

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20 MARCH 2024
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

THE MAYOR – COUNCILLOR SANDFORD

To be read in conjunction with the agenda and additional information pack for the meeting at

[Public Pack, Council, 20 March 2024](#)

[Additional Information Pack, Council, 20 March 2024](#)

Should you wish to listen to the debate had, please visit Peterborough City Council YouTube Channel at

[Full Council 20/03/2024 at 6pm \(youtube.com\)](#)

Present:

Councillors Ahmed, J Allen, S Allen, Ayres, Bi, Bisby, A Bond, S Bond, Casey, Cereste, Cole, Coles, Day, Dowson, Elsey, M Farooq, S Farooq, Fenner, Fitzgerald, Judy Fox, John Fox, Harper, Haseeb, Hemraj, Hiller, Hogg, Howard, Hussain, Iqbal, Jamil, A Jones, D Jones, Khan, Knight, Mahmood, Nawaz, Over, Perkins, Qayyum, Rangzeb, Ray, Rush, Sabir, Sainsbury, Sandford, Seager, Shaheed, Sharp, Simons, Skibsted, Stevenson, Strangward, Thulbourn, Trust, Warren and Wiggin.

101. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Asif, Barkham and Tyler.

102. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received from Members.

103. Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 February 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record.

COMMUNICATIONS

104. Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor introduced his announcements report, which outlined the recent civic engagements attended by the Mayoral Party (the full report can be found in the agenda pack). In addition, the Mayor made other announcements in relation to:

- (i) The installation of Rt Revd Debbie Sellin as the new Bishop of Peterborough.

- (ii) A curry night held, which had raised nearly £1000 for the Mayor's charities.
- (iii) The success of Eva Wood's term as Youth MP for Peterborough.

105. Leader's Announcements

The Leader made several announcements and Group Leaders were able to respond.

Topics included:

- (i) A congratulations for the new Youth MPs Danielle Daboh and Pranav Aggraval.
- (ii) A successful funding bid of £100,000 from the Digital Planning Improvement Fund.
- (iii) The launch of the Ask the Cabinet sessions.

QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

106. Questions from Members of the Public

One question had been received from a member of the public in relation to the venues available for the Peterborough Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

The question and response given are attached in **APPENDIX A** to these minutes and are available on the Council's website.

107. 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 were no petitions presented by Members at the meeting.

108. 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 in relation to (a) to (d) were raised and taken as read in respect of the following:

1. Pavement Parking.
2. Green energy projects and local feeling.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS

109. Executive and Committee Recommendations to Council

There were no items to consider.

110. Questions on the Executive Decisions Made Since the Last Meeting

Councillor Mohammed Farooq introduced the report, which outlined the record of Executive decisions made since the last meeting.

Members asked questions on the following Executive Decisions:

- 2024/2025 Transport Capital Programme of Works - MAR24/CAB/91a
- 2024/2025 Transport Capital Programme of Works - MAR24/CAB/91b
- Authority To Enter Into Contracts and Grant Funding Agreements for Luf2 Peterborough Station Quarter - MAR24/CAB/92
- Regional Fitness and Swimming Centre, Bishops Road - MAR24/CAB/93
- Development Of The First Primary School For Great Haddon - MAR24/CAB/95
- Acquisition Of Homes - MAR24/CAB/94

111. Questions on the Combined Authority Decisions Made Since the Last Meeting

There were no items to consider.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

112. Motions on Notice

112(1) Motion from Councillor Coles - Seeking support for the rural economy and local food production

Councillor Coles moved his motion, as amended in the additional information pack.

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

Council debated the motion: Councillor exercised her right to speak, and Councillor Coles summed up.

A vote was taken on the amended motion and the motion was **UNANIMOUSLY** carried.

113. Reports to Council

113(a) Report of the Peterborough City Council Independent Improvement and Assurance Panel

Councillor Qayyum proposed a motion without notice under Council Standing Order 28.3 for a member (Councillor Fitzgerald) not to be heard further which was seconded by Councillor Jamil.

A vote was taken on the motion without notice (33 in favour, 22 against and 2 abstentions) and the motion without notice was **CARRIED**.

At 21:07pm the following Councillors left the Chamber and did not return.

Councillors Ahmed, J Allen, Ayres, Cereste, Coles, Fenner, Fitzgerald, Hussain, Khan, Over, Perkins, Rangzeb, Ray, Sainsbury, Sharp, Trust, Warren

The recommendations moved by Councillor Mohammed Farooq and seconded by

Councillor Howard were **UNANIMOUSLY** agreed as follows:

1. Requests Cabinet to consider this report and consider any actions that it wishes to take.
2. Requests the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee to review this report, the Cabinet's response and the progress being made with the delivery of the Improvement Plan.

113(b) Appointment of the Monitoring Officer

The recommendations moved by Councillor Alison Jones and seconded by Councillor Mohammed Farooq were **UNANIMOUSLY** agreed as follows:

It is recommended that Council approve the appointment of Neil McArthur as the Council's Monitoring Officer with effect from him taking up the role of Director of Legal & Governance.

113(c) Annual Pay Policy Statement

The recommendations moved by Councillor Howard and seconded by Councillor Mohammed Farooq were **UNANIMOUSLY** agreed as follows:

It is recommended that Council approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2024 included at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Mayor
7.00pm – 9:28pm
20 March 2024

Appendix A

FULL COUNCIL, 20 MARCH 2024 QUESTIONS

Questions were received under the following categories:

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Questions from members of the public

1. Question from Patrick Brooks/Vanessa Pool

Councillor Howard, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Finance.

Thank you, Mr Mayor, I am delighted to do that.

Patrick is actually the Secretary of PPSC, so as Chair I have been delegated to read the question.

Last Summer, Peterborough Palestine Solidarity Campaign put on a 2-week Festival in our city, and I know that many of you visited it. In August we were offered the use of the Museum community area to hold an exhibition of Palestinian Culture in April and May this year.

On the 31st of January this year, our exhibition was cancelled. We are deeply concerned about this decision.

We were proud that our multicultural city saw the importance of educating people about Palestine and its rich culture, as it did in 2023 for the Ukrainian Community.

Peterborough can hold its head high following the recent vote calling for an immediate, permanent ceasefire in Gaza. Our plans complement that vote. Our exhibition is about the history and culture of Palestine, using Palestinian voices. We believe now is the time to let Palestinians speak for themselves, promoting peace through better understanding.

Will the council please allow this exhibition to go ahead in the museum community gallery?

The Cabinet Member responded:

Thank you and through you Mr Mayor.

Thank you for stepping in to ask the question because I think it is really important that the public hear the question so thank you for stepping in and doing that.

The postponement of this exhibition was not an easy decision to take, but it was one that, after careful consideration, we felt was proportionate and necessary to minimise any increase in community tensions.

This council has been profoundly shaken by the events in Gaza and Israel and a majority of Councillors as you recently know voted to call upon an immediate ceasefire. We are fully motivated to support all communities affected by this terrible conflict.

Regrettably, the situation in the middle east is having far reaching and detrimental implications on community harmony in this country. Events that prior to the conflict would have had little impact, now need to be carefully considered as they may inadvertently lead to local tensions.

As organisers, the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign' is a campaign group whose publicised aims and objectives could be polarising during a time of unrest. To host an event from our own premises may call into account council impartiality and lead to an unforeseen community impact, thank you for the question.

Supplementary Question:

Yes, I am not sure I caught all of it, but I won't ask you to repeat it. I noticed one word used – postponed, we had no idea it was postponed, all we were told is that we can't have that space. So, if we can't have it now, part of the question, that's not all of the question would be when. Over the years we have participated in many events, none of which have caused problems for our community. Indeed, we are committed to contribute to community cohesion. We are hoping to link with others over this, it is not just us.

Peterborough has a long and proud history of multiculturalism, embracing all cultures and not excluding any. It is ironic that we are being excluded because of the fear of maybe hurting other communities who have never, and some have been to our events, expressed a problem. So, will Peterborough Council be one of those standing up for what is right by enabling the exhibition to take place at the museum this year.

The Cabinet Member responded:

Thank you for the follow-up question.

I would definitely welcome you to engage with me and officers and the Museum team to see what can be done in the meantime. So, you do have my assurance that we would love to talk more with you on that.

What I can say is that the Museum team are still very keen to host a broader programme of events to promote Palestinian and wider middle eastern culture and the Palestinian and middle eastern communities will be invited to be part of a new approach to community programming at the Museum. It is early days, and it would be good to have your input into that. It is about bringing communities together to explore commonality, topics, or themes such as food, work and play, family, friendships, celebrations through exhibitions and events so we would welcome working closely with you on that and I hope you take us up on that offer, thank you.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

Questions on notice to:

- a. The Mayor
- b. To the Leader or Member of the Cabinet
- c. To the Chair of any Committee or Sub-committee

PART B

1. Question from Councillor Steve Allen

Councillor Elsey, Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Climate Change.

I am sure we all realise the real issues that pavement parking presents for pedestrians and people with buggies and prams, but particularly for disabled people with sight or mobility impairments.

Pavement and verge parking causes damage to pavements and footpaths and turns verges into rutted quagmires; leading to increased maintenance costs local authorities.

Pavement parking has been prohibited in London since 1974, except where councils choose to permit it by implementing exemptions and erecting the necessary traffic signs.

However, there is no specific ban outside London;

Councils can implement local pavement and verge parking prohibitions through traffic regulation orders. (TRO's)

The Commons Transport Committee reported on pavement parking in September 2019, with the key recommendation that the Government bring forward proposals to reform the TRO process to make it cheaper and easier for local authorities to use this option, facilitating implementation of local traffic orders.

Can I ask the responsible Cabinet Member?

That we as a local authority, as soon as practicable implement restrictions by the means of local legislation to deal with anti-social parking behaviour, such as pavement and verge parking, an exercise which blights communities and neighbourhoods; and additionally as a Council we lobby our local MP's to make representations in Parliament to press for reform of the TRO processes.

The Cabinet Member responded:

Thank you, Mr Mayor, and through you.

Thank you, Councillor Allen, for his question.

The council recognises the damage and inconvenience that can be caused by anti-social parking, including on pavements and verges, and, in 2018 introduced a scheme whereby a citywide prohibition of verge and pavement parking could be activated in local areas based on a consensus of local residents. The Traffic Regulation Order supporting this prohibition is required to be made active in specific areas as it is not always the case that parking on verges should be banned outright. For example, in areas where there is extremely limited on-street parking.

We do however agree that the process to implement a Traffic Regulation Order more generally needs to be reviewed, and we would welcome Parliament making changes that make that process more straightforward.

Meanwhile, officers can work with Councillors on any specific locations they have concerns about, and details of our verge and pavement parking policy can be found on our website.

Supplementary Question:

Thank you, Mr Mayor, and why not, let's have a supplementary.

Thank you, Cllr Elsey, it seems we are on the same page with that. We realise the problems and the inconvenience caused by pavement parking and indeed how dangerous it is to those who are limited sight or mothers with push chairs and indeed people using wheelchairs. So, we get that. What we need to do is something about it and I don't think we are doing much about it as a Council.

Hopefully the implementation of local legislation can be put into process with a bit more gusto shall we say. In the meantime, in order that Peterborough City Council as the highway authority sends a message of clear intent, can officers at the highest-level progress engagement with the police to request they exercise their powers on the issue of causing unnecessary obstruction and seek to achieve effective enforcement of that offence as a way to deal with pavement parking, thank you Mr Mayor.

The Cabinet Member responded:

Thank you, Mr Mayor, and thank you Councillor Allen for the question. It appears that this has only happened over the last 4 months.

As I have already stated, in 2018, the Council introduced a scheme whereby city-wide prohibition of a verge and pavement parking could be activated in local areas based on a consensus of local residents.

I have also said that where appropriate, we will look to effect change and improve the lives of those affected by this issue. I am happy to work with both Shailesh Vara MP and whoever our next Peterborough MP is on this matter.

As this is the case, and as it is such a pressing issue to you, why did you as an administration do nothing in the following 6 years to make a difference from the 2018 introduction of this legislation. Why is it that you are bringing this to Council 6 weeks prior to an election having wasted the 6 years of opportunity that you had as a Conservative administration to do

anything about it. I think you are underestimating the intellect of the electorate, thank you Mr Mayor.

Point of explanation from Cllr Allen:

Importantly, what we have to do is to look forward and not back. People are politicking on the left side on this Council, let's do something about this problem which has certainly occurred with much emphasis over the past year or so, thank you.

PART C

2. Councillor Steve Allen

Councillor Day, Chair of the Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny.

It has been reported that Labour Party nationally now argues that they have to focus on "being seen" as responsible stewards of the economy, rather than committing to a spending pledge for green energy projects.

May I ask this question to Chair of Climate Change Scrutiny Committee?

With Labour recently abandoning its green investment pledge and no longer committing to invest £28 billion a year in green energy projects if it wins the next election; may I ask you as Chair of the Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee, with what is I am sure is a deep commitment to the philosophy of green Energy, whether you feel that your "Alliance" partners locally are on the same page as you and still travelling in the same direction with their commitment to our own Environmental aspirations.

The Scrutiny Chair responded:

Thank you, Mr Mayor, and thank you Councillor Allen for the question.

The work of the Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee and the reports and strategies that are taking place will continue whoever the new administration or government is and as a Council, we are committed to the ambitions and polices.

The Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and committed to becoming a net zero carbon organisation by 2030 and to supporting Peterborough to become a net zero city. This was a unanimous decision made by Full Council.

The cross-party Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee has been running for 2 years. It has scrutinised and helped shaped many climate related council activities including: a Council Carbon Footprint and Climate Change Action Plan, a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, formation of a Cycling and Walking Task and Finish Group, a Climate Change Public Engagement Programme, use of the Local Area Energy Plan to inform a city-wide plans, a Climate Change Schools Engagement Programme, a Carbon Literacy Programme, a Climate Adaptation Plan, a Recycling and Waste Policy, an Echo Homes Project which I updated everybody about earlier, a Climate Change Procurement Policy and the Peterborough Integrated Renewables Infrastructure otherwise known as PIRI Project.

It is not the role for me as a Scrutiny Chair to comment on the general election manifesto of any party. It is our role to ensure that the polices put forward by the Council administration are robust and working for the benefit of Peterborough residents and our natural environment.

Supplementary Question.

Fluently answered as one would expect from the Chairman of that Committee.

I am conscious that outside influences affect how we get on with each other and certainly we have to be careful how we choose our friends as have been manifested in this Chamber over the last 5 or 6 months. So, I am pleased that you are still passionate about your ideals, but I do think looking forward, perhaps you should be conscious of people around you having different ideas.

So, the question is, will you carry on with this policy despite the fact that one of your 'alliance' colleague's parties has now kicked into touch with our ideals.

The Scrutiny Chair responded:

Thank you, Councillor Allen.

Just to reassure you that my position as Scrutiny Chair of this Committee as we all know is apolitical and I can assure you that members of the Cross-Party Committee, also apolitical have been working together and moving in a very positive direction in terms of our climate and environment ambitions and we will continue to do so, thank you.

Questions on notice to:

The Combined Authority Representatives:

There were none.