

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

Wednesday 3 October 2012

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs Aspinall, in the Chair.

Councillor Bowie, Vice Chair.

Councillors Bowyer, Philippa Davey, Sam Davey (substitute for Councillor Casey), James, Jarvis (substitute for Councillor Tuffin), Murphy, Mrs Nelder, Nicholson and Mrs Pengelly (substitute for Councillor Wigen).

Apologies for absence: Councillors Casey, Tuffin (Vice Chair) and Wigen.

Also in attendance: Patrick Hartop (Senior Policy, Performance and Partnerships Officer), Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance), David Northey (Head of Finance), Giles Perritt (Head of Policy, Performance and Partnerships) and Helen Wright (Democratic Support Officer).

The meeting started at 4pm and finished at 5.30pm.

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.

50. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

In the absence of the Vice Chair the Board agreed that Councillor Bowie is appointed as Vice Chair for this particular meeting.

51. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

52. MINUTES

Agreed that the minutes of the meetings held on 3 July and 5 September 2012 are confirmed as a correct record.

The Project Initiation Document for the alcohol strategy had been drafted and would be submitted to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel and the opposition lead member for its final sign off (with any amendments that were deemed necessary).

53. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

54. **TIME OF MEETINGS**

The Chair advised that she wished to consult with Board members regarding the start times of its scheduled meetings. One Councillor found it extremely difficult to attend the meetings at 4pm due to their work commitments.

Councillor Bowyer suggested that due to the lack of public interest in the Management Board meetings, the start times should be varied.

The Lead Officer advised that the council now had the opportunity to webcast meetings that were held in the Warspite Room or the Council Chamber. Consideration could be given to webcasting future Board meetings in order to reach a wider audience (as potentially more people would look at the webcast rather than attending the meeting).

The Board agreed to start its meetings at 4.30pm rather than 4pm subject to a maximum time limit for each meeting of two hours (where possible).

55. **TRACKING DECISIONS**

The Board considered the schedule of decisions made and noted the latest position.

The recommendations arising from the Board meeting held on 3 July 2012 would be included in the tracking resolutions.

The Chair considered that the MPs meeting held on 21 September 2012 had been extremely successful. All three of the city's MPs would be invited to attend future meetings of the Management Board. The meeting would follow the same format, as the previous meeting.

56. **CALL-INS**

There were no call-ins for consideration at this meeting.

57. **URGENT EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

There were no urgent executive decisions to consider at this meeting.

58. **NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS/PRIVATE BUSINESS**

The Board noted the forthcoming key decision 'the continued provision of school meals to maintained schools post school funding post school funding reform'.

59. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

There were no recommendations to consider at this meeting.

The Lead Officer advised that the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel had scrutinised NHS regional pay, at its meeting held on 26 September 2012.

The meeting had been well attended with representatives from Plymouth Hospital NHS Trust, British Medical Association, Royal College of Nursing, Royal College of Midwives, Plymouth University, Plymouth Chamber of Commerce and Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust JSNC.

Councillor James enquired whether the recommendation that he had put forward (the panel requested that PHNT produce an effective sickness/absence management strategy and that the Trust returns to a future meeting of the panel to discuss progress against the recommendations) had been included in the Panel's final recommendations.

The Lead Officer gave an assurance that the recommendation would be included.

60. **FIRST QUARTER JOINT PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE REPORT**

The Head of Finance and the Senior Policy and Performance Officer submitted a report on the performance and finance report (including Capital Programme update) and the July/August Corporate Monitoring (Councillor Lowry, Cabinet Member for Finance was also present), which highlighted the following issues –

- (a) the performance and finance report (including Capital Programme update) was the first monitoring report for 2012/13 and outlined the performance and finance monitoring position of the Council as at the end of June 2012;
- (b) the report would be the last in its current format as it was being replaced by a shorter, more focused report; the report would continue to focus on the overall financial position for the Council but would clearly link the financial position relative to the new administration pledges; the report would also set out the variances to the budget and explain the impact of the variances on the full year financial position and set out counter measures;
- (c) performance indicators used in the report represented Plymouth City Council's contribution to delivering the citywide priorities of Growth, Aspiration, Inequalities and Value for Communities;
- (d) the overall performance position at the end of the first quarter was as follows –
 - 50 per cent of the indicators monitored in year were on track;
 - 25 per cent were just off track;
 - 75 per cent of the performance indicators were on target;
- (e) the corporate monitoring report for July/August included -
 - revenue monitoring position;
 - key issues and corrective actions (if required);

- revenue delivery plan position;
- red, ambers and actions;
- capital position;
- key issues;
- capital receipts potential shortfall.

The following responses were provided to questions raised by the Board –

- (f) additional information would be provided in the report detailing the in-year guide for the delivery of the capital programme;
- (g) subject to the approval of Cabinet, a separate report detailing staffing numbers, absence levels and agency staff numbers per directorate would be provided;
- (h) variances within the Place Directorate, specifically for street lighting were due to the increase in utility costs;
- (i) the Cabinet Member for Finance had undertaken a robust budget challenge process to ensure that the budget was delivered.

The Board welcomed the new format for the July/August corporate monitoring report.

The Chair thanked Councillor Lowry and officers for attending.

(Councillor Davey entered the room and was present for the remaining items).

61. **WORK PROGRAMMES**

The work programmes of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and Panels were submitted for consideration and approval.

- (a) with regard to Customers and Communities –
 - the first meeting of the task and finish group considering the social fund had taken place;
 - with the new arrangements for the Police and Crime Panel, consideration would need to be given to the most appropriate panel to discharge the statutory responsibility for the crime and disorder function;
- (b) with regard to Growth and Prosperity –
 - new items had been included within the work programme (road safety awareness, street naming and numbering and Government proposals on planning system);

- a scoping meeting had been arranged for the task and finish group on subsidised bus routes, cross ticketing, patronage and accessibility;

(c) with regard to Children and Young People -

- the special education needs strategy/funding had been deferred as further work needed to be undertaken.

With regard to Support Services, the Chair raised concern over an issue that had arisen at the recent meeting held on 1 October 2012, whereby a report that had been requested had not been provided to the Panel; the Chair considered this situation to be totally unacceptable and suggested that if reports were not being provided, Panel Chairs should follow this issue up with their Lead Officers; if this situation arise in the future, a senior officer should be asked to attend the meeting to explain why no report had been provided.

A further discussion took place regarding the importance of the level of support provided by senior officers for the scrutiny process.

Agreed the work programmes as submitted subject to –

- (1) the Plymouth Plan and Progress Report from Cabinet Members are added to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board's work programme;
- (2) the buy-back of services item is removed from the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel's work programme.

With regard to the concern raised by the Chair of the Board, it was also agreed that the Lead Officer would raise with the new Chief Executive the importance of senior management supporting the scrutiny process.

62. **PROJECT INITIATION DOCUMENT (PID)**

The Board agreed the Library Modernisation Project Initiation Document subject to the amendment of the timetable and key dates, following the Cabinet decision to defer this item to January 2013.

63. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.