

COUNCIL	AGENDA ITEM No. 12
6 December 2023	PUBLIC REPORT

MOTIONS ON NOTICE

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

1. Motion from Councillor Sandra Bond

Council notes that:

Peterborough City Council is a proud Corporate Parent and takes its responsibilities to support and protect vulnerable children and care leavers seriously. This requires cross-party political support.

Once children in care reach the age of 18, they are redesignated as care leavers until the age of 25. While being supported by Children and Young Peoples Services, care leavers are faced with a new set of potentially overwhelming responsibilities, often without the family support and wider network that most other young people can rely on. Although many care leavers work, study, or have access to benefits, as the cost of living has increased, so have their struggles to transition to adult life.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 requires each local authority to consult on and publish a local offer for its care leavers. The local offer should provide information about all the services and support that is available to care leavers from the local authority, including information about both their statutory entitlements as well as any discretionary support that a local authority chooses to provide.

A recent review of our local (Peterborough) offer has highlighted that there is scope to improve and update our current offering. This may then include offerings such as

- Negotiated preferential rates on utility costs.
- Discounted or free travel cards
- Help with fulfilling aspirations to attend further and higher education.
- Council tax exemption

These examples amongst others are outlined in the government publication - Keep on Caring 2016, the guidance issued by government in 2018 about implementing the local offer, and in both the first and second annual reports prepared for government by the national implementation advisor for care leavers.

Ofsted have also renewed its interest in outcomes for care leavers and this now focuses heavily in the ILACS inspection framework.

Council resolves to

Formally agree to work on a cross party basis regarding improving outcomes for children, whilst discharging the Council's corporate parenting responsibilities.

Establish a cross party working group with elected members, officers, and care leavers to develop a revised and fully costed set of proposals in the form of a revised care leaver local offer that reflects our aspiration to be the best corporate parent we can be.

2. Motion from Councillor Mahmood

This council notes:

- That business rates avoidance costs councils around £250 million annually (Local Government Association Survey, 2019).
- Repeated short-term periods of occupation was the method of avoidance most commonly identified. Box shifting," a practice where landlords place boxes in vacant commercial properties for a six-week period to trigger a rates-free period, often repeated, results in local councils losing their empty rates income.
- That some landlords use basic objects such as a broadband box or an empty fish tank to initiate rates avoidance, which exacerbates the loss of income for councils.

This council believes:

- That business rate avoidance undermines the integrity of our rates system and deprives the local community of funds that could be invested in local services and infrastructure.
- That current legislation may inadvertently allows these practices, and that reform is needed to ensure that rates accurately reflect property usage and occupancy.

This council resolves:

- To lobby for the extension of the occupation period for rates exemption from six weeks to six months, following the example of the Welsh and Scottish governments, which have already introduced legislation to tackle this issue.
- To advocate for robust and regular checks on the occupancy status of commercial properties to ensure compliance with any reformed rates system.
- To Lobby Peterborough MP's to ask the government to legislate against rates avoidance.

3. Motion from Councillor Iqbal:

Council notes:

- That the parkways and road systems in Peterborough are vital to enable flexible travel across the city.
- The new town principle was to provide good public services, allowing residents to easily access local amenities or travel to other parts of the city. There was cross party consensus at the Full Council meeting in July 2023, when discussing ultra-low emissions and congestion zones, that charging road users would not work in the city.
- Peterborough City Council have the power of veto on highways related decisions. Therefore, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Mayor does not have power to impose congestion charging or ultra-low emissions schemes on Peterborough.
- It is for Peterborough City Council, as the transport authority, to decide whether to introduce a charging scheme.
- Total local highways funding in the East of England fell by a quarter in real terms between 2020/21 and 2023/24.

Council believes:

- We should ensure adequate funding is provided for our road network to be maintained to a safe standard with improvements to help drivers, public transport users, cyclists, and pedestrians.
- Government cuts to local highways maintenance budgets have adversely affected the condition of roads.

Council resolves to:

- Oppose any road user charging schemes in Peterborough.
- Campaign for the restoration of local highways maintenance budgets to improve their condition in Peterborough, including the Leader of the Council lobbying the government for fairer funding for road maintenance.

4.Motion from Councillor Hemraj

Allergies in Schools

Every child has the right to being and feeling safe in a school environment, with parents also feeling reassured their child's school is a safe place for them.

Allergic disease is the most common chronic condition among children, affecting 7.0–8.0% of children worldwide or about two children in an average-sized classroom of 25 children. 18% of food allergy reactions and 25% of first-time anaphylactic reactions occur at school.

As well as being the most prevalent condition, it is also one of the most serious - with anaphylactic allergic reactions being potentially fatal. There are several recent instances of children dying following an allergic reaction at school. Even where reactions aren't fatal, they're distressing for the child and their families.

With the numbers of children starting school with known allergies, and around 30% of allergic reactions in schools occur in children previously not known to have a food allergy or those with an allergy that had not been communicated to school staff, the need for schools to be prepared becomes ever more necessary. It's also important that schools take a 'whole school approach' given that 79% of allergic reactions take place outside the lunch hall.

Benedict Blythe was a pupil at a Peterborough school when he collapsed in December 2021. A post-mortem found that he died from anaphylaxis.

Research carried out shows the need for schools to have the basics in place to ensure pupil safety, with many still without a simple allergy policy or consistency in creating IHPs. Although there is Department for Education guidance in place, none of this is mandatory with uptake varying by school and LA. Additional research can be found at [Benedict Blythe Foundation](#).

This motion is to raise awareness of the potential risks schools should be aware of, and to recommend safeguards to ensure all children are able to learn in a safe environment - especially when a child suffers with an allergy that can lead to a medical emergency.

The recently published Schools Allergy Code, developed by ISBA (Independent Schools Busar Association), Benedict Blythe Foundation and supported by The Allergy Team, outlines a code of practice intended to raise the bar of allergy awareness, safety and inclusion across English schools.

This motion asks that the Council should recommend to Peterborough Schools that they should consider adopting the Schools Allergy Code outlined below to increase the safety and inclusion in Peterborough schools for children with allergies.

For information - Schools Allergy Code

Allergic disease is the most common chronic condition in childhood. An allergic reaction occurs when a person's immune system is triggered by a substance that is usually considered harmless.

Whilst most allergic reactions are mild, some can be very serious and cause anaphylaxis which is a

life-threatening medical emergency.

The Code is not a set of rules and regulations but it is a guide to best practice in achieving a whole school approach to allergy safety and inclusion.

It has been developed by the Independent Schools' Bursars Association, Benedict Blythe Foundation and The Allergy Team, with the backing of leading allergy clinicians and educators.

All schools are encouraged to use the Schools Allergy Code to ensure good allergy management in their setting. The Code and its accompanying Checklist are free resources.

Principles of good practice

- a. *Take every allergy seriously* - allergic reactions are unpredictable and every child with a diagnosed allergy should be included in the measures outlined in the Code.
- b. *Every child matters* - allergies are as unique as the children who have them. It is crucial that an individualised approach is adopted to implementing the Code, working with families and children to understand their experiences.
- c. *Prioritise safety and inclusion over the 'status quo'* – responding to the needs of children with allergy can require finding new ways of doing things, with schools prioritising safety and inclusion every time.

Code guidance

1. Take a whole-school approach

Every member of the school community should understand allergy and their responsibility for reducing risk, from pupils and parents to staff members. Allergy management is not just the responsibility of the catering and medical team

- 1.1 Build the knowledge and skills of all staff through targeted training and education. This will include understanding risk reduction and the importance of inclusion, as well as first aid response to allergic reaction.
- 1.2 Weave allergy awareness into classroom activities, for example lessons on nutrition and PHSE.

2. Communicate clearly

Give people information about the school's approach to allergy clearly and frequently.

- 2.1 Establish an Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy which is written in plain English and accessible. The policy should be published online and communicated to all staff and relevant members of the school community, including parents. This should be a dynamic document that is frequently reviewed and updated.
- 2.2 Ensure open communication with parents, teachers, support staff and caterers about the individual needs of children, based on co-created Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs) for all children with allergy.

3. Have clear governance and risk management

Create an awareness of allergy risk across all activities and processes.

- 3.1 Ensure clear governance structures and clearly defined roles and responsibilities including a Designated Allergy Lead.
 - 3.2 Make sure allergy policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and reported on by Designated Allergy Lead.
4. Allergy should form a part of every risk assessment.

Readiness to respond

Have systems, processes, and medication in place for emergencies.

- 4.1 Ensure that pupils prescribed with adrenaline pens have two in-date devices accessible at all times.
- 4.2 Hold spare adrenaline pens and make sure everyone knows where they are.
- 4.3 Establish annual risk reduction and anaphylaxis training for all staff.
- 4.4 Publish an Anaphylaxis Emergency Response Plan which enables staff to respond confidently and immediately to an allergic reaction.
- 4.5 Rehearse the Anaphylaxis Emergency Response plan.

5.Motion from Councillor Cole

Peterborough City Council notes that:

Peterborough has a proud history of residents putting their country before themselves and belonging to our armed forces. Fighting and holding peace keeping roles across the world. We need to be thankful to the veterans of the UK's Nuclear Testing programme, carried out between 1952 and 1991 in Australia, Christmas Island, Malden Island and the Nevada Desert.

Operation Grapple was one of series of British nuclear weapons tests of early atomic bombs and hydrogen bombs carried out in 1957-1958 at Malden Island and Kiritimati (Christmas Island) in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands in the Pacific Ocean (modern Kiribati) as part of the British hydrogen bomb programme. In total 45 nuclear detonation and 600 highly toxic radiation experiments were carried out as part of the testing program across the world.

Hundreds of thousands of people were and are directly affected by the Atomic and Nuclear testing program across the world. Millions were exposed to fallout from the testing program and families suffer today from illness and deformities caused by these tests. Many are no longer alive today and it is their families that continue to suffer the consequences of the tests. Genetic damage as a result of the Nuclear Testing is conservatively estimated to last for 500 years.

The participants of the testing program were 'lab rats' or 'guinea pigs'. These men were used in experiments to test the effects of Nuclear warfare, with no regard for the indigenous people, their lands or their lives. Veterans, indigenous people, scientists and civilians have all died as a consequence of the tests; yet their stories remain unheard by the general population of the world. An apology to these men is long overdue. The veterans of British Nuclear Testing have recently and with much fight on their part been awarded medals in recognition of their service. However, these medals have been sent to them via second class post, and many families are still fighting for the recognition these heroic men deserve. As of October 2023, the total number of Nuclear Test Medal applications received was 3,198 and 1,060 awards have been issued so far.

Most veterans and direct family members are getting a complete refusal from the Ministry of Defence when requesting their full medical records and the records they have received often have large chunks of their records blacked out or redacted. Some of the medical records have information that has been falsified. Imagine medical professionals trying to diagnose your medical problems or design a plan of treatment without knowing your medical history. These veterans and their families urgently need access to their full medical history including what they were exposed to or results of blood and urine tests taken during the testing program. The current veterans minister has publicly and privately stated that if these veterans and their families wish to access their full medical records, they need to sue the government. A CIC called LABRATS are currently trying to crowd fund the £100,000 and have already raised over £50,000 so that they can start the litigation process.

British Nuclear Testing is not spoken about as part of the United Kingdom's military history. This cannot continue. By ensuring that no-one forgets the testing program, immortalising the survivors in video, podcasts and campaigning for recognition, we can ensure that the legacy of the tests continues. No-one should be a lab rat; it was a human experiment which continues to this day.

Peterborough City Council therefore resolves to:

- Recommend that the Council Leader will write a letter to Minister for Veterans and the Shadow Veterans minister, lobbying the government for a full apology to the veterans of British Nuclear Testing. Acknowledging these men were used as test subjects in order to understand the effects of nuclear warfare.
- Recommend that the council leader and group leaders will write a jointly signed letter to the Minister for Defence demanding full access to medical records without the need to sue the government for the British Nuclear Veterans medical history.
- Ask Education Officers to sign post schools and colleges to information about British Nuclear Testing and worldwide Test experiments and work with a range of organisations who can direct schools to a range of resources and firsthand accounts of what veterans and family members have experienced as a result of the testing. (One such resource is www.labratsacademy.online)
- Recommends that on the anniversary of the first British Nuclear Test (Operation Hurricane) which was detonated off the Montebello Islands, Australia on the 3rd of October 1952, the Town Hall and other public buildings in Peterborough will be lit up in Yellow to thank and commemorate the veterans of British Nuclear Testing in recognition of all they have and continue to suffer as a consequence of the testing that took place.

6. Motion from Councillor Stevenson

The team motorbike sport known as 'speedway' has been of great credit to Peterborough since 1970. The local 'Peterborough Panthers' team has won the highest level national championship three times, most recently in 2021.

Over the years, the club has brought many trophies to our city at various levels within the sport, including junior level.

Peterborough Speedway has put the city of on the international map, via regular live TV coverage broadcast on the Warner Bros Discovery TV channel.

Since 1970 until now, Peterborough Panthers has been racing on a purpose-built racetrack, thought to be one of the best in the world, on the East of England Showground. The showground's current owner, the East of England Agricultural Society (EEAS) now wishes to sell the showground, and the council's local plan states that the land may be developed for housing and leisure.

However, AEPG, the company tasked with preparing the showground land for sale on behalf of EEAS has made it clear that the Peterborough speedway club is no longer permitted to race at the showground with immediate effect, regardless of the outcome of its two existing planning applications to redevelop the site. (In an article published in the Peterborough Telegraph on 21st November 2023, AEPG said, "To be clear, the decision not to renew the arrangement for running speedway meets would remain, irrespective of any planning applications on the land.")

The landowner and its agent having confirmed that the club will not be permitted to race at the showground after the end of the 2023 season (which has now concluded), means that club now has nowhere to race, and with nowhere to race the club cannot continue to operate and the sport of speedway in Peterborough may die.

As a matter of urgency, Peterborough Panthers Speedway Club must now find a new home.

This council acknowledges:

- The enormous cultural and economic benefits that Peterborough Panthers Speedway Club has brought to Peterborough over the past 53 years.
- The many benefits Peterborough Panthers Speedway Club brings to the residents of Peterborough, many of whom have spoken of how the club has contributed positively towards their mental health and sense of wellbeing and community.
- That Peterborough Panthers provides positive role models for young people who are interested in motorbikes and provides a means for them to enjoy motorbikes as a sport in a safe and responsible way.

This council resolves:

- To arrange a meeting between the current owners of the Peterborough Panthers Speedway Team and the council leader and relevant cabinet member(s) and council officers to discover if there is any way the council can help to keep the sport of speedway alive in Peterborough.
- To promote speedway in Peterborough so that more of the city's residents are aware of the benefits this family-oriented sport brings to the city.

This page is intentionally left blank