

Budget Consultation 2023/24



...let us know what
you think...



Budget Consultation

2023/24

Contents

- Foreword from the Leader of the Council..... 3
- Peterborough’s facts and figures 4
- Our priorities 5
- Financial position 6
- The challenge from 2023/24 7
- Setting Council Tax 10
- Budget simulator feedback 11
- Place services..... 12
- People’s services..... 16
- Corporate services 21
- Our consultation..... 23

Alternative formats: If you require any of the consultation material in an alternative format or language, please contact communications@peterborough.gov.uk



Foreword from the **Leader of the Council**

Peterborough is a city of opportunity with a positive future and there is so much of which to be proud. But like every council, we face many challenges too – rising demand, reduced Government funding and the economic crisis which is pushing up the prices of many of our services.

To benefit the most from the opportunities that we have - and to overcome the many challenges - we must continue to move towards becoming a financially sustainable council. That means being able to deliver the services that our residents need with the money we have available.

We have made great progress this year which is why we are now able to show you our proposals for how we will deliver a balanced budget in 2023/24.

Each year the council spends around £190million on services for local people that range from social care and support for vulnerable families; to public protection, planning and economic growth; to libraries, highways and street cleaning; and many more services not listed here.

We know these services are highly valued by our communities but, as in recent years, we know we will have to transform services and make some difficult decisions to ensure resources continue to be prioritised and money is directed to where it is most needed.

The increasing cost of living is making it harder for many local people to make ends meet. We will continue to provide help for those residents who need it the most within the resources we have available, but the council is not immune to this crisis.

We've been working hard to meet our budget challenge for some time. We're reviewing all our contracts to make sure they're providing the services we need for the best possible price, we're looking at all our assets and making sure we use them efficiently and effectively while only keeping those we can afford and seeing how we can transform services to deliver them more efficiently.

This document sets out how we are looking to change the way we deliver services in the coming financial year to be able to balance our budget and move a step closer to becoming a financially sustainable council.

So please, take the time to tell us what you think.

Your feedback will help inform the decisions we make when councillors set the budget on 22 February 2023. Your responses are highly valued, and I'd like to sincerely thank you for playing your part.

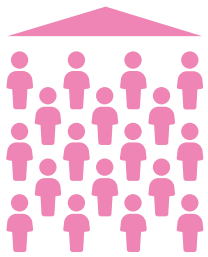
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wayne Fitzgerald'. The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

**Councillor Wayne Fitzgerald
Leader of Peterborough City Council**

Peterborough's facts and figures



Provisions have been made for a further **19,440 new homes** BY 2036



We're growing, we have a population of over 215,000
That's an increase of over **30,000 people** in the last 10 years

1200 homes have been built in the last 12 months

The local economy **GREW BY 24%** between 2015 and 2019



In 2021 there were **OVER 9,400 BUSINESSES** IN PETERBOROUGH

Over the last 10 years, there has been a

24%

increase in children under 15 years



PETERBOROUGH IS AMONG ONE OF THE TOP 15 CITIES for the highest number of business start-ups



Peterborough is home to **215,700 residents**

The largest proportion of homes fall into Bands A and B category (%).



The last financial year has seen a **14% increase** in the number of people of working age

supported by the Council with long-term care and support needs



As a unitary authority, we have **nearly 1900 statutory duties** and **over 130 service areas** spread across the council



Peterborough has a diverse and robust economy and **is one of the fastest growing cities in the UK**



More content



Our priorities

In October 2022 city council members signed off a new corporate strategy.

Sustainable Future City Council sets out how we will deliver long-term improvements and meet the changing needs of residents in the next three years. It is also the council's response to the geo-political, macro and socio-economic challenges being faced in the UK and locally in Peterborough.

Our City Priorities set out the proposed direction of travel for the council so that we can deliver our long-term vision for the region and our four priority outcomes. It is a positive vision for the city and one which will capitalise on the huge opportunities the city presents to us:

- **The Economy & Inclusive Growth** - maximising economic growth and prosperity for Peterborough as a city of opportunity in an inclusive and environmentally sustainable way, together with our partners and communities.
- **Our Places & Communities** – creating healthy and safe environments where people want to live, work, visit and play, enabled by effective community engagement and strong partnerships.
- **Prevention, Independence & Resilience** - help and support our residents early on in their lives and prevent them from slipping into crisis.
- **Supported by a Sustainable Future City Council** - adjust how we work, serve and enable, informed by strong data and insight capability and led by a culture of strong leadership.

Through delivering these priorities, our aim is to improve life in Peterborough and build a solid foundation for the city's future success.

The starting point is the challenge of finding significant savings over the coming years and to achieve financial sustainability – then, we can invest in our city's future. We will do this by delivering a new type of council, which will enable us to manage demand and help and support people before they reach crisis point, while finding new ways to tackle inequality in our communities by maximising inclusive, sustainable economic growth that benefits everyone.

When setting our budget, we will do so with our priorities in mind.

Financial position

Like all councils, we've faced increasing pressure on services and budgets for many years.

Census data shows that the city has grown at more than twice the national average for England and Wales over the past ten years with our population increasing by 17.5% to 215,700 (an increase of 32,100) while the total number of households has increased by 14.2% to 84,500 (an increase of 10,500).

The financial landscape which we are operating in has been constantly changing. Our rapidly rising population means that demand for services has increased faster than the average. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a lasting impact as we have seen significant spending pressures arising from built up demand and increased complexity of care packages.

Added to this, we also now face rising inflation, which is driving up the cost of delivering services. Like many households and businesses, the council faces increased energy costs and rising costs of pay for our own staff and those who deliver services on our behalf such as care workers.

At the same time the funding that we receive from Government and from Council Tax has not kept pace, with increasing demand for the services we provide.

We have always risen to the challenge, although this has required difficult decisions about our services, and with it, new ways of working.

We also know that there is now a large national budget deficit that is a result of the financial measures the Government implemented during the pandemic and more recently from their support to the cost-of-living crisis.

On 17 November the Government announced its Autumn Statement, with its key priorities being around stability, growth, and public services. Overall, it is fairly positive for Local Government with resources being directed to support households, businesses, the social care sector, and education.

The announcement also outlined an increase in the National Living Wage from £9.50 to £10.42, which will ensure pay is increasing in line with inflation for those in low paid jobs, but it is likely to increase the cost of delivering some of our front-line services such as social care.

Over the coming weeks we will be reviewing the detail to assess the full financial impact for the council.



The challenge from 2023/24

In July, Cabinet considered our forecast budget for 2023/24 alongside our expected income such as Council Tax, business rates and government funding and this identified a forecast budget gap of approximately £9.5million.

This was based on the latest funding and inflationary assumptions available at the time, however the economic picture then vastly changed with inflation and interest rates continuing to grow.

In October, due to unprecedented levels of inflation, a nationally agreed pay award for staff creating at least an additional £2million pressure and the council expecting to receive less than originally anticipated from its membership of the Cambridgeshire Business Rates Pool, we indicated that our financial challenge could be as high as £21.7 million. Although this forecast has now subsequently reduced.

However, this has not taken us by surprise, and we always knew that our financial position could become more challenging. We have been planning for it and developing strategies as early as possible to meet the very steep challenge.

We have been working closely with councillors as part of our cross-party Financial Sustainability Working Group, to develop budget saving ideas and explore ways to support the council to achieve financial sustainability.

Since December 2021 we have also been working with the Independent Improvement and Assurance Panel, who are experts in specific fields of local government to challenge, scrutinise and advise on our budget proposals to ensure they are robust and provide best value.

Managing inflation has been a crucial part of our plan, and we have taken steps to ensure we maintain a tight grip on these pressures, by:

- Insourcing the procurement team and using some additional external specialist procurement expertise.
- Reviewing all contracts to ensure they reflect best value and meet established needs.
- Reviewing all expenditure budgets, whilst at the same time maintaining a tight grip and control on expenditure.
- Establishing an inflation reserve to mitigate and smooth any immediate pressures.

In addition, our chief executive and his senior leadership team have been working closely with our cabinet and all members to identify ways that we can make savings and transform service delivery. This includes:

- Continuing to look for ways to reduce spend and get a better deal from those organisations we rely on to provide services, including our supply chain.
- Continuing to transform the way we deliver services, doing things differently in a way that improves outcomes and doing more for less or have somebody else doing it cheaper. We are bringing back in-house service delivery where it is in the best interests of the council to do so.

- Reducing our capital programme. Our capital receipts programme has reduced the risk of future interest rates exposures and our cost of borrowing by selling some of our assets.
- Stopping ‘non vital’ services or charging more - as part of this we must consider our statutory obligations to those who need our help and support the most.

These actions get us close to delivering a balanced budget in 2023/24, with work continuing to close the remaining budget gap of £2.6million. In the years that follow, the gap we face rises to £3.9million in 2024/25 and £4.2million in 2025/6.

It’s important to add that the council is not alone in its financial challenge, with many other local authorities reporting significant budget pressures next year and into the future.

However, as this document outlines, we have made significant progress with plans in place to almost meet our challenge, which will allow us to offset inflationary pressures, manage demand, continue to grow and develop the city and support those residents who need our help the most.

That said, the financial climate nationally is so unstable that we must continue our focus and indeed some of the plans we are outlining here may change in the coming weeks and months, prior to us setting the budget in February.

Our budget principles:

We have developed a set of budget principles which will underpin the council’s budget decisions and seek to limit the impact of budget cuts on the city’s most vulnerable residents

- **We’ll continue to manage budgets carefully**, with control on expenditure ensuring the best possible services and strive to obtain value for money for the taxpayer.
- **We’ll be responsible and strive to become a financially sustainable council** by developing a robust rolling three-year Medium Term Financial Strategy
- **We’ll produce a Medium Term Financial Strategy which supports our net zero carbon objectives** and helps us create a Council which is environmentally as well as financially sustainable
- **We’ll set a direction of travel to improve the council’s financial health and resilience** by increasing reserves balances and reducing our borrowing where appropriate. This will be outlined within our annual Reserves Policy and Capital Strategy



To achieve this we will:

- ✓ Fully consider the benefits of increasing Council Tax in line with the maximum referendum limit to ensure the council is best placed to continue providing the same range and quality of services.

- ✓ Continue to find alternative ways of providing services more efficiently and effectively by working jointly with partner organisations such as the health sector, the voluntary sector, local businesses, and other local authorities.

- ✓ Take every opportunity to maximise technology, digitalisation and transform working practices to make the council more efficient.

- ✓ Seek to generate additional income by reviewing our sales, fees, and charges, including those for discretionary services.

- ✓ Where possible, we will protect services that support the city's most vulnerable, including adults and children's social care services. However, some of our current services may stop; many will have to be delivered differently or reduced.

- ✓ A reduced budget will likely mean that the size and composition of our workforce will change; we'll treat our staff with respect, do all we can to retain staff through redeployment and retraining, to minimise compulsory redundancies.

- ✓ Seek to maximise income opportunities from commercial services and investments.

- ✓ Maintain a tight grip on our capital expenditure, by maximising grant income and prioritising schemes in line with our capital strategy principles - this will contribute towards reducing the council's total borrowing.

- ✓ Maximise the use and return from our estate by maximising the use and return on our assets.

- ✓ Scrutinise all requests for investment to ensure we maximise the return (financial benefits) and protect our reserves balances.

- ✓ Conduct an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for our budget proposals.

- ✓ Develop a process by which in the council's overarching budget setting process, wherever possible, spending and investment plans are focussed on enabling the Council to better achieve its corporate objective of achieving net zero carbon by 2030. We will also undertake Carbon Impact Assessments (CIA) of all major budget proposals.

- ✓ Conduct consultation on the tough choices we must make and be transparent with any stakeholder groups, groups of service users or staff who may be affected by any cut, reduction, or significant change in service provision, and explore with them other ways to provide the service.



Underpinning all of the above we will be **open and honest** about our financial position with our residents, businesses, and service users.

Setting Council Tax

The Government has traditionally set a maximum limit for Council Tax increases that can be introduced without holding a referendum. Last year this limit was 2.99%, which can be broken down into a 1.99% for general Council Tax and 1% for the Adult Social Care Levy.

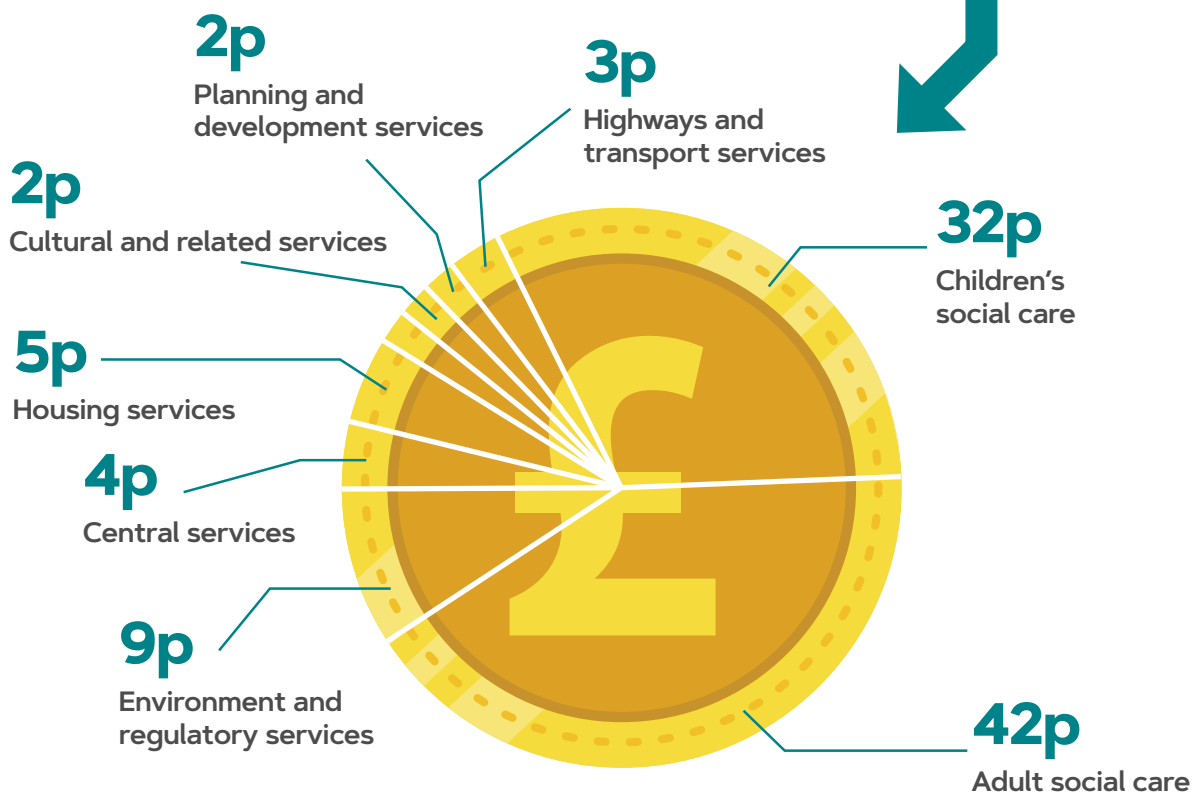
In the Autumn Statement outlined by the Chancellor on 17 November, it was announced that councils will be able to increase Council Tax up to 2.99% without holding a referendum. In addition, councils can charge an additional 2% Adult Social Care precept, giving a maximum increase of 4.99%.

In line with our Budget Principles, we'll fully consider the benefits of increasing Council Tax in line with the maximum referendum limit to ensure the council is best placed to continue providing the same range and quality of services.

An increase of 4.99% would add £75.43 per year (or £1.45 per week) to the city council element of the bill for a typical band D property and take the total city council element of Council Tax to £1,587.08 (or £30.43 per week).

Such an increase would raise £4.6m per year towards the council's rising costs.

2022/23		
	£m	%
Council Tax	91.0	50%
Business Rates	56.6	31%
Revenue Support Grant	10.8	6%
Other Grants	22.9	13%
Total	181.9	100%



This diagram shows how every pound of our funding is spent, with Council Tax being our biggest source of funding.

Budget simulator **feedback**

On 17 October we launched a budget simulator to give residents the opportunity to learn more about the breadth of services we provide and to have a say on where they think we should be focussing our spending and making savings.

The simulator closes on Monday 28 November 2022. At the time of writing Thursday 24 November, 181 people had completed the challenge with the following themes emerging:

... Of all the areas identified for savings and investment, education is the area that most respondents said they did not want to cut funding

... The average council tax rise agreed by residents was 5%

... Leave hedgerows and grass to grow longer

... We need to look at how much we spend on third parties

... More savings need to be found in adults and children's services

... It is difficult to balance the simulator because of the choices given which are not exhaustive - however a useful tool to see the pressures on the council and the difficulty of balancing the budget with the current service delivery.

... Growing the economy is important to attract better paid jobs and more housing. Others said that too much growth can be damaging for the city

✓ We have used the responses to the simulator in developing this document



Place services

Safer and Stronger Communities

Delivering services that help make communities safer and stronger is something which we know matters to people and has a direct impact on the quality of life for residents, businesses, and visitors to Peterborough.

We are in the middle of a set of social and economic challenges and the increasing cost of living is making it harder for many people to make ends meet. In addition, we know there are groups of people who need our support more than ever. For example, the increasing number of people experiencing domestic abuse and our new residents and communities. This includes asylum seekers who have been placed in the city by the Home Office just recently, as well as refugees who have arrived from the Ukraine, Afghanistan and Syria in recent years. We are so grateful to our many voluntary, community and faith sector partners, without whom the level of practical help and support we'd be able to offer these people would be far less significant.

Therefore, we continue to do all we can to help people who are struggling the most, including issuing grants via the Government's Household Support Fund to those in greatest need and to families to support with the cost of food during the school holidays.

We will also provide advice through our network of community hubs based across the city and continue to run and promote support schemes for residents, with several focussed on helping people struggling to pay for energy bills, such as the Local Energy Advice Partnership (LEAP).

In the coming year we plan to further this work by locating small teams of officers including housing, social care, adult skills, and others in community buildings to target support at people long before they reach crisis point. We know that if we can help people sooner it is better for them, and it reduces demand on council services.

Requests for help from people in housing crisis are rising because of the difficult economic climate, with national data suggesting there will be a 25% increase in the number of people coming to us at risk of becoming homeless.

In the coming year we will increase our efforts to work with residents who are in housing difficulty at the earliest possible opportunity, to prevent them becoming homeless in the first place. Where this is not possible and there are no other options, we will continue to provide accommodation for those who are homeless.

We also have a legal duty to ensure the safety of all privately rented housing in our city and are planning to increase our support for the private rented sector, which is a vital part of the city's housing stock. We cannot control the level of rental charged for such properties, but we can ensure the safety of properties and the quality of new builds. Therefore, we want to introduce a stronger regime to regulate the standards of private rented housing, through additional licensing requirements, taking enforcement action where necessary. In addition, we will increase our support for landlords and offer advice, particularly around managing difficult tenants.

In the coming year we will continue to focus our efforts on the city centre, making sure it is a place which is vibrant and where people feel and are safe. As part of this we will increase our efforts to make sure it is clean and attractive and will work with our partners, including the police, to continue tackling anti-social behaviour. We will make sure we are using our assets, such as Cathedral Square and the museum, in the best way possible.

Our focus will not just be on the city centre though; we plan to work closer with our partners to better solve neighbourhood problems. These are the issues that affect people's quality of life, and we will be looking at how we can work smarter to find solutions to issues.

Through Peterborough Limited, a company wholly owned by the council, we collect 7.15 million wheeled bins each year, and currently recycle or compost around 41% of the city's waste – or 18,000 tonnes. We maintain and clean over 1,685km of highway, pathways, cycleways, and pedestrianised areas and respond to around 12,000 reports of fly tipping and 2,000 requests for litter/dog foul clearance or bin emptying.

Like any organisation, Peterborough Limited is facing significant financial pressures because of rises in inflation and nationally agreed pay increases. To meet this increase, in the region of £1m, we plan to make savings where we can, for example reducing cleaning in council buildings. We also plan to work with Peterborough Limited to explore ways of working more closely together to address neighbourhood issues, and identify further efficiencies if we possibly can.

As a result of the uncertainty in the financial markets globally and the changing climate which is leading to more unusual weather patterns, for example extreme heat in the summer and a higher prevalence of torrential downpours, the council needs to be prepared to support its residents and to plan for emergency situations. We will continue to focus on emergency planning to ensure we are prepared as possible for those situations which are outside of our control.

Place and Prosperity

The past few years have been challenging for all towns and cities in the UK – the pandemic, followed by rising costs and inflation, have hit everyone hard.

However, Peterborough is fairing the storm and an explosion of growth is taking place in the city – one which will benefit us all. Cranes, scaffolding, and new buildings emerging on our skyline are a common sight – with plenty more currently being planned.

Growing the city creates opportunities for residents including better jobs, higher salaries, a better mix of housing and less deprivation. For the council it means more investment through business rates and council tax to fund services for residents.

In our Budget Simulator you told us that growing the economy is important to attract better paid jobs and more housing, however growth needs to be controlled and carefully managed.

In the coming year we plan to invest £1million to create a growth, regeneration, and economic development service to drive forward at pace our ambitious plans to increase the number of homes in our city, attract new businesses, create better jobs, and ensure that growth acts as a lever to address our inequalities.

It is also vital to the success of our economic growth and development that we have an adult skills service focused on providing opportunities for people to enter the workforce, or to increase their earnings through better employment. Our adult education service is delivered by City College Peterborough, and we plan to review the way we deliver the service in the city to ensure it is fully aligned to our growth and economic development targets.

We plan to change the way we deliver adult skills services in the city, by working differently through City College Peterborough and also Opportunity Peterborough, our economic regeneration arm, to produce a refreshed adult skills service.

Plans are already in progress to transfer Opportunity Peterborough back to the council. This will further enhance its focus locally and nationally to attract new businesses and developers to invest in the city, thereby generating employment opportunities, as well as the work with businesses to support them to succeed and expand.

A good mix of housing is essential for a growing city and therefore we will continue to plan for the city's housing needs to ensure there is the supply needed now and into the future – whether our residents are looking for one-bedroom apartments or larger family homes.

We will continue to support public sector grant funding and loan opportunities which support major projects in the city. For example, through the Government's Towns Fund, Peterborough is set to receive £22.9m and it has also been identified as a priority area for investment as part of the Government's Levelling Up Fund. This funding will create additional leisure and educational opportunities for residents and pay for new infrastructure including a pedestrian bridge connecting the Embankment with Fletton Quays.

The council's culture and leisure services (gyms, swimming pools, libraries, the museum, and Flag Fen) are currently delivered by Peterborough Limited. Although leisure performance is improving following the pandemic, it remains a challenging landscape and at best we expect services to be cost neutral. Therefore, we will look to change the delivery arrangements of our culture and leisure portfolio, moving many services into a charitable organisation achieving savings of around £1.6m via business rate relief and VAT relief on income.

Infrastructure and Climate

Providing the right infrastructure is crucial as the city grows, including a good network of roads, footways, and cycleways.

We maintain and develop the highway network which includes over 930km of roads, 24,000 streetlights, 366 structures (like bridges) as well as footways, cycle paths, traffic signs and signals, bollards, and drainage gullies.

This includes carrying out emergency work to repair potholes, broken paving, streetlights, and cleaning gullies to keep roads draining well. Over the winter months we grit main routes to ensure people can get around safely.

We operate school crossing patrols, promote cycling and walking and deal with issues such as speeding and parking problems where needed.

Our highways services are provided by Milestone, and we will be reviewing this contract to make sure it is delivering the services we need in the most cost-effective way. This is part of a wider piece of work to ensure all council contracts are providing best value for residents.

We will also use new powers to tackle parking offences such as driving in a pedestrianised area and driving through a no entry sign, in selected areas of the city, with the potential to increase the number of areas if successful. Previously moving traffic offences could only be enforced by the police, but in May 2022 the government enacted part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 which allows local authorities in England (outside London) to apply for powers to enforce moving traffic offences for the first time.

We will look to use automatic number plate recognition cameras in council car parks; based on other areas of the country, we are predicting an increase in car park income of at least 15%. This will also free up enforcement officer time to focus on other areas of the city and its neighbourhoods.

The council has also committed to become a net zero authority by 2030. Reducing our carbon emissions will bring a number of vital benefits for our city including reducing fuel poverty, improving physical and mental health, improving air quality, stimulating our economy, and providing jobs to the local area.

To make our city net-zero carbon every community group, business and resident has an essential role to play, and we are in the process of developing a Peterborough-wide Climate Change Action Plan. This work will continue into 2023/24.

We will also invest in a range of measures to improve energy efficiency and cut carbon across our buildings, such as installing more solar panels, and increasing take-up of solar and other technologies across communities, for example, through group buying schemes to enable mass roll-out of solar and other technologies in communities.

Every 1% increase in recycling achieves a £66k benefit to the council – money that can be used to provide services. Therefore, we will concentrate on improving our recycling rates by investing in dedicated education and engagement officers who will work directly with our communities to improve recycling rates. Evidence from across the country shows that targeted education in areas where recycling rates are poor, or where there are high levels of waste cross-contamination, leads to direct increases in recycling rates.

There are also a number of areas where the council expects to increase its income, which can be used to provide services. This includes Westcombe Engineering, the council service providing employment to people with learning or physical disabilities, and the Energy Recovery Facility operated by Viridor.



People's services

Adult Services

We aim to help and support our residents early on in their lives and prevent them from slipping into crisis by ensuring they receive the right level of support at the right time, in the right place and by the right person.

The aim is to keep people as independent and healthy as possible and prevent or delay the need for long-term care and support, which is both better for the individual and less expensive than the alternative. This is delivered through a range of different services:

- **Early intervention and prevention** – supporting people early with targeted information and advice and low-level and community support, for example targeted short-term reablement support at home, or equipment that can help people manage at home.
- **Long-term care and support which is personalised and keeps people connected to their communities**, for example regular care coming into the home or residential/nursing care placements.
- **Adults at risk are safeguarded from harm in ways that meet their desired outcomes.** This year we have responded to an average of 232 safeguarding concerns each month.
- **Supporting people with care and support when they come out of hospital.** This includes designing, delivering, and commissioning localised, person-centred, and sustainable care services to meet their needs. This year, we are supporting an average of 175 discharges from hospital each month.

Adult services face challenges including rising inflation, population growth and the ongoing impacts of the pandemic. This means we are seeing more demand on services and people having higher levels of need when they come to us for help. This year, we have received an average of 3,414 contacts per month to our adult early help team, a 4% increase on last year.

We also support 52 people a month with short term reablement to recover from a hospital stay or illness, and are currently supporting 2,031 people with long term packages of care.

Our focus in future years is to embed further opportunities to deliver more prevention and intervention through the following areas:

- **Increased Technology Enabled Care:** TEC involves using equipment to support people with their care and support needs. This could be things such as Lifeline alarms, medication reminders and fall sensors. By increasing the use and range of TEC we can increase people's confidence to live independently and delay the need for more costly long-term provision of care.
- **Reablement:** This delivers short term, goal-oriented support for up to six weeks to help people regain their independence when they have been in hospital. We will recruit more frontline workers which will enable us to expand the service to support more people in their own homes, preventing the escalation of need for long-term care which is more costly.

- **Direct Payments:** These enable people to plan and pay for their care and support directly, with a financial contribution from the council. Reviewing processes and enhancing the range of options available for people to access Direct Payments will enable them to benefit from greater choice at more affordable costs.

Children's Services

We have a statutory duty to support vulnerable young people and their families across Peterborough with the key aim of helping children to meet their development goals and supporting their mental health and emotional needs.

The service has faced several challenges in recent years, particularly because of Covid-19 and most recently the cost-of-living crisis. As a result, demand for our services has risen and we expect this trend to continue.

We provide an extensive fostering service across Peterborough, helping young people who are in vital need of support to find loving homes and the best opportunities to develop. Like many fostering agencies, we have experienced a decrease in public interest in fostering since March 2022, despite the need to find homes for local children and young people remaining high.

We continue to look to increase the numbers of council fostering placements, enabling us to reduce the numbers of children placed in more expensive agency placements. We are currently appealing for new foster carers to come forward and will also be reviewing our service offer to foster carers. Changes might include helping foster carers to work more flexibly and providing them with additional support.

There is a continuing commitment to protect and promote services for children and families, and we will also benefit from the significant central government grants being offered to promote the development of Family Hubs and drug and alcohol treatment services over the next three financial years.

We have recently reviewed our family safeguarding structure and deleted existing vacancies. We have embedded a new operating model in Peterborough, resulting in low numbers of children subject to child protection planning and low numbers of children being placed into care.

In the coming year we want to continue with our commitment to reunite children in care with their birth families, where it is safe to do so, in a more-timely way.

We operate a positive behaviour service which works with children who have complex additional needs and disabilities, as well as prevention and early help services, providing advice and support to children and families to help keep children at home in a safe, loving family environment. This includes support to children with additional needs such as autism or ADHD and young people at risk of sexual or criminal exploitation or becoming homeless. In the coming year we plan to increase income for some services for children with complex needs.

We will continue to focus on improving the recruitment and retention of staff, including strengthening pathways into social care as a profession. A review of the management structure in Children's Services is also underway to ensure we have the right skills in the right place.

Over the next three years an ambitious transformation programme for children's social care will be developed, focussing on key areas including our workforce development, fostering and adoption and replacing current systems.

Education

We have a statutory responsibility to provide education for every young person in schools, colleges, and further education locally, and our key aim is supporting them to achieve expected national standards. Our Budget Simulator challenge told us that Education is the area you least want to see funding reduce.

There are currently 63 primary schools within the authority area, along with 15 secondary, eight special schools and three further education colleges. As of May 2022, there were a total of 40,166 pupils in education locally.

Our education service has faced some unprecedented challenges in recent times, most notably working to support schools and colleges throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, which stretched resources to the very maximum.

A key challenge remains, providing places for pupils in light of Peterborough's rapid population growth. Three new schools were opened for the current academic year, but it is likely that additional places will have to be found in future. Secondary and Special Educational Needs (SEND) numbers are expected to increase for the next five years, whilst there has been a fall in the number of annual births, which is resulting in a lower demand for early years and younger primary school places.

The cost-of-living crisis and austerity in national funding is likely to be a huge issue moving forward. Next year, 2023-24 is the final year of a three-year settlement and whilst it has an increase in funding, it is not reflecting the cost pressures of the sector. We are currently waiting for the October School Census, and we have been building budgets throughout November.

Despite these challenges, we are seeing some very encouraging progress in our schools and significant rises in several league tables. In the national 'progress 8' table which measures how far young people progress in their education across secondary education for eight subjects, the improvement by 0.24 is a substantial rise. It is also the first time Peterborough has had a positive progress 8 outcome. Out of the 151 local authorities, this places Peterborough as 38th nationally, up from 107 previously.

We have built strong relationships with all our schools and colleges, proactively setting up head teacher groups to ensure regular dialogue and effective problem solving. Moving forwards, we are working on several measures to help drive financial efficiencies and manage increasing demand.

A transformation programme of work for the Home to School Transport service is being developed, with the aim of providing more cost-effective transport. This will include a review of our transport routes, sourcing volunteer drivers and developing independent travel training along with other strategies to manage this significant area of pressure.

Meanwhile, our school improvement services has been streamlined, including a removal of school intervention funding.

Following the national reorganisation of secondary schools in 2007, the council has a historic legacy pension liability for teachers' dependents. Due to the passage of time, the number of eligible dependents has decreased meaning the financial liability to the council has reduced.

There has also been investment in the Statutory Assessment Team (SAMS) and Educational Psychology Team (EPS) to ensure capacity to respond to significant increases in demand.

The department's current IT system will be replaced, maximising opportunities for digitalisation to deliver leaner process efficiencies.

Public Health

We have a duty to improve and protect the health of everyone who lives in Peterborough. More broadly this is about living for longer in good health, reducing inequalities in health and making sure that children have good outcomes that lead to a long and healthy life.

We commission services that support healthier lifestyles, identify issues early and prevent problems escalating which includes:

- School nurses and health visitors (Healthy Child Programme) – last year we funded approximately 8,000 visits to children and families by health visitors. This program enables all families with a new baby to get support to improve health and wellbeing and identify any issues early. There were nearly 5,000 contacts with young people through Chathealth (a confidential text messaging service for children and young people aged 11-19) and approximately 4,000 calls to our Healthy Child Programme (0-19) duty desk in 2021/22.
- Help to stop smoking – we helped 432 people quit smoking last year.
- Improving sexual and reproductive health through information and support – in 2021/22, there were a total of 8,899 sexual health clinic attendances.
- Reducing drug and alcohol misuse – There were a total of 1,522 adults and 136 young people aged 12-18 who used services during 2021/22.
- NHS health checks – for people aged between 40 and 74 which look at an individual's general health including their weight, blood pressure and cholesterol. The NHS health check is designed to spot early signs of stroke, kidney disease, heart disease, type 2 diabetes or dementia.
- Weight management – 273 people lost 5% or more of their weight through a Tier 2 Adult Weight management course last year

It is also important to keep investing in public health as it not only provides health benefits to those who engage with us, but this in turn reduces pressure on other public services and saves money in the long term. This is especially important as Peterborough gets 39% less funding per head for public health services than comparable areas (£54 per head compared to £75 per head).

Many of our residents – across all ages, but particularly in deprived areas – benefit from these public health services which will be needed even more in the future due to an increase in our population. For instance, there has been a 24% increase in children under 15 over the past 10 years, many with a high level of need, for example, 38.5% of our Year 6 children are overweight or obese.

Importantly, Peterborough has been identified as one of 75 local authorities to receive funding for Family Hubs which support families from conception, through the child's early years, to later childhood, up to the age of 19 (or 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities). This is a real opportunity for Peterborough as Family Hubs provide support services early and in a joined up-way (with the NHS and voluntary sector), when families need them.

They can support all families but they are designed to be particularly accessible to families from lower socio-economic groups, families who have special education needs or a disability, or those from minority groups who are experiencing exclusion.

We are all dealing with the impact that Covid had on health, especially on long term conditions and mental wellbeing. However, we also learnt a lot during the Covid pandemic.

With that learning we are making sure we continue to work differently both with the council and with partners - keeping the focus on prevention and early intervention despite financial challenges and using data, evidence and intelligence (international, national and local) in a more proactive way to improve people's health.

The Health and Wellbeing Integrated Care Strategy has highlighted three main goals by 2030

- ✓ Increase the number of years people spend in good health
- ✓ Reduce inequalities in preventable deaths before the age of 75
- ✓ Achieve better outcomes for our children

How do we do this?

- ✓ By making sure our children are ready to start school and are prepared for their lives after they finish education
- ✓ By creating an environment to give people the opportunity to be as healthy as can be
- ✓ By reducing poverty through better employment, skills and housing
- ✓ Promoting early intervention and prevention around mental health and wellbeing.

This will be delivered through working with partners and co-production which is where we deliver solutions alongside those we are trying to help.



Corporate Services

There are a number of essential professional support services the council needs to keep it operating effectively and they provide vital support to services across the council to allow them to function.

For example, the council's finance team ensures there is an effective system of financial control to manage budgets, monitor spending and is responsible for ensuring the council prepares statutory accounts - something it is legally required to do. It also prepares the Medium-Term Financial Strategy which sets out how the council plans to spend its money over the next three years to deliver council priorities.

The legal service provides legal advice to the council's departments and to councillors when making their decisions and represents the council in court, as well as taking legal action on behalf of the council such as trading standards and fly-tipping prosecutions.

The HR and Development function assists in delivering its corporate strategy and objectives by supporting change, effectively recruiting and developing people and managing their performance as well as ensuring our policies and processes are compliant with employment legislation, easy to understand and supportive. Health & Safety also sits within this function and provides an advisory service to all council employees to ensure we are compliant.

In the coming year, we will be redesigning our finance, HR, and legal teams to make sure they are structured in a way that provides best value and are aligned to our new corporate strategy. We know that HR is an area that has been cut too far in the past, so we will be investing in our HR service, with benchmarking for this area and a review of the level of work dictating the need for extra resource.

As part of our Improvement Plan, a review of all the council's contracts has taken place to ensure they are providing value for money and meeting the council's needs. As a result, the procurement service moved back in house on 1 November.

We have started to develop an Annual Procurement Plan which will provide a greater focus on the council's key areas of spend and on ensuring the council is spending money in the right way, for example making sure the services we procure are the service we need for the best possible price.

In addition, in June we gave notice on a 10-year joint venture agreement with NPS - Norfolk Property Services, which provided the council with a range of services including estate and facilities management. These services will be provided in-house from June 2023, allowing us greater oversight of the property portfolio.

We will also develop a new Asset Management Plan, aligned with our capital expenditure plans. This plan will formalise the approach we are now taking, which is to invest in assets which support our Corporate Plan and dispose of those that don't, thereby reducing our capital programme and borrowing costs.

Our IT and Digital Services are largely invisible to members of the public, apart from the website, however, they are essential and underpin the delivery of all front-line services. Everything that staff do requires access to IT in a secure and compliant manner. In the coming year we will be refreshing our IT and Digital Strategy to ensure it is aligned with the council's priorities.

Our Communications Team has been a shared service with Cambridgeshire County Council since January 2020. In July the council's Employment Committee agreed to appoint a dedicated Head of Communication for Peterborough and this person is now in post.

This ending of the shared service creates a saving for the council. A redesign of the communications team will be needed so it can meet the needs of the organisation and align itself with the new corporate priorities, whilst looking for opportunities for continued joint working.

In addition, our Constitutional and Democratic Services team will continue to support with the organisation of around 80 public meetings each year and the organisation of civic events, such as Remembrance events, and flag raising ceremonies.

Our Electoral Services will be responsible for running the local elections in May which will include managing and publishing an up-to-date and accurate register of voters so anybody entitled to vote can do so.



Our Consultation

We want to hear the opinions of residents, partner organisations, businesses, and other interested parties as part of the budget setting process.

People will be able to give their opinions by completing an online survey on the city council website www.peterborough.gov.uk/budget

Hard copies can be requested by emailing communications@peterborough.gov.uk.

The consultation will close at midnight on 8 January 2023.

Our Joint Scrutiny Committee will consider the council’s budget and your feedback on 23 January 2023 in addition to Cabinet on 13 February 2023.

- 1** Our Sustainable Future City Council document sets out our priorities for the next three years.
To what extent do you agree with this approach?

Strongly Agree
 Agree
 Slightly Disagree
 Strongly Disagree
 Not Sure

- 2** One of the options to help us protect and invest in services is to increase Council Tax.
To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should increase Council Tax?

Strongly Agree
 Agree
 Slightly Disagree
 Strongly Disagree
 Not Sure

- 3** We spend half our net budget on adults and children’s social care services.

Children’ social care services support children in the greatest need – children who are disabled, who have to be protected from harm or need to be looked after in residential or foster placements.

Adult social care provides support to older people, and to adults with either physical or learning disabilities, or physical or mental illnesses.

How important is it to you that we continue to prioritise spending in these areas?

Very important
 Fairly important
 Not very important
 Not important at all
 Not Sure

- 4 The council works hard to recruit foster carers but with the number of children needing placements being greater than our number of carers, we have to use private fostering agencies, placing children away from the local area.

What could the council do to make fostering a more attractive offer for residents?

- 5 National data suggests that there could be a 25% increase in the number of people at risk of becoming homeless.

Do you have ideas as to how the council could better support residents to avoid them becoming homeless?

- 6 The council has launched a network of community hubs to help those who are struggling with the cost-of-living crisis.

What services would you benefit from being able to access at these hubs?

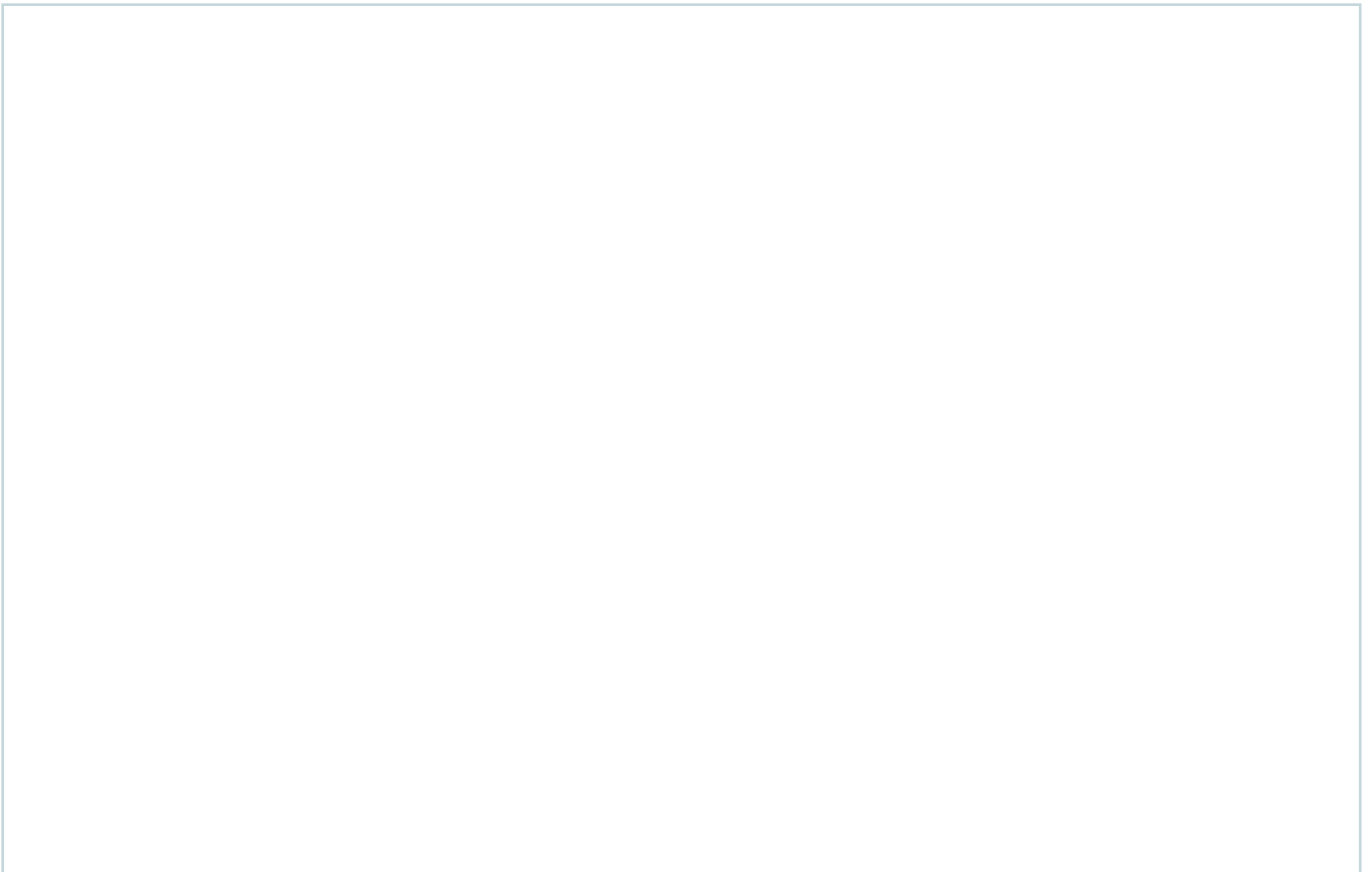
- 7 We are committed to helping Peterborough become a net zero carbon city over the next few years and will be launching an action plan to help us get there. We can't deliver this on our own though - everyone needs to play their part.

What ideas do you have for things you and your community can do differently to help achieve this target? What support do you think you would need from the council?

8 What ideas do you have for how the council could reduce spending?



9 What ideas do you have for how the council could generate income?



10 Do you have any other comments to make about the council’s priorities or any other aspect of the council’s spending, service delivery or this Budget Consultation?

i We are asking the following questions so that we can check that the response to our survey is representative of Peterborough. The information won’t be used to identify you in any way. We don’t ask for any information that will enable us to identify you.

You can find out more about how we use personal data here
www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/council-data/corporate-privacy-notice

So that we can check this survey is representative of Peterborough overall, please complete the following questions. Please note that all questions are optional – you do not have to respond.

Are you?

<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer another term
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Please indicate your age range:

<input type="checkbox"/> Under 18	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 25-34	<input type="checkbox"/> 35-44
<input type="checkbox"/> 45-54	<input type="checkbox"/> 55-59	<input type="checkbox"/> 60-64	<input type="checkbox"/> 65-69
<input type="checkbox"/> 70-79	<input type="checkbox"/> 80 or over	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say	

Which of the following best describes you?

<input type="checkbox"/> Employed full time	<input type="checkbox"/> Employed part time	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-employed	<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed actively seeking work
<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed actively seeking work	<input type="checkbox"/> Full time student over 18	<input type="checkbox"/> Full time student under 18	<input type="checkbox"/> Stay at home parent
<input type="checkbox"/> Retired	<input type="checkbox"/> Carer	<input type="checkbox"/> Unable to work	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say

Do you work in the Peterborough City Council area?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
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Can you give us your home postcode?

We would like this to know that you live in Peterborough or visit the city.

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
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What is your ethnic group?

<input type="checkbox"/>	White English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British Gypsy or Irish Traveller Any other white background
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed / multiple ethnic groups / White and Black Caribbean / White and Black African White and Asian Any other mixed / multiple ethnic background
<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian / Asian British / Indian / Pakistani / Bangladeshi/ Chinese Any other Asian background
<input type="checkbox"/>	Black / African / Caribbean / Black BritishAfricanCaribbean Any other Black / African / Caribbean background
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other ethnic group / Any other ethnic group

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey



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