

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD WEDNESDAY 3 MARCH 2021  
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

**THE MAYOR – COUNCILLOR GUL NAWAZ**

**Present**

Councillors Aitken, Ali, Allen, Ash, Ayres, Barkham, Bashir, Bisby, Andrew Bond, Sandra Bond, Brown, Burbage, Casey, Cereste, Coles, Day, Dowson, Ellis, Farooq, Fitzgerald, John Fox, Judy Fox, Harper, Haynes, Hemraj, Hiller, Hogg, Holdich, Howard, Howell, Hussain, Amjad Iqbal, Azher Iqbal, Jamil, Jones, Joseph, Lane, Lillis, Murphy, Nadeem, Gul Nawaz, Shaz Nawaz, Over, Qayyum, Robinson, Rush, Sandford, Seaton, Shaheed, Simons, Skibsted, Walsh, Warren, Wiggin, Yasin and Yurgutene.

**61. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lamb and Councillor Fower.

**62. Declarations of Interest**

Agenda Item No. 14(2)

Councillor Murphy declared that he was a supporter of the Tenants Union and Shelter.

Agenda Item No. 14(6)

Councillor Judy Fox declared that she now possessed a Blue Badge, but did not have one when the motion was submitted.

Councillor Lane declared that a family member of his possessed a Blue Badge, but that this would not impact his consideration of the motion.

The Monitoring Officer then confirmed that those with families member who had Blue Badges were not required to declare so.

**63. Amendment to the Virtual Meetings Protocol – Full Council Voting**

Council received a report in relation to an amendment to the Virtual Meetings Protocol around the voting procedure at meetings of Full Council.

Councillor Sandford introduced the report and moved the recommendations. The Councillor noted that there was a difference of opinion among Members as to the effectiveness of virtual voting methods and, as such, an interim procedure was required. An 'en bloc' process, whereby group whips provide a vote on behalf of the group seemed a sensible way forward, while still allowing individual Members to record individual votes as well. It was not considered to be ideal, but alternative methods would require meetings to go on for hours longer than was necessary.

Councillor Shaz Nawaz seconded the recommendation.

A vote was taken (27 voted in favour, 29 voted against, 0 abstained from voting) and the recommendation was **DEFEATED**.

**Councillors For:** Ali, Barkham, Andrew Bond, Sandra Bond, Day, Dowson, Ellis, Haynes, Hemraj, Hogg, Howell, Hussain, Amjad Iqbal, Jamil, Jones, Joseph, Lillis, Murphy, Shaz Nawaz, Qayyum, Robinson, Sandford, Shaheed, Skibsted, Wiggin, Yasin, Yurgutene

**Councillors Against:** Aitken, Allen, Ash, Ayres, Bashir, Bisby, Brown, Burbage, Casey, Cereste, Coles, Farooq, Fitzgerald, John Fox, Judy Fox, Harper, Hiller, Holdich, Howard, Azher Iqbal, Lane, Nadeem, Gul Nawaz, Over, Rush, Seaton, Simson, Walsh, Warren

**Councillors Abstaining:** Nil

#### **64. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 27 January 2021**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2021 were approved as a true and accurate record.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

#### **65. Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor thanked all those Members for whom this would be their last meeting for their hard work and contributions to their communities.

It was further advised that the Mayor would use his discretion to re-order the agenda, so that Members could consider agenda item 11(a), 'Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 to 2023/24 – Phase Two' before agenda item 10(a), 'Council Tax Resolution 2021'.

#### **66. Leader's Announcements**

Councillor Holdich made an announcement on his upcoming retirement from the Council. Councillor Holdich extended his thanks to officers, who he considered to have shone in their response to the COVID-19 pandemic. He felt that there had been many highlights in his career, including the establishment of the Combined Authority, the delivery of affordable homes and the introduction of the university project.

Other group leaders thanked Councillor Holdich for his work as a Councillor and it was felt that his decision to defer his retirement and continue as Leader during the COVID-19 pandemic was commendable, showing his commitment to Peterborough and its residents. His leadership was considered to be fair, firm and consistent and delivered with good nature. Group leaders wished him a happy retirement with his family.

### **QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

#### **67. Questions with Notice by Members of the Public**

Questions from members of the public were raised in respect of the following:

1. London Road football stadium
2. Selective licensing
3. Tenancies and anti-social behaviour
4. St Peter's Arcade
5. City centre accessibility

The questions and responses are attached in **APPENDIX A** to these minutes.

## **68. Petitions**

### **(a) Presented by Members of the Public**

There were no petitions presented at the meeting.

### **(b) Presented by Members**

There were no petitions presented at the meeting.

## **69. Questions on Notice**

### **(a) To the Mayor**

### **(b) To the Leader or Member of the Cabinet**

### **(c) To the Chair of any Committee of Sub-Committee**

### **(d) To the Combined Authority Representatives**

Questions (a)-(d) to the Leader or Member of the Cabinet were raised and taken as read in respect of the following:

1. Parking on footpaths
2. John Lewis retail store
3. Laptops and routers available to children
4. Taxi driver grants
5. Taxi/electric charging points
6. Capitalisation directive
7. Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council
8. COVID vaccinations within the Muslim community

The questions and responses are attached in **APPENDIX A** to these minutes.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS**

### **70(a). Cabinet Recommendation – Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 to 2023/24 – Phase Two**

Council received a report, which had been considered by Cabinet on 23 February 2021, in relation to phase two of the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2021/22 to 2023/24.

Councillor Seaton introduced the report and moved the recommendations, as amended by Councillor Day and Councillor Joseph. The Councillor noted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had that day presented the national budget, with a few items included that were relevant to Peterborough. Particularly, these were the furlough scheme continuing until September, the business rates holiday continuing until June, the

announcement of further grants, further New Town Fund deals, additional funding for tackling domestic violence, and further funding for communities to take over assets at risk of closure.

Updates to the MTFS of note were the correction of the Community Leadership Fund figure, as well as the Climate Change Risk being added to the risk log, as recommended by the Joint Meeting of Scrutiny Committees.

Councillor Seaton reminded Members that in March of 2020 the Council had balanced its budget, with a gap for the following year of £14million and £12million worth of saving already identified. Following the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak regular reports have been received by the Cabinet to monitor the impact on the budgetary position. This was aided by the provision of Government funding, though would not be offset entirely. As such, Councillor Seaton advised, the Council engaged with the Government at an early opportunity for further funding.

The award of a Capitalisation Directive had helped the Council's financial position, and the Council was now able to present a balanced budget. Councillor Seaton accepted that the requirements to repay such funds were far from ideal and were not a long term solution, but considered that no alternative option was available. The next stage of discussion with the Government would be to achieve a permanent fairer funding status for the city.

Councillor Seaton accepted the amendment from Councillor Day, which attracted no additional cost. The amendment from Councillor Joseph was also accepted, though Councillor Seaton commented that an opportunity to put forward these proposals would have been available if all the groups of the Council attended the Budget Working Group. Many of the proposals set out in the amendment, it was felt, were already being addressed, including a Housing Revenue Account, tree planting, additional green space, debt financing, improvements in recycling rates, and consideration of city of culture status.

Councillor Fitzgerald seconded the recommendation.

A closure motion was moved by Councillor Farooq that the question be now put. This was seconded by Councillor Howard.

In accordance with Council Standing Order 21.12, the Mayor determined that he felt the matter had been sufficiently discussed, and permitted a vote on the closure motion.

A vote was taken and the Council **RESOLVED** (28 voted in favour, 28 voted against, 0 abstained from voting, the Mayor using his Casting Vote to vote in favour) that the question be now put.

**Councillors For:** Aitken, Allen, Ayres, Bashir, Bisby, Brown, Burbage, Casey, Cereste, Coles, Farooq, Fitzgerald, John Fox, Judy Fox, Harper, Hiller, Holdich, Howard, Azher Iqbal, Lane, Nadeem, Gul Nawaz, Over, Rush, Seaton, Simson, Walsh, Warren

**Councillors Against:** Ali, Ash, Barkham, Andrew Bond, Sandra Bond, Day, Dowson, Ellis, Haynes, Hemraj, Hogg, Howell, Hussain, Amjad Iqbal, Jamil, Jones, Joseph, Lillis, Murphy, Shaz Nawaz, Qayyum, Robinson, Sandford, Shaheed, Skibsted, Wiggin, Yasin, Yurgutene

**Councillors Abstaining:** Nil

**Mayor's Casting Vote:** In Favour

Councillor Seaton summed up and advised this would be his last budget presentation, thanking Members for their comments.

A vote was taken on the recommendation as amended by Councillor Day and Councillor Joseph and Council **RESOLVED** (29 voted in favour, 9 voted against, 18 abstained from voting):

To approve, subject to the incorporation of the proposals set out in the amendment from Councillor Day and the amendment from Councillor Joseph:

1. The Phase Two service proposals as outlined in Appendix B
2. The updated budget assumptions, to be incorporated within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 – 2022/23. These are outlined in sections 5.
3. The revised capital programme outlined in section 5 and referencing Appendix G.
4. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 to 2023/24 - Phase Two, as set out in the body of the report and the following appendices, subject to the removal of the Hydrotherapy Pool from the Disposals Schedule:
  - Appendix A – 2021/22-2023/24 MTFS Detailed Budget Position Phase Two
  - Appendix B – Budget Proposal Detail
  - Appendix C – Phase One and Phase Two Budget Proposal Summary
  - Appendix D – Grant Register
  - Appendix E – Council Tax Information
  - Appendix F – Fees and Charges
  - Appendix G – Capital Programme Schemes 2021/22-2023/24
  - Appendix H – Financial Risk Register
  - Appendix I – Carbon Impact Assessments
  - Appendix J – Treasury Management Strategy
  - Appendix K – Capital Strategy
  - Appendix L – Asset Management Plan

To note:

1. The additional risk relating to Climate Change to be incorporated within the Financial Risk Register as outlined within Appendix H of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2021/22-2023/24 Phase Two report.
2. The correction of Appendix J – Treasury Management Strategy from '2020/21 & 2022/23' to '2020/21 & 2021/22'

**Councillors For:** Aitken, Allen, Ash, Ayres, Bashir, Bisby, Brown, Burbage, Casey, Cereste, Coles, Farooq, Fitzgerald, John Fox, Judy Fox, Harper, Hiller, Holdich, Howard, Azher Iqbal, Lane, Nadeem, Gul Nawaz, Over, Rush, Seaton, Simson, Walsh, Warren

**Councillors Against:** Barkham, Andrew Bond, Sandra Bond, Haynes, Hogg, Lillis, Sandford, Shaheed, Wiggin

**Councillors Abstaining:** Ali, Day, Dowson, Ellis, Hemraj, Howell, Hussain, Amjad Iqbal, Jamil, Jones, Joseph, Murphy, Shaz Nawaz, Qayyum, Robinson, Skibsted, Yasin, Yurgutene

#### **71(a). Council Tax Resolution 2021**

Council received a report in relation to Council Tax report for 2021.

Councillor Seaton introduced the report and moved the recommendations.

Councillor Fitzgerald seconded the recommendation.

A closure motion was moved by Councillor Seaton that the question be now put. This was seconded by Councillor Fitzgerald.

In accordance with Council Standing Order 21.12, the Mayor determined that he felt the matter had been sufficiently discussed, and permitted a vote on the closure motion.

A vote was taken and the Council **RESOLVED** (28 voted in favour, 28 voted against, 0 abstained from voting, the Mayor using his Casting Vote to vote in favour) that the question be now put.

**Councillors For:** Aitken, Allen, Ayres, Bashir, Bisby, Brown, Burbage, Casey, Cereste, Coles, Farooq, Fitzgerald, John Fox, Judy Fox, Harper, Hiller, Holdich, Howard, Azher Iqbal, Lane, Nadeem, Gul Nawaz, Over, Rush, Seaton, Simson, Walsh, Warren

**Councillors Against:** Ali, Ash, Barkham, Andrew Bond, Sandra Bond, Day, Dowson, Ellis, Haynes, Hemraj, Hogg, Howell, Hussain, Amjad Iqbal, Jamil, Jones, Joseph, Lillis, Murphy, Shaz Nawaz, Qayyum, Robinson, Sandford, Shaheed, Skibsted, Wiggin, Yasin, Yurgutene

**Councillors Abstaining:** Nil

**Mayor's Casting Vote:** In Favour

Councillor Fitzgerald exercised their right to speak and advised that as the MTFs had already been agreed, the Council Tax resolution could not now be changed without also changing the budget.

Councillor Seaton summed up and suggested that if any Member disagreed with the proposed Council Tax resolution, they would have submitted an amendment.

A vote was taken and Council **RESOLVED** (38 voted in favour, 15 voted against, 3 abstained from voting) to approve the Council Tax Resolution which proposed a Council Tax Increase of 4.99%, which included the following breakdown:

- A rise in general Council Tax of 1.99%
- An Adult Social Care Precept of 3.00%

**Councillors For:** Aitken, Allen, Ash, Ayres, Barkham, Bashir, Bisby, Andrew Bond, Sandra Bond, Brown, Burbage, Casey, Cereste, Coles, Farooq, Fitzgerald, John Fox, Judy Fox, Harper, Haynes, Hiller, Hogg, Holdich, Howard, Azher Iqbal, Lane, Lillis, Nadeem, Gul Nawaz, Over, Rush, Sandford, Seaton, Shaheed, Simons, Warren, Walsh, Wiggin

**Councillors Against:** Ali, Ellis, Hemraj, Hussain, Amjad Iqbal, Jamil, Jones, Joseph,

Murphy, Shaz Nawaz, Qayyum, Robinson, Skibsted, Yasin, Yurgutene

**Councillors Abstaining:** Day, Dowson, Howell

**72(b). Cabinet Recommendation – Peterborough City Council’s Response to the Climate Change Emergency 2021**

Council received a report, which had been considered by Cabinet on 23 February 2021, in relation to the work of the Climate Change Working Group and the Council’s response to the Climate Change Emergency.

Councillor Cereste introduced the report and moved the recommendations. The Councillor thanked the working group, who had unanimously supported the proposals. It was advised that the revised Carbon Management Action Plan built on the work already achieved and set out 21 commitments for 2021. The Council would be providing carbon literacy training as part of a pilot training programme. It was considered that for Peterborough to become truly carbon neutral the Council would need to engage with residents and community groups to ensure that all areas of the city reduced their carbon footprint. A further city wide action plan would be brought before Council in due course.

Councillor Bashir seconded the recommendation.

Council debated the recommendation, and the summary of the points raised by Members included:

- It was commented that there was more Members could do individually and as part of the Council to combat climate change, though the Council had progressed from its position last year.
- The importance of working on a city-wide carbon management action plan was highlighted.
- Members suggested that future plans should be less car centric, with further tree-planting.
- Members expressed their support of the use of earmarked funding to support climate change initiatives, as agreed within the budget.
- It was considered beneficial for the working group to consult with the public.
- Members recognised the target of net zero carbon for all of Peterborough by 2030 was ambitious.
- The working group recommended that, rather than bringing the full document to Full Council, it would be more appropriate to consider public consultation on the city wide plan first.
- There was concern raised in relation to the Peterborough Integrated Renewables Infrastructure (PIRI) project and Members noted that the working group was due to hold a working group focusing on the advantages and disadvantages of this project.
- Comment was made that a more ambitious tree planting target should be agreed.
- Members were encouraged to sign up for the carbon literacy training, which had been helpful to those who had already attended.

Councillor Cereste summed up and thanked all the Members and officers involved in the working group for their work.

A vote was taken and Council **RESOLVED** (unanimous) to:

1. Adopt the Council’s Carbon Management Action Plan (CMAP).

2. Delegate authority to the Executive Director for Place and Economy to undertake any presentational, factual or other minor amendments to the documents associated with this report prior to publication, provided such amendments do not materially amend the content of the documents.

### **73(c). Constitution and Ethics Committee Recommendation – Task and Finish Group and Working Group Meetings**

Council received a report, which had been considered by the Constitution and Ethics Committee on 8 February 2021, in relation to meetings of task and finish groups and workings groups being held in public.

Councillor Seaton introduced the report and moved the recommendations. The Councillor noted that the Constitution and Ethics Committee had considered three options, including leaving the holding of meetings in public to the discretion of individual groups and holding all meetings in public, and had felt that holding evidence gathering sessions only in public was a suitable compromise.

Councillor Allen seconded the recommendation.

Council debated the recommendation, and the summary of the points raised by Members included:

- Members considered that it was important that the Council's business should be open to observation by the public as much as possible, in order to be held accountable.
- It was felt that option two was a pragmatic compromise, and comparable to the approach followed by parliamentary hearings.
- As there was only a small number of additional meetings resulting from the proposal, Members felt that there would not be any significant extra cost involved.

A vote was taken and Council **RESOLVED** (unanimous) to approve the amendment to the constitution:

#### Part 3. Delegations Section 7 – Joint Committees and Working Groups Involving Members

“7.6.1 Working groups, review teams and advisory groups are established from time to time, for specific purposes and shall be time limited. They will only be established when the matter cannot be undertaken by a relevant Scrutiny Committee or Scrutiny Commission. Meetings of such groups will be held in private, with the exception of evidence gathering sessions with key witnesses, which the public will be invited to observe, unless the subject matter was considered to be of a sensitive nature, in which case it may not be possible to hold the evidence gathering session in public. They usually fall into one of the following categories:

- a. Advisory groups relating to Executive Functions

Usually established to advise a Cabinet Member about an issue or subject area. The terms of reference and membership are specified by the Executive.

- b. Task & Finish Groups

Small groups of Members appointed by a Scrutiny Committee or Scrutiny Commission for the purpose of advising the parent committee about either:

- i. an in-depth policy review
- ii. performance monitoring
- iii. responding to a major policy consultation from the Executive.

The terms of reference and purpose are specified by the relevant Scrutiny Committee or Scrutiny Commission.”

At this time a motion was moved by Councillor Holdich and seconded by Councillor Jamil to suspend Standing Order 12.4 to enable the meeting to extend beyond the three hour guillotine by 30 minutes. A vote was taken and the Council **RESOLVED** (unanimous) to extend the three hours guillotine for a further 30 minutes.

#### **73(d). Employment Committee Recommendation – Annual Pay Policy 2020/21**

Council received a report, which had been considered by the Employment Committee on 18 February 2021, in relation to the 2020/21 Annual Pay Policy.

Councillor Brown introduced the report and moved the recommendations. The Councillor advised Members that the statement was produced for Full Council every year as per legislative requirements and would be published on the Council’s website. It was noted that the highest paid employee’s remuneration was currently 8.89 times the remuneration of the lowest paid employee, which was due to an increase of the lowest salary from £18,666 to £19,515.

Councillor Holdich seconded the recommendation.

A closure motion was moved by Councillor Jamil that the question be now put. This was seconded by Councillor Fitzgerald. Council **RESOLVED** (unanimous) that the question be now put.

Councillor Brown summed up and advised that he agreed with the contents of the policy.

A vote was taken and Council **RESOLVED** (unanimous) to approve the content of the Pay Policy Statement for 2021/22.

#### **74. Questions on the Executive Decisions Made Since the Last Meeting**

##### Decision to Award Compensation as Recommended by the Local Government Ombudsman

In response to a question from Councillor Hogg and Councillor Ayres advised that the particular case resulting in this compensation payment had been considered in great depth and that the Cabinet Member herself had provided feedback to the director to ensure such a situation did not happen again.

#### **75. Questions on the Combined Authority Decisions Made Since the Last Meeting**

The Mayor confirmed that there had been no decisions made by the Combined Authority to report since the last meeting.

### **COUNCIL BUSINESS TIME**

#### **76. Notices of Motion**

## 76(1) Motion from Councillor Howard

Councillor Hogg moved the motion and acknowledged the inspiration that Captain Sir Tom Moore had provided to many, and felt that the Council could pay tribute to him by asking the Honours Panel to consider the naming a room or hall in his memory.

Councillor Farooq seconded the motion.

Council debated the motion, and comment was made that it was possible for such a proposal to go directly to the Honours Panel without Full Council having to agree it.

A vote was taken on the motion from Councillor Howard. The motion was **AGREED** (unanimous) as follows:

“Council acknowledges the sad loss of Captain Sir Tom Moore. During the toughest phase of the Pandemic, he raised all our spirits and made an enormous contribution with his phenomenal fundraising efforts and the inspiration he gave us to get through the Coronavirus crisis with his heart-warming messages of positivity and optimism.

**Council resolves to refer consideration of what can be done to acknowledge the legacy of Captain Sir Tom Moore to the Honours Panel, to ensure his name and achievements will never be forgotten in our City, as well as to commemorate his efforts and to mark his loss. This may include renaming a room or hall of significance within the Council domain, one of the Council meeting rooms, or a hall in our new University after Captain Sir Tom Moore.”**

## 76(2) Motion from Councillor Coles

Councillor Coles moved the motion as amended by Councillor Murphy.

A closure motion was moved by Councillor Murphy that the question be now put. This was seconded by Councillor Joseph.

In accordance with Council Standing Order 21.12, the Mayor determined that he felt the matter had been sufficiently discussed, and permitted a vote on the closure motion.

A vote was taken and the Council **RESOLVED** (unanimous) that the question be now put.

A vote was taken on the motion from Councillor Coles, as amended by Councillor Murphy. The amended motion was **AGREED** (unanimous) as follows:

~~"I have been receiving many Council notes that complaints have been received from my residents about terrible parking congestion some in local streets. Further investigation has shown that a lot of the extra A number of vehicles belong to residents of Homes of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) who understandably want to park in their street. I am aware that congestion from HMOs is affecting other wards across the city.~~

An HMO of 6 or fewer people who are living together as a family unit is a permitted development and does not need planning permission. In these cases, there is no planning control and the impact of an HMO upon parking provision cannot be taken into account.

This problem is getting worse in Peterborough, particularly where there are narrow Victorian streets, or in newer developments where a past Labour Government planning policy deliberately may have reduced parking spaces for environmental reasons.

There is a provision within the legislation to remove rights for permitted development through an Article 4 Direction, which can be used to prevent further HMOs being developed without the need for planning permission. ~~They would then have to be assessed in the same way as a planning application for larger HMO schemes.~~

~~This Council therefore asks the Cabinet Member, in consultation with the relevant scrutiny committees and the Planning and Environmental Protection Committee, to consider:~~

1. **identifying specific locations across the city where the concentration of HMOs is having a significant and disruptive impact on the local residential community.**
2. **developing an Article 4 direction to apply to all future HMO developments in these specified areas so that the council can require a full planning application to be made which will require owners to apply a limited parking ratio to their properties."**

### **76(3) Motion from Councillor Fitzgerald**

Councillor Fitzgerald moved an altered version of motion and advised that the purpose of the motion was to cut down unnecessary debate at Council meetings.

Councillor Walsh seconded the altered motion.

Councillor Murphy moved an amendment to the motion, which would refer consideration of the proposals to the Constitution and Ethics Committee.

Councillor Sandford seconded the amendment.

Council debated the motion and the amendment, and it was suggested that, following the intention of the motion, consideration of the matter should have been directed to the Constitution and Ethics Committee.

Councillor Walsh exercised her right to speak and advise Members that she had little faith in the Constitution and Ethics Committee, as it had watered down a number of proposals in the past.

Councillor Fitzgerald summed up and maintained that the motion was submitted for the best reasons and in order to stop political parties taking advantage of the motions system.

A vote was taken on the amendment from Councillor Murphy to the motion from Councillor Fitzgerald. The amendment was **DEFEATED** (28 voted in favour, 28 voted against, 0 abstained from voting, the Mayor using his Casting Vote to vote against).

**Councillors For:** Ali, Ash, Barkham, Andrew Bond, Sandra Bond, Day, Dowson, Ellis, Haynes, Hemraj, Hogg, Howell, Hussain, Amjad Iqbal, Jamil, Jones, Joseph, Lillis, Murphy, Shaz Nawaz, Qayyum, Robinson, Sandford, Shaheed, Skibsted, Wiggin, Yasin, Yurgutene

**Councillors Against:** Aitken, Allen, Ayres, Bashir, Bisby, Brown, Burbage, Casey, Cereste, Coles, Farooq, Fitzgerald, John Fox, Judy Fox, Harper, Hiller, Holdich, Howard,

Azher Iqbal, Lane, Nadeem, Gul Nawaz, Over, Rush, Seaton, Simson, Walsh, Warren

**Councillors Abstaining:** Nil

**Mayor's Casting Vote:** Against

A vote was taken on the altered motion from Councillor Fitzgerald. The altered motion was **AGREED** (28 voted in favour, 28 voted against, 0 abstained from voting, the Mayor using his Casting Vote to vote in favour) as follows:

“Council acknowledges:

That Motions are an integral part of the democratic process and a means to precipitate debate on a range of issues, as well as delivering positive outcomes for the benefit of the city's residents.

Council however furthermore acknowledges:

That Motions, when adopted, can have a significant resource implication hitherto not factored into the system and major implications:

- for Council policy, procedures, including budget-setting
- for the Council's strategic/contractual partners
- for the city of Peterborough as a whole

**Council therefore resolves:**

- **That any draft motion which would have one or more of the above consequences is referred to the Director of the relevant service and Democratic Services at least three weeks in advance of the Council meeting, to allow for the process as set out below.**
- **That should the Director consider that the motion has major implications as described above the draft motion and a briefing note by the relevant director on the issue is released into the public domain at least two weeks in advance of the relevant Full Council meeting, setting out the reasons why the motion would fit within the Council's Strategic Plan, policies, and budget or why it does not.**

**Council also resolves:**

- **That all Members be required to consider alternative methods to tabling a motion prior to submitting a draft motion, which would achieve the same, outcomes., such as:**
  - referring the matter to a Scrutiny Committee for preliminary consideration
  - requesting the issue is brought to a Cabinet meeting, Committee meeting, informal briefing or All-Party Policy meeting.
- **On submission of a draft motion justification should be provided via a motion submission template as to why the above options were felt to be inappropriate.**

**Council also resolves to delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer to make such amendments to the Constitution and related documents necessary to enact these changes.**”

**Councillors For:** Aitken, Allen, Ayres, Bashir, Bisby, Brown, Burbage, Casey, Cereste,

Coles, Farooq, Fitzgerald, John Fox, Judy Fox, Harper, Hiller, Holdich, Howard, Azher Iqbal, Lane, Nadeem, Gul Nawaz, Over, Rush, Seaton, Simson, Walsh, Warren

**Councillors Against:** Ali, Ash, Barkham, Andrew Bond, Sandra Bond, Day, Dowson, Ellis, Haynes, Hemraj, Hogg, Howell, Hussain, Amjad Iqbal, Jamil, Jones, Joseph, Lillis, Murphy, Shaz Nawaz, Qayyum, Robinson, Sandford, Shaheed, Skibsted, Wiggin, Yasin, Yurgutene

**Councillors Abstaining:** Nil

**Mayor's Casting Vote:** In Favour

#### **76(4) Motion from Councillor Ali**

At this point the revised three hour 30 minute guillotine took effect, and debate ceased. The Council proceeded to move to the vote on all remaining items.

A vote was taken on the amendment from Councillor Walsh to the motion from Councillor Ali. The amendment was **AGREED** (unanimous).

A vote was taken on the amended motion from Councillor Walsh. The amended motion was **AGREED** (unanimous) as follows:

“Council notes that:

- local government has a vital role to play in preventing hate and extremism of all forms in society
- Peterborough has a long-standing tradition of integrated and cohesive communities, built on a foundation of tolerance and acceptance
- there is a noticeable increase in recent social media activity locally that is racist in tone and content, and that is disproportionately directed towards Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. This content is often in response to news and information stories about our communities or neighbourhoods. This is entirely at odds with Peterborough's genuine spirit of acceptance and our strong and long track record of sustained community cohesion
- responsibilities for aspects of the Prevent duties, previously led by the Police, have transferred to councils as it is accepted that prevention and community engagement is a vital tool in eradicating hate in all its forms
- some sections of our community feel that the Prevent strategy disproportionately targets them.

**Council therefore resolves to:**

1. **request the statutory authorities that serve on the Peterborough Community Safety Partnership (known as the Safer Peterborough Partnership) Hate Crime partnership and the statutory Prevent partnership formally agree to work together, as a system, to be especially vigilant to, and form a collective response to, commentary on social media and in other channels relating to hatred and extremism.**
2. **request that the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee, in its formal capacity as the statutory Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee, receives a regular report setting out the detail of the ways in which (i) the Safer Peterborough Partnership statutory partnerships outlined are is-responding to hatred and extremism, and (ii) this council is leading its responsibilities in regard to the Prevent duties, as well as hate incidents and targeted community cohesion activity more generally**

3. **write to the Government, through our MP's, ~~demanding~~ requesting a review of the Prevent strategy to ensure it has the confidence of all our communities locally and nationally and addresses the rise of Domestic Right Wing Extremism.**
4. **Agree that as Members we should commit ourselves to ensuring none of us use language that may give rise to hate and prejudice towards a section of our diverse community."**

#### **76(5) Motion from Councillor Murphy**

A vote was taken on the motion from Councillor Murphy. The motion was **AGREED** (unanimous) as follows:

"The Council resolves to:

1. Train its corporate procurement team to understand modern slavery through the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply's (CIPS) online course on Ethical Procurement and Supply.
2. Require, where possible, its contractors to comply fully with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, wherever it applies, with contract termination as a potential sanction for non-compliance.
3. Challenge any abnormally low-cost tenders to ensure they do not rely upon the potential contractor practising modern slavery.
4. Highlight to its suppliers that contracted workers are free to join a trade union and are not to be treated unfairly for belonging to one.
5. Publicise its whistle-blowing system for staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.
6. Where possible, require its tendered contractors to adopt a whistle-blowing policy which enables their staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.
7. Review its contractual spending regularly to identify any potential issues with modern slavery.
8. Highlight for its suppliers, by complying with modern slavery legislation, any risks identified concerning modern slavery and refer them to the relevant agencies to be addressed.
9. Refer for investigation via the National Crime Agency's national referral mechanism any of its contractors identified as a cause for concern regarding modern slavery.
10. Ensure that it continues to comply Modern Slavery legislation in the UK, as this is updated and evolving. This shall include the furnishing of a detailed annual Modern Slavery Statement, and report publicly on the implementation of this policy annually."

#### **76(6) Motion from Councillor John Fox**

A vote was taken on the motion from Councillor John Fox, as amended by Councillor Murphy. The amended motion was **AGREED** (unanimous) as follows:

"As members will be aware, and with thanks to the then Leader of the Council (Cllr Cereste), several disabled parking bays were, some years ago, installed on St Peter's Road, to the rear of the Town Hall. The bays facilitate access for Blue Badge Holders to the city centre, with its banks, shops and Peterborough Cathedral. The 'purple pound' (the estimated spending power of disabled people and their friends and family) could be worth as much as £950,000,000 per annum to Peterborough. This is just one reason why access to the city for disabled residents is vital, and access to disabled parking bays in the city centre for Blue Badge Holders is crucial.

When parking bays were installed along St Peter's Road, which is connected to the City Centre by St Peter's Arcade where the disabled toilet facilities are currently located, it was agreed that only half of them would be disabled parking bays. It was also agreed that the council would monitor the impact of the bays on disabled people's access to the city as well as the impact, positive or negative, on other road users.

Since their installation, the disabled parking bays have proved very popular and there is little doubt they play a key role in making Peterborough city centre more accessible to disabled people.

Owing to the amount they are used, the disabled parking bays had been in dire need of re-painting. However, due to recent works on the rear of the Town Hall, the bays were relocated further down St. Peter's Road to give works vehicles better access to the Town Hall.

The Government ('Inclusive Mobility', Department for Transport, 2005) recommends that 6% of on-road parking should be dedicated to Blue Badge Holders (unless otherwise covered by local planning regulations).

**The Council resolves to refer to the Cabinet Member (Cllr Hiller) a request to consider the following:**

- **the re-establishment of the parking bays in their original location once the work on the Town Hall is complete**
- **leaving the newly-created disabled parking bays in situ to provide even greater access to our city for Blue Badge Holders**
- **Promoting the existence of the disabled parking bays to Peterborough's approximately 50,000 disabled people."**

#### **76(7) Motion from Councillor Walsh**

Councillor Simons advised that he no longer wished to move his motion, which had been submitted on his behalf by Councillor Walsh.

#### **77(a) Polling Districts, Places and Stations 2021**

A vote was taken and Council **RESOLVED** (unanimous) to approve the following changes to polling districts, places and stations for elections taking place in 2021 as follows:

1. Stafford Hall, Hampton Court, Westwood, to be assigned as the dedicated polling station for the RAV2 (Ravensthorpe Ward) Polling District replacing Highlees Primary School, Ashton Road, Westwood who have advised that they cannot accommodate a polling station on their premises in 2021.

The Mayor  
6.00pm – 9:56pm  
3 March 2021  
Town Hall  
Bridge Street  
Peterborough

**FULL COUNCIL 3 MARCH 2021  
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

Questions were received under the following categories:

<b><u>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</u></b>	
<b><u>Questions from members of the public</u></b>	
1.	<p><b>Question from Hazel Perry</b></p> <p><b>For Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Commercial Strategy and Investments</b></p> <p>I've spoken to many residents in Peterborough who are concerned about the proposed plans to build a stadium on the Embankment.</p> <p>Concerns are elevated through the fact that planning permission has not been applied for yet there is still a dedicated website promoting the idea - <a href="https://embankmentstadium.com/">https://embankmentstadium.com/</a>.</p> <p>'Invest in Peterborough' mention it on their website - <a href="https://investinpeterborough.co.uk/investors/peterborough-development-opportunities/">https://investinpeterborough.co.uk/investors/peterborough-development-opportunities/</a>.</p> <p>And the stadium has also been mentioned as a possibility by PCC in text released in as part of the towns fund posted on social media two weeks ago, so it wasn't actually part of the Towns Fund, but it was mentioned in conjunction with it.</p> <p>However, a football stadium does not feature in the local plan - in fact in the local plan reference L51 says that there is a commitment to retain the Embankment as green space.</p> <p>Taking all this into consideration my question is this: what is going on? How far along the road are plans for the stadium and when and how does the council plan to engage with local residents?</p> <p><b>The Cabinet Member may respond:</b></p> <p>I would be surprised actually if the majority of Peterborough residents didn't consider the embankment a treasured and indeed a valuable asset for our City.</p> <p>That said Mr Mayor, many might think it is under-utilised and given the growth of our City in recent years we need to bring it to life somehow, giving our communities a better place to go to enjoy green space, and enjoy the river while being close the City Centre, and its amenities and attractions.</p> <p>Any future proposals to change the uses across the Embankment must strengthen it as an environmental asset, making it a place residents and visitors</p>

choose to want to visit and can get to easily.

As it has been said earlier this evening, the Conservatives administration under the leadership of John Holdich has enabled a University to happen in our City. The much anticipated phases 1 & 2 will add real purpose and value to the Embankment as students and workers are drawn to that end of the City Centre. This Conservative administration has also secured funding from the Government's New Town's Fund for a bridge across the river from Fletton Quays to the Embankment. This will also bring communities south of the river closer to the Embankment.

I can be absolutely clear when I tell you Ms Perry, no further decisions have been taken on any future development on the Embankment. You mentioned the Local Plan in your question Ms Perry. The Local Plan incorporates the University concept and does indeed protect the Embankment from inappropriate development. It seeks to maintain open space and access for the community and we must absolutely respect that, so if any development proposals do come forward they would have to be tested very closely against our policies and the adopted local plan. I can also be absolutely clear that any future development would not be consistent with our Local Plan.

2. **Question from Barry Holgate**

**For Councillor Walsh, Cabinet Member for Communities**

As a landlord and selective licence payer my question is about the selective licencing scheme due to finish at the end of October:

Can we have a date by which the full financial and performance data of the current scheme will be issued? We should have this by 30th June at the latest so a full consultation can take place prior to any new schemes starting. Special council / landlord meetings should be arranged to discuss matters in detail, because landlords are the people paying for this operation. Two further points:

1. Because of COVID-19 and the non-payment of rent by tenants (substantial in many cases) any new scheme should incorporate a licence phase payment method to help ease the financial strain on landlords which will last a long time.
2. Because there will be no discounts, if the current scheme is renewed, the council is likely to raise an additional £4million+. This should be used to reduce the licence fee charged, not go in the council coffers. The licence scheme is supposed to be non-profit making.

**The Cabinet Member responded in writing:**

I would like to respond to Mr Holgate's Question in two parts:

Firstly, with regard to Selective Licensing, it's worth reminding ourselves that the scheme was introduced with the aim of improving the quality of life for all in the designated areas by ensuring a consistent high standard of management of private rented homes, thus making a positive contribution to the area. The

council is in the process of undertaking a review of the current Selective Licensing scheme, and preparing information for public consultation on a new Selective Licensing scheme. It is important to note that councils are not permitted to generate surplus income from operating a Selective Licensing scheme. The current scheme has led to improvements in housing conditions, but there is further work underway as part of the scheme review to determine the wider benefits also.

The review of the current scheme will be available by June 2021 during the formal public consultation period on any new scheme. The review report will be considered alongside proposals for any new scheme, including the proposed fee structure, with due consideration being given to a phased payment method and to any discount schemes.

A major part of this process will be consultation with the public and those directly impacted, and this will be wide-ranging and will run for 12 weeks. As with the consultation process for the current scheme, this new consultation will include public meetings open to all, as well as specific meetings with landlords. If, following consultation, an application for a new scheme is submitted to, and approved by, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, he will determine its start date.

The second part of my answer concerns non-payment of rent by tenants.

We recognise the challenges that landlords and tenants face in the current circumstances. To minimise the impact, tenants who have fallen into rent arrears have been assisted by the Homelessness Prevention Fund as well as discretionary housing payments to clear outstanding rent arrears. These payments are made direct to the landlord.

If on the other hand, tenants can actually afford to pay their rent, but refuse to do so, then landlords are best advised to contact the landlords association to which they belong and seek advice about rental arrears recovery. There is also useful guidance on the government website and measures relating to notices to seek possession.

Finally, I hope that this has answered Mr Holgate's question adequately and I wish him well with regard to his current situation.

**3. Question from Jayne Horton**

**For Councillor Allen, Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture and Recreation**

I would like to know why Peterborough City Council would give a tenancy to someone who was evicted by the police from their parents' home due to anti-social behaviour and put them in a Cross Keys block of flats without taking into consideration the vulnerable and elderly tenants already living in the block?

**The Cabinet Member responded in writing:**

Without being aware of the individual case being referred to, I can only respond with a generic answer, but I would be happy to investigate further with the Council's officers if Ms Horton is agreeable.

The Council allocates accommodation in accordance with its housing allocations policy. Anyone who has a housing need is eligible to apply unless they have previously been found guilty of unacceptable behaviour, which would make them unsuitable to be a tenant.

The Council doesn't currently have its own general needs housing stock and all the housing allocations are made by nomination to a housing association partner like Cross Keys Homes. If the Housing Association does not stipulate any restrictions on a property, then a shortlist will be generated of all who have expressed interest in the properties via choice-based lettings and forwarded to the landlord for consideration. The Housing provider then applies their own lettings policy.

4. **Question from Phill Brentor**

**For Councillor Cereste, Cabinet Member for Waste, Street Scene and the Environment**

Good evening Councillors, I would like to ask a question about St Peter's Arcade and would like to make a short statement before I actually ask it.

Councillor Cereste has gone on record that the additional footfall down Bridge Street is so great that reopening the Arcade would make a huge difference to the shops on Bridge Street. According to the shops I have spoken to, it has not made any difference at all. None of them that I have spoken to say that they have been questioned about this before. Infact Mr Steve Emmingham, one of joint owners of Specsavers in Bridge Street has told me that he has noticed no difference in the number of customers into the store except for the problems caused by Covid and he feels it would be ridiculous to cut off access to Bridge Street in any way. Of course, it is impossible to talk to most of the stores on Bridge Street at this time because they are closed because of the Covid epidemic.

My question is with St. Peter's Arcade, a long-standing pedestrian walkway linking St. Peter's Road and Bridge Street in Peterborough Town Centre, being such a useful access route for able bodied pedestrians and for those that are disabled, why is Peterborough City Council considering closing it?

**The Cabinet Member responded:**

A similar question was asked last month full council meeting. The second paragraph of that response deals with the issue set out in this question, and for consistency I refer to that previous answer:

St Peters arcade is currently closed in line with national guidance provided to local councils to ensure a COVID safe environment. This is owing to access issues from St Peters road which narrows down the entrance to this location and does not allow for minimum distances to be maintained. This decision has been subject to ongoing review and given the prevalence of the virus this is still assessed as necessary.

Cabinet met in October 2020 to discuss the long-term use of this space. It was noted that its closure is providing benefit to the shops in Bridge Street who reported seeing a higher footfall as a result of people accessing the town via lower Bridge Street.

And with reference to your statement this morning, I find it absolutely amazing that you should be able to say what you have said, because I was there this afternoon, obviously respecting all of the Covid restrictions. Speaking to loads of core businesses down bridge Street who told me completely the opposite to what you said. I don't know where you get your information from, but that was not what I was told today at 2:15pm this afternoon.

It was also noted that the impact on pedestrians is minimal, and that adequate disabled access to Bridge Street can be found via the footpath adjacent to Bourges Boulevard. And we have also instructed our officers to look at alternative disabled bays even closer to the City Centre than the one behind the Town Hall. Additionally, as part of the city recovery plans it is felt that the Arcade could offer a valuable space to support our 'cafe culture' aspirations.

To consider this further, plans are being made to explore the permanent closure of the arcade. Legal advice is currently being sought. Once that advice has been received we will engage with stakeholders including pedestrian and disability groups to explore the variety of options that could be developed to improve pedestrian access to the city centre from this direction.

Additionally, I will underline the final point that any decision to permanently close will be made in consultation with pedestrian and disability groups with the aim of improving access via alternative arrangements.

### **Supplementary**

I thank Councillor Cereste for his comments. I would actually like to comment that the questions I asked local store holders was also this afternoon and I find it very strange that Councillor Cereste has got that because I got exactly the opposite. With reference to the closure of St Peter's Arcade, Councillor Cereste has also been quoted as saying that, it would do everybody a bit of good unless you are disabled to walk the extra 25 yards around the building. It is not 25 yards, it is actually 252 yards, there is a big difference. This Conservative Government is determined for a disabled person to receive the full mobility component Personal independence Payment or PIP the test is to be unable to walk more that 22 metres or almost 22 yards without having to stop for a rest because of pain or simple inability to continue. I am myself disabled and receive the full mobility component because I cannot walk more than 20 metres without pain. Infact, I cannot walk at all without pain. With all of the major banks in Peterborough. HSBC, Natwest, Lloyds, TSB and Santander, being more easily accessible through St Peter's Arcade when parked in the most used disabled parking spaces at that end of the Town Centre and using them as just simple examples of places that disabled persons need to access. Just how far extra does this Conservative lead Council feel that it is acceptable to ask disabled persons to walk?

The Cabinet Member responded:

I find your questions offensive quite frankly Mr Brentor, as you have never seen me tell anybody or heard me tell anybody that it is an extra 25 yards, so I don't know where you got that from. The press quote all sorts of things. I know as you know, it is not 25 yards and I would never say such a thing. Secondly, I refer you to the last few lines of

	<p>my previous answer which is I will underline the final point that any decision to permanently close will be made in consultation with pedestrian and disability groups with the aim of improving access via alternative arrangements. So if and when the situation arises, that becomes something that we are considering no doubt you and your friends will be consulted if you wish to be part of it and we will arrive at a decision that is made by the majority of people.</p>
5.	<p><b>Question from Julie Fernandez</b></p> <p><b>For Councillor Cereste, Cabinet Member for Waste, Street Scene and the Environment</b></p> <p>Many local retail businesses are struggling to survive the COVID-19 crisis. The ‘purple pound’ is the combined spending power of disabled people and their families and is worth millions of pounds to Peterborough per annum. What is Peterborough City Council doing to ensure the city’s centre is as accessible as it can be and should be to disabled people and their families?</p> <p><b>The Cabinet Member may respond:</b></p> <p>You very well know of all people how committed I am to making sure that our City is accessible to disabled people without any difficulty whatsoever and you probably know my record in that respect. We are at the moment undergoing a full review of the City Centre which includes all forms of access and clearly, part of that review includes access for people with disabilities. We are very committed to making sure that everybody who wants to access our City Centre can do so comfortably, which is also why we are looking in very close up places in the City Centre to provide more disabled parking and also make it easier for disabled people to get into the Town Centre and particularly to the banks that Mr Brentor was so concerned about.</p> <p>So no one has a magic wand, we as an administration and I would have a responsibility at the moment are absolutely committed to providing proper access to everybody that wants it and that includes your group and your friend’s and people with disabilities.</p> <p>We can do this together and I invite you and anyone else to come and talk to me to contact me, let’s go and have a look. Sometime ago I did a walk about with Councillor Fox and identified areas that might have caused a problem and we got those sorted. I then did a walk about with an organisation that represents partially sighted people and then I really begun to understand what it was all about and as I say we are absolutely committed to making access available to our City Centre by everyone who wants to and that actually includes people who have disabilities. I repeat if you want to be part of that process you want to talk to me, we can wonder around the City and bring your friends, Mr Brentor would be very welcome and we will have a look. If there is anything we can do to make it easier, let’s look at it.</p> <p>Supplementary</p> <p>Thank you Councillor Cereste and I know you have been absolutely brilliant when it comes to supporting disability rights in Peterborough. My question is, its great using and getting advice off of disabled people, but it is also really important that we get the right professional advice from access auditors and make sure that the right things are done in the right way. Can I ask if that has</p>

been done and if that has been done, when and what parts of that access was then implemented and will that be implemented in the future.

The Cabinet Member responded:

I have to be completely honest with you, I haven't done it. The brief given to our architects will have contained something to do with disability and access, but I don't know whether it contained a brief to go to access auditors. I would be quite happy to talk to you about that and let's have a look at it. I mean, we all need to enjoy our City Centre, whatever colour you are or wherever you come from we should be enjoying it together and anything we can do to make it easier for everyone to be able to do that, I'm up for it.

## **COUNCIL BUSINESS**

### **Questions on notice to:**

- a. The Mayor
- b. To the Leader or Member of the Cabinet
- c. To the Chair of any Committee or Sub-committee

### **1. Question from Councillor Ash**

#### **For Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Commercial Strategy and Investments, and Councillor Walsh, Cabinet Member for Communities**

I am sure many ward councillors will have noticed and had complaints about vehicles parking within the curtilage of properties without the benefit of approved crossing points (VCP). All too often, as a result, dirt is transferred from grass verges onto footpaths which become muddy and cause a slipping hazard for pedestrians.

Does the cabinet member agree with me that this causes and has caused a danger to pedestrians using footpaths and needs to be addressed? Have any steps been taken to eradicate this issue and what further action will be taken to ensure that people do not take vehicles across footpaths without a VCP?

#### **The Cabinet Member responded:**

We are aware certainly that this can be an issue for residents across the City in most of our wards and it is indeed an offence under the highways act and confirm that when the highways team become aware of such an act taking place without an authorised crossing point, a letter is sent to the occupiers of the property to draw their attention to the offence and to ask them to cease the activity. Should the occupiers fail to act accordingly, it is certainly within the Council's power to commence legal proceedings.

In relation to the transfer of mud onto the footpaths, it is the responsibility of the individual depositing the mud to rectify and highway's will also advise the occupier if its reported. However, if residents are particularly concerned, they can indeed contact Aragon Direct services to establish if additional cleansing is required.

**Supplementary question:**

Thank you Councillor Hiller for the answer and I am satisfied with that, but it bothers me that it continues the same place over long periods of time and this reported to me by residents who are then in turn report it to Highways and it doesn't seem to be sorted. With that in mind does the Highways to take action against offenders who continue to ignore the rules regarding crossing the footpath?

**The Cabinet Member responded:**

Thank you for the follow up question Councillor Ash, from what you have described it appears not. I don't know the incidents; I don't know the address and I don't know the location. It's obviously in your ward, I'm suggesting it's in your ward, I imagine it is in your ward? If you let me know what this persistent offender where he is located or where she is located or the family, I can certainly get our Officers to understand what has been done thus far and if nothing effective has been done then we can try and ensure that something effective is done.

2.

**Question from Councillor Sandford**

**For Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Commercial Strategy and Investments**

The Sunday Times and the Guardian in the past few days have reported that the John Lewis Partnership, having announced the closure of 8 stores a few months ago, is now actively considering closure of a further 8 of its 42 remaining stores.

Given that John Lewis is the anchor store in our Queensgate Shopping Centre in Peterborough, would the leader of the Council agree with me that its closure would be disastrous for the future of Queensgate and also for the overall retail offer in Peterborough and consequently disastrous for the economy of our city centre?

Therefore, could the leader or relevant cabinet member make urgent representations to John Lewis to try to ensure that the store in Peterborough does not get scheduled for closure?

**Cabinet Member responded:**

There is no doubt of the importance of John Lewis in Queensgate we are indeed fortunate to have this prestigious brand in our City. The recent investments they've made in their store here has encouraged me Councillor Sandford to believe that they value their tenure as much as we do. Also beyond doubt the Covid pandemic has made trading very difficult for the high street retail sector throughout the UK and in Peterborough, we have provided support through the appropriate Government schemes in 21/22. The City MP John Bristow has been lobbying John Lewis I am told and indeed the expected additional support was announced in the Chancellor's statement today and I am pleased that John Lewis will get 100% business rates relief like all hospitality retail and leisure for the first three months of 21/22, with further

relief still to be confirmed for the rest of the year. There will be restart grants available for up to £6,000, for non essential retail and £18,000 for hospitality and leisure.

We have been supporting Peterborough Positive to set up a Business Improvement District which includes the Queensgate Shopping Centre area, although the ballot of business for this decision has been delayed from May this year to October this year due to the present circumstances

We will continue to work proactively with Peterborough Positive and our Retailers to maintain the City's retail sector. This includes dialogue with John Lewis of course on the status of the Peterborough store and helping to secure its future here whenever possible and practical.

**Supplementary question:**

I think that John Lewis store is probably the only major store remaining in Peterborough and lots of people like to go there because of the high quality of the produce and the really good customer service. I appreciate what Councillor Hiller has mentioned about the financial support that is going to be made available but, could I ask him, I actually recognise that our MP has made representation to them, would he also consider making representation on behalf of the Council? Because I do think if we are going to continue to have a thriving Queensgate Centre, it is really important that John Lewis remains in it.

**The Cabinet Member responded:**

I thank Councillor Sandford for his follow up question and point very well made and yes of course I will do that. But I am also aware that my colleague Councillor Cereste is aware and actively engaged with most if not all of the Town Centre businesses, including dialogue with his fellow Director in Peterborough Positive, which actually happens to be the Queensgate manager, Mark Broadhead. I'm sure that will be taking place also.

**3. Question from Councillor Rush**

**For Councillor Ayres, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Skills and the University**

Council is aware that Peterborough City Council has joined with Cambridgeshire County Council in a campaign to buy laptops and 4G routers for a significant number of children who do not have the use of a computer or access to broadband at home - meaning that they cannot easily participate in lessons, benefit from the wealth of online resources, get support from their teachers or even interact with their classmates, putting them at risk of falling behind with their studies, affecting their health and wellbeing and future life chances.

Can the cabinet member for education explain when these laptops and routers will be made available for use by the children and how, who is paying for them and how it is determined which pupils will actually get them?

**Cabinet Member responded:**

I am delighted to report that schools across Peterborough received their first delivery of laptops, Chromebooks and 4G routers in the week beginning 22 February 2021. A total of over 1000 laptops and Chromebooks and over 450 4G routers have been purchased to date to support disadvantaged children and young people in Peterborough using funding made available specifically for this purpose. This is a combination of the £300,000 which this Council has committed from its capital funding, £100,000 from Yours Clothing, and £30,000 from the Education Directorate. We are now able to add to this the £17.676 which individual Councillors have chosen to allocate from their Community Leadership Fund for the 2021/22 financial year. With this funding, we will be able to purchase another 54 laptops for Peterborough children and young people.

Schools I must say, make the decision on which children will receive the equipment as they know which families are in most need of this vital support.

**Supplementary question:**

Thank you for the answer Councillor Ayers. When the children go back to school, who will take ownership of the laptops and IT equipment that have been loaned out to help with their home learning?

**The Cabinet Member responded:**

Thank for that question Councillor Rush, because it is important for people to know that it will be the schools that own the laptops, and it is they who will control which children will have access to them of course because they know their own children and they know what the requirement is. There will be a need to support children to continue their education at home even when schools are open to all children again and providing them with fulltime education in school, as regrettably there are many children that have suffered significant educational disadvantage as a result of Covid. In addition, there will still be some children that will need to self-isolate of course as well as those that simply need the equipment for internet access necessary for them to prepare for examinations and tests and of course to do their homework.

4. **Question from Councillor Shaz Nawaz**

**For Councillor Seaton, Cabinet Member for Finance**

I know taxi drivers were pleased to received support from the council. They have put themselves in harm's way during the pandemic to keep our city and its people mobile. Birmingham and Luton provided grants of £1,000 and £500 respectively. What is the reason for Peterborough providing a lower amount?

**The Cabinet Member responded:**

Thank you, Councillor Nawaz. This is basically why is Peterborough not giving taxi drivers a thousand pounds each from the grant as Birmingham is. The basic reason is that the additional restrictions grant is to support all businesses and the self-employed and the amount takes account of other applications being received from other businesses for a limited pot of funding. As part of the scheme, we must be seen as a Council to be equitable to all. However, we've been able to accelerate support specifically for Taxi Drivers based on licensing information that we hold.

**Supplementary question:**

Thank you Councillor Seaton for that answer. I agree with you that it is important to be equitable but I am just looking at Luton that are very close to us in proximity and a similar sized Council, albeit slightly larger and we do earn a good amount of fees from Taxi Drivers, they have done a lot of good work as I know many of the businesses and key workers have as well. Is there any chance you could reconsider and try and match to what Luton have done for their Taxi Drivers, Councillor Seaton?

**The Cabinet Member responded:**

Thank you Councillor Nawaz, what I have said to Officers, is that if we have less applications and funding available, we will have details on record to enable pro rata future payments to ensure any remaining money is allocated. I am pleased to say that as of today, I've checked this, we've made 179 payments of £300 to Taxi Drivers. I think we've got, last time I checked 1,278 Taxi Drivers, so we've still got a long way to go. But certainly, if there is still funding available after we've gone through all the applications then we can look at a pro rata payment to all those who have applied.

5. **Question from Councillor Ali**

**For Councillor Cereste, Cabinet Member for Waste, Street Scene and the Environment**

I have received several calls from our hard-working local Taxi Drivers who are extremely disappointed and concerned that the promised Electric Charging Points for Taxis have not been installed or made accessible.

It is extremely important that we have these Charge Points for use by our Taxis to reduce pollution and the carbon emissions.

Can I be advised as to the progress with these Charge Points, and why we have this delay, as our Taxi Drivers gradually endeavour to move towards replacing their current diesel or petrol Taxis to Electric?

**The Cabinet Member responded:**

Thank you Councillor Ali, this is something I am keen to get delivered and as quickly as possible.

The 50kw electric taxi rapid charger has been installed in the Riverside car park and is connected. Although there are some minor bay linings and signing works to completed but I am assured that these should be completed by the end of March 2021.

You will also be please to know that we are in discussion over the 75kw rapid charges which are even better and that is the latest technology. I am also told that very soon, 100kw charging will be available and we are also looking for those. I am expecting some sort of presentation on those two items next week.

Infrastructure works to the on-street electric taxi charging points in Midgate, Northminster and Viersen Platz are scheduled to commence on site on Monday, that's next Monday. And the rapid charging points have been procured, we've bought them, but unfortunately, delays in the supply chain due to the COVID-19 pandemic

have led to much longer lead-in times for specific pieces of equipment including the main distribution cabinets and other bits that go with them. Waiting times for connections from the utility operating companies have also been affected by the national lockdown. We anticipate that the project will be complete and all the on-street charging points fully commissioned and operational by the end of May 2021.

But that is not where it will stop, because we are looking at introducing many more as soon as possible.

**Supplementary question:**

I thank Councillor Cereste for his answer, I am encouraged by that. I'm disappointed that there has been a delay because the promise made was some time ago to Taxi Drivers that this would be available. As we all know that our Taxi Drivers, hardworking are probably the hardest hit members of our community throughout this pandemic. If we are going to look at reducing the carbon footprint, then we need to make sure that we provide the incentives and encouragement and provide the facilities for Taxi Drivers to move on from diesel and petrol vehicles too and active vehicles that will help us all to help the Environnement. I would urge Councillor Cereste to, and also if I can make the point, we have been reducing the number of ranks that are available to our taxis as well, so we need to make sure that we are looking ahead, to the needs once this pandemic is over and we are back to normal. Taxi Drivers play a very important part of keeping our economy going and I think we need to give the right recognition and incentive to them and what I would suggest to actually push ahead with this as quickly as possible please and give the right incentives to give the Taxi Drivers to move on from petrol and diesel vehicles to electric vehicles as soon as possible.

**The Cabinet Member responded:**

I couldn't agree with you more Councillor Ali, I'm completely 100% committed to what you've said and even more we need them throughout the City, not just for the Taxi Drivers, we need to encourage people to buy electric cars. I'm even trying to buy one myself, I'm trying to find something that does 200 miles, well 250 miles to a load. It's the way forward and it's the way the world has got to go and you are absolutely right there is and onus on the local authority to make sure that the facilities are available so people can use them and help us reduce our carbon emissions and save the planet.

6. **Question from Councillor Shaz Nawaz**

**For Councillor Seaton, Cabinet Member for Finance**

The recent capitalisation direction from government means we could potentially end up with an additional £24.8m of debt. This is due to severe funding cut from central government since 2010. How much longer can we survive with this type of approach?

**The Cabinet Member responded:**

I think I did cover this point at Joint Scrutiny meeting last week Councillor Nawaz. Yourself and other Members of joint Scrutiny. I said the issue we have is the pandemic, not funding changes that have occurred over the last 10 years. I reminded everyone in March last year we had a £14m gap in our budget, had identified £12m of savings, and we had a year to close that final £2m gap. The pandemic changed everything.

However, to answer your last sentence, how do we survive borrowing and borrowing to cover a revenue a revenue gap? We can't. That's why again I made it clear, to you and fellow Members at Joint Scrutiny, that the impact of extra borrowing must be taken into account in our discussions with Government about future sustainability. It has to be front and centre in those discussions.

**Supplementary question:**

Thank you very much for that answer Councillor Seaton. As you will appreciate the challenges of obviously, one of cash felt trying to obviously to meet the obligation in terms of interest and the capitol repayments and if the Government don't support us further, like we have seen since 2010, so this hasn't been something that's short term. I am interested to hear your view? We've asked for fairer funding in the past, it hasn't happened. If nothing is forthcoming in the next 12 to 24 months, what other alternatives would you suggest we explore going forward? I know you won't be here and I should take this opportunity to thank you, Chris Ash and Darren Fower for their service too, but for the rest of us do you have any advice Councillor Seaton?

**The Cabinet Member responded:**

Thank you Councillor Nawaz. You say it's not a short-term thing but I've just said a year ago, £14m gap £12 savings identified £2m to find in 12 months. So, the pandemic, you could say 12 months of the pandemic is not a short-term thing as well, it feels like a very long-term thing. If the Government will not support us with fairer funding then the obvious result is that we go into special measures and we have a section 114 notice, that's the result. We could get to that sooner Councillor Nawaz if you don't approve the budget tonight. But we cannot be asked to constantly borrow to cover revenue and to meet the payments, that's not sustainable as I've just said. Thank you.

7. **Question from Councillor Ash**

**For Councillor Holdich, Leader of the Council and Deputy Mayor of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority**

I am sure all will agree that Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council officers have worked well together, noting that Peterborough, barring just a few years, has effectively been a unitary authority serving local people. Given that there have been moves in recent times to effectively abolish district councils and centre control at County Council level, does the leader and his cabinet believe that having fought hard to return to unitary status, and after the amalgamation with Cambridgeshire, that there is a prospect that Peterborough once again be fully under the control of Cambridgeshire. Does he agree with me that the City of Cambridge and Cambridgeshire as a whole have separate needs from our growing City which can only be fully addressed at City level and also enable us to continue close links with neighbouring areas to our West and North?

**The Cabinet Member responded:**

The Joint Working Agreement between the PCC and CCC is based around a sovereignty guarantee which safeguards the local autonomy of each Council and ensures that PCC is able to make the best decisions for its residents. The Council's approach to working with communities is centred on a deep understanding of the characteristics and needs of individual places. It is clear from this work that Peterborough is unique in the area, not just in its demography and needs but also for

the opportunities presented by being a fast growing, entrepreneurial City. Needs continue to be assessed on a very local basis and the PCC determines its own strategic and spending priorities accordingly.

A number of benefits have already been realised through the shared services work, including;

- Development of best practice – as seen within children’s services and through our joint work on fostering campaigns;
- Retention of high-quality managers who have driven significant savings out in both authorities. Experienced senior officers are attracted to larger interesting roles
- Residents on the borders between Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have benefited from increased choice as to where they access services. E.g. Joint school at Hampton, childcare provision, alternative education providers.
- Where one authority has struggled the other authority has been able to step in and help e.g. Quality Assurance functions in Safeguarding in Cambs.
- Much improved ICT systems and quality of communications function in both authorities taking the best from each and using increased purchasing power to secure better deals
- Joint commissioning across several areas, increasing purchasing power and enabling more flexible response from a greater range of providers.

Another significant advantage of the model is that the joint leadership team now shares a common geography with Health, Police, Local Resilience Forum and the Combined Authority. This provides efficiencies in the number of partnership boards and a large number of working groups that include both top tier authorities - for example the health Strategic Transformation Partnership, Safeguarding and Youth Offending Boards, Cambridgeshire Public Service and, during the pandemic, the Strategic Gold Command group. This gives both Councils greater influence in partnership discussions and has been a particularly helpful, efficient and effective way of working during the pandemic.

Cross party leaders and senior officers across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are committed to public service reform and are actively building on the collaborative ways of working that have always existed but which have been strengthened during the pandemic. A number of work streams are already underway to look at how we can further develop our relationships to improve outcomes for people across the region. This work does not include exploration into structural reform nor does it propose any changes to the Joint Working Agreement between PCC and CCC

**Supplementary question:**

I thank Councillor Holdich for his full and detailed answer, most useful and I know Councillor Holdich is committed to doing his best for Peterborough. Can I just follow up with asking, is he concerned when we read that some counties are in fact becoming unitary authorities, or the Government is encouraging that to happen. Some years ago Cornwall became unitary authority, does that cause any concern?

**The Leader of the Council responded:**

I can’t give you an authority view on that, but I can give you my personal view Councillor Ash. I think that if Local Government in this form is to survive, we do have to do something. In 1977 when we were doing Combined Authorities my view then was that Cambridgeshire should go into half and it still is. That gives you a quality of scale and also make it easier to fund. So that would be my personal view but there’s no

	<p>discussion going on to that end. It was the Combined Authorities job to look at it and so far, they haven't done it so thank you very much.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>Question from Councillor Ali</b></p> <p><b>For Councillor Fitzgerald, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Public Health</b></p> <p>I am pleased that I, along with a number of my loved ones, have had the first COVID-19 jab, as we were invited to have the vaccination. Many of us within our communities are working hard to encourage people to have the vaccination against the backdrop of some conspiracy theories. The promoters of these conspiracy theories are from all the diverse communities. However, I am saddened to note that there is this narrative giving focus to the Muslim community that members of this community are REFUSING the vaccination. I believe this is wrong and unfair and could give rise to Islamophobia and hatred of Muslims. Is there any evidence to suggest that the members of the Muslim community, when invited to have a vaccination, are refusing it and whether this is more prevalent in comparison with other communities?</p> <p><b>Cabinet Member responded:</b></p> <p>Thank you Councillor Ali for your question, very topical subject at the moment. I am pleased to hear that you and a several of your loved ones have had your first Covid vaccination.</p> <p>I've consulted with the Director of Public Health following your question, who says that there are no local statistics on the uptake of said vaccinations in relation to people's religion. However, the British Islamic Medical Association publicly recommends both the Pfizer vaccine and the Astra-Zeneca vaccine for eligible at-risk individuals in Muslim communities. The Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board also publicly advocates that the vaccination is compatible with Islamic practices. The Chair of our Local Joint Mosques Committee, Mr Chaudhuri has also written to the Peterborough Telegraph to say that he and his family have already had their first vaccine so as to encourage everyone who is eligible to do so. Therefore it would be wrong to say that Muslim communities are not supportive of the vaccine, and I would strongly discourage the spread of this narrative. In fact completely the opposite, we should be encouraging all whatever region ethnicity you are from to take up the vaccine. I myself have had the first dose myself and we need to follow the advice, trust in the science and forget the propaganda about this. It's a good thing and it saves lives.</p> <p><b>Supplementary question:</b></p> <p>I thank Councillor Fitzgerald for his response and absolutely agree 100%, we all need to play our part to encourage all our communities to get the vaccination that we can get out of this situation as soon as possible, but I fear that in some quarters there is narrative going around and my fear is that as we know our current Prime Minister labled Muslim women as going round as letter boxes. For all of us there was a surge in crimes against Muslim women. So it's very important for all of us to ensure that the negative publicity that is going around, that we deal with it effectively and robustly. I would just ask him and urge, you're responsible, to actually make public statements because there is often comments in the local media, people make comments on social media etc. Lots of negativity towards (in audible) communities and Muslim communalities and I think we as a Council and Councillors have a role to play. I would just like to ask Cllr Fitzgerald, he agrees with me and I am grateful for that and I know most of us agree,</p>

but I think we need to do a little more to make sure that narrative is condemned wherever we can and to our utmost. What actions will we be taking. I didn't just come up with that question, the question was asked of me from the media. This is what we hear and I put this question to you Councillor Fitzgerald to make sure we do something about it.

**The Cabinet Member responded:**

Councillor Ali, look I don't recognise from a Council point of view any of what you are saying so I know that from official channels there is no suggestion of promoting this narrative. But unfortunately, in the society we live in, when you are told by people, I'm not taking the vaccine because I saw it on TikTok, what kind of world are we living in? And unfortunately, you must accept and recognise, and we must always challenge individuals about their views particularly if we think they are wrong. However, they are entitled to their views and we are never ever going to get 100% of people to take this vaccine. We must do all that we can to do so, and I believe if you've kept up with the Council's Comms team and the plans and the messaging, that everybody across all communities including those in the Muslim community have been actively approached and targeted by our communications specialists to help spread the message about taking the vaccine.

Unfortunately, though, there will always be individuals in society that will spread false rumours; they attack race and religion, and we just have to live with it and combat it. You yourself will know coming from the Muslim community, you know what kind of things people say to you, unjust as they may be. It happens in all communities across the world. All I can say here is, I don't really see that message of hate and anti-vaccine really going out here. And I would also say to you, most people shouldn't listen to the media in terms of the popularist tabloid culture. They should seek to get facts from community leaders, from sensible people like yourself in the community and others in order to make a balanced judgement. But unfortunately, we are never going to be able to stop people doing it, but we must do all we can, and I do think we're doing a lot.

But by the way if you've got a suggestions for anything else we could be doing please step up and tell us, we would be only too happy to listen.

**9. WARD SPECIFIC: Question from Councillor John Fox**

**For Councillor Cereste, Cabinet Member for Waste, Street Scene and the Environment**

Werrington First Councillors are delighted with the continued work that is going on at Cuckoo Hollow bringing the lake up to a high level in both water quality and the environmental impact for wildlife.

We have seen the return of otters on the lake along with cormorants, herons, crested grebe and eaglets and several fish species.

As the longer serving members of this council will know, we have continually over the years campaigned regarding our concerns about the state that Cuckoo Hollow was deteriorating into. We have previously put motions and questions to council regarding these concerns and its future development and we believe residents are now benefitting from this.

Thanks to certain PCC officers, the Environmental Agency, our drainage team, Werrington Neighbourhood Council and not forgetting our invaluable volunteer litter picking group, we have never seen Cuckoo Hollow looking so good.

However, we now see the footpaths deteriorating around the lake to such a degree that we have concerns about the safety aspect of those residents who use this area for their daily walks, especially during this pandemic.

The paths do not seem to have been swept for some time as there are wet soggy leaves that have been left over from the Autumn Fall. We fully understand that the weather has had a big part to play in this, but we feel there is a need to review the sweeping regime, so it is swept more frequently.

Can we therefore ask that an inspection is carried out to look at the state of the footpaths in the area and carry out remedial work if deemed necessary?

**The Cabinet Member may respond:**

We have arranged for Aragon Direct Services to have the pathways around Cuckoo Hollow swept, the snow and wet weather has impeded the removal of some of the detritus, but we hope the recent sweep will have helped.

We have also asked that Aragon Direct Services to look at the condition of the pathways and the areas where the path has visibly been impeded to have this cut back.

**Questions on notice to:**

d. The Combined Authority Representatives

None.

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