

Growth and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Wednesday 8 May 2013

PRESENT:

Councillor Nicholson, in the Chair.

Councillor Mrs Nelder, Vice Chair.

Councillors Mrs Aspinall, Casey (substituting for Councillor Damarell) Fox, Martin Leaves, Michael Leaves and Wheeler.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Damarell, Darcy and Wogens.

Also in attendance: Councillor Evans, Leader, Councillor Peter Smith, Deputy Leader, David Draffan, Assistant Director for Economic Development, Amanda Lumley, Chief Executive, Destination Plymouth, Amanda Ratsey, Enterprise and Inward Investment Manager, Adrian Trim, Head of Sustainable Transport, Richard Grant, Local Planning Team Leader, Hannah Sloggett, Neighbourhood Planning Team Leader, Sue Eden, Lead Officer, and Ross Johnston, Democratic Support Officer.

The meeting started at 3 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.

71. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

72. **MINUTES**

Members commented that the fourth bullet point of Minute 63. 'Evaluation of East End Transport Scheme' should be re-worded as follows:

'whilst, it was unfortunate that there had been a decline in air quality on some of the roads adjacent to Gdynia Way they still remained within safe limits'.

Agreed that subject to the amendment above the minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2013 are approved.

73. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair extended his gratitude and thanks to all staff and members that had been involved in the work of the Growth and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Panel over the past year.

74. **TRACKING RESOLUTIONS AND FEEDBACK FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The panel noted their tracking resolutions.

75. **INWARD INVESTMENT**

Councillor Evans, Leader of the Council, David Draffan, Assistant Director for Economic Development and Amanda Ratsey, Enterprise and Inward Investment Manager presented a report and provided an update on Inward Investment.

Members were informed that –

- (a) unemployment benefit claims in Plymouth were at 3.6 per cent of the city's population, which was lower than the national claimant rate at 3.9 per cent and was a positive reduction on a comparable time in 2012 were claimants in Plymouth totalled 4.2 per cent;
- (b) the largest claimant group were 18-24 year olds, where in Plymouth 6 per cent of this age group claimed unemployment benefits; this was a concern despite the figures being considerably lower than the national average of 7.2 per cent;
- (c) a recent economic review identified an increase in part-time employment as well as comparatively high rates of underemployment in the city;
- (d) in an attempt to bring unemployment levels back to pre-recession rates and increase investment in the city the Economic Development department had created a dedicated Enterprise and Inward Investment team, consisting of three new members of staff;
- (e) inward investment was not solely about obtaining investment from outside of the city but also by creating opportunities for city-based companies to invest further in the city by ensuring that the infrastructure and skills were accessible to these companies;
- (f) a major aspect of the work undertaken by the inward investment team involved providing an excellent aftercare programme; this programme was available to all investing companies and was a key initiative in delivering financial benefits through re-investment and creating additional jobs to drive the city's growth agenda;
- (g) investment enquiries were another key role within the team and this had been very successful, with in excess of 250 enquiries being dealt with in the past 12 months;
- (h) it was hoped that the UK Trade and Investment (UKTI), who had provided six investment enquiries to the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), would generate more investment enquiries as Plymouth improved its inward investment programme;

- (i) vital to delivering investment in the city was for Plymouth to improve its marketing ability and to sell its potential and resources to investors, this had been successfully achieved following the America's Cup, the City of Culture bid and City Deal opportunity and would further be improved by the creation of an ambassador programme, which would be led by current city-based businesses.

In response to questions it was reported that –

- (j) low-pay was not seen as a significant issue in Plymouth with many of the city's employees highlighting lifestyle, the local environment, quality of education and infrastructure as more important issues;
- (k) Plymouth was employing an enterprising culture in an effort to improve prospects for young people in the city; this initiative had a partnership led focus involving the University of Plymouth, City College and businesses in the city's growth sectors;
- (l) other initiatives such as the 1000 club were also improving the prospects of young people finding employment.

Councillor Evans and Amanda Ratsey were thanked for their attendance.

Agreed that –

- (1) the panel notes the current activities being carried out and planned for the coming months;
- (2) the panel notes, with staff resources focused on inward investment coming into being during April 2013, that an end of year progress report on enhanced activity is brought back to the appropriate scrutiny panel in Spring 2014.

76. **VISITOR PLAN/DESTINATION PLYMOUTH**

Members were informed that –

- (a) the Visitor Plan, which was developed in 2011 aimed to deliver economic growth and increase jobs within Plymouth by growing visitor numbers and increasing visitor spend
- (b) the key aims of the Visitor Plan were to deliver growth in visitor numbers to 4.8m per annum, and increase visitor spend to £315m per annum by 2020. Visitor spend for the 2011 year based on Cambridge economic impact model is 5.5 per cent above target growth figures – target figure is £290 million, actual is £307 million. Visitor numbers for 2011 year are also above the target of 4,297,650 at 4,858,001, which is plus 12.5 per cent.

- (c) marketing and promotion campaigns were key in delivering the Visitor Plan's aims and objectives successfully and as such, a tendering exercise to employ a PR agency to actively raise the profile had been successful with a new agency – Hills Balfour appointed;
- (d) other initiatives were vital in raising the profile of Plymouth and delivering growth, these included the successful branding of Plymouth as 'Britian's Ocean City' and improving the Visit Plymouth website; this website's growth has increased 170 per cent yr. on yr. versus March 2012.

In response to members' questions it was reported that –

- (e) Improving Plymouth as a disability-friendly city for visitors was important for Destination Plymouth and guidance produced by Visit England would be used to support the delivery of this objective by raising awareness among businesses.
- (f) Destination Plymouth will work in partnership with Visit Cornwall and English Riviera Tourism in an effort to attract additional visitors to Plymouth;
- (g) Destination Plymouth will continually review its target audience for promoting Plymouth including opportunities to promote Plymouth at events in Devon and at Exeter Airport if available.

Councillor Smith, David Draffan and Amanda Lumley were thanked for their attendance.

Agreed that the report is noted.

77. **DIGITAL EXCLUSION**

It was agreed that this item is deferred until a future meeting.

78. **LIVING STREETS AND NETWORK MANAGEMENT: ROAD SAFETY BRIEFING**

Adrian Trim, Head of Sustainable Transport presented a report and provided an update on Living Streets and Network Management: Road Safety Briefing.

Members were advised that the information provided in the report on the current situation regarding collisions on Plymouth's Network had been superseded by data recently received and that the information for 2012 should now read as follows:

Road User	2012
Pedestrians	11
Cyclists	10
Motorcyclists	26
Car users	14

Other vehicle users	0
Totals	61

Members were further informed that –

- (a) the department was concerned with the number of cyclists and motorcyclists involved in road accidents and had begun a partnership activity looking at road engineering, educating road users and enforcement action against offenders;
- (b) motorcycle incidents were not isolated to Plymouth and was, in fact, a peninsula wide issue; this was being raised with motorcyclists on a regular basis at the Peninsula Motorcycle Forum;
- (c) local traffic safety schemes had been launched in a number of vulnerable areas across the city; schemes included '20mph zones', 'home zones' and a 'twenty's plenty zone' in Whitleigh;
- (d) a 'learn to live' campaign had been running at Pavilions for over five years and to date more than 20,000 young people had been to this event.

In response to questions it was reported that –

- (e) the police did enforce the 20mph speed limit in many of the 20mph zones, although not all 20mph zones were enforceable, due to some zones being advisory zones, such as the 'twenty's plenty zone' in Whitleigh;
- (f) positively, traffic improvements targeted using an intervention approach had led to a reduction in incidents with car users and pedestrians.

It was commented by members that the Fire Authority could provide an update to a scrutiny panel on the work they were doing to target and reduce road traffic accidents in Plymouth and its surrounding areas.

Adrian Trim was thanked for his attendance.

79. **PLYMOUTH PLAN UPDATE**

Richard Grant, Local Planning Team Leader and Hannah Sloggett, Neighbourhood Planning Team Leader presented a report and provided an update on the Plymouth Plan.

Members were informed that –

- (a) the Plymouth Plan was being developed to provide a long-term vision for Plymouth that aimed to deliver change and growth within the city;
- (b) the Plan would replace many of the Council's strategies and policies including, amongst others, the Core Strategy, the Local Development

Framework and Area Action Plans;

- (c) the Plan was currently in the 'conversations stage' of the consultation process, where officers were engaging with stakeholders, partners and members of the public at a number of 'Plymouth Plan sofa' events, using social media and attending meetings and conferences to give presentations;
- (d) other events that were looking at the future of the city and that had not been organised as a Plymouth Plan event have also been included in the consultation process and termed 'fringe events'; the outcomes of these events would be used to inform the 'preferred options' stage of the Plymouth Plan timetable, due to take place in Autumn 2013;
- (e) in June a Plymouth Plan convention would take place with the aim of highlighting the responses to the consultation so far, and to debate these responses with stakeholders, partners and the public in order to better inform the 'preferred options' stage.

In response to questions it was reported that an all-member briefing could be set-up to provide an update on the preferred options for the Plymouth Plan following the Plymouth Plan Convention.

Richard Grant and Hannah Sloggett were thanked for their attendance.

Agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board are recommended to request that the Planning Department formally consult with all councillors when the Plymouth Plan together with the preferred options are published in Autumn 2013.

80. **MINUTES OF THE GROWTH BOARD**

Noted the minutes of the Growth Board held on 4 March 2013.

81. **WORK PROGRAMME**

Members reviewed the work programme for 2012 – 2013 and agreed to add an additional item to 'review the impact of the road closures on Outland Road'.

Due to there being a number of outstanding items remaining on the work programme it was recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board forward on all outstanding work programme items to the relevant scrutiny panel to be scrutinised in the 2013 - 2014 municipal year.

82. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.