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Peterborough Council Appoints Three Cabinet Advisors in Strategic Leadership Move

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— Categories: Finance



In a forward-looking decision aimed at strengthening governance and developing future leadership, Peterborough City Council leader Dennis Jones has appointed three cabinet advisors at a combined annual cost of just under £27,000. Each advisor will receive an allowance of £8,999 to support cabinet members in delivering key priorities across vital policy areas.

The appointments Cllr Zameer Ali, Cllr Noreen Bi, and Cllr Asim Mahmood follow shortly after the Labour-led administration successfully overcame a motion of no confidence

during the full council meeting on 18 June.

Supporting Governance and Building Capacity

Peterborough's cabinet consists of seven members, including the council leader, who are tasked with leading policy development, managing budgets, and overseeing service delivery across the city. Cabinet advisors do not hold decision-making authority or voting rights but play a supporting role by advising cabinet members, leading on specific projects, and deputising at meetings and events where appropriate.

- Cllr Zameer Ali has been appointed Cabinet Advisor for Finance and Corporate Governance.
- Cllr Noreen Bi will serve as Cabinet Advisor for Children's Services.
- Cllr Asim Mahmood assumes the role of Cabinet Advisor for Adults and Health.

These areas reflect some of the most complex and resource-intensive responsibilities within the council, requiring strategic support to ensure effective delivery.

A Strategic Investment in Future Leadership

Explaining the rationale behind the appointments, Cllr Jones stated:

“There are two reasons. One is to support cabinet members on a project basis. Their briefs are huge. The second is succession planning. These are people who are all relatively young, and I want to nurture the political leadership of the future.”

He further noted that while the idea of appointing cabinet advisors had been previously discussed, it was initially shelved due to budget constraints. However, the current political and administrative environment, combined with the lead-up to upcoming elections, presented a timely opportunity to implement the plan.

“It's important we bring new people into leadership roles to gain experience and ensure continuity. I'm trying to future-proof how we go about our business.”

Cross-Party Engagement and Governance Transparency

In a broader effort to enhance accountability and collaboration, Cllr Jones has also appointed Conservative and independent councillors to chair several council committees

for the 2024–25 civic year. He emphasised that this approach reflects a commitment to good governance:

“We didn’t want to be seen as marking our own homework.”

Balancing Cost and Value

At a total cost of under £27,000 annually, the appointments represent a modest investment in leadership development and operational support. While some may question the expense, the council argues that the benefits of enhanced capacity, talent development, and improved service delivery justify the expenditure.

As Peterborough City Council navigates complex challenges and prepares for the next electoral cycle, the decision to appoint cabinet advisors signals a clear intent: to invest in strategic governance today and build resilient leadership for tomorrow.