

**MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING
HELD AT 10:00AM, ON
MONDAY 11 JULY 2022
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

Cabinet Members Present: Councillor Steve Allen (Vice-Chair in the Chair), Councillor Ayres, Councillor Coles, Councillor Howard, Councillor Simons

Cabinet Advisor Present: Councillor Jackie Allen, Councillor Bisby, Councillor Hussain, Councillor Gul Nawaz, Councillor Sainsbury

14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence received from Councillor Fitzgerald and Councillor Cereste.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

16. MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETINGS HELD ON:

(a) SHAREHOLDER CABINET COMMITTEE – 28 FEBRUARY 2022

The minutes of the Shareholder Cabinet Committee meeting held on 28 February 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

(b) CABINET – 20 JUNE 2022

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 20 June 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

STRATEGIC DECISIONS

17. FIRST INDEPENDENT IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE PANEL REPORT

The Cabinet received the first report from the Peterborough City Council Independent Improvement and Assurance Panel.

The purpose of this report was to provide the Panel's first six monthly review of the work of the Council against the previously agreed Improvement Plan and the recommendations of the independent reports commissioned by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

The Sustainable Future City Council Director introduced the report and outlined the key points included within.

Cabinet Members debated the report and in summary responses to questions raised included:

- Members noted that there had been cross party engagement on the development of the revised Corporate Strategy.
- It was advised that plans were in place to introduce a Chief Executive's delivery unit to work with the Cabinet to develop plans for leadership.
- Comment was made that work would be done to find funding for schools and developing schools, including special schools.
- Members were advised of the intention to bring the Capital Programme into an affordable space, finding different ways to invest in growth, but not at the expensing of the Council's statutory functions.
- It was felt that there were a number of exciting developments underway in the city.
- Members noted that some of the schools funding was currently ring-fenced and prioritised with the Capital Receipts envelope.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the first report of the Independent Improvement and Assurance Panel and agreed with the action to be taken as a result.
2. Request the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee review the report, Cabinet's response to it and the progress being made with the delivery of the Improvement Plan.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The reporting process in accordance with the governance review of September 2021.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

No alternative options were considered.

18. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023-2026 QUARTER 1 UPDATE

The Cabinet received a report in relation to quarter one of the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2023 to 2026.

The purpose of this report was to demonstrate that the Council's finances over the medium term were secured to deliver the Council's aims and objectives over the next three years from 2023/24 to 2025/26. Preparation of an MTFs was good financial practice. It was an important part of understanding the Council's financial challenges and risks, its financial resilience, and set out the strategy to deliver long term financial sustainability and viability.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Governance introduced the report and outlined the key points included within.

Cabinet Members debated the report and in summary responses to questions raised included:

- Members noted that the projected budget gap had increased to £9.5 million, due to cost of living increases.
- The MTFs, in was advised, would be updated on a quarterly basis, with the current report based on the May inflation forecast. This would be updated for the next quarter's report.

- It was noted that the capital expenditure moratorium was still in place for the 2022/2023 period. It was felt, however, that the Council was entering a stage where restrictions would not need to be in place in all areas.
- Members were advised that the Council's savings plan was monitored closely, and was subject to change, including 'plan b' arrangements for more challenging savings in social care.
- For the upcoming year's budget, cash limits had been introduced for each service area, supported by the finance team and budget leads.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to note:

1. The revised assumptions included within the quarter one Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023-2026 update as outlined within Appendix A of the report.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

To provide an update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and support the delivery of the Council setting a lawful and balanced budget for 2023/24.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

No alternative option had been considered.

19. ST GEORGE'S HYDROTHERAPY POOL

The Cabinet received a report in relation to St George's Hydrotherapy Pool.

The purpose of this report was to provide Cabinet with the outcome of work undertaken by officers in response to the motion to Full Council in relation to St George's Hydrotherapy Pool, in order that Cabinet could make an informed decision about the future of the Hydrotherapy Pool.

The Assistant Director for Communities introduced the report and outlined the key points included within.

Councillor John Fox addressed the Cabinet and raised the following points:

- It was questioned why, if Cabinet Members were considering all options, including re-opening the pool, all the signs had been removed.
- On 14 March 2022 Councillor Fox had been reassured that the sale of the pool was on track and it was planned for the pool to open again at the earliest opportunity. It was questioned what had changed following this conversation.
- Cabinet were asked, in order for the decision to be truly transparent, for it to be deferred until after the petition had been debated at Full Council.
- It was suggested that experts were available who could explain why the pool should not be closed.

Karen Oldale addressed the Cabinet and raised the following points:

- The service provided by the Hydrotherapy pool was considered to be vital, as indicated by the representations received.

- It was suggested that the report before Members did not mention the impact the closure of the pool would have on users, particularly those who could not access the gym or the lido. It was felt that this was discriminatory and cruel.
- The Council was urged to honour its original agreement to sell the pool, which would generate profit, as all the cost of renovation would lie with the buyer.
- It was felt that there were simpler ways to expand Heltwate School that could allow the pool to remain open.
- Members were asked to take this decision to Full Council in light of the impact that closing the pool would have on the city's most vulnerable residents.

Councillor Shaz Nawaz addressed the Cabinet and raised the following points:

- It was suggested that, rather than the Council not being able to afford to open the pool, it couldn't afford not to.
- Comment was made in relation to the figures set out in the report, in order to bring the pool back up to standard. It was suggested that the lower end of this range was more accurate, if the any buyer were to take on responsibility for the work.
- It was felt that a more detailed breakdown of costs was required before any decision made.
- Suggestion was made that selling part of the Heltwate School plot would be beneficial, as a number of smaller lots could return a higher level of income.
- It was queried whether consideration had been given to leasing the site, with a break clause at three or five years.
- It was felt that to close the pool would be short-sighted and would deprive Peterborough residents of a much needed service.

Cabinet Members debated the report and in summary responses to questions raised included:

- Members were advised that the higher end price set out in the report included an extension. Without an extension, the price would be around £40,000.
- It was advised that the £278,000 figure related to if the Council were to bring the facility back online for 2 to 3 years.
- In relation to the increased school demand, this was new to additional SEND demands on the school, which would need to be factored into forward planning.
- Comment was made that the cost of sending children with complex needs out of the authority for education was considerable and had not been factored into the report.
- Members noted advice received stating that dividing up the plot would lead to a decrease in overall value.
- It was further noted that following conversations with the potential buyer, no lease option, short or long-term, was viable.
- Member acknowledged the health benefits of the facility, but did not feel that this was the responsibility of the local authority. Members, however, were pleased to hear that officers would continue to investigate how such a service could continue in some form in Peterborough.
- It was noted that following a capital review, after the conversation with Councillor John Fox, it had been determined that the sale of the facility was not good value.
- Members were advised that the removal of signs at the facility were in relation to removing the Vivicity branding from the site and was not linked to the matter discussed today.

- Comment was made that other local authorities did not fund such facilities, however, Councillor John Fox suggested that this was inaccurate.
- It was noted that discussions with the potential buyer remained positive, and that they would be interesting in building a pool on another site. Officers would continue to work with them on this.
- It was further noted that previous suggestions to use the Regional Pool had been determined as inappropriate, following liaison with the 'Friends of St George's Hydrotherapy Pool', due to the depth and temperature of the pool.
- Members thanked those that had provided representation and advised that they were keen to continue to work with user groups to find a solution. This included consideration of the Lime Academy Pool as a possible replacement.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Agree to the permanent closure of the St George's Hydrotherapy Pool based on the information set out in this report; and
2. Acknowledge and support the work of officers to identify alternative hydrotherapy provision.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

It was absolutely recognised and acknowledged that the decision would adversely affect some of the former pool users, but the council needed to prioritise its statutory obligations and its obligation to achieve best value in all its decisions.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The alternative options considered were set out in section 4.7 of the report.

20. IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PETERBOROUGH PARKING STRATEGY

The Cabinet received a report in relation to the Peterborough Parking Strategy.

The purpose of this report was to present a number of short-term recommendations to Cabinet as a result of the work undertaken to prepare a Parking Strategy. It also sought the consent of Cabinet for an officer working group to be established in order to consider and bring forward, as appropriate, the remaining recommendations in the strategy.

The Transport and Environment Manager introduced the report and outlined the key points included within.

Cabinet Members debated the report and in summary responses to questions raised included:

- Members were advised that the next step in the process would be to approach stakeholder groups, including any disability groups.
- Following a query raised in relation to implementing electric vehicle chargers around the city, Members were advised that work was being done to establish what the private sector could offer for electric vehicle infrastructure and that that this would be a key issue for the officer working group.
- The officer working group would also be considering the Automatic Number Plate Recognition as, while based purely on cost it was not viable, it was felt by

Members that it could assist with the problems faced from car cruising in the city.

- Members noted that the recommendations included the loss of a number of parking spaces and were advised that part of the future work to be undertaken would be to review these to ensure that such loss would not create problems in the future.
- It was noted that while a motorcycle club was currently thought to operate from Dicken's Street car park, this was unofficial and would be further looked into.
- Officers would be liaising with local affected stakeholders, such as community centres, to ensure that no problems would arise from the proposals creating parking pressure points.
- Members were advised that the officer group would be working closely with Cabinet Members.
- Regarding the use of any land that was made vacant from the closure of car parks, Members noted that this would be one of the focuses of the working group going forward.
- It was felt that any changes made to car parking should not jeopardise the city centre economy.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note on the Peterborough Parking Strategy.
2. Approve the following short-term recommendations:
The Council shall:
 - a. Continue to review parking occupancy levels as the city continues its recovery from the pandemic.
 - b. Close Dickens Street Car Park at the earliest possible opportunity.
 - c. Request officers undertake feasibility and costing work to improve the disabled parking bay provision in existing car parks.
 - d. Implement parking charges, including recovery of the electricity cost, for electric vehicle charging bays including those solely used for the taxi and private license trade.
 - e. Undertake a review of parking charges in line with ongoing work to review 'fees and charges' across the Council.
 - f. Undertake a review of charging technology to assess the feasibility of alternative mechanisms e.g. ANPR.
3. Instruct the Executive Director Place and Economy to establish an officer working group to review the remaining recommendations ahead of further consideration by Cabinet later this year.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The decision was considered to be practical and deliverable interventions to support the development of the city centre.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The alternative option considered were to hold back on implementing any recommendations until such a time as a full review could be undertaken across all of the recommendations contained within the Parking Strategy. This had been ruled out because there were a number of advantages to pursuing both short and medium term actions simultaneously.

21. PETERBOROUGH FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Cabinet received a report in relation to the Peterborough Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

The purpose of this report was to enable Cabinet to review the draft Peterborough Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (FMS) and seek support to undertaken a public consultation.

The Highway Development Control and Drainage Manager introduced the report and outlined the key points included within.

Cabinet Members debated the report and in summary responses to questions raised included:

- It was advised that a Section 19 report was currently being finalised following an investigation, and working with Anglian Water to mitigate any future flood risks. This would remain flexible to address any further issues.
- Community engagement around the risk of flooding had increased, it was noted, including land owner responsibilities. This had been conducted both face to face and online and would continue in the future.
- It was noted that the table on page 273 of the agenda had West Ward down as river flooding. It was suggested that this should instead read Fletton and Woodston Ward. Officers would look into this.
- Comment was made that flooding experienced in the previous summer was due to the sheer volume of water.
- Officers confirmed that they were working to ensure that future developments address the possibility of higher rainfall and storm cells.
- It was noted that the Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document currently prescribed a number of mechanisms to mitigate the impact of such issues. This included an action plan which would be reviewed.
- Members were advised that funding was being sought to reduce the water level in the sewage system and reduce the risk of an overflow.
- Members were further advised that flooding on Bourges Boulevard was being investigated by officers in order to address any projects in the future.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

- a) Review Peterborough's updated Draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy;
- b) Accept the recommendation from the Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee and instruct officers to enter into a period of public consultation on the Draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy ahead of consideration by Council later this year.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The production and monitoring of the FMS were a statutory requirement and the existing FMS and associated action plan that were produced in 2015 required updating.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Wholesale review and rewrite of existing FMS – Rejected due to additional costs of external resource and significant amount of extra time required to deliver with potentially limited benefits from that process.

No review or update of existing FMS – Rejected due to the FMS and the need for its monitoring being a statutory requirement. The legislative environment in the flood risk and water sector was constantly changing and opportunities would be missed if this monitoring and update did not reflect that.

22. OUTCOME OF PETITIONS

The Cabinet received a report in relation to the outcome of petitions.

The purpose of this report was to update Cabinet on the progress being made in response to petitions submitted to the Council.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to note the actions taken in respect of petitions.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

As the petitions presented in this report had been dealt with by Cabinet Members or officers, it was appropriate that the action taken was report to Cabinet.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

There had been no alternative options considered.

Chairman
10.00am to 11:43pm
11 July 2022