

Cooperative Scrutiny Board

Wednesday 7 August 2013

PRESENT:

Councillor James, in the Chair.

Councillor Mrs Aspinall, Vice Chair.

Councillors Ball, Bowie, Bowyer, Casey, Philippa Davey, Sam Leaves, Morris and Tuffin.

Apology for absence: Councillor Murphy.

Also in attendance: Simon Arthurs (Strategic Finance Manager), Kevin Elliston (Interim Deputy Director for Public Health), Alan Knott (Performance and Research Officer), Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance), Councillor McDonald (Cabinet Member for Public Health and Adult Social Care), Giles Perritt (Head of Policy, Performance and Partnerships), Helen Wright (Democratic Support Officer).

The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 5.45 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.

35. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

In accordance with the code of conduct, Councillor Sam Leaves declared a private interest in minute 42, as she was employed by the Clinical Commissioning Group.

36. **MINUTES**

The Board agreed the minutes of the meeting held 10 July 2012 as a correct record.

37. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

38. **DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

The Board discussed delegating authority to the Board's Lead Officer, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, in order to expedite the decision making procedure outside of the normal meeting process.

The Board agreed that in order to expedite the decision-making process outside of the normal business meeting process, approval of work programme related matters are delegated to the Board's Lead Officer in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair; work programme related matters include but are not limited to –

- Cooperative review(s)
- Cooperative review reports(s)
- Panel recommendations
- Forward Plan of Key Decision item(s)

39. **WORK PROGRAMMES**

The work programme for the Caring Plymouth Panel and the Cooperative Scrutiny Board were submitted for consideration and approval.

The Board agreed the work programme for the Caring Plymouth Panel.

The Board further agreed its work programme subject to the inclusion of the following -

- (1) redevelopment of the Civic Centre and future accommodation requirements (to be scrutinised at its meeting on 21 August 2013);
- (2) Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service – Review Corporate Plan 2013/14 - 2014/15 (date to be confirmed in September 2013);
- (3) ICT shared services (date to be confirmed);
- (4) City's MPs meeting (date to be confirmed).

40. **TRACKING DECISIONS**

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

41. **FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS AND PRIVATE BUSINESS**

The Board considered the following executive key decisions in the Forward Plan which were scheduled to be discussed at the Cabinet meeting on 3 September 2013

–

- redevelopment of the Civic Centre and future accommodation requirements;
- Home Park football stadium and Higher Home Park;
- ICT shared services;
- The History Centre Project;
- contract award for domiciliary care services;
- future procurement of low level support for older people.

As agreed in minute 39 above.

42. **CABINET MEMBER**

The Chair welcomed the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Adult Social Care together with Kevin Elliston (Interim Deputy Director of Public Health) who provided a brief overview of the current areas of work being undertaken, which included –

- the continuation of the transformation programme for the adult social care service;
- budget pressures relating to the exceptionally high demand for adult social care services due to the demographics of the city;
- the day opportunity framework (26 suppliers offering 200 different activities, such as one to one enabling, training courses, employment support, etc);
- as part of the modernisation of older people's services , seven extra care facilities had been provided;
- improving quality in dementia care within the city's residential care homes;
- with the formal transfer of key public health responsibilities to Plymouth City Council in April 2013 this would contribute significantly to reducing health inequalities;
- reducing health inequalities which included closing the gap in life expectancy, child poverty and reducing the premature mortality rates in men; this would be achieved in line with the development and delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy as part of the overall Plymouth Plan;
- the level one mandatory responsibilities for public health included sexual health services commissioning, health protection and emergency response, public health advice to the NHS and the National Child Measurement Programme;
- low level responsibilities included alcohol misuse, healthy weight and physical activity and mental health.

In response to questions raised by the Board, it was reported –

- (a) a child obesity initiative had been introduced whereby reception and year six children would be weighed and measured; this information would be shared with Plymouth Community Health Care; (however this was a growing concern nationally);

- (b) a number of new delivery plans had been agreed by Cabinet in August 2013 which would help manage the financial pressures for 2013/14 and beyond;
- (c) work was currently being undertaken to investigate innovative ways of providing care;
- (d) eye health was now part of Public health's Outcomes Framework; sight testing of children was however not a commissioned service from the local authority;
- (e) the Care Quality Commission had the powers of closure of premises, whilst Plymouth City Council, as the safeguarding authority, did not have these powers.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Adult Social Care and the Deputy Director of Public Health for attending.

43. **FINANCE - CAPITAL AND REVENUE MONITORING**

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) and Simon Arthurs (Strategic Finance Manager) presented the finance, capital and revenue monitoring report, which highlighted the following key areas –

- (a) the report was the first quarterly monitoring report for 2013/14 and outlined the finance monitoring position of the council as at the end of June 2013;
- (b) the estimated revenue overspend was £1.892m in this quarter; the current estimated position showed an overspend of £1.319m in the People Directorate and £0.573m in the Place Directorate;
- (c) the overspend equated to a net spend of £214.452m against a budget of £212.560m which was a variance of 0.9 per cent; officers and members were working on actions to deliver a balanced outturn;
- (d) the latest capital programme for 2013/14 to 2015/16 was £122.6760m which had been approved at Cabinet on 21 May 2013 (£129.477m including Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry);
- (e) following the approval of new schemes, re-profiling, variations and the inclusion of future years' government grants, the forecast capital programme for 2013/14 to 2016/17 would be £159.903m;
- (f) there continued to be improvement in the average number of sick days (per full time equivalent);
- (g) compared to the same period last year, there were 293 fewer members of staff employed by the council.

In response to questions raised, it was reported that –

- (h) it was anticipated that the ‘working balance’ would not be required to fund the overspend; (although the ‘working balance’ needed to be held at a sensible level);
- (i) information would be provided on whether the figure of £6.807 included within the capital programme for the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry was the total amount or whether this was Plymouth’s proportion of the funding;
- (j) concerns were raised relating to the Council Tax Support Scheme; there was evidence that people were going into debt in order to pay council tax; council tax was a priority debt and as such recovery action would be taken for non-payment; (the council would apply to the Magistrates’ Court for a summons to be issued (at a cost of £60); an administrative fee would also be applied;
- (k) concerns had also been raised relating to the Housing Benefit Spare Room Subsidy; currently there were insufficient one bed properties to meet demand; discussions were being held with developers but it was not economically advantageous for them to provide this type of property;
- (l) clarification would be provided relating to the total number of full time equivalent (FTE) sick days.

The Board agreed to –

- (1) undertake a cooperative review to look at the Council Tax Support Scheme (Attachment of Earnings) and to also look at Housing Benefit Spare Room Subsidy;
- (2) delegate authority to the Lead Officer, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair to scope the cooperative review.

44. **2012/13 PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) together with Alan Knott (Performance and Research Officer) presented the update on the 2012/13 corporate performance, which highlighted the following key areas –

- (a) the council continued to improve services despite the reduction in revenue;
- (b) corporate performance compared between 2011/12 and 2012/13 –
 - 31 indicators had improved;
 - 12 indicators had worsened;
 - 2 indicators had remained the same;

- 70 indicators were not comparable at this time.

Councillor Lowry advised that the performance monitoring report, in the future, would focus on the 16 outcomes, monitoring key actions and associated key performance indicators.

In answer to a question raised by the Board, it was reported that information was currently being received from Public Health and work was being undertaken to set targets for the current year and the next three years.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Performance and Research Officer for attending the meeting.

45. **CALL-INS**

There were no call-ins to consider.

46. **URGENT EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

There were no urgent executive decisions to consider.

47. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Board endorsed and agreed the recommendations of the Caring Plymouth Panel –

- work programme;
- cooperative review;
- the one off sessions relating to cover the relationship between the Health and Wellbeing Board, NEW Devon Clinical Commissioning Group and local area teams (looking at roles and responsibilities).

48. **COOPERATIVE REVIEWS**

The Board endorsed and agreed the following cooperative reviews –

- (1) narrowing the gap in schools (Ambitious Plymouth Panel);
- (2) Health Accountability Forum (Caring Plymouth Panel);
- (3) review procedures used by the Council when dealing with unauthorised encampments (Your Plymouth Panel);
- (4) customer services (website and interactive transactions) (Your Plymouth Panel);
- (5) neighbourhood working (Your Plymouth Panel).

49. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.