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## **GROWTH AND PROSPERITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

### **TO FOLLOW**

**DATE: FRIDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2010**  
**TIME: 2.00 PM**  
**PLACE: COUNCIL HOUSE, NEXT TO THE CIVIC CENTRE**

#### **Committee Members–**

Councillor Viney, Chair  
Councillor Coker, Vice Chair  
Councillors Ball, King, Martin Leaves, Mrs Nelder, Reynolds, Roberts and  
Wheeler

**TO FOLLOW – Please find enclosed additional information for your  
consideration under agenda item numbers 5 and 9.**

**BARRY KEEL  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

## **GROWTH AND PROSPERITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

### **5. FEEDBACK FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD (Pages 1 - 2)**

To receive any feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on issues which concern this Panel.

### **9. REVIEW OF SKATEBOARDING BY LAW TASK AND FINISH GROUP UPDATE (Pages 3 - 6)**

Members will be provided with an update on the Skateboarding Task and Finish Group.

**19 February 2010 Growth and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Panel****Feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 3 February 2010**

At 3 February Overview and Scrutiny Management Board it was resolved that the following amended worklessness resolution be approved:

The Growth and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Panel discussed the issue of worklessness at two scrutiny meetings, namely 28 September 2009 and 7 December 2009 (G & P minutes 18 and 37). Several representatives from different organisations namely, Jobcentre Plus, Working Links, Plymouth Employment & Skills Board, Plymouth City Council and Devonport Regeneration Community Partnership, attended the September meeting and provided the Panel with presentations upon the high levels of worklessness in Plymouth and the importance of tackling the issue of worklessness together.

Representatives from different organisations and sectors of the Council, namely Strategic Housing, Social Inclusion, Recruitment and the Shekinah Mission, similarly attended the December meeting and informed the panel that programmes were currently in place to tackle worklessness; however it was important for this to continue and for Plymouth City Council to take a lead.

The main points to address were –

(i) Tackling Worklessness was essential to the City meeting the objectives set out in the Local Economic Strategy, Sustainable Community Strategy, Children & Young People's Plan as well as a range of other targets. Whilst it was recognised that Worklessness impacted on many aspects of the Council and partnership's work e.g. health, learning, etc., ultimately it demanded a lead service area and could best be addressed from a Strategic Economic Development perspective.

(ii) The present framework with central and local government and the third sector was too complicated. The emerging consensus in national policy, endorsed by Overview & Scrutiny, was that, operationally, Worklessness was best led by the Local Authority under the strategic direction of the Local Strategic Partnership.

(iii) The Children & Young People OSP will be aware of the Skills and NEETs agenda.

Resolved that Overview and Scrutiny Management Board be requested to approve the following –

- (a) **Recommendation:** That the Department for Development & Regeneration take on the ownership and leadership of the Worklessness agenda on behalf of the Council and that links across Plymouth City Council are accordingly established to a)

ensure the council's role is clearly understood and b) that, from an Economic Development perspective, skills development aligns with the economic drivers of the city and key sectors.

- (b) **Recommendation:** that Plymouth City Council take on a strategic leadership role.
  
- (c) **Recommendation:** That Human Resources work with the Assistant Director for Development & Regeneration (Economic Development) and his team to develop a strategy for Plymouth City Council recruitment under the Worklessness agenda and that the Corporate Management Team be requested to endorse this.
  
- (d) **Recommendation:** That Plymouth City Council review its Recruitment policies to become an exemplar employing body, by providing greater employment/work opportunities for disengaged groups e.g. young people, care leavers, young offenders and the longer term unemployed.

## Growth and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Reviews)

Thursday 4 February 2010

### PRESENT:

Councillor Coker, in the Chair.  
Councillors Ball and Martin Leaves.

Apologies for absence: Councillor Reynolds

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.30 pm.

*Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.*

### 1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in accordance with the code of conduct.

### 2. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Chair's Urgent Business.

### 3. MINUTES

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2009 be approved as an accurate record.

### 4. REVIEW OF PLYMOUTH SKATEBOARDING BY-LAW

Inspector Russell Sharpe from Devon and Cornwall Police, Councillor Wogens Portfolio Holder for Transport and the Head of Network Management attended the final Skateboarding By Law Task and Finish Group meeting in order to provide the Panel with their opinions upon the skateboarding by law, possible solutions to the problem caused by skateboarding and the cost of possible deterrent measures.

Inspector Russell Sharpe informed Members that –

- (i) the current skateboarding by law was very difficult to enforce as it referred to 'nuisance' which was hard to establish, if the by law was changed to a complete ban skateboarders would be criminalised;
- (ii) having spoken to young people who skated in the area, officers were informed that the skaters wanted a skate park nearby;
- (iii) in his opinion, skateboarders liked to be seen performing their tricks and stunts;
- (iv) the police would enforce a skateboarding by law however Members were of the opinion that it would be beneficial for an alternative skating venue to be sought;
- (v) the Crown Prosecution Service felt it was the responsibility of the Council to prosecute skateboarders breaking the skateboarding by law ; Plymouth City Council representatives considered it would cost between £70 and £100 for each prosecution;
- (vi) a mobile skate park may be more appropriate as city centre land was of high value;

- (vii) it was difficult for the police to enforce the skateboarding by law 24/7 as police resources would be focused towards higher priority crime;

Councillor Wogens, Cabinet Member for Transport informed Members that –

- (viii) he was interested to hear evidence collected by the Task and Finish Group;
- (ix) he was unaware of anywhere in the city centre where a skate park could be incorporated;
- (x) he did not want to curtail a reasonable activity that was spoilt for the majority by a few individuals;
- (xi) he agreed that signage needed to be adapted to remind skateboarders of their actions

The Head of Network Management informed Members that –

- (xii) the estimated cost of deterrent measures to city centre furniture and paving were expensive as health and safety measures had to be carried out;
- (xiii) AMEY would be tasked to do the work if this was agreed.
- (xiv) it was important for shared space to be incorporated for any future designs to the city;

Having heard from the Police and the Portfolio Holder for Transport, and also having taken into account evidence from the first two panel meetings, Members agreed that it was very clear from all the evidence that skateboarding was not conducive to this area, because of the numbers of the public crossing the area to reach different destinations.

The Panel noted the fact that there had been a minimum number of formal complaints to the authority and the Police, but that there was a significant undercurrent of informal complaints about the activity not being suitable and causing anxiety to members of the public; this was confirmed by the results of the survey commissioned by the Panel.

The majority of the feedback from members of the public and witnesses supported the implementation of a total ban, but they went on to say that they would not support a total ban without a suitable alternative location being made available.

Feedback from the Police Service confirmed that a new by law, to totally ban the activity, would potentially involve a significant resource from both the Police and the Authority and it was unlikely therefore that it could be appropriately enforced and subsequently unlikely to have the desired effect. The legal framework for by laws was currently under review nationally, and may impact on local enforcement arrangements later this year.

The Panel noted further feedback from the Police and unanimously agreed that they would not like the young people to be criminalised due to their participation in a sport of their choice.

Resolved that Overview and Scrutiny Management Board be requested to approve the following recommendations–

- (1) The Panel recommends the retention of the current by law;

**In the short term;**

- (2) The Panel recommends that the legal department review the words on the external signage in the area to ensure that it appropriately informs people of the dangers of prosecution should they cause a nuisance, harm or damage in accordance with the

current by law;

- (3) The Panel recommends that a suitable alternative site be sought for urban skateboarding;

**In the longer term;**

- (4) The Panel recommends that future design proposals for areas of the city centre consider communal use of space and to ensure that final designs take into account either the encouragement or deterrent of skateboarding activity.
- (5) The Panel recommends that a further review takes place once the new Central Park Skateboarding park and the indoor facility at Cattedown have had time to mature and when the future enforcement legislation is known; this review to be undertaken by the Lead Member for this neighbourhood under the Councils Localities Working arrangements.

5. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.

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