

COUNCIL	AGENDA ITEM No.12
23 JUNE 2021	PUBLIC REPORT

MOTIONS ON NOTICE

The following notice of motion has been received in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders:

1. Motion from Councillor Iqbal

"The growing shortage of gravesites in the UK is a nationwide problem. With almost a half of all local authorities claiming that they will run out of burial plots in just 20 years, burials in cemeteries and church yards may one day turn into an exclusive privilege reserved for the wealthy.

Currently, Peterborough City Council provides grave sizes as follows:

- Adult - 7 feet and 8 inches long by 2 ft and 8 inches wide.
- Babies at any stage of gestation or after birth - 3ft long and 2 ft wide.

The Council believes it is important to:

- Provide facilities and services which meet the needs of all the local communities who use the service, with the highest possible standards of care, dignity and choice.
- Provide cemeteries, a crematorium with gardens of remembrance, and associated facilities at the highest possible standards.
- Facilitate the best possible options for meeting the needs of the public, by encompassing the values of Business Excellence in the management of the cemeteries, Crematorium, and associated services including the general administration of all closed churchyards.
- Demonstrate that the service effectively meets the needs of the community, without tolerance for mediocrity or non-compliance with published service standards including meeting religious/ethnic needs.

There are unique circumstances affecting the Muslim community who carry out their burial rites in an Islamic manner. Peterborough City Council and the funeral management committee have always enjoyed a close and respectful relationship with the Muslims community and taken their views and needs on board when considering modifications to improve funeral experiences for Muslim families within the city.

Given that the area we have is limited and in consideration of circumstances surrounding Covid-19, the perception of increased projected burial space and its effect on our communities may require additional space within our cemetery.

This Council resolves to request that the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture and Communities consider exploring the feasibility and potential benefits of:

- **Ensuring babies, at any stage of gestation or post term, to Muslim and other faith families**

are laid to rest in a grave size that is appropriate for their size of gestation or term, akin to Huntingdonshire District Council where burials of babies and infants take place according to the size of the casket.”

2. Motion from Councillor Sainsbury

“Council notes that:

- Knife Crime is a very serious issue and can have long term impact on victims, their families and whole communities.
- In 2019/20, Cambridgeshire Police recorded 565 offences across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough involving a knife or sharp weapon, more than double the rates reported in 2012/13.
- Some areas of the UK have achieved significant reductions in knife crime amongst young people by adopting a public health approach to the issue and working closely across partner agencies including with youth services, the voluntary sector, social care, health and education.
- The Safer Peterborough Partnership has set up a multi-agency Problem Solving Group which manages the tactical response to local issues as and when they arise but there is not currently a specific focus on knife crime within the work of the Group.

Council resolves to:

- **Request the Safer Peterborough Partnership Problem Solving Group to establish a particular focus on knife crime to ensure that incidents are identified and reported and that measures are instigated to prevent further incidents.**
- **Develop and instigate plans to adopt a public health approach to the issue of knife crime, as demonstrated elsewhere in the UK.**
- **Set up, in conjunction with the police, the police and crime commissioner’s office, Cabinet Members for Housing, Culture and Communities and for Integrated Social Care, Health and Public Health and neighbourhood watch, a Peterborough-wide publicity and education campaign pitched at young people, their parents and carers on the subject of knife crime.**
- **The results of this work to be reported regularly to the Communities Scrutiny Committee.”**

3. Motion from Councillor Sandford

“Following publication of the Waste Management Plan for England in January 2021, the Government has announced that it intends to legislate for consistent collection of recyclable materials by local authorities across England and that this may include requirements for more kerbside separation of different recyclable materials. They are currently consulting on what form these new regulations may take.

In its waste management plan, Government states that its aim is get recycling rates for municipal waste up from around 45% currently to 65% by 2035. Peterborough's current recycling rate is only just over 40%.

Council therefore believes it would be premature for Peterborough City Council to invest further in domestic waste collection vehicles until precise Government waste collection requirements are known.

Council also believes it is important, as part of the Council's commitment to get the city to net zero

carbon by 2030, that wherever possible future investment is in electric or hybrid vehicles.

Council therefore requests the Cabinet to pause any further investment in new waste collection vehicles and requests that the Growth and Environment Scrutiny Committee carry out an urgent review of collection of domestic waste, with a view to significantly increasing our recycling rates and ensuring cost effective investment in new vehicles and machinery.”

Accompanying Briefing Note from Executive Director of Place and Economy:

There are currently several interrelated consultations underway (notably the second round of a process that commenced in 2019), in support of the Environment Bill 2020, however, the form of any subsequent waste and recycling legislation remains unclear. Various issues have delayed this process and proposed dates for policy implementation are still ‘proposals’ so there is at present no certainty of the timing of various policy elements to flow from the results of these consultations.

These consultations are:

- Introduction of a deposit return scheme in England, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Packaging and packaging waste: introducing Extended Producer Responsibility
- Consistency in household and business recycling in England

There is insufficient clear policy certainty upon which the Council or any other body involved in this area of environmental services could use as a basis of a sound and evidenced investment strategy, as such immediate pressures of vehicle breakdowns, repair costs, increasing unreliability etc, are a powerful set of reasons to why, following the signed CMDN, the order is being placed for the replacement of the podded RCV's.

The current vehicles on the Aragon Direct Services (ADS) contract are at a point where they are becoming uneconomical to repair and have moved from a ‘few thousand’ to repair to tens of thousands each time. This is not financially sustainable for any company and has the potential to impact ADS / PCC fulfilling their statutory duty in collecting household waste with several vehicles being taken off the road for lengthy repairs.

When looking at the procurement and as per the CMDN that has been approved we are looking to purchase 16 diesel vehicles fitted with food pods that will be to the latest Euro rated engine, we are also moving away from diesel-hydraulic bin lifts to electric. The electric bin lifts will help to impact the CO2 emissions as well as the move to the latest Euro-rated engine. We did look for electric options but at this time, they do not offer an electric RCV with a food pod which we would require to carry out a weekly food waste service and I am sure will also be a requirement of the legislative changes.

A number of options were looked at including, ‘do nothing’ this was ruled out as above due to the current age and viability of the fleet, ‘short term lease/hire’, this was ruled out due to again the need for the food pods and these are not readily available in the hire market. As such, therefore, we felt it was best to move to a new fleet now and not at the point when potentially the legislation is released, and the market is flooded meaning we would not be able to get build slots for a considerable amount of time given lead times range from 9 – 12 months once you have secured a build slot.

The government has been clear that any new infrastructure, vehicles, equipment, etc., required to meet new statutory objectives arising directly from legislative changes will be funded by the government through the new burdens process. Therefore, one might say that potentially the Council's present investment is not in fact at risk from future possible changes in legislation.

A review of the Council's waste and recycling strategy would indeed be a sensible thing to undertake, however, this might be most effective and efficient once government policy is in fact published and not

based on expectation.

Increasing recycling rates is a clear aim for the council and ADS as such and as part of the amended budget options a business case is being taken to the RIT board to look at employing education officers. These officers will be used to target areas of the city with poor recycling, as we have seen from the recent WRAP-funded food waste campaign excellent results can be achieved through continued education and messaging approaches. Additionally, to this project, we are also participants in PECT's Blueprint project which looks at how we can move to a more circular economy approach with Recycling, one of the key outcomes is to create behaviour change and increase residential recycling rates.

4. Motion from Councillor Jones

"This Council notes that:

- The Covid-19 lockdowns have shown how vital technology is to keeping people connected, in particular the vulnerable in society, many of whom have been confined to their homes and unable to see loved ones.
- According to Age UK, 51% of digitally excluded people are over the age of 65, while refugees and the homeless also face worrying levels of digital exclusion. According to homeless charity C4WS, 90% of those in shelter don't have access to IT devices.

This Council believes:

- We need to embrace new ways to bridge the digital gap, as it has taken a global pandemic to show what can happen when we don't do that.
- Companies need to embrace innovative ways to upcycle their old technology rather than simply sell for scrap, which just gets shipped around the world and adds to our carbon footprint.
- Digital exclusion is particularly concerning for the most vulnerable in society, including those on low income, such as pensioners living on pension credit, refugees and those without homes.
- Along with other public bodies in local area, such as schools and universities, we have a civic duty to work together to find the most beneficial solutions to challenges we face as a local community, including digital exclusion.

The Council resolves to request that the Cabinet Member for Digital Services and Transformation consider:

- **Donating IT locally to those in need rather than scrapping it, using schemes such as the Laptops for Homeless and Vulnerable Initiative.**
- **Encouraging public bodies and local businesses in Peterborough to take similar action as set out above.**
- **Encouraging council suppliers, together with the Council, to proactively take part in sponsoring and promoting this message to local businesses, through traditional media and social media channels."**