

**MINUTES OF THE GROWTH, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT 7.00PM, ON
TUESDAY 18 JULY 2023
BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOMS, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

Committee Members Present: Councillors Iqbal (Chair), M Jamil (Vice-Chair), Asif, M Farooq, Fenner, J R Fox, Knight, Sharp, Thulbourn, Warren and Wiggin and Independent Co-opted Members Parish Councillors Ormston and Young.

Officers Present: Adrian Chapman, Executive Director Place and Economy
Rob Hill, Service Director: Housing and Communities
Jim Newton, Service Director Infrastructure and Environment
James Collingridge, Head of Highways and Transport
Neal Byers, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Representative
Charlotte Cameron, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Councillor Simons, Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Climate Change

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Knight.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

There were no declarations received.

3. MINUTES OF GROWTH RESOURCES AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 7 MARCH 2023

The minutes of the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 7 March 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. CALL IN OF ANY CABINET, CABINET MEMBER OR KEY OFFICER DECISION

No call ins were received.

5. APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS 2023/2024

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee received a report in relation to the appointment of Co-opted Members in accordance with the Council's Constitution Part 3, Section 4 – Overview and Scrutiny Functions.

The purpose of the report was to seek approval from the Committee to appoint Parish Councillors Mark Ormston and Terrance Young as a Non-Voting Co-opted Members for the municipal year 2023/2024.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer introduced the report and explained that the nominations for Parish Council Co-opted Members had been put forward by the Parish Council Liaison Committee and that the appointments would be reviewed annually.

The Committee unanimously agreed to the appointments of Parish Councillors Mark Ormston and Terrance Young as non-voting Co-opted Members for the municipal year 2023/24.

Members noted that the Parish Councillors were an asset to have on the Committee and the Senior Democratic Services Officer outlined the co-option selection process.

The Chair welcomed the Co-opted Members who were in attendance and invited them to join the committee for the rest of the meeting.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Appoint Parish Councillor Mark Ormston as a Co-opted Member with no voting rights to represent the rural area for the municipal year 2023/2024. Appointment to be reviewed annually at the beginning of the next municipal year.
2. Appoint Parish Councillor Terrance Young as a Co-opted Member with no voting rights to represent the rural area for the municipal year 2023/2024. Appointment to be reviewed annually at the beginning of the next municipal year.

6. PETERBOROUGH STATION QUARTER REDEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee received a report in relation to the status of the Peterborough Station Connectivity and Enhancements Project. The purpose of the report was to provide an update on the projects process and outline the use of funding.

The Service Director Infrastructure and Environment introduced the report and key points raised included:

This project was a huge opportunity for Peterborough and would be led through a partnership approach. There had been focused consultation with a number of stakeholders to make sure there was as wide of feedback as possible. The Council had appointed world leading experts to review how the Station Quarter worked and provide ideas for how the funding could be used to improve it.

The Officer highlighted some elements of the approach which included that the station was only one sided, the need for the consolidation of car parking, a move of the maintenance delivery unit for National Rail and that the public realm around the existing station would be reviewed.

An Officer level board had been set up which included colleagues from across the council, National Rail, London Northeastern Railway (LNER) and Anglian Ruskin University Peterborough (ARUP).

The business case would be outlined by the end of 2023 and a full strategic outline would be delivered in 2024.

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

- Members referred to accessibility issues in the city centre and were advised that the Officers were alive to the issues, and they were a key driver in the development of the project.
- Members queried where the multiple underpasses were, and the Officer clarified that there was one central underpass with various directions which were difficult to navigate as a first-time visitor.
- Members were advised that a bridge into the Queensgate car park was a route that was available.
- There were further opportunities to make changes to make North Westgate more attractive.
- Members were advised that Officers looked to consult with as many people as possible and would be happy to take suggestions.
- Members were concerned with accessibility issues and asked Officers to consult with various disability groups.
- Members were advised that the work of the Cycling and Walking Task and Finish Group would be considered in the development of the framework as new policies and strategies were firmed up.
- Members noted that Lewis Banks, Transport and Environment Manager sat on the officer board.
- Members referred to air pollution and the proximity to schools and asked what steps were being taken to alleviate the issue. Members were advised that plans would intercept traffic and the anticipated outcome would see improved air quality through the reduction of queuing traffic.
- Members were advised that the report contained information of LNER's financial contributions to the development programme.
- Network Rail's assumption was that passenger demand would continue to be strong and the Officer highlighted that Croydon to King's Cross was slower than the Peterborough to King's Cross.
- Members noted that this would be a viable long-term project for the train operator and Network Rail.
- Members noted that no concerns regarding the plan had been raised by any stakeholders.
- Members raised concerns regarding accessibility and asked Officers to consider disability as a number one priority.
- The Officer highlighted that opportunities had been explored through model journeys to and from the station so that policies were aligned to maximise potential.
- Members expressed the importance of this opportunity and the importance of getting it right.
- Members queried why there was no mention of Taxis in the report given the importance of the taxi rank at the station. Members were advised that the role of the taxi rank would be reviewed.
- Members were advised that the bus strategy and the station quarter redevelopment would interchange with each other but improvement to bus services was beyond the scope of the funding for this project.
- Members referred to the high-level timeline on page 17 and requested a briefing note that outlined each stage of fund allocation.

The following recommendation was made by Councillor John Fox and seconded by Councillor Jamil, that this council via their individual group leaders, select councillors who are passionate about and have knowledge of various disability issues, to be a part of an active consulting group working with those planning the Station Quarter. Also working alongside with various other recognised disability groups within Peterborough. A vote was taken on the recommendation from Councillor John Fox and was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED**.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Offer challenge and scrutiny to the current position of the Peterborough Station Quarter Levelling Up Fund 2 (LUF2) project and next steps to progress.

The Committee also requested that Officers provide a briefing note on the high-level timeline for the Station Enhancement and Connectivity project, detailing the funding and steps for each phase.

RECOMMENDATION

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that this council via their individual group leaders, select councillors who are passionate about and have knowledge of various disability issues, to be a part of an active consulting group working with those planning the Station Quarter. Also working alongside with various other recognised disability groups within Peterborough.

7. PASSENGER TRANSPORT

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee received a report in relation to Passenger Transport.

The purpose of the report was for the Committee to consider and make comments as it sees fit in respect of the Council's and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's (CPCA's) future plans for passenger transport provisions.

The Head of Highways and Transport and the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Climate Change accompanied by a Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Representative introduced the report and key points raised included:

The report provided an overview of the strategic projects being undertaken, an update on the bus strategy and an update on the bus service improvement plan.

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

- Members were advised that the team had looked at potential sites in the city for the new bus depot and regular meetings with the CPCA had been held to progress the project.
- Members noted that Peterborough was significantly different to other cities and that services were performing reasonably well.
- There were future governance models within franchising in order to provide connectivity to the communities who needed it.
- The Cabinet Member advised that the CPCA were looking at other authorities for guidance on a franchise investment model.
- Members queried the uptake of the £2 bus fare and were advised that there was no specific data for that scheme but there had been an uplift of 7-8% in journeys.
- Members were cautioned that there were a variety of factors that could contribute to that uplift.
- Members were concerned about the services in rural areas and were advised that the CPCA had reviewed the use of school transport as an alternative.

- Members noted that the use of electric buses or biofuels had not been included within the report and were advised that it was part of the plan for the new depot, but nothing had been finalised.
- Work had been undertaken to understand customer journeys to support the business case for franchising as there was a need to understand the financial viability of the network.
- Members were advised that the data was commercially sensitive and could not be shared,
- Members referred to the duplication of services and were advised that the purpose of the bus depot review was to make proactive decision on the improvement of the network.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Consider, and make comments as it sees fit, in respect of the Council's and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's (CPCA) future plans for passenger transport provisions.

The Committee also requested that Officers share the passenger transport strategies with all Parish Council Clerks so that the Parish Councils are properly consulted.

8. END OF YEAR CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee received a report in relation to the End of Year Corporate Performance Report.

The purpose of the report was to provide an update and to provide the direction of travel on the council's corporate performance in line with our priority outcomes as set out in the Sustainable Future City Council Strategy 2022-25.

The Executive Director Place and Economy introduced the report and key points raised included:

The report mirrored the Corporate Strategy that Full Council had adopted and outlined the four main priorities alongside the three outcomes for each. The Officer presented the overarching report and would take questions back if they could not be answered.

The Council had developed four portfolio boards that aligned with the corporate priorities which were led by senior officers and had cross council representation. There were five main projects to focus on over the next twelve months that would make the biggest difference to the Council and its residents.

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

- Members referred to the housing of Ukrainian Refugees and queried what had been learnt. The Officer advised that Peterborough had stepped up and supported various displacements and the pressure on housing had been mitigated by the national scheme.
- There were future pressures that would need to be considered as the need for independent housing increased.
- Members noted that there had not been significant community tensions and Peterborough had a strong record for inclusivity.

- Members referred to the rise in referrals of domestic violence and were advised that there was a fine line between reporting an increase as a good or bad thing. There were many factors that influenced underreporting, but an increase did mean more people were coming forward.
- Members were advised that there had been a rise in one community and the team brought on board an independent advisor who understood the culture and spoke their language.
- Members were reassured that the team were in the best position to support and improve awareness.
- Members referred to workforce capacity issues and the well-publicised health and social care capacity concerns. Members were advised that this was an issue in Peterborough and that a significant number of agency workers had been brought in to support the workforce.
- The Executive Director advised that there was a project that related to workforce that investigated how to recruit the best people and build a comprehensive training programme.
- Members requested that the city council workforce programme was brought to a future meeting.
- Members commended the report and thanked Officers for their time.
- Members noted that some sectors did not contain challenges and were advised that the report was a version that looked at describing the headlines. There would be a more granular report to follow with a detailed view of activity from across the council.
- Members were advised of two pieces of work that supported the housing need of the city. The development of the refreshed local plan and a new housing strategy.
- The Officers also referred to the extensive transformation programme that would best support the delivery of housing development.
- Members raised concerns on the time it takes for a planning application to be heard and resolved. Members were advised that planning data was a concern but there would be improvements once the team was at full recruitment.
- Members noted the positive progress in education and the Council had done well to track school place demand. However, there would be a continued increase in demand and senior managers had worked to create a stronger relationship between growth, planning and school place planning.
- Members were advised that there were clear expectation of the local plan and Officers were encouraged by the conversations that had taken place.
- There was a sharp focus on skills at entry level and there would be continued focus on the opportunities to upskill.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Notes the End of Year Corporate Performance Report.

The Committee also requested that:

- Officers provide them Committee with the number of agency staff working in the Health and Social Care teams.
- the portfolio board's city council workforce programme be bought to the committee.
- Officers provide a briefing note on the recent data and work around upskilling within the city.
- Officers liaise with the Senior Democratic Services Officer on the pathway for bringing the portfolio board reports to scrutiny.

9. REVIEW OF 2022/2023 AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2023/2024

The Senior Democratic Services Officer presented the report which considered items presented in 2022/2023 to the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee and looked at the work programme for the new municipal year 2023/24 to determine the Committee's priorities. Members also noted the Terms of Reference for the Committee.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Considers relevant items which were presented to the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee during 2022/2023 and makes recommendations on the future monitoring of these items where necessary.
2. Notes the Recommendations Monitoring Report attached at Appendix 1 and considers if further monitoring of the relevant recommendations made by the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee during 2022/2023 municipal year is required.
3. Determines its priorities and approves the draft work programme for 2023/2024 attached at Appendix 2.
4. Notes the Terms of Reference for this Committee as set out in Part 3, Section 4, Overview and Scrutiny Functions attached at Appendix 3 and in particular paragraph 2.1 Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

10. FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Senior Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which included the latest version of the Council's Forward Plan of Executive Decisions containing decisions that the Leader of the Council, the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members would make during the forthcoming month. Members were invited to comment on the plan and where appropriate, identify any relevant areas for inclusion in the Committee's Work Programme.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the current Forward Plan of Executive Decisions and **RESOLVED** to note the report.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee was noted as being the 14 September 2023.

CHAIR
Meeting began at 7:00pm and ended at 8:47pm

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