

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD AT 6.00PM ON
11 NOVEMBER 2020
VIRTUAL MEETING: PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL'S YOUTUBE PAGE**

Committee Members Present: Councillors C. Harper (Chairman), K. Aitken, S Barkham, R. Bisby, S. Bond, R. Brown, C. Burbage, G. Casey, A Coles, N. Day, A. Dowson, A. Ellis, John Fox, Judy Fox, T. Haynes, S Hemraj, J. Howard, J. Howell, Amjad Iqbal, M Jamil, D. Jones, S Lane, D Over, L. Robinson, B. Rush, N Sandford, N. Simons, H. Skibsted, S. Warren, C Wiggin and I. Yasin.

Also in Attendance: Shaz Nawaz as Leader of the Labour Party

Education Co-optee Peter Cantley

Independent Co-optee Members:
Alistair Kingsley, Rizwan Rahemtulla
Parish Councillor June Bull
Parish Councillor Keith Lievesley
Parish Councillor Neil Boyce
Parish Councillor James Hayes

Officers Present:	Gillian Beasley, Chief Executive of Peterborough City Council Wendi Ogle Welbourn, Executive Director People and Communities Dr Liz Robin, Director for Public Health Steve Cox, Executive Director Place & Economy Mohamed Hussein, Director: Housing Needs and Supply Graham Hughes, Service Director, Highways and Transport Sue Grace, Director, Customer and Digital Services Amanda Askham, Director of Business Improvement and Development Peter Carpenter, Acting Corporate Director Resources Fiona McMillan, Director of Law and Governance Rachel Edwards, Head of Constitutional Services Pippa Turvey, Democratic and Constitutional Services Manager Paulina Ford, Senior Democratic Services Officer Jane Webb, Senior Democratic Services Officer Dan Kalley, Senior Democratic Services Officer David Beauchamp, Democratic Services Officer Karen S Dunleavy, Democratic Services Officer
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Also Present:	Councillor Holdich, Leader of the Council and Member of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Councillor Fitzgerald, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Public Health
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	<p>Councillor Ayres, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services and Education, Skills and University</p> <p>Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Commercial Strategy and Investments</p> <p>Councillor Seaton, Cabinet Member for Finance</p> <p>Councillor Walsh, Cabinet Member for Communities</p> <p>Councillor Allen, Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture and Recreation</p> <p>Councillor Farooq, Cabinet Member for Digital Services and Transformation</p> <p>Councillor Cereste, Cabinet Member for Waste, Street Scene and Environment</p> <p>Councillor Bashir Cabinet Advisor for Children’s Services</p>
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The Senior Democratic Services Officer opened the meeting by welcoming those members of the public and press who were watching the livestream of the meeting through the Council’s YouTube page. Due to government guidance on social distancing, the meeting took place remotely in accordance with current legislation which made provision for remote attendance at, and remote access to Council meetings. The meeting was also following the Peterborough City Council’s Virtual Meeting Protocol

1. NOMINATION OF CHAIR

The Senior Democratic Services Officer advised the Committee that in accordance with *Part 4, Section 8 – Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules, section 13, Joint Meetings of Scrutiny Committees* a Chair would be required to be appointed from among the Chairmen or Chairwomen of the Committees who were holding the meeting. Nominations were sought from those Chairs present who were Councillor Simons, Chair of the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Aitken, Chair of the Health Scrutiny Committee and Councillor Harper, Chair of the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Harper was nominated by Councillor Bisby and seconded by Councillor Rush. There being no further nominations, Councillor Harper was appointed Chair of this committee.

The Chair welcomed everyone present and explained that the purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for all members of each Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the Medium Term Financial Strategy, 2021/22 to 2023/24 Phase One Proposals document as part of the formal consultation process, before being presented to Cabinet on 30 November 2020 for approval and recommendation to Full Council on 9 December 2020.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Goodwin, Councillor Qayyum and Councillor Ali. Councillor Jones was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Ali and Councillor Amjad Iqbal was in attendance as substitute Councillor Qayyum.

The following co-opted members also submitted their apologies:

- Education Co-opted Members: Clare Watchorn and Flavio Vettese
- Independent Co-opted Members: Parish Councillor Susie Lucas and Parish Councillor Dr Sridhar

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

4. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2021/22 TO 2023/24-PHASE ONE

The Cabinet Member for Finance gave a short introduction to the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 – 2023/24 Phase One proposals document as per the Cabinet report dated 26 October 2020 in the agenda.

The Cabinet Member for Finance highlighted the following:

There had been a change in financial position for all Local Authorities. At the start of the year the Authority had a balanced budget and there was time to address a £2m gap in 21/22; following the initial identification of a £12m of savings options during the lean reviews. The Authority was confident it could maintain sustainability primarily due to the Fairer Funding Review, which would reflect the Authority's demographic and growth. In addition, the Authority had demonstrated the ability to deliver much larger efficiencies in the past, whilst maintaining services.

The circumstances for all authorities had changed and analysis published by the Local Government Association, demonstrated that the national picture identified pressures and lost income in excess of £11bn, in the current year. Examples of that were adult social care pressures of £2.3bn, £1.6bn of lost business rates and the same for Council tax. Fees and charges income had also dropped by £2bn. These pressures would have a long term impact, and would affect base budgets, which made Government support even more critical. In addition, there would be no comprehensive spending review, however the Local Governments settlement would be for a single year. The settlement would provide a crucial link to next year's plans as it would provide clarity on key areas such as grants, inflationary or growth uplift, fair funding review, council tax increase limits and social care precepts.

Provisional settlements would provide Local Authorities with a degree of clarity on support from the Government and any final deficit amount that needed to be closed. The national Local Authority finance position was surveyed by the BBC, and of the 173 local authorities (LA) that took part, only 158 could not fund their services for the current year. Peterborough was not one of these.

The Authority had received 86% of its COVID 19 funding to date and there were further grant announcements expected for the current financial year. Further Government funding would be required for future years as the original projected £2m gap had increased to £36m. This was due to the pandemic and the impact on income, expenditure and reduced work on efficiencies, with extra demands and project expertise reprioritised to support critical issues such as people who were shielding. The needs of vulnerable adults, children and providers of care had increased. There had also been a decrease in additional income planned and in receipts of payments owed to the Council. There was an increase in demand on Corporate Services during the pandemic and redeployment of employees and this would have an impact on longer term budgets too.

There were several factors that had set Peterborough apart from other LA neighbours such as a fast-growing population, which increased the need in public services and the complexity of support required.

The Authority had received low funding in comparison to the large growing population, however, services were being provided at a low unit price cost. The council tax base was low nationally and if Peterborough was to move to the average unitary rate, then it could generate an additional £8m per year.

The Cabinet Member of Finance also updated Members about the 'Peterborough Takes Action' lobbying activity for 2021-2022, where formal talks were being held with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in relation to the pandemic and the current financial position. Following the initial discussions, a formal approach was

made to MHCLG to state the Authority's case to deliver local services in order to meet statutory and legal obligations in the current year and for future years after the pandemic. The response was immediate and positive, and the LA had put several solutions forward to bridge the gap both to meet financial pressures resulting from the pandemic and to meet the financial shortfalls of the MTFS going forward.

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

Section of MTFS Phase One Proposals	Questions / Comment from Members	Response from Relevant Cabinet Member / Corporate Director
<p>Presentation and Introduction of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy Phase One Proposals Document</p> <p>Cabinet report dated 26 October 2020 (pages 1 to 30) of the MTFS 2021/22 to 2023/24 Phase One Proposals Document</p>	<p>It was good to see that the reserves had increased from £7.1m to £12.8m. Was the Authority expecting further good news following the Chancellors spending review?</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance confirmed that the increase in reserves was due to a Government funding announcement of £1.5bn for Local Government. Peterborough had received £5.7m which was more than expected.</p>
	<p>Will capitalisation direction awarded in March 2020 continue into 2023, given the projected three-year deficits for the Authority?</p>	<p>The LA had been given specific capital funding in order to move the finance position to a more sustainable budget. The capitalisation funding was spread over two years.</p>
	<p>Which budget cuts would need to be made if the LA cannot balance its budget with the additional funding expected?</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that the only way to balance the budget was with additional funding from the Government. It was the LA's job to find out how much additional funding was needed and to bring it forward to March 2021. The pandemic had also created financial issues and it was difficult to predict how much funding would be required at this stage to balance the budget.</p>
	<p>Had the second lock down had any further impact on the LA's finances since the pandemic had been declared?</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that it was too early to know what financial impact the second lockdown would have. However, the council tax and business rates income were at a slightly better position than expected.</p> <p>The Acting Executive Director Finance advised that there were a range of benefits</p>

		available for businesses and residents. The LA strived to distribute the funding quickly and there were many regulations in place on how it was granted. There had been £6.7m for local business to last until April 2021.
	How confident was the LA on delivering a balanced budget?	The Cabinet Member for Finance explained that there would be a balanced budget for this year, however, 2021/2022 would be more challenging to deliver without Government assistance.
	Why had the lean costs of £11m reduced to £2.6m	The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that there had been a degree of resource directed to staff working at the hub during the pandemic, which had been met from efficiency savings.
	What stages were the conversations at with MHCLG?	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that there had been a formal request made with MHCLG for funding support on 1 October 2020, and the application was in progress.</p> <p>The Acting Corporate Director Resources advised that the data was being validated with MHCLG in order to ensure the information met their criteria for financial returns.</p>
	How confident was the LA that the budget deficit gap was the final figure outlined in section 6.3, on page 22 and 23 of the report?	The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that there was no way of knowing what impact the pandemic would have on the LA financially. It was expected that January /February 2021 may provide a clearer picture however, the LA had been quite cautious over the predictions. It was felt that the assumptions were looking robust and that the position would not get any worse.
	Members asked whether the Government was going to bail out the LA deficit and whether	The Cabinet Member for Finance explained that at the start of the year the LA was confident that the £2m deficit

	<p>there was a contingency plan in place.</p>	<p>left out of the £14m deficit could be met for this year.</p> <p>The Government had provided 86% funding to meet the extra pressures of COVID-19 and the Cabinet Member was confident that the LA would receive further funding.</p>
	<p>Members were concerned that although some of the financial deficit was due to the pandemic, there had been a proposal to provide Aragon services with additional funding which had no figure attached to it.</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that there was an item within the consultation which covered extra funding for Aragon, which could be answered by the relevant Cabinet Member.</p> <p>Members were invited to contribute to budget contingency planning discussions and put forward their ideas.</p>
	<p>Members asked whether feedback on the consultation had been received and what was the feedback?</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that budget consultation was ongoing and the collated responses would be received at Cabinet and Full Council in due course.</p>
	<p>Members commented that page seven of the MTFs had stated that the LA had managed a balanced budget, however had exhausted all financial measures. Members asked if the financial measures were exhausted as a result of the pandemic and if the Government had not provided adequate funding needed, what the next steps would be?</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that the LA had exhausted the one off financial options, however further accounting changes could be found to balance the books. With the £14m gap at start of the year and £2m to find the LA was in a very good position. It had been difficult to find those savings year on year. In addition, authorities could be in a s114 notice situation due to the pandemic and for some LA's it would have happened despite the situation.</p> <p>It was further advised that the Government would have to come up with a solution to work with all authorities.</p>
	<p>Members asked what would the catastrophic cuts entail if the LA was unable to find the savings required and how</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that the BBC had undertaken a survey of 173 Local Authorities and</p>

	likely would the LA be to issue a s114 notice?	Peterborough was not one of those LA's likely to issue a s114 notice. He also advised that he was confident that there would be extra funding, however, if that was not possible the scenario would be to find catastrophic cuts.
	Members asked if the Government funding was not approved would the LA be classified as a going concern.	The Acting Corporate Director Resources, advised that the national Audit Office had requested all external auditors nationally to assess whether all LAs were a going concern. Peterborough's external auditors had identified that the LA was a material concern as it was dependant on the Government settlement to set next year's budget. There were different going concern classification levels and the top being a public interest report. There were three LAs with that classification. The next level was statutory recommendation; however, Peterborough was not at this level. In addition it was advised that the position would be realised in December 2020 and this would show what savings gap the LA would need to find.
	Members asked if there was a contingency plan for income generation given that Peterborough was a Gigabit city, as there was a spend reduction proposed for digital services in 22/23 and 23/24. What digital services and capital spend would be compromised?	The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that the reason the spend on digital had reduced was that Peterborough was merging its services with Cambridgeshire County Council. There would be cost savings to be gained from the merger.
The Committee RESOLVED to note this section of the budget.		
Appendix A Page 31 to 32 2021/2022 – 2023/24 MTFS	There were no questions raised	

Detailed Budget Position Phase One		
The Committee RESOLVED to note this section of the budget.		
Appendix B Page 33 to 36 Capital Programme Schemes 2021/22- 2023/24	There were no questions raised	
The Committee RESOLVED to note this section of the budget.		
Appendix C Page 37 to 68 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 Phase One Budget Consultation Document	Members commented that the report showed that Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) had increased by 40% despite the population growth. Could the LA do more early intervention to reduce the increase?	<p>The Executive Director People and Communities advised that there were a mixture of issues and this was a national concern. The LA needed to explore across all areas to support education, health and mental health issues.</p> <p>There had also been a growth in complexity at all levels especially in mental health. The LA had received positive news that schools were due to receive additional funding to support the emotional resilience of children, however, the LA also needed to explore further early intervention to prevent EHCPs.</p>
	<p>Members asked where the un-ring-fenced funding would be accommodated from as outlined on page 40 of the budget book to set a balanced budget.</p> <p>In addition, could a further explanation be provided on dept financing, one-year holiday revenue provision payments and one-year holiday pension payments, and how much would be left to find to plug the budget deficit gap?</p>	<p>The Acting Corporate Director Resources advised that the un-ring-fenced funding was additional funding from the Government settlement which the LA awaited.</p> <p>Dept. finance was in relation to capital direction funding, which permitted the LA to use revenue funding over several years and class it as capital spend. The Government were not keen on LAs using this method and there had been no idea of what could be allocated.</p> <p>The minimum revenue provision had been where the LA paid £30m a year in dept charges, which £15m was a minimum revenue provision</p>

		<p>and classed as capital funding, the rest had been interest charges. The LA had submitted a request to MHCLG to defer this payment for a year.</p> <p>Members were also advised that the pay pension fund related to staff pensions where the LA contributed a proportion. The deficit on this funding pot had decreased however, the LA would be requesting a one-year holiday break on its contribution. The request would need to be approved by MHCLG in addition to the Cambridgeshire Local Authority pension fund.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Finance added that the £36m deficit could be met through the Government grant funding or one-off payment holiday breaks mentioned. If approved, the LA could be in a better financial position for budget year 2023.</p>
	<p>Members asked whether the LA would raise council tax rates to balance the budget if the deficit could not be resolved and if so what figure that might be.</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that the Government would explore tailored solutions for each LA. Some LAs that had large reserves were less likely to be eligible to receive Government funding. Peterborough could use its debt financing as one solution. The Covid funding was also a solution and could work across the whole of Local Government.</p>
	<p>The LA had been successful in their application of £22.9m from the New Towns Fund as outlined on page 41, however the upper limit had been removed since. Could the Authority bid for more to fill the funding gap?</p>	<p>The Executive Director Place & Economy advised that the LA had been successful and had secured £1m accelerated funding in September which made the total of £23.9m. There was no scope to bid for extra funding, however, the LA was in discussions with the Combined Authority to explore match funding options.</p>
	<p>When would the Hilton loan repayments be initiated in</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that it was a</p>

	<p>order for the income regeneration to allow the building works to go ahead?</p>	<p>staged payment loan, and the money would be provided to Hilton once they started work.</p> <p>The Acting Corporate Director Resources advised that the Hilton loan was short term and that the LA received interest payments as the money was provided. In addition, the interest rate was compliant with state aid rules.</p>
	<p>Members asked whether Peterborough Football Club (PFC) would financially gain from the site sale and relocation.</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance confirmed that the LA had sold less land back to the club than originally purchased. In addition, it would be hard to speculate what PFC would do with the site and where it would be moved to in the future.</p>
	<p>Members asked about land identification for the station quarter master plan?</p>	<p>The Executive Director Place & Economy advised that the master plan was being prepared for the station quarter to understand the viability of the scheme and how it would work before the land could be identified.</p> <p>The LA was working with Network Rail and LNER and both were ambitious about the development. The important part was to ascertain the connectivity between the station quarter and the city at the master plan stage.</p>
	<p>Members asked about how the reduction in subscriptions for the brown bin collection had impacted the LA's financial situation?</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Waste Street Scene and the Environment advised Members that the LA had over 1000 new subscriptions recently, which was seen as positive.</p>
	<p>Members asked why bulky waste collections had been stopped and whether this was a concern for the LA?</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Waste Street Scene and the Environment advised that Aragon were under pressure and services had slowed due to two members that had become unwell with the Covid virus, however, all existing bookings would be honoured. Currently</p>

		the LA was not able to offer any further collections in the current pandemic situation.
	Members asked if any cost benefit analysis had been undertaken on stopping the brown bin charge, taking into account the cost of recycling and back office costs.	The Cabinet Member for Waste Street Scene and the Environment advised that analysis had been undertaken previously and it was found not to be financially viable.
	Members asked if turning off the streetlights had safety impacts for residents, especially for shift workers and whether the LA would consider removing this saving from the budget?	The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Commercial Strategy and Investments advised that there were no safety issues and that there were many examples where there were no lights. In addition, he advised that it was not a good idea to remove the savings from the budget.
	Members asked if there had been any consultation on the safety aspect of switching off streetlights.	The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Commercial Strategy and Investments advised that there had been extensive consultation and trials on dimming or switching off the lights in the city.
	Members asked where all the garden waste was going from the 80% of Peterborough residents that had not signed up to the brown bin waste scheme?	The Leader of the Council advised that the brown bin service would cost £1m even if there was no charge, so the income helped to facilitate the service. There were also residents in apartments or flats that could not have a brown bin, so charges would not be appropriate for them should the LA introduce a blanket fee. The Authority operated a waste to energy plan, where general waste was being incinerated. This also generated income for the Authority.
	Members asked why Aragon was being given £1.5m when recycling performance rates for Peterborough had decreased from 60% to 40%.	The Cabinet Member for Waste Street Scene and the Environment advised that Aragon required funding to operate the city services, in addition, the LA was working with partners, such as Virador

		and the Recap Board to raise the recycling rates and Peterborough was in one of the top 10 percent of the highest performers nationally.
	Members asked about children in care placements and the extra £2m required for the next three years and what the breakdown between extra placements and complexed needs was? In addition, Members asked whether the provision for in-house care could be explored rather than using outside sources.	The Executive Director People and Communities advised Members that there had been a rise in available placements needed, which had been why the costs had risen. In addition, there were some cases where specialist placements were required and that involved using independent providers. Members were also informed that there may be an increase in the number of children coming into care as an impact of the pandemic.
	Members asked about the energy from waste plant and why the energy costs had fluctuated and whether the Authority had thought about solar and wind power on properties instead?	The Cabinet Member for Waste Street Scene and the Environment advised that the costs had fluctuated due to the infrequent price of energy. In addition, there had been a high through put of waste at the incinerator during the pandemic but this should settle going forward. The Authority was exploring other sources of renewable energy such as wind and solar power and Peterborough was one of the best in the country for the installation of solar panels on roofs. In addition, the Authority was exploring initiatives such as the installation of a heating pipe around the city to deliver cheaper energy costs for residents.
	Members asked what the Authority was doing to join renewable energy schemes such as the one being led by the South Cambridgeshire Council, in relation to contractors providing a wide range of solar energy options to residents.	The Cabinet Member for Waste, Street Scene and the Environment advised that the Authority took part in such schemes when permissible.

	<p>Members asked why the refuse vehicle replacement spend was being made from revenue budget and not capital expenditure.</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Waste, Street Scene and the Environment confirmed that the Authority was exploring electric/hybrid refuse vehicle replacement options and it was anticipated that this should be undertaken as a staged basis rather than a whole fleet, in order to understand what the best replacement vehicle option would be.</p> <p>The Acting Corporate Director Resources advised that the refuse vehicle purchase would be made on a staged basis and would be through capital budgets, however the Authority would repay this with revenue budgets over several years.</p>
	<p>Members asked when the Authority would know when the income generation scheme of piping hot water around the city would be introduced.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Waste, Street Scene and the Environment advised Members that the hot water pipe scheme would not be operational before 2023.</p>
	<p>Members asked about the collection of council tax and NNDR collection fund deficits spread over three years and how that would affect the precept set by the Police and Fire services and whether the spread would be compounded?</p>	<p>The Acting Corporate Director for Resources advised that it would be a significant issue for those that received funding through precepts. There had been a reduction in Council tax of 1.9% and business rates had reduced by 20.6%. Although the deficit situation had improved, the Government had to write the deficit over three years.</p> <p>In addition, there was no way of knowing what non collections were going to amount to year on year. MHCLG was looking into the issue as many authorities had raised it.</p>
<p>The Joint Scrutiny Committee RESOLVED to note this section of the budget, and the following recommendations and action points were agreed:</p> <p>RECOMMENDATIONS:</p>		

A proposal was received from Councillor Ellis, which was seconded by Councillor Sandford, and following a vote 14 in favour, 16 against and 1 abstention, the proposal was **DEFEATED** as follows:

It was recommended the Authority take out from the Peterborough Highways Services proposals within the budget on all options for turning off or adjustments to lighting levels between midnight and five in the morning and offset the saving elsewhere in the budget.

A proposal was received from Councillor Wiggin, which was seconded by Councillor Sandford, and following a vote 17 in favour, 13 against and 1 abstention, the proposal was **AGREED** as follows:

The Joint Meeting of the Scrutiny Committees **RESOLVED** to recommend that the proposals for the increase in fees for the brown bin waste collection be reviewed and a cost benefit analysis be completed with a view to removing the fees altogether, the outcome of which to be provided to the Committee.

AGREED ACTIONS:

The Cabinet Member for Waste, Street Scene and the Environment to provide Members with an itemised breakdown in relation to the £1.5m funding being allocated to Aragon Services.

The Cabinet Member for Finance to provide Members with an update on the discussions held with MHCLG as they happen in relation to the budget deficit.

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Commercial Strategy and Investments agreed to provide the Committee with a detailed list of the streetlight dimming saving proposals highlighted in the MTFs before the next Council meeting on 9 December.

<p>Appendix D Page 69 to 70 Financial Strategy pre C-19</p>	<p>There were no questions raised.</p>	
<p>The Committee RESOLVED to note this section of the budget.</p>		
<p>Appendix E Page 71 to 80 Financial Risk Register</p>	<p>There were no questions raised.</p>	
<p>The Committee RESOLVED to note this section of the budget.</p>		
<p>Appendix F Page 81 to 96 Equality Impact Assessment</p>	<p>Members asked whether there had been an error on page 81 in relation to the comment about disability infrastructure male and female, prison outlined in the report.</p>	<p>The Executive Director of People and Communities advised that the report would be amended.</p>
	<p>Members commented about the equality impact assessments in relation to increase in brown bin take up</p>	<p>The Head of Environmental Partnerships advised that the brown bin waste service was made as accessible as</p>

	on page 91 of the report and asked if any further work carried out to increase the take up.	possible. There were also options including splitting costs over three months and a pull-out service for those who were unable to take their bins to the curb themselves.
	Members asked whether there was any feedback about why residents had not continued with the brown bin service.	The Head of Environmental Partnerships advised that there had been surges in the take up of brown bin subscriptions, especially in the Autumn months and it was anticipated that there would be an increase throughout the year compared to previous years.
The Committee RESOLVED to note this section of the budget.		
Appendix G Page 97 to 102 Carbon Impact Assessments	Members asked when the modelling would take place for highway services energy reduction and the utilisation of different source materials to realise savings.	The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Commercial Strategy and Investments would let Members of the Committee know when the modelling was going to take place.
8:42pm - At this point Cllr Haynes left the meeting	Members asked how the carbon impact could be reported as neutral for the brown bin charge increase outlined on page 99 of the report when most residents use the black bin for garden waste.	The Cabinet Member for Waste, Street Scene and the Environment advised that there was no doubt that garden and food waste continued to appear in black bins, however this would not be due to the increase in the charges for brown bins as this had only recently been implemented. The Head of Environmental Partnerships advised that the incinerator crane operators had confirmed that there had been no increase in organic waste due to the brown bin charge increase.
	Members asked if the neutral position outlined on page 99 of the report in relation to the Aragon budget and the fleet refurbishment meant that the low emissions in the future had been taken into account?	The Head of Environmental Partnerships advised that it was neutral since there was no definitive electric or hybrid vehicle in place as the various options were being considered.
	Members sought clarification over the replacement fleet carbon impact assessment as	The Cabinet Member for Waste, Street Scene and Environment advised that there

	it was expected that electric or hybrid options would have an impact on carbon emissions in the future.	was no way of knowing what the carbon impact would be as the replacement vehicles had not been commissioned yet, hence the statement in the report of neutral, therefore it would be difficult to make a prediction.
<p>The Joint Scrutiny Committee RESOLVED to note this section of the budget.</p> <p>AGREED ACTION:</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Commercial Strategy and Investments to let Members of the Joint Scrutiny Committee know when the modelling was going to take place. on changes to energy reduction and utilisation of different source materials to realise savings outlined in the MTFS with regard to Street Lighting.</p>		
<p>General Comments, any overall recommendations and Conclusion of item 4.</p>	<p>Members asked whether Councillors should consider a 1% reduction in their allowances to help with the LAs financial position.</p> <p>Members commented that there was an Independent Remuneration Panel due to be held to review elected Members allowances and any suggested changes to the scheme, should be presented to them.</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that there were 60 councillors that would need to consider the option and make their own decision.</p>
	<p>Members asked had the change from Google to Microsoft saved the LA money especially as there was remote working due to the pandemic.</p>	<p>The Director, Customer and Digital Services advised that even though the LA had operated Google, other applications required Microsoft licenses for other applications. Changing to Microsoft had contributed to some of the savings and using Teams and Zoom had been a very helpful tool during the pandemic.</p>
	<p>Members asked if the Hilton Hotel was a British registered company or an offshore company.</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that the Hilton Hotel was a British registered company with company's house.</p>
	<p>Members commented that benchmarking data showed that unit costs were some of the lowest in the sector for Peterborough and asked whether there was a summary</p>	<p>The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Public Health confirmed that there were a variety of data benchmarking sources available. In addition, Grant Thornton had recently ranked</p>

	to show how effective the LA services were performing?	Peterborough as high performing with very low costs.
	Members sought assurances that the LA was exploring all avenues of income such as recycling for wood products.	The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that all routes of possible income would be explored and welcomed ideas from Members, which would also be explored.
	Members sought clarification over the recent accuracy of the Grant Thornton audit and whether the service received by Peterborough was value for money.	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that Grant Thornton were acknowledged as experts in local government and Peterborough found £33m and a further £12m savings through the lean review. Therefore, the fee paid to Grant Thornton was felt to be value for money.</p> <p>The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Public Health also advised that Peterborough had circa £80m of external income and the revenue generation was considered good.</p> <p>In addition, he advised that all services such as Aragon had several business plans and set targets to increase revenue, which was available within the public domain.</p>
The Committee RESOLVED to note this section of the budget.		

AGREED ACTIONS

The Joint Scrutiny Committee requested that the Acting Corporate Director Resources provide performance benchmarking data for all service areas.

Finish 8:09pm

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