

Appendix A- Shaping Our City consultation feedback

In October 2022, city council members signed off a new Corporate Strategy. [Sustainable Future City Council](#) set out how we will deliver long-term improvements and meet the changing needs of residents up to 2025. This strategy had the following priorities:

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

In September 2024 we launched a consultation on a revised draft Corporate Strategy. Shaping Our City proposed four core priorities as follows, with a number of associated priorities:

1. **Economy and Inclusive Growth**
2. **Creating a Sustainable Future**
3. **Prevention, Independence and Resilience**
4. **Children and Young People**

Consultation Feedback

We consulted in a number of different ways, including an online survey, face to face events in eight locations across the city, with our staff, and on a Shaping our City Facebook group.

Here is a summary of what you told us via each of these different engagement routes:

Online form Feedback

There was a total of 120 responses submitted, however not all those who responded answered all questions posed to them.

39% of people agreed with the draft priorities, 32% slightly disagreed, 15% strongly agreed and 14% strongly disagreed.

Those who responded felt that Jobs and Economy (26), Financial Sustainability (23) and Housing and Homelessness (19) were the three areas that should be top priority over the next three years.

The most common themes that emerged as having been expected to be in the draft priorities but weren't, were safety (9), leisure facilities (9) and environmental sustainability (8).

In terms of themes that people felt should not be a priority for the council, the top 3 results were housing and homelessness (11), environment (9) and growth (9).

Face to face events feedback

There was a mixture of positive and negative feedback from 8 face to face community events and one online event. Key themes discussed as priorities included:

- The city centre – a need to focus on creating a welcoming and safe place.
- Better support for children with SEND and support for those young people into adulthood.
- Cycle routes around villages and protection of green belt land.
- Importance of having a green city and a clean city.
- Protection of rural environment and community values, especially Peterborough's history.
- Consider our identity - celebrate our city, city of culture, festivals.
- Not enough mention of disability in the document.
- Realise the value of those services which are not children's and adult's, ie leisure and culture attractions, street cleansing.

Shaping Our City Facebook group feedback

As part of the Shaping Our City campaign, we set up a Facebook group to engage social media users without risking messages getting lost among the other campaigns running on our main feed. Facebook groups can act as a safe space for two-way conversations between brands and customers, or in this case, the council and our residents.

In total, 1,086 users joined the Facebook group, contributing 556 comments and reactions and 4,488 votes on polls. The most engaging polls, gaining a combined total of 2,682 votes, centred around the services most important to residents, and the ways the council could raise funds.

The services most important to residents included road maintenance, leisure and culture, adult and children's social care, litter picking, waste disposal and homelessness/housing needs. Users had the ability to add their own options to the poll, of which the most popular were tackling antisocial behaviour, disability access and NHS dentists.

Meanwhile, the top fundraising option (with 19% of votes) was applying for more government grants, with lobbying central government for funding a close second (with 14%). There was little to no support for any suggestion of cutting services or raising charges. Out of the options added by users, 'Stop buying hotels', 'Stop allowing MPs to claim for extras' and 'Stop bonuses for council members' were all popular choices.

Among the 171 comments received on the group, the main themes were:

- Concern for those with disabilities/SEND and vulnerable elderly
- Making the city centre more attractive to visitors
- Worries about population growth putting a strain on services
- Dissatisfaction with the funding received from central government

There were also debates over what is council funded and what is funded centrally.

We found the Facebook group to be a meaningful exercise in information gathering, with a wealth of data and contributions for the consultation. Additionally, we now have a community of engaged residents that have a proven interest in local issues, which could be used and built on for future consultations.

Staff consultation

Four sessions were held with council staff to understand their views and priorities.

There were concerns about the erosion of preventative services like Sure Start centres and the lack of public health considerations, particularly GP surgeries, for expanding housing developments.

Other areas of focus included the need for economic growth and inclusive development, an emphasis on diverse and skilled job opportunities within Peterborough and improving the city centre. It was also raised as necessary to ensure the mental well-being of social workers and better educational support for excluded children.

There were strong suggestions that there must be more employment support, as well as services being more visible from early years to the elderly.

Comments also highlighted the need to understand cost drivers to manage spending better.

Many believe that aspirations should remain the same, but there is a need to better manage spending to achieve them.

Discussions emphasised the need for improved financial processes, debt management, and budget planning.

Departmental collaboration and efficient use of resources was also important, some suggestions included centralising processes, reducing duplication, and using technology solutions like AI.

There was also a concern about the negative perception of the council and the need to support a positive public image.

Conclusion

The comments made during this consultation are now being considered by the council's Corporate Leadership Team and Cabinet and a revised draft will go before Cabinet for approval in the New Year.

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