

Growth and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Friday 19 February 2010

PRESENT:

Councillor Viney, in the Chair.

Councillor Coker, Vice Chair.

Councillors Berrow, Roberts, Thompson, Wheeler and Wildy (substitute).

Apologies for absence: Councillors Ball, Martin Leaves and Nelder

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 4.35 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.

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declaration of interest was made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

Name	Minute number and subject.	Reason	Interest
Councillor Thompson	50. Plymouth City Council Housing Services	Plymouth Community Homes Board Member	Personal

47. MINUTES

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2009 be confirmed as a correct record subject to the following change; Councillor Wildy to be marked as present and Councillor Wheeler to be marked as having provided his apologies.

48. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Chair's Urgent Business.

49. FEEDBACK FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Democratic Support Officer informed the Panel that on 3 February 2010 the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board resolved that the recommendation from 7 December 2010 Growth and Prosperity meeting regarding 'Worklessness: The Contribution and Role of Plymouth City Council' be amended slightly as set out in the supplementary agenda (pages 1-2).

The Panel noted the amendment.

50. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK 2009 ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

The Assistant Director for Planning Services, a Spatial Planning Coordinator and Spatial Planning Officer together with the Cabinet Member for Planning, Strategic Housing and Economic Development provided the Panel with an update on the Local Development Framework 2009 Annual Monitoring Report.

The Panel was informed that –

- (i) this was the 5th Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) and Plymouth remained the most successful authority in the country for preparing its Local Development Framework (LDF);

- (ii) the AMR 2009 covered development activity undertaken in the period of time between 1 April 2008 and 31 March 2009;
- (iii) the AMR 2009 highlighted that 90% of targets were on target, and for those that were not there were corrective actions that had been put in place;
- (iv) Plymouth was one of only 13% of Local Planning Authorities that had delivered an adopted Core Strategy and had more Area Action Plans adopted than any other authority.

In response to questions raised it was reported that –

- (v) the AMR 2009 report was submitted in order for the Growth and Prosperity Panel to be informed of the status of current targets;
- (vi) scrutiny should focus upon the degree of success of each core strategy target and Members should analyse whether corrective action put in place was adequate and if specific areas of the AMR 2009 report needed to be scrutinised in more detail;
- (vii) Core Strategy Target 9.1, namely 'Delivery of new primary schools in Barne Barton, Devonport, Millbay, Southway and Plymstock and the Whitleigh campus, by 2008-2016' was still ongoing and on track; the accuracy of the project status relating to Devonport School needed to be looked at;
- (viii) Core Strategy Target 10.4, namely '20% of new dwellings developed to be Lifetime Homes standard (equating to 3,450 home by 2021)' was below target but improving performance and the report set out measures put in place to help deliver the target;
- (ix) Core Strategy Target 11.1, namely 'To work towards ensuring that the city's population have access to a natural greenscape within 400 metres of their home' was on track; there were currently two major park proposals in the North and East sectors of the city;
- (x) Affordable Homes were dependent upon household income and house prices whereas Lifetime Homes would incorporate a series of design standards in order make the building more adaptable with age;
- (xi) work on the Sustainable Neighbourhood Development Plan Document was progressing;
- (xi) the amalgamation of Langage Junior and Primary schools as well as schools in Tamerton Vale and Southway was part of a programme to reduce the number of surplus pupil places; it was understood pupil places was dependent upon housing developments in certain areas, and this issue would be addressed;
- (xiii) results from the equality survey did not add up to 100% due to non response to certain questions;
- (xiv) vacancy rates for the remaining city centre prime frontage area went up from 3% to 7%; this reflected the fact that there were currently policies in place to encourage smaller shopping parades, however this policy needed to be looked at in order to address concerns regarding the impact of the recession upon retail units. Issues of long term vacancy in specific centres would be addressed in any review of retail policy;
- (xv) a market recovery action plan brought forward 10 sites for development to the value of £133 million and work on two of those ten sites had commenced;
- (xvi) Core Strategy Target 10.2, namely 'at least 30% of new dwellings on qualifying sites to be affordable' was on track and officers were confident that affordable housing

could be met;

- (xvii) officers would check whether any section 106 money had to be repaid to developers due to case law timescales;

Members thanked officers for their good quality report.

Resolved that the Growth and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Panel –

- (1) note that the process for preparing LDF documents will change in response to revisions to government legislation and guidance on this matter;
- (2) note the current position reported in the Annual Monitoring Report in relation to contextual indicators, core output indicators and significant effect indicators;
- (3) note that the 2009 Annual Monitoring Report provides a commentary on whether or not the LDF Core Strategy Targets are on track to deliver the plan's key strategic objectives;
- (4) instruct officers to take appropriate action to address the issues arising in relation to those indicators which are currently not on target but which can be addressed through the planning application process, namely Lifetime Homes and Renewable Energy Production;
- (5) request further clarification from officers regarding Core Strategy 9.1 and the status of Devonport Primary School;
- (6) request a response regarding concerns about the provision of community infrastructure in areas of the city where additional housing development is planned.

51. **PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL HOUSING SERVICES**

The Assistant Director for Strategic Housing and the Cabinet Member for Planning, Strategic Housing and Economic Development provided the Panel with an update on Plymouth City Council's Housing Service (as set out in the agenda, pages 123-134).

In response to questions raised it was reported that –

- (i) the Council intended to carry out a strategic Review of Homelessness and Housing Advice Services; it would be beneficial for the Growth and Prosperity Panel to scrutinise this process in order to ensure that both services are fit for purpose, geared to existing demands and address prevention;
- (ii) work undertaken included the delivery of Neighbourhood Management Programmes in North Prospect and Stonehouse and the delivery of the Efford Building Communities Initiative was a success; from feedback received there was an increase in local residents who felt they were able to get involved in local activity and those that were satisfied with their area as a place to live;
- (iii) Devon Home Choice went live last month and was proving very successful as every property advertised had received hundreds of hits on the website; the website also clarified which housing band individuals were on;
- (iv) local housing needs were an important factor to the council and were hoped to be addressed by a development in local housing due to a £21m grant from the Government;
- (v) the Devonport library was to be a priority with Kick Start funding;

Recommended that –

- (1) the Panel explore and review key areas of strategic housing, specifically Choice Based Letting and the private renting sector in order to identify how both areas are working;
- (2) the Panel host two presentations by Plymouth Community Homes on the delivery of the transfer promises;
- (3) the Panel host a review of Plymouth Community Homes twice yearly;
- (4) a monitoring report on Devon Choice Lettings be incorporated into the Panel's future work programme;
- (5) the Panel receive a report from the Peer Challenge on private rental;
- (6) the Panel lead the scrutiny engagement with all services that fall under strategic housing;
- (7) the Strategic Review of Homelessness and Housing Advice services be incorporated into the Panel's future work programme;

(Councillor Thompson declared a personal interest in this item)

52. HOE FORESHORE SITE VISIT UPDATE

The Chair informed that Panel that a site visit for the Hoe Foreshore Task and Finish Group took place on 4 February 2010; the majority of red risks originally highlighted by the Audit Committee on 18 December 2008 had been rectified however it was expected that all remedial works would be completed by the end of February 2010. The diving board that was originally identified as a red risk had been dismantled.

53. REVIEW OF SKATEBOARDING BY LAW TASK AND FINISH GROUP UPDATE

Councillor Coker provided the Panel with a brief update on the Review of Skateboarding Task and Finish Group and informed Members that four recommendations were made to help alleviate the problem of skateboarding outside the Civic Centre.

Councillor Wildy commended the work of the Task and Finish Group and congratulated Panel Members for the sensitive yet practical way the issue of skateboarding in the city centre was handled.

Resolved that the four recommendations from the Review of Skateboarding By Law Task and Finish Group be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for approval.

54. TRACKING RESOLUTIONS

The Business Manager for Development and Regeneration informed the Panel that Destination South West would not be added to the Panel's agenda until the tourism strategy had been completed, the agenda item concerning the possibility of co-opting a representative to the Panel would be added to the March agenda and that the resolution concerning Worklessness had been revised by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (minute 49 refers).

55. WORK PROGRAMME

The Business Manager for Development and Regeneration informed the Panel that the Carbon Reduction Commitment item specified on the work programme was no longer part of the Panel's remit due to a change in corporate structure. The Panel was also informed that

the next meeting was to be focused around the Growth agenda and city and sub regional governance.

Resolved that –

- (1) the Carbon Reduction Commitment be transferred to the Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel;
- (2) the chair of the wealthy theme group be invited to a future meeting

56. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

Resolved that, under Section 100(A)(2) and (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of confidential/exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 Schedule 12A of the (Local Government Access to Information) Act 1985, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

57. **EASTERN CORRIDOR PROGRESS REPORT (E3)**

The Major Schemes Project Manager, the Portfolio holder for Transport and the Assistant Director for Transport provided the Panel with an update on the Eastern Corridor.

Resolved that the update be noted.