

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD WEDNESDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2023  
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

**THE MAYOR – COUNCILLOR SANDFORD**

**Present:**

Councillors Ahmed, Jackie Allen, Steve Allen, Asif, Ayres, Barkham, Bi, Bisby, Andrew Bond, Sandra Bond, Casey, Cereste, Cole, Day, Dowson, Elsey, Mohammed Farooq, Saqib Farooq, Fenner, Fitzgerald, Judy Fox, John Fox, Harper, Haseeb, Hemraj, Hiller, Hogg, Howard, Hussain, Iqbal, Jamil, Jones, Khan, Knight, Lane, Mahmood, Nawaz, Perkins, Ray, Rush, Sabir, Sainsbury, Sandford, Seager, Sharp, Simons, Skibsted, Stevenson, Strangward, Thulbourn, Trust, Tyler, Warren, Wiggin

**48. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Casey, Councillor Coles, Councillor Over, Councillor Qayyum, Councillor Rangzeb and Councillor Shaheed.

**49. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Wiggin declared that in respect of the Motion from Councillor Fenner under item 12 of the agenda, he currently worked for the Passport Office which is part of the Home Office. As action was requested in the Motion from the Home Office, he would not be taking part in the debate or voting on the Motion.

Ms Adesuwa Omoregie declared that for item 13e on the agenda, Appointment of the Interim Monitoring Officer, she would not be taking part in consideration of this item and would be leaving the room.

Ms Rachel Edwards declared that she would be leaving the room for item 13g on the agenda, Appointment of Statutory Scrutiny Officer and would not take part in the consideration of this item.

**50. a) Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 June 2023**

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 26 July 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record.

**b) Minutes of the Public Meeting held on 31 August 2023**

The public minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 31 August 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### 51. Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor introduced the Mayor's Announcement report, outlining the recent civic events attended by the Mayoral Party, and upcoming events, including:

- His attendance at the annual Black History month celebration and Diwali events.
- His officiating at the start of the Great Eastern Run.
- His attendance at the opening day of the Peterborough Beer Festival.
- His joining in the Starlight Hike run by one of his mayoral charities, Sue Ryder.
- Mayoral fundraising events had been successful in September and October with over £600 raised at the Sausage Supper held at the Town Hall and over £800 at the first of the 'Curry Nights'.
- He referred to Remembrance Weekend on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> November.

Members were encouraged to join the Mayor in attending fundraising events. These were a Caribbean evening at the Millennium Centre on 18<sup>th</sup> November, a mayoral curry night at Maharani's restaurant in Hampton Hargate on 26<sup>th</sup> November and a coach tour around the John Clare Countryside on 2<sup>nd</sup> December.

### 52. Leader's Announcements

The Leader made a number of announcements on the following areas:

- He wished Dan Kalley, who was due to leave his role as Democratic & Constitutional Services Manager at the Council shortly, all the best for the future and thanked him for his contribution.
- He had attended and given a speech at the Opportunity Peterborough Bondholder Dinner on 19<sup>th</sup> October.
- He stated that the Station Quarter re-development project would be used as a Levelling Up Fund case study by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- Two officers from the Council's Housing Needs Team, Megan English-Stevens and Ella Evans, were congratulated for being shortlisted for the Housing Occupational Therapist of the Year accolade at this year's National Healthy Housing Awards. He wished them well at the ceremony in the National Football Museum in Manchester next month.
- Officers would be attending a 'Love Local Government' event in London in a fortnight's time to celebrate the creative work taking place in the face of unprecedented challenges.
- The Cabinet had recently approved the route to delivery of the Peterborough Integrated Renewables Infrastructure 'PIRI' project, via a partnership arrangement. The project delivered low carbon heat and electrical power to key businesses and public buildings.
- ARU Peterborough had recently announced that work had started Work on XRP eXtended Reality Peterborough, a new Centre of Excellence on the ground floor of the Peterborough Innovation and Research Centre at the ARU Peterborough campus.

Other Group Leaders responded to the Leader's announcements and raised the following points:

- Dan Kalley was thanked for his contribution by the Group Leaders and they wished him well in his new role at Cambridge City Council.
- The Group Leaders congratulated Megan English-Stevens and Ella Evans for their shortlisting and wished them well at the National Healthy Housing Awards.
- Members welcomed the progress at ARU Peterborough in a short period of time.
- Further information would be appreciated on the plans for a replacement of the regional pool.
- Members looked forward to hearing more about the PIRI scheme as it develops.

## **QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

### **53. Questions from Members of the Public**

Five questions were received from members of the public in respect of the following:

1. Appearance and noise nuisance of monopole and boxes – why it was authorised to be located so close to a dwelling.
2. Criteria used to decide the area of land suitable for masts and how Coniston Road met this criterion..
3. Would the Council consider placing masts on the grass verge along the Parkways.
4. A request to remove the telecoms mast at Coniston Road.
5. Communications and Council decisions in respect of the situation in Israel and Palestine, including regarding the lighting in Peterborough city centre.

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

### **54. Petitions**

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

There were no petitions presented by Members of the public at the meeting.

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

There was one petition presented by Members at the meeting. Councillor Hussain presented a petition from the Peterborough Hackney Carriage Association. Financial pressures such as the cost of living and high fuel costs had had a drastic impact on their taxi trade and as a result the Association was requesting an increase to the age limit of their vehicles by three years. The Association was also seeking that the waiting times for MOT checks were reduced as the existing waiting times of two to four weeks were having a significant impact on their livelihoods.

### **55. Questions on Notice**

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

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

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

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

Questions (a)-(d) were raised and taken as read in respect of the following:

1. Charging of new and replacement bins.
2. Update on the implementation of the Small Homes in Multiple Occupation.
3. Status of the Gravel Car Park.
4. Status of the loan to the developers of the Hilton Gardens Hotel.
5. Vote against the adoption of the new combined authority's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan.

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

**RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS**

**56. Executive and Committee Recommendations to Council**

**56(a) Employment Committee Recommendation – Appointment of S151 Officer**

Council received a report from the Employment Committee recommending the appointment of Cecilie Booth as the permanent Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer for Peterborough City Council.

Councillor Alison Jones moved the recommendation and referred to Ms Booth's experience and suitability for the role, having been Chief Finance and Section 151 Officer at the Council on a temporary basis since January 2022. Councillor Jackie Allen seconded the recommendation, confirming she had nothing further to add.

A vote was taken on the recommendation and Council **RESOLVED** (unanimous with no Members indicating to vote against or abstain) to approve the appointment of Cecilie Booth as the permanent Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer for Peterborough City Council.

**57. Questions on the Executive Decisions Made Since the Last Meeting**

Cllr Fitzgerald introduced the report which outlined the record of Executive decisions made since the last meeting.

Members asked questions on the following Executive Decisions.

Disposal of the Dickens Street and Wellington Street Car Parks

In response to a question from Councillor Hogg regarding the impact on car parking at the Millennium Centre following the disposal of Dickens Street Car Park, Councillor Fitzgerald advised that the disposal of the Dickens Street Car Park was separate from the Millennium Centre's specific car parking area.

Citizens Advice Peterborough Grant 2023-24

In response to a question from Councillor Jamil around whether the award of grant funding would lead to an employee being available in person at Citizens Advice Peterborough rather than contactable by telephone, Councillor Steve Allen advised that the direction of travel was to have a member of staff in the library area.

Councillor Fitzgerald also clarified in response to a question from Councillor Hogg that it was deemed necessary for the Cabinet Member to authorise the delegation of authority to Cambridgeshire County Council in some of the Public Health decisions due to Public Health being a joint service.

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

### Transport and Infrastructure Committee

In response to a question from Councillor Fitzgerald, Councillor Simons as the representative of the Combined Authority's Transport and Infrastructure Committee stated that he did not believe that the Committee had discussed that the drawdown of £200,000 which Councillor Fitzgerald had said that the Council had not received was reliant on the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan being passed at the subsequent Combined Authority Board meeting.

### Combined Authority Board – 20 September 2023

In response to a question from Councillor Hogg, Councillor Fitzgerald advised that as the Council's representative on the Combined Authority Board, he had voted against the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan due to congestion charging proposals in the document.

## **COUNCIL BUSINESS**

### **59. Reports to Council**

It was agreed by the Mayor and Group Leaders prior to the meeting that item 13 on the agenda, Reports to Council would be considered before item 12, Notices of Motion.

#### **59(a) Children's Improvement Board**

Council received a report in relation to the setting up of the Children's Improvement Board

Councillor Jackie Allen moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

Councillor Ayres seconded the recommendation and reserved her right to speak later in the debate.

A vote was taken on the recommendation and Council **RESOLVED** (unanimous with no Members indicating to vote against or abstain) to:

1. Approve the establishment of a Children's Improvement Board in line with the statutory notice of improvement issued by the Department for Education.
2. Approve the terms of reference of the Peterborough City Council Children's Improvement Board as set out at appendix 2 and in doing so appoint Sally Rowe as its independent chair.
3. Approve the remuneration of the panel chair as set out in para 2.1.
4. Approve the delegation to the Chief Executive, Executive Director of Children's Services and Young People and Executive Director of Corporate Services & S151 officer to take all necessary actions to appoint independent board members as outlined within the terms of reference.

5. Approve the delegation of authority to the Director of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer:
  - to make any necessary changes to the constitution and incorporate the terms of reference for the Children's Improvement Board
  - Outline the route for recommendations from the Children's Improvement Board through Cabinet, Children and Education Scrutiny Committee and Full Council.
6. Receive regular reports from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Education following each Improvement Board Meeting.
7. Note that improvement work commenced in March 2023 following the initial feedback from Ofsted.

#### **59(b) Notification of Changes to the Leader's Scheme of Delegations**

Council received a report in relation to Changes to the Leader's Scheme of Delegations

Councillor Fitzgerald moved the recommendation as set out in the report.

Councillor Steve Allen seconded the recommendation and reserved his right to speak.

A vote was taken on the recommendation and Council **RESOLVED** (unanimous with no Members indicating to vote against or abstain) to note the changes made by the Leader of the Council to the Executive Scheme of Delegations.

#### **59(c) Appointment of Independent Audit Committee Chair**

Council received a report in relation to the appointment of the Independent Audit Committee Chair.

Councillor Haseeb moved the recommendation as set out in the report.

Councillor Dennis Jones seconded the recommendation and reserved his right to speak.

A vote was taken on the recommendation and Council **RESOLVED** (unanimous with no Members indicating to vote against or abstain) to:

1. Approve the appointment of Daniel Schumann to the position of Independent Audit Committee Chair for a period of four years until September 2027.

#### **59(d) Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report**

Council received a report in relation to the Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report.

Councillor Hussain moved the recommendation.

Councillor Warren seconded the recommendation and reserved his right to speak.

A vote was taken on the recommendation and Council **RESOLVED** (unanimous with no Members indicating to vote against or abstain) to:

1. Note the annual report of the Joint Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Health and Wellbeing Board for 2022-2023.

### **59(e) Appointment of Interim Monitoring Officer**

Council received a report in relation to the appointment of the Interim Monitoring Officer.

Councillor Fitzgerald moved the recommendation.

Councillor Steve Allen seconded the recommendation and reserved his right to speak.

A vote was taken on the recommendation and Council **RESOLVED** (unanimous with no Members indicating to vote against or abstain) to:

1. Approve the appointment of Adesuwa Omoregie as the Interim Monitoring Officer for Peterborough City Council.

### **59(f) Appointment of Education Statutory Co-Opted Member**

Council received a report in relation to the appointment of the Education Statutory Co-Opted Member

Councillor Jackie Allen moved the recommendation.

Councillor Ayres seconded the recommendation and reserved her right to speak.

A vote was taken on the recommendation and Council **RESOLVED** (unanimous with no Members indicating to vote against or abstain) to:

1. Approve the appointment of Peter French as a co-opted member of the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee

### **59(g) Appointment of Statutory Scrutiny Officer**

Council received a report in relation to the Statutory Scrutiny Officer

Councillor Fitzgerald moved the recommendation.

Councillor Steve Allen seconded the recommendation and reserved his right to speak.

A vote was taken on the recommendation and Council **RESOLVED** (unanimous with no Members indicating to vote against or abstain) to:

1. Approve the appointment of Rachel Edwards as the authority's Statutory Scrutiny Officer.

## **60. Notices of Motion**

The Mayor adjourned the meeting prior to this item in keeping with 14.1 of the Council's Constitution.

### **60(1) Motion from Councillor Harper**

Councillor Harper moved his motion, which asked for members to undertake a vote of no confidence to remove the Leader of the Council. He commented that opposition members had no confidence in the Leader of the Council, his Cabinet or the administration and would be seeking an alternative leader and administration. He added that the political attacks and weaponization of the Council administration against

opposition members had led to the relationship between the Leader (including his cabinet) and the opposition groups (including former group members) deteriorating to such an extent that the delivery of council services and having majority consent on major policy including the budget were at risk. He placed an emphasis on the council needing stability and leadership to navigate through the difficult financial and governance challenges it was facing.

Councillor Iqbal seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

The designated speaker on behalf of the Conservative Group was Councillor Sainsbury. He referred to the issues he believed had been created by lack of opposition support and commented that a new administration would put delivery of services at risk. Councillor Sainsbury also referred to some examples which he believed demonstrated the success of the Leader and the current administration.

The designated speaker on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group was Councillor Hogg. He reserved his right to speak.

The designated speaker on behalf of the Green Party was Councillor Day. She supported the motion, expressing the view that the Council required a fresh approach. She confirmed she would be supporting the proposed 'Peterborough First' administration.

Council debated the motion and a summary of the points raised by Members included:

- Members from the Conservative Group stated that the Council was in an improved position due to the actions of the current Leader, Cabinet and administration. Further points included that the current administration had provided strong leadership and created stability, including through the creation of the all-party Financial Stability Working Group and that progress had been reflected in the report of the Independent Improvement and Assurance Panel. Achievements were referred to that they believed were linked to the work of the current administration, including the establishment of the University, the development of the PIRI project and the number of houses being built which made Peterborough one of the fastest growing cities in the country. They disputed that there had been no attempt to work in a spirit of co-operation with opposition members and expressed the view that the Leader had encouraged cross party engagement.
- Opposition members spoke in favour of the motion, expressing their concerns that there had been political and personal attacks by the current administration against opposition members and a lack of an attempt to work in partnership or in a spirit of co-operation with them. Further points included that it was not considered that it was the way to run a minority administration and that decisions were taken in political interests rather than the City's interests. The decision to vote against the Combined Authority's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan was raised as a decision of concern. The lack of progress in the OFSTED report was also given as a reason for supporting the motion.
- Members of the Conservative Group had made the point that the Council's Independent Improvement and Assurance Panel would need to remain in place due to the challenges that were likely to be raised by a new administration. Members of the Council were advised that it was the intention of 'Peterborough First' Members to keep the Panel in place should they become the new administration as the journey to seek improvements continued. It was stated that it was responsible to retain the Panel's support.



- Councillor Lane did not support the motion on the grounds that he believed the priority was for Members to work together, using collective skills and experience to achieve financial stability.

Councillor Hogg addressed Council, commenting that there had been good measures brought forward by the current administration such as the Financial Stability Working Group but also some negative aspects. He referred to Npower, Hilton Hotel and the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan not being signed as examples of those. He considered that at July Council there had been combative motions submitted and he believed there had been criticism of that from the Independent Improvement and Assurance Panel. Councillor Hogg also confirmed there had been discussions between the Liberal Democrat Group and Peterborough First regarding cross party working and he would be supporting the motion.

Councillor Iqbal then spoke, stating that the current administration and Leader had not sought to build trust with the opposition parties. He considered that the Conservative Group's criticisms of Peterborough First were unfair and he had found them competent, experienced, aware of the financial challenges the Council faced and in his view they would do their best for the people of Peterborough.

Councillor Harper, in his summing up, thanked those who had supported his motion. The aim, he stated, was to put the citizens of Peterborough first with collaboration, listening, transparency, stability and financial competence.

A recorded vote was taken on the motion (32 voting in favour, 20 voting against, 2 abstaining from voting.) The motion was **CARRIED**.

**Councillors For** – 32 – Barkham, Bi, Bisby, Andrew Bond, Sandra Bond, Cole, Day, Dowson, Mohammed Farooq, Saqib Farooq, Judy Fox, John Fox, Harper, Haseeb, Hemraj, Hiller, Hogg, Howard, Iqbal, Jamil, Alison Jones, Dennis Jones, Knight, Mahmood, Rush, Sabir, Seager, Skibsted, Stevenson, Strangward, Thulbourn, Wiggin

**Councillors Against** – 20 – Ahmed, Jackie Allen, Steve Allen, Asif, Ayres, Cereste, Fenner, Fitzgerald, Hussain, Khan, Lane, Nawaz, Perkins, Ray, Sainsbury, Sharp, Simons, Trust, Tyler, Warren

**Councillors Abstaining** – 1 – Sandford

## **60(1) Motion without notice to suspend standing orders**

Councillor Harper moved a procedural motion to suspend the following Council Standing Orders set out in the Constitution relating to Motions: 19.1, 19.2, 19.3, 19.4, 20.1, 21.2, 23.1 and 23.2. He advised this was intended to be for the duration of the motion to elect a new Leader and subsequent matters arising from this motion.

Councillor Hogg seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

A recorded vote was taken on the motion (32 voting in favour, 19 voting against, 2 abstaining from voting.) The motion was **CARRIED**.

**Councillors For** – 32 – Barkham, Bi, Bisby, Andrew Bond, Sandra Bond, Cole, Day, Dowson, Mohammed Farooq, Saqib Farooq, Judy Fox, John Fox, Harper, Haseeb,

Hemraj, Hiller, Hogg, Howard, Iqbal, Jamil, Alison Jones, Dennis Jones, Knight, Mahmood, Rush, Sabir, Seager, Skibsted, Stevenson, Strangward, Thulbourn, Wiggin

**Councillors Against** – 19 – Ahmed, Jackie Allen, Steve Allen, Asif, Ayres, Cereste, Fenner, Fitzgerald, Hussain, Khan, Nawaz, Perkins, Ray, Sainsbury, Sharp, Simons, Trust, Tyler, Warren

**Councillors Abstaining** – 2 – Lane, Sandford

#### **60(1) Motion without notice to elect a new leader**

Councillor Harper moved his motion to appoint Councillor Mohammed Farooq as the new Leader of the Council.

Councillor Hogg seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

#### **60(1) Motion without notice to elect Councillor Wayne Fitzgerald as Leader**

Councillor Steve Allen proposed an amendment to the motion to elect Councillor Fitzgerald as Leader of the Council. Addressing Council on the amended motion, he stated that all Members of the Conservative Group were supportive of Councillor Fitzgerald as their leader. He expressed the view that it was personal enmities held by a group of disparate opposition parties and the ambition of the new administration rather than reasons of substance which had led to the vote of no confidence.

Councillor Tyler seconded the amended motion and reserved his right to speak.

It was agreed that Members would speak on the Motion without notice to elect a new leader and the amended Motion without notice to elect Councillor Fitzgerald at the same time.

Council debated the motions and a summary of the points raised by Members included:

- Members of the Conservative Group expressed concerns that many of the Members who were now part of the new administration had formerly been elected as Members of the Conservative Group and not on a Peterborough First mandate. Further points included that Councillor Farooq had originally been elected as a Member of the Group and was now seeking to be Leader of the Council as a Member of Peterborough First. It was questioned whether this was legitimate or moral. It was queried whether the numbers in Peterborough First were sufficient to run the administration and it was doubted whether it was appropriate that the largest party was no longer being asked to form the administration. There were concerns expressed that opposition groups were voting for the new administration of former Conservative Group councillors and would take no part in it.
- Members of the Conservative Group spoke in favour of the motion to elect Councillor Fitzgerald on the grounds that he was the best leader for Peterborough.
- There were concerns expressed from opposition members about the level of debate from Councillor Fitzgerald during this item, including in relation to Members of Peterborough First. This was stated as a reason as to why a new Leader and administration was required.

Councillor Hogg, in his capacity as the seconder of the motion to elect Mohammed Farooq as the new Leader of the Council, queried the legitimacy of seeking to elect Councillor Fitzgerald as Leader following the vote of no confidence. He hoped that Councillor Fitzgerald would be able to play a part in seeking better outcomes for the Council with the other parties in the future, given his experience.

Councillor Harper summed up, having moved the motion to appoint Councillor Mohammed Farooq as the new Leader of the Council. He concurred with Councillor Hogg that it was necessary for all parties to work together and the Members who had stated that the level of debate was the reason why it was necessary to seek a change of administration. He asked that Members vote for Councillor Farooq in order for the City to make progress.

It was clarified by the Mayor that the amended motion to elect Councillor Fitzgerald as Leader would be taken first and in the event it was carried, it would become the main motion. A recorded vote was taken on the amended motion. (20 voting in favour, 32 voting against, 1 abstaining from voting.) The motion was **DEFEATED**.

**Councillors For** – 20 – Ahmed, Jackie Allen, Steve Allen, Asif, Ayres, Cereste, Fenner, Fitzgerald, Hussain, Khan, Lane, Nawaz, Perkins, Ray, Sainsbury, Sharp, Simons, Trust, Tyler, Warren

**Councillors Against** – 32 – Barkham, Bi, Bisby, Andrew Bond, Sandra Bond, Cole, Day, Dowson, Mohammed Farooq, Saqib Farooq, Judy Fox, John Fox, Harper, Haseeb, Hemraj, Hiller, Hogg, Howard, Iqbal, Jamil, Alison Jones, Dennis Jones, Knight, Mahmood, Rush, Sabir, Seager, Skibsted, Stevenson, Strangward, Thulbourn, Wiggin

**Councillors Abstaining** – 1 – Sandford

A recorded vote was then taken on the motion to appoint Councillor Mohammed Farooq as the new Leader of the Council (32 voting in favour, 19 voting against, 2 abstaining from voting.) The motion was **CARRIED**.

**Councillors For** – 32 – Barkham, Bi, Bisby, Andrew Bond, Sandra Bond, Cole, Day, Dowson, Mohammed Farooq, Saqib Farooq, Judy Fox, John Fox, Harper, Haseeb, Hemraj, Hiller, Hogg, Howard, Iqbal, Jamil, Alison Jones, Dennis Jones, Knight, Mahmood, Rush, Sabir, Seager, Skibsted, Stevenson, Strangward, Thulbourn, Wiggin

**Councillors Against** – 19 – Ahmed, Jackie Allen, Steve Allen, Asif, Ayres, Cereste, Fenner, Fitzgerald, Hussain, Khan, Nawaz, Perkins, Ray, Sainsbury, Sharp, Simons, Trust, Tyler, Warren

**Councillors Abstaining** – 2 – Lane, Sandford

## **60(1) Motion without notice to note leader's scheme of delegations**

Councillor Farooq moved his motion for Council to note the new Cabinet Members and their respective portfolios. He thanked colleagues, including from the different political groups, for voting for him as the new Leader of the Council. He also referred to four key priorities for the new administration that were growth and prosperity, protecting the vulnerable, education and environment. He stated that the vision was for the core values of transparency, compassion and ambition to become embedded in a financially stable and collaborative council.

The new Cabinet Members were as follows:

- Councillor Howard – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services, Legal and Communities
- Councillor Bisby – Cabinet Member for Children's Services
- Councillor Hiller – Housing, Growth and Regeneration
- Councillor Saqib Farooq - Cabinet Member for Adults and Health
- Councillor Elsey - Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Climate Change
- Councillor Harper - Cabinet Advisor for Housing, Growth and Regeneration
- Councillor John Fox - Cabinet Advisor for Adults and Health.

Councillor Farooq added that the new administration was well aware of the financial challenges the council was facing and the plan was to deliver a long term financial strategy in order to provide stability in the medium to long term. It appreciated all the hard work of officers and looked forward to working with them having taken on the new roles. It also planned to work closely with all political groups and extend a hand of friendship to Conservative Group colleagues. Co-operation of the Conservative Group would lead to stronger and more stable leadership.

Councillor Howard seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

It was clarified by the Mayor that the vote taken on the motion was to note the leader's scheme of delegations. The vote was as follows (33 voting in favour, 18 voting against, 1 abstaining from voting.) The motion was **CARRIED**.

#### **60(1) Motion without notice to elect Committee Chairs, Vice Chairs and Appointments to Outside Organisations**

Councillor Farooq moved his motion, asking Council to approve the appointments of the following as Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Council Committees:

- Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee – Chair, Councillor Wiggin and Vice Chair, Councillor Jamil.
- Children and Education Scrutiny Committee – Chair, Councillor Shahid and Vice Chair, Councillor Hemraj.
- Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee – Chair, Councillor Day and Vice Chair, Councillor Sandford.
- Adults and Health Scrutiny Committee – Chair (To Be Confirmed) and Vice Chair, Councillor Shahid.
- Employment Committee – Chair, Councillor Alison Jones and Vice Chair, Councillor Jamil.
- Planning and Environmental Protection Committee – Chair, Councillor Iqbal and Vice Chair, Councillor Jamil.
- Appeals and Planning Review Committee – Chair, Councillor Thulbourn and Vice Chair, Councillor Qayyum.
- Audit Committee – independent Chair, Daniel Schumann and Vice Chair, Councillor Haseeb.
- Corporate Parenting Committee – Chair, Councillor Dennis Jones and Vice Chair, Councillor Bi.
- Constitution and Ethics Committee – Chair, Councillor Qayyum and Vice Chair, Councillor Hiller.
- Licensing Committee – Chair (To Be Confirmed) and Vice Chair, Councillor Sandra Bond.

Councillor Farooq asked Council to note the Committee membership, to approve the appointment of Councillor John Fox as the Armed Forces Champion and to note the membership of all other outside bodies (these had been provided to Members at the meeting).

Councillor Howard seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

A vote was then taken on the motion (47 voting in favour, 3 voting against, 2 abstaining from voting.) The motion was **CARRIED**.

## **60(2). Motion from Councillor Fenner**

Councillor Fenner moved the motion. He stated that it was noted that the Council had received £48 million for the Station quarter. The redevelopment was likely to include the Great Northern Hotel site. At present the hotel was being used as a hostel for migrants that had crossed the channel on small boats.

Councillor Fenner commented that Peterborough supports more asylum seekers than any other city in the east of England. There was a strong track record of helping those that faced persecution and who are in need. However, any further use of this hotel as a place for migrants could potentially impact and delay any redevelopment plans. The use of the hotel for this purpose was not in the long-term interests of Peterborough and the young men themselves.

It was proposed that the Council resolve to press ahead with the station quarter redevelopment plans as quickly as possible, lobby government to find alternative accommodation, outside of Peterborough, for the asylum seekers and support the government in its campaign to stop the boats and illegal immigration.

Councillor Hussain seconded the motion, thereby reserving his right to speak.

Council debated the motions and a summary of the points raised by Members included:

- The Government had now advised that the Great Northern Hotel would no longer be used as a place for asylum seekers to stay after the end of January 2024.
- The view was expressed that given there were 'no spades in the ground' as yet in the redevelopment, the position regarding the hotel was not currently impeding it.
- It was agreed that there was no wish to see asylum seekers risk their lives in boat crossings and for human traffickers to profit. However, there was a difference of opinion between Conservative Group members who supported Government policy and added that those who travelled in the boats were not following due process and Liberal Democrat and Labour Group members who expressed concerns about the Government's policy, including the cost of people staying in hotels and the number of cases yet to be processed. Opposition members asked that asylum seekers were not called illegal immigrants on the basis they were able to seek asylum and it was for the system to ascertain whether they met the legal criteria.

During this item, in according with the Council's Standing Orders in the Constitution, it was noted that at 10.15pm the meeting would be formally brought towards its

conclusion unless there was a motion to suspend Standing Order 14.2 in order that the meeting could be extended.

Councillor Hogg moved a motion to suspend the Standing Order in order that the meeting could be extended. Councillor Ray seconded the motion.

A vote was taken on the motion to extend the meeting of Council by 30 minutes (29 voting in favour, 23 voting against, 1 abstaining from voting.) The motion was **CARRIED**.

Councillor Farooq moved a procedural motion under Standing Order 20 to refer Councillor Fenner's motion to the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Jamil seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

A vote was taken on the procedural motion moved by Councillor Farooq (30 voting in favour, 20 voting against, 2 abstaining from voting.). The motion was **CARRIED**.

### **60(3). Motion from Councillor Trust**

Councillor Trust moved her motion. She stated that according to the Office of National Statistics, one in five adults experienced domestic abuse. The majority were women. Reflecting conversations she had had with residents, there was a lack of knowledge about support services available to them. Earlier in the year, the Youth MP Eva Woods and Paul Bristow MP had contacted Councillor Trust about exploring the prospects of launching a Violence Against Women and Girls Commission in Peterborough which emphasised the ongoing work of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership. Driven by high profile inroads made by Plymouth City Council around violence against women and girls, it had been decided to take action to address the lack of understanding and discussion of this issue amongst elected representatives and the general public in Peterborough. In response the Partnership Board had outlined a highly impressive map of ongoing work at a strategic and operational level to support and protect known victims and facilitate reporting and strategies to further meet the need in the City. It was considered that the need in Peterborough was not a gap in provision but a lack of knowledge of the support available.

Councillor Trust added that to help combat the lack of profile of this work across the community, it was requested that members engaged with plans for wider communications of the campaign, including male members to take the White Ribbon Pledge to support the eradication of violence against women and girls. White Ribbon Day was being held on 25 November. The motion also included that the draft domestic abuse and violence guidance for members be referred to scrutiny and then to the relevant Cabinet Member for sign off.

Councillor Jackie Allen seconded the motion and reserved her right to speak.

Council debated the motion and a summary of the points raised by Members included:

- The motion was welcomed. It was requested that there was support not only for victims of domestic abuse and violence but also those working to help victims.
- Councillor Cole was thanked for her work in this area.
- Members were encouraged to sign up to the White Ribbon Pledge and be an ambassador.

A vote was taken on the motion and it was **CARRIED** (unanimous with no Members indicating to vote against or abstain).

#### **60(4). Motion from Councillor Hussain**

Councillor Hussain moved his motion. He stated that the Government had opted to extend the date of the petrol and diesel car ban to 2035 to ensure a more fair and pragmatic approach towards achieving net zero. He commented that the delay aimed to provide an opportunity for individuals and businesses, including taxi drivers, to take advantage of the decreasing costs of electric vehicles, thus promoting an eco-friendlier way of travelling.

Councillor Hussain requested that in alignment with the Government's approach, the council ensured that the transition to net zero remained fair and pragmatic while not punishing Peterborough taxi drivers with further financial burdens. By allowing taxi drivers to license vehicles which were Euro 6 compliant would allow those drivers a greater choice of vehicles there by guarantee convenient taxi services for the residents of Peterborough.

He added that Euro 6 vehicles not only allowed a greater choice of vehicle but a wider choice of type of vehicle from small hybrids to larger MPVs, which was able to help school runs and improve accessibility for individuals with mobility challenges. By permitting Euro 6 emissions vehicles, it would strike the right balance between reducing harmful emissions and considering economic conditions, thereby offering taxi drivers a practical and fair path forward that protected their livelihoods.

The motion requested Council recommend that the Licensing Committee consider bringing forward the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licencing Policy Review to allow for Euro 6 emission standards taxi vehicles and recommend to the highway authority to review road layouts to allow private hire and taxi cabs access to previously restricted areas around the city where practicable thereby reducing journey times, cost to public and emissions.

Councillor Fitzgerald seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Hogg moved a procedural motion under Standing Order 20 to refer Councillor Hussain's motion to the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee. He explained that his reason for this was that the proposals needed to be explored in more detail, including whether there were major financial implications. He stated that Euro 6 vehicles were already permitted and questioned whether the actual aim that was being sought was for ULEZ and ULEV vehicles to be permitted for a longer period. Councillor Hogg also remarked that the Council was the highway authority and clarity was sought on what road layouts were being referred to and whether this was the network of bus lanes.

Councillor Day seconded Councillor Hogg's motion and reserved her right to speak.

Councillor Hussain emphasised that his motion had requested that the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licencing Policy Review be considered by the Licensing Committee and that the Highway Authority review the road layouts to allow private hire cabs access to previously restricted areas around the city where practicable thereby

reducing journey times, cost to public and emissions. He was therefore not requesting that wider matters were considered at the current Council meeting.

Councillor Day stated in her capacity as seconder of the procedural motion that she wished to support the hard working taxi drivers of Peterborough. However, Councillor Hussain's motion required officer time and needed to be considered in detail, including with the receipt of officer reports. Further details were required of which road layouts were proposed to be reviewed. Councillor Day added that in the event the motion was taken to the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee, she would also support it being taken to the Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee as part of that work.

Councillor Hogg, in summing up, said that he had consulted licensing officers and they had informed him that the changes requested in Councillor Hussain's motion would require changes in the Council's net zero target policy. He had also consulted the Head of Highways Department on private hire and taxi cabs access to previously restricted areas and been advised that it would need a large body of work, including introducing Traffic Regulation Orders, changing signage if it included bus lanes and a wider consultation with the likes of bus companies and health and safety.

A vote was taken on the procedural motion moved by Councillor Hogg. (32 voting in favour, 18 voting against, 1 abstaining from voting). The motion was **CARRIED**.

#### **60(5). Motion from Councillor Ray**

Councillor Ray moved his motion, making the point that in local elections in Peterborough and elsewhere the public were able to cast their vote to elect councillors based largely on the political manifestos set out by each candidate and a general belief in the same principles of the party or person they choose to support. Generally, people voted for likeminded people, whether that be for a smaller party candidate or one of the main ones such as Labour, the Liberal Democrats or the Conservatives.

He expressed the view that it was simply not right that once elected, an individual Councillor was able to abandon that manifesto and swap to another party or claim to be independent of the party they stood for and the promises they made, without displaying accountability by going back to the public to face a further vote in the ballot box.

He believed it betrayed the trust of the people that voted for them when rather than displaying openness, individuals misled the electorate by standing on a political platform, only to cross the floor within a matter of weeks or months.

He asked that Council resolved to write to the City's MPs, Paul Bristow and Shailesh Vara, to take the necessary steps in Parliament to gain cross-party support and change the law to state "Any MP or Councillor that crosses the floor mid term should call a by election". This, he added, would hold elected representatives accountable and would ensure when they stand on a set of policies, funded by those that believe them and are elected by those that support them, they were doing so with honest and selfless intentions.

Councillor Steve Allen seconded the motion, commenting that it was particularly pertinent in terms of what had taken place at the Council meeting. He made the point that for every member that stood for a political party, people worked on their behalf and money was invested in them as a candidate. Crossing the floor was undemocratic.



Council debated the motion and a summary of the points raised by Members included:

- The comment was made that there had been no calls previously for legislation when members of opposition parties had crossed the floor.
- There would be a cost for any additional by-elections required.
- Members spoke about how they felt that their political views or values had not changed but that the parties they represented had or representatives of the parties, they believed, had acted in an unacceptable fashion. It was also felt that in certain cases the electorate voted for the candidate rather than the party. The member still represented residents no matter which party was represented.

At 10.45pm, in keeping with the Council's Standing Orders, there was no further discussion of the remaining business and a vote taken.

A recorded vote via the electronic voting system was taken on the motion moved by Councillor Ray (19 voting in favour, 32 voting against, 1 abstaining from voting.) The motion was **DEFEATED**.

The Mayor  
6.00pm –10:47pm  
1 November 2023

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