by the company and, therefore, should the bid be unsuccessful, the company may see a reduction in income. A reserve for this had been included in the business plan. However, if it was considered that if the Council were to withdraw its funding, there would be some services that Opportunity Peterborough would no longer be able to provide.

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

- The Committee were advised that Opportunity Peterborough provided services to the 'greater Peterborough' area to support the Peterborough economy, However, the company also looked to enhance the talent pool and economy of area that Peterborough would benefit from.
- The value of Opportunity Peterborough was emphasised to Members, while also seeking consideration of future budgetary implications.
- It was suggested that the Committee make a recommendation to Cabinet to take into account the continuing benefits of the company when considering the Council's budget.
- It was noted that a greater focus on communication by Opportunity Peterborough to Members may ensure that Members had a greater understanding of the company's value.
- The Committee emphasised the importance of the visitor economy and expressed a wish to see further work carried out on how to sell the city and its assets as a more tourist-centric asset.
- Officers agreed with this point and referenced work undertaken by London and Partners and Making Manchester as successful models.
- The Committee requested that Opportunity Peterborough circulate information to Members of the Committee on a bi-monthly basis, or as often as possible, to keep them informed of future developments.

The Shareholder Cabinet Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

- Note the achievements and impact of Opportunity Peterborough with regards to support for the local economy and jobs creation.
- Note the opportunities for enhancing its services, and thus its impact, as laid out in the Business Plan in Appendix A.
- Note the challenges that the company will face should it be unsuccessful in securing a new contract with the CPCA.
- Recommend that Cabinet consider the continuing benefits of Opportunity Peterborough as a valued asset, and to pursue the potential to share costs and service outcomes with neighbouring authorities such as Cambridgeshire County Council and South Kesteven District Council.

## **REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

It was recommended that the Shareholder Cabinet Committee consider the benefits of continued funding for Opportunity Peterborough to enable the company to continue delivering valuable services to the city, particularly in the time of economic uncertainty.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

Peterborough City Council could withdraw funding for Opportunity Peterborough from 2021/22 with the associated loss of the benefits.

Peterborough City Council could contract Opportunity Peterborough to deliver specific services to the Council on a case by case basis. However, without a long term commitment to levels of funding it would be difficult to retain resources to enable delivery.

Given that Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council enjoyed a close relationship sharing many officers, and given that CCC did not have its own economic development function, services could be further enhanced or a cost saving could be realised if costs were shared with CCC and both organisations were provided with access to OP's services. Likewise, an approach by PCC to South Kesteven District Council suggesting a merging of OP with InvestSK, which had recently been through a streamlining process, could again provide some costs savings to PCC whilst retaining access to services currently provided by OP. Such arrangements would not have to be mutually exclusive and could provide increased efficiencies and collaborative working across Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and South Lincolnshire providing ongoing benefits to all involved.

### **6. GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS AND OFFICERS WHO SERVE ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Monitoring Officer advised the Shareholder Cabinet Committee that the 'Guidance for Members and Officers who Served on Outside Bodies' had not been updated, as the guidance remained the same.

### **7. SHAREHOLDER CABINET COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Shareholder Cabinet Committee received the Shareholder Cabinet Committee work programme for the 2020/2021 municipal year.

The Shareholder Cabinet Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to note the latest version of the work programme.

Chairman  
10:00am – 11:04am  
14 September 2020