

Cabinet

Monday 14 August 2023

PRESENT:

Councillor Evans OBE, in the Chair.

Councillor Laing, Vice Chair.

Councillors Aspinall, Briars-Delve, Coker, Dann, Haydon, Lowry and Penberthy.

Apologies for absence: Councillor Cresswell.

Also in attendance: Matt Bromley (Partner, Ward Williams), David Haley (Interim Director of Children's Services), Tracey Lee (Chief Executive), David Northey (Interim Service Director for Finance), Anthony Payne (Strategic Director for Place), Sandra Pentney (Project Manager), Giles Perritt (Assistant Chief Executive), Jamie Sheldon (Senior Governance Advisor) and Gary Walbridge (Head of ASC and Retained Functions).

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 4.21 pm.

Note: The full discussion can be viewed on the webcast of the City Council meeting at www.plymouth.gov.uk. At a future meeting, the Council 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.

24. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

25. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

26. **Questions from the Public**

There were two questions from members of the public:

The following question was received from Mr Stephen Dart and answered by The Leader:

Question: Is the £2.75 million Council funding agreed by the Cabinet in March 2023 for the Brickfields redevelopment a one off capital payment or an annual revenue payment?

Response: Firstly, I think it's worth reminding ourselves about the context of this decision and the scale of investment that it is helping to unlock. We recently concluded the agreements and then did a media release about it a couple of weeks ago.

It is a £21m investment in Brickfields that will not only transform the

	<p>Brickfields site, but will transform opportunities for the Devonport community, for sport in the City and also our professional sports clubs. This project is the result of an amazing and long-term partnership between the Council, Plymouth Argyle, the Argyle Community Trust, Plymouth Albion, Devonport Community Leisure Ltd and existing users of the site.</p> <p>This deal is about massive investment in new facilities and making the most of the Brickfields site. It is clearly also a significant inward investment - in particular from Argyle who are investing £18m across the club and the community trust. But for me this deal is about ambition for our communities, it is about better health outcomes for the people of Devonport and it is also about better access to facilities for our local residents.</p> <p>The entire complex will be reconfigured and upgraded creating some of the finest outdoor sports facilities in the South West. The new community hub will deliver outcomes that residents and stakeholders have told us they want to see (including dedicated space for young people and youth service provision/ education and employment programmes/ wellbeing services / soft play and an affordable gym).</p> <p>The question we've received from Mr Dart asks whether the Council's funding is a one-off capital payment or an annual revenue payment. This is a one-off commitment for a maximum of £2.75m. The majority of this is capital funding that helps to support the costs of delivering the project. Some of it will be paid to Argyle to support the costs associated with delivering the new infrastructure required at Brickfields. A significant amount of the funding has been earmarked to support the ongoing provision of hockey in the city, as well</p>
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	<p>as the relocation of the petanque rink to a suitable location nearby. Some of the funding will be provided to Devonport Community Leisure Ltd to support their ongoing role in the community and the oversight of the Brickfields project. And there is also an allowance for ongoing maintenance of the athletics track, which as you may know we invested in very recently as well. In fact, aside from all of the other benefits that I've already mentioned, this project will actually help the Council achieve some revenue savings as outlined in the original report that went to Cabinet. I would like to thank Councillor Mark Coker for the time he has spent in the last few months getting the deal over the line and played an incredibly important brokering role between the aspirations of the project and the aspirations of the local community.</p>
<p>The following question was received from Alderman George Wheeler and answered by Councillor Mark Coker (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport):</p>	
<p>Question: Thanks for your reply to my previous question indicating that the St Budeaux bus shelters would not be replaced imminently. Could the unused bus shelter at the top of Penrose Road, owned by Tamar Crossings, be re-sited to the square to help passengers over the coming winter?</p>	<p>Response: Thank you Alderman Wheeler for your question.</p> <p>It has been estimated that the suggested relocation would cost the council approximately £12,000 and would take between 10-14 weeks to relocate the shelter to allow for necessary conditions, utility ground and ground checks, as well as a possible need for a temporary traffic regulation order for which there is no budget provision. The transforming cities funds in St Budeaux Square is scheduled to start in quarter three of 2023/24, which would be before any temporary relocation could be undertaken. The relocation would also delay the commencement of this scheme, leading to further abortive costs. The relocation of the shelter from Penrose Road to St Budeaux Square is, therefore, not practical or</p>

	<p>good value for money and would therefore not be taken forward. Instead, the city council will focus on delivering the transforming cities funds scheme for this area which includes the provision of two brand new clear channel shelters.</p>
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27. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

28. **Leader's Announcements**

The Leader made the following announcements:

- a) At the end of August the brush and tree stacks would be scanned to ensure that all nesting birds had flown the coop and once that was confirmed a new scheme for the area would be brought forward with the opportunity for feedback from all residents and businesses in Plymouth.
- b) A video was played at this point in the meeting demonstrating what had been achieved in the [first 100 days by the administration in relation to Armada Way](#);
- c) Explained that work on the first port strategy had commenced and would look at the economic potential of the 4 ports for the first time as they had previously been looked at individually; the strategy would identify a huge opportunity for Plymouth to increase its number of green jobs and Government would be lobbied for large scale infrastructure investment;
- d) The Leader had attended a number of important meetings to ensure that Plymouth would be at the forefront of the economic opportunities that would result from the massive national investment in the Celtic Array and an investment prospectus was being developed as well as a major event to highlight what Plymouth had to offer;
- e) He had also attended meetings to look at how to ensure that Plymouth benefitted from the scale of investment going into the Naval Base, in particular the 10% social requirement in MOD contracts, and more work would be done in this area in the coming months;
- f) An important visit from the CEO's of ABP and Brittany Ferries (Christophe Mathieu and Henrik Pedersen) was being hosted that week, where opportunities of how to work together to unlock significant new investment into Millbay Port would be discussed and The Leader was hopeful to make an announcement following the meeting;
- g) An important meeting was taking place later that week with Sutton Harbour Group, the Environmental Agency and the fishing industry to make sure that the fishing industry was protected during the repair works to the lock grates, as the fishing industry remained essential to Plymouth and it was essential the council did

everything it could to support it;

- h) The Leader had also attended a meeting with Brett Phaneuf from MSUBS to learn more about the investment plans for Oceansgate Phase 3 and the Leader wanted to invite more businesses to follow into South Yard;
- i) The Leader had hosted a meeting with Rachel Reeves to Barden Corporation in Plymouth to hear about their unique global business and growth ambitions, as well as about the fact that they had 380 employees doing high-quality work, and 75% of what they make there is exported and items such as ball bearings, made in Plymouth, are being used in missile systems in Ukraine and in the Curiosity Rover on Mars, which helped reinforce Plymouth's position as a manufacturing hub, alongside other companies of quality in the city.

29. **Cabinet Member Updates**

Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture, Events and Communications) provided the following updates:

- a) August had seen the second busiest day ever at The Box with 3196 visitors and, at that point during the summer holidays, they had been averaging 10,000 visitors a week, with a range of family holiday activities;
- b) The British Firework Championships would be taking place later that week, which would be sponsored by Brittany Ferries, and this year the event would feature the Young People's Choice Award, where a group of care-experienced young people would give their verdict, and the award was sponsored by Plymouth Citybus;
- c) The Plymouth Culture Project Vending Machine with a difference, which stocked plays, poems and pin badges, all made by local Plymouth artists and it only cost £1, had proved extremely popular and had had to be restocked 3 times its first week, one poem had been contributed by Councillor Laing herself, and she was very happy to see how it had been embraced.

Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) gave the following updates:

- d) Nearly 8,000 households would be receiving a one-off £25 payment towards their Council Tax bills to help those struggling with the cost of living crisis and payments would be made automatically to people who had completed their Council Tax Support forms and he encouraged anyone who was struggling to pay their Council Tax to check whether they were eligible for their Council Tax Support Scheme.

Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) provided the following updates:

- e) Contractors were starting work that week on creating rain gardens as part of the new sustainable urban drainage system as part of the New George Street public realm improvements, which would collect rain water for irrigation of plants in the scheme and he thanked the hard-working staff involved in the project and he was pleased to see it underway after delays due to voids, Blitz rubble, filled-in cellars and

a maze of utilities under the tarmac which had slowed the scheme down;

- f) The development of the Community Diagnostics Centre had only been made possible because of the proactive approach taken by the Council over recent years and a planning application had been submitted for a temporary facility, with the main building expected for completion by 1st April 2025 and confirmation of funds had been received that morning;
 - i. The new facility would undertake a range of 280,000 diagnostic checks a year, easy access for people from a variety of city centre car parks, and cover 3,000 sq. ft.
Councillor Mark Coker (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport) provided the following updates:
- g) A bus champion, Councillor Kevin Sproston, had been announced, as the industry was struggling to recover following the COVID-19 pandemic and it was important to have a Councillor as a single point of contact for bus companies, support groups such as PADAN, and for bus users;
- h) Councillor John Stephens would be officially announced as the walking and cycling champion later that week to give residents and involved companies a single point of contact;
- i) Plymouth City Council's Active Travel team, in partnership with the Plymouth School Sports Partnership had been announced as the top performing local authority in the country for training Year 6 pupils, by the BikeAbility Trust and he also took the opportunity to thank the active social prescribing team, who have been delivering adult cycle safety training.

Councillor Sally Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Cemeteries and Crematoria) provided the following update:

- j) During the school summer holidays in 2022, 3,018 children registered for the Summer Reading Challenge, and the numbers were already higher with 3,358 children registered by 10 August 2023, an 11.5% increase and she thanked the librarians who helped this happen, and volunteers;
- k) The Community Safety had been signed to tackle anti-social behaviour, whose aim was to involve a wide range of local organisations, charities, businesses and groups in crime prevention and she had worked with Councillor Coker to have Plymouth CityBus on board to promote this.

Councillor Sue Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Sport, Leisure and HR & OD) provided the following update:

- l) The Fit and Fed programme had continued to support disadvantaged families, co-ordinated by the Sports Development Unit, and there had been over 78 holiday clubs and 30 teen-taster sessions providing free activities and food for children and young people on benefit-related free school meals and other eligible children;

- m) Plymouth Active were also hosting a variety of free and low cost summer activities throughout the summer holidays, including diving tasters and Family fun Swims at the Life Centre with 24,066 spaces available across the activities in total;
- n) A well-supported community open day had been hosted at Brickfields on 20 July 2023 for local residents and stakeholders to learn more about the sports centre refurbishment and the vision for the future of the site, and give them a chance to provide feedback on the proposals;
 - i. To enable the refurbishment work to be carried out, the sports centre would be close from 1 September and Plymouth Active would cease to manage the site;
 - ii. The trust had been working with Plymouth Active Leisure to ensure existing customers and hirers had been invited to use alternative local facilities in the meantime;
 - iii. The pitches and athletic track would remain open until the end of March 2024, when the second phase of the redevelopment would begin.

Councillor Tom Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change) provided the following updates:

- o) At the end of July 2023, eight parks in Plymouth were awarded the prestigious green flag for their high standard of quality and cleanliness and he took the opportunity to thank the hard working staff as well as the dedicated friends groups and volunteers across the city, who gave up their time to look after Plymouth's green spaces;
- p) The Council had celebrated Love Parks Week 2023 with a range of free events, tying in with what had been mentioned by Councillor Sue Dann already, as well as the online promotion of the week reaching over 60,000 people who were given the opportunity to enter a competition by providing feedback on their favourite parks;
- q) Upgrades had been made to the Pattinson Drive playground in Mainstone with a focus on inclusivity for all abilities and work would also be undertaken with the probation team, artists and local families to create nature-based murals;
- r) As part the solar rooftops project, 7 of the 8 projects had been completed at Prince Rock Depot, Chelson Meadow, Ballard House, The Council House, The Box, Crownhill Court and Prince Rock Admin Block with the installation of the 8th project at Theatre Royal due to commence shortly;
- s) To date the Council had installed over 2,200 solar panels, reducing carbon emissions by an estimated 198 tons year;
- t) The heat decarbonisation programme was progressing well, with 5 sites complete and a further 4 sites with heat pumps in the design stage.

Councillor Mary Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) provided the following update:

- u) She thanked Whitley Primary School for inviting her to a session on the Dental Task Force with year 6 pupils, for them to ask questions.

30. **First 100 Days**

The Leader introduced this agenda item and highlighted:

- a) Renewed energy and urgency had been brought to key issues that concerned Plymouth residents, such as the cost of living crisis and the regeneration of the city centre, as well as working closely with partners to tackle issues such as lack of access to NHS vendors;

Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture, Events and Communication) added:

- b) It had been 87 days on the day of the meeting;
- c) She was proud to be part of a committed and hard-working cabinet who wanted to get things done.

At this point in the meeting, a video was played which can be found at: [The first 100 days of Building a Better Plymouth - YouTube](#)

- d) She then highlighted the opening of the four family hubs on Day 14, part of a commitment to making Plymouth the best place to grow up in;
- e) On day 40, she and The Leader visited a disused building, which had been transformed into self-contained flats for care experience young people who were ready to live more independently.

Councillor Mark Coker (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport) highlighted;

- f) Ensuring that Mount Wise Pools access was free;
- g) 4,150 road defects had been fixed up from May to 6 August (in the previous two years around 5,000 had been completed annually).

Councillor Sally Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Cemeteries & Crematoria) added:

- h) Plymouth had received the Purple Flag accreditation for its evening and night-time economy on Day 20;
- i) On Day 46 Plymouth joined a national campaign to tackle antisocial behaviour and the council went to residents and she wanted to thank all agencies involved for going out to visit residents and making it easier for people to express their concerns.

Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) added:

- j) On Day 22 PWC commended Plymouth on good growth and spoke about some of the things that the previous Labour administration had done;
- k) On Day 49 the redevelopment of the Co-operative Development Strategy had been announced, which would be carried out over the following year, to underpin how Plymouth could achieve having a good, working economy throughout the city;
- l) Tracey Lee (Chief Executive) and himself would be co-chairing a housing task force, and he was working with Councillor Mark Lowry on how more temporary accommodation could be brought forward in relation to homelessness, and housing remained an important issue and the BBC had used Plymouth as a case study to demonstrate the impact of the housing crisis on families with no fault evictions etc.

Councillor Tom Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change) added:

- m) On Day 32 the administration recommitted to a net-zero goal of 2030 and it was exciting working on an issue that was being addressed by multiple portfolio holders.

Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture, Events and Communication) summed up and highlighted the following points:

- n) The work was the result of a hard-working cabinet who were working with Council officers and teams to make things happen;
- o) They were accountable to the people of Plymouth and this showed what they had done since the elections in May 2023;
- p) This was just the beginning, there was much more to come and they were committed to making Plymouth the best city to grow up and grow old in.

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

31. **Cost of Living update on plan**

Councillor Sue Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Sport, Leisure and HR & OD) introduced the item and highlighted:

- a) On Day 71, of the administration having been in power, the council had a cost of living workshop and on Day 96 they would be officially launching the Cost of Living Plan;
- b) Work had been carried out with the Citizens Advice Bureau to try and articulate what the cost of living crisis meant for residents in Plymouth, 66% of whom were worried about how to make their money stretch to what they needed;
- c) The plan would be a multi-agency approach to effectively share and signpost information to local people;

- d) 60% of people who were affected by the cost of living crisis would be in work;
- e) Lobbying of national government needed to take place to enable local authorities to better support people;
- f) The first communication wave would be aimed at households that were families with children, or young people in education, so that when they went back to school or college, they got all the support that they could;
- g) It was important to help people's money go further and help them to access free and low-cost activities to improve mental health as well as offering crisis support for their housing, food and heating;
- h) It would also be important to tackle poverty in general;
- i) She would report back at the next meeting with feedback from the launch as well as a communications plan.

Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) added:

- j) There were clear connections between the pressures residents were experiencing and impacts on the council's budgets too, for example increases in energy costs.

32. **Director of Public Health Annual Report**

Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health) introduced the report and highlighted:

- a) It was a requirement that the Director of Public Health set out a report annually covering a topic, or topics, of their choosing, which this year was Thrive Plymouth, launched in 2014 as a ten year programme to tackle health inequalities, focusing on how lifestyle factors impact health and wellbeing;
- b) There are external factors that can influence health wellbeing such as a global pandemic or an economic downturn, so not all factors could be controlled locally, but the department could do their best to support people;
- c) Around 2010, life expectancy continued to increase, but not at the same rate as previously or as much that had been expected, and part of the reason for this was that life expectancy for people in more deprived areas was slowing down as the improvements were less than those available to wealthier people, due to national policies and the impact of austerity;
- d) The latest data shows a decrease in life expectancy in data set 2018-2020, impacted by the COVID19 pandemic;
- e) More deaths were still being experienced per week than expected, and research was being carried out to look into whether this was a result of the COVID19 pandemic, whether directly from the virus, or complications caused by it, or perhaps if it has been impacted by the lack of health care available during the pandemic;

- f) The difference in life expectancy between Plymouth and England, for both males and females, was 0.6 years, but Plymouth had the highest expectancy in comparison to areas of similar sizes;
- g) Healthy life expectancy had also been looked at, as living a long life could be different to living a long life but in bad health and in Plymouth male healthy life expectancy had gone above the England average, whilst the same data for females showed below the England average;
- h) Every year Thrive Plymouth had had a different annual focus, bringing in more partners, and that network had been highly valued through the COVID19 pandemic;
- i) It had been recognised that the language of behaviours and lifestyle was not solely about choice because external factors weight those choices, something that was more apparent at this time than when the programme launch;
- j) Mental health and well-being had become a central pillar of Thrive Plymouth, and it was important to understand the role it played in how people could lead healthier lives, reduce the impact of trauma and how they could be resilient to challenges;
- k) A considerable amount of momentum and learning had been gained over the length of the programme and her recommendation moving forward would be to continue the programme.

Councillor Mary Aspinnall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) added:

- l) Thanks to the teams for their work on the report;
- m) It was important to look into why women had a longer life expectancy but a shorter healthy life expectancy;
- n) There were long-lasting effects of COVID19 that were still impacting people;
- o) The news that only 5,000 steps a day were needed was welcome news to those with mobility issues;
- p) She was looking forward to working more with the Director of Public Health to improve the health of Plymouth residents.

On reflection Councillors mentioned:

- q) The importance of determining why women's healthy life expectancy was lower than the England average and looking at addressing the causes, which would link with the Aging Well agenda;
- r) The Child Poverty Action Group had discussed the need to tackle the issue of women's skills development and the importance of women's financial contribution to the home;

- s) It was important to work with multiple departments on tackling poverty in order to improve health;
- t) Certain aspects of health across the city had been improved since the launch of Thrive Plymouth;
- u) Preventative treatment and improvements in mental health were vital to the improvement of health overall;
- v) Research could be done into the health offer Plymouth had received through the NHS and national government and if that had impacted health, particularly women's health;
- w) The council were doing a number of other things, such as promoting active travel and providing low-cost or free access to activities that supported Thrive's aims of keeping everybody active.

The Cabinet agreed to:

1. Note the contents of the report, and in particular, the concerning impact of the cost of living crisis on health and wellbeing;
2. Require the Director of Public Health to return to Cabinet in Spring 2024 with a proposal for the future of Thrive Plymouth.

33. **Finance Monitoring Report**

Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) introduced the report and highlighted the following:

- a) Thanked David Northey (Interim Service Director for Finance) who had agreed to postpone his retirement to the end of the financial year;
- b) The budget for 2023/24 had been set by the previous, Conservative administration;
- c) At the end of the first three months of the financial year (April-June 2023) there was a reported revenue net forecast overspend of £7.5 million for the full financial year;
- d) Unachievable forecast savings of £1.5 million from the Customer and Corporate Services Department had been reported and a workshop had been held with relevant cabinet members and officers to understand the issues and he would report the findings in the long-term mitigation actions in the future to address it;
- e) There was a pressure of £2.8 million in Children's Services and a further pressure of £852,000 for a home to school projections and a peer review was being undertaken to look at this, and there was a further £1.3 million pressure of four new high-cost placements as well as £600,000 covering a pending special guardianship order judicial review. Tracey Lee (Chief Executive) and the Children's Services transition board were reviewing the departments finances and the issues within the department to do

their best to achieve a preferable financial outcome;

- f) There were net pressures in care packages, mostly in long-stay nursing;
- g) Community Connections was forecasting an overspend of £2.423 million, which was a significant increase and there were reviews underway looking into why this was happening, although it was a trend being experienced across the country;
- h) There were a number of proposed capital projects in the report such as the Theatre Royal car park solar scheme, phase one biodiversity projects of Derriford Community Park, Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest; Central Park improvements.

In response to questions it was reported that:

- i) The Leader's scheme of delegation set out the different ways in which different financial decisions needed to be taken and David Northey (Interim Service Director for Finance) agreed to meet with The Leader following the meeting to discuss the specific example he had, and reminded members that there was an ongoing review of the constitution where there would be opportunities to feedback;
- j) The cost of the by-elections was considered an overspend rather than a new line in the budget as there was an existing budget for elections in the Chief Executive's department.

The Cabinet agreed to:

1. Note the forecast revenue monitoring position at Period 3 as set out the report at the sum of £7.5 million;
2. Note the Capital Budget 2023-2028 had been revised to £556.722 million and agreed to recommend the amendments to Full Council for approval.

34. **City Centre Regeneration Leadership**

Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) introduced the report and highlighted:

- a) The report set out the administration's new vigour to deliver a better city centre for residents, businesses and visitors to Plymouth;
- b) There were approximately 18,000 jobs in the city centre and the area contributed and estimated economic value to Plymouth's economy of £700 million per annum;
- c) City centres in similar places to Plymouth had far more people residing within their city centres and there was considerable opportunity in Plymouth to increase this;
- d) There were projects totalling £250 million in the pipeline with a potential further £700 million and Plymouth had a track record of successfully delivering projects;

- e) The report set out a new strategy and structure to achieve positive progress in the city centre of Plymouth;
- f) The establishment of the proposed Boards would support the future growth and regeneration of the city centre.

Anthony Payne (Strategic Director for Place) added:

- g) There were significant opportunities and challenges within the city centre;
- h) There had been approximately £300 million worth of investment in the city centre over the previous 5 years;
- i) The structures were being put in place to ensure opportunities were taken forward even in a challenging economic environment.

The Cabinet agreed to:

1. Note the report and agree to the establishment of the structures set out in section three of the report;
2. Delegate authority to agree the terms of reference of the proposed Boards to the Cabinet member with responsibility for the city centre and the Strategic Director for Place.

35. **Modern Slavery Annual Update**

Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) introduced the report and highlighted:

- a) The Council had signed the Modern Slavery Charter around 5 years previously and part of that was to present an annual report;
- b) There were relatively low levels of modern slavery in Plymouth, but the council continued to proactively take steps to minimise the likelihood of it happening;
- c) It was important to raise awareness of the issues across the city and tackle those issues by working well with partners;
- d) The Illegal Migration Bill that was going through central government, if enacted, would deny potentially thousands of people trafficked into slavery any protections.

Councillor Sally Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Cemeteries & Crematoria) added:

- e) Modern Slavery remained a largely hidden crime and work would continue with the police service and other partners and organisations across the city to support vulnerable individuals who had been identified as potentially being exploited.

Councillor Mary Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care) proposed an additional recommendation to Lobby the Government to reconsider the Illegal Migration Bill, this was seconded by Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities).

The Cabinet agreed to:

1. Note the progress made on the delivery of the Modern Slavery Statement and the next steps required to further tackle modern slavery;
2. The updated Modern Slavery Statement;
3. Lobby the Government to reconsider the Illegal Migration Bill.

36. **Bereavement Service Project update**

Graham Smith (Head of Bereavement Service) introduced the update and highlighted:

- a) The Park was due to open in Spring 2024, a site of 17 acres;
- b) 522 trees were being planted before the opening with a further 361 to be planted in a phased approach that would be able to be memorialised by families and there would be electric car charging points at the site;
- c) The project had already been shortlisted for awards;
- d) At this point a video was played which could be viewed at: [The Park: Construction fly-thru August 2023 - YouTube](#), which showed the progress that had been made up to early August 2023;
- e) It was important to have a site where the services could be personalised for families experiencing a bereavement so they were supported in the best way.

Councillor Sally Haydon added the following remarks:

- f) Encouraged Cabinet members to visit the site if they had not already;
- g) The video would be shared on social media channels to reach members of the public;
- h) Positive feedback had been received on social media on the project via social media comments.

In response to questions it was added:

- i) The project had not been without its challenges but it was progressing very well and projected for completion in Spring 2024;
- j) The weatherproofing would be done imminently which would enable more work to be carried out within the buildings;

- k) The new cremators would be 40% more efficient than what was already in use in the city;
- l) Solar array would provide 20% charge back to the building and heat pumps were being looked into for the café and a sustainable drainage system would be included;
- m) The project was still within budget, but there were challenges as there had been some increases in costs, as well as changes that needed to be made to the cremators to make them compliant with legislation that was due to be implemented in 2027 and inflation costs;
- n) The installation of the cremators would be filmed as part of a further update video.