

Cooperative Scrutiny Board

Wednesday 19 February 2014

PRESENT:

Councillor James, in the Chair.

Councillor Mrs Aspinall, Vice Chair.

Councillors Mrs Beer, Bowie, Darcy, Sam Leaves, Murphy, Jon Taylor (substitute for Councillor Philippa Davey), Kate Taylor and Tuffin.

Apology for absence: Councillor Philippa Davey.

Also in attendance: Peter Honeywell (Transformation Programme Manager), Phil Morgan (Senior Policy, Performance and Partnerships Adviser), David Northey (Head of Finance), Giles Perritt (Head of Policy, Performance and Partnerships) and Helen Wright (Democratic Support Officer).

The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 5.50 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.

Change of Membership

The Chair advised that there had been a change in membership on the Board with Councillor Casey being replaced by Councillor Kate Taylor for the remainder of the municipal year. The Chair took this opportunity to welcome Councillor Kate Taylor to the Co-operative Scrutiny Board.

117. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

The following declarations of interest were made, in accordance with the code of conduct –

Name	Reason	Interest
Councillor Sam Leaves	Employed by NEW Devon Clinical Commissioning Group Western Locality	Personal
Councillor John Taylor	Employed by NEW Devon Clinical Commissioning Group Western Locality	Personal

118. **MINUTES**

Agreed the minutes of the meetings held on 18 December 2013, 8, 13 and 15 January 2015 as a correct record.

119. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair advised that an Action Plan had been drafted which set out proposals on how the Transformation Programme would be scrutinised by the Board and Panels during 2014/15. The Chair requested any comments be fed back to the Lead Officer, Vice Chair and himself by Friday 28 February 2014.

(Copies of the plan were circulated at the meeting).

(In accordance with Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Chair brought forward the above item for urgent consideration because of the need to inform Members).

120. **WORK PROGRAMMES**

The work programmes of the Co-operative Scrutiny Board and the panels were submitted for consideration and approval.

The Board agreed –

- (1) its work programme subject to the inclusion of the following items –
 - Transformation Programme (Budget Scrutiny recommendation 10)
 - Flood protection (Budget Scrutiny recommendation 15)
 - Review of staff engagement and negotiation (Budget Scrutiny recommendation 17)
 - Fairer Charging
- (2) the work programmes of the Ambitious Plymouth Panel and the Caring Plymouth Panel;
- (3) that a meeting is arranged between the Chairs of the Ambitious Plymouth and Caring Plymouth Panels to consider which panel was best suited to consider the additional work programme item relating to the 'healthy child quality mark scheme';
- (4) the work programme for the Working Plymouth Panel subject to the inclusion of the Local Economic Strategy at its meeting scheduled for 5 March 2014.

121. **TRACKING DECISIONS**

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

The Lead Officer confirmed that a formal request had been made to the Cabinet in February 2014, to re-adopt a four month forward plan of key decisions and private business (in order to facilitate effective pre decision scrutiny) and that a response was awaited.

122. **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 meetings between 4 March and 10 July 2014 –

- review of Local Development Scheme and Plymouth Plan Programme;
- award of the Plymouth Strategic Material Recycling Facility Contract and Approval of the City Wide Roll Out of Doorstep Glass Recycling;
- Fairer Charging;
- Children’s Centre Tender Award;
- Concession for a Wireless Network in Plymouth.

Following consideration of the above items, the Board agreed to activate the provisional meeting scheduled for 12 March 2014 to consider the Fairer Charging item.

123. **CALL-INS**

There were no call-ins to consider.

124. **CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT**

The Transformation Programme Manager presented the corporate plan performance monitoring report, which highlighted the following key points –

- (a) the quarter three report outlined progress and emerging trends against key actions and the supporting performance measures;
- (b) the majority of the Corporate Plan Key Actions remained on target to achieve their milestones, so that outcomes would be completed by the end of 2016/17;
- (c) there had been a decrease in the number of Key Actions on target which had resulted in an increase in the number not on target (in most cases action plans for the Key Actions were fully operational);
- (d) of the 42 Key Actions -
 - six (on target to achieve outcome)
 - 34 (on target to achieve outcome)
 - two (outcome at risk but mitigation in place)
- (e) of the 25 performance measures tracking outcomes of the Corporate Plan, the majority were performing well; performance had improved compared to previous quarters, although new measures had been added;
- (f) of the performance measures -

- 15 (meeting target – good performance)
- seven (below target but above intervention level)
- one (below target and intervention level)
- two (uncoded measure under development/no target)

In response to questions raised by Members, it was reported that –

- (g) further information on Key Action 40 ‘develop a proactive approach to lobbying Government, working with the LEP and neighbouring authorities’ would be provided to the next Board meeting;
- (h) Key Actions marked as ‘red’ in the report were continually monitored by the Assistant Directors, raised at team meetings and scrutinised by the Corporate Management Team;
- (i) with regard to -
 - P19 ‘children’s safeguarding timing of core assessments’; this target was ‘amber’ as there had been an unanticipated increase in demand for children requiring assessments and was also due in part to the availability of social workers; in the second quarter more capacity had been dedicated to this issue and the backlog of cases had been cleared;
 - P17 ‘percent of residents who believed they can influence decisions affecting their local area’; historically this measure had been very low achieving 19 percent during the last Place Survey, which was a reduction from 24 percent; work was currently taken place focusing on community engagement (action plans were being created and it was therefore expected that future performance for this measure would improve);
 - P18 ‘reduce the gap between the worst 10 neighbourhoods and city average rate per 1000 population for overall crime’; the target was ‘amber’ as it was largely due to an increase in less serious violence, other theft and shoplifting; in recent months the gap had closed slightly with partnership activities appearing to impact positively on the overall crime levels; the launch of the ‘Community Action Against Crime’ small grant fund and shoplifting action plan should result in a positive impact on this target.

The Board agreed to receive an update on the current position relating to the lobbying of Government, working with LEP and neighbouring authorities at its meeting scheduled for 26 March 2014.

The Chair thanked the Transformation Programme Manager for attending the meeting and commended officers for including the additional information (such as the direction of travel) which the Board had requested.

125. **CORPORATE MONITORING REPORT**

The Board received the third quarterly monitoring report for 2013/14 which outlined the finance monitoring position of the Council as at the end of December 2013. The Head of Finance provided an overview of the report, which outlined the following key areas –

- (a) the revenue forecast year end overspend was £0.993m which represented an improvement of £0.529m compared to September 2013;
- (b) the current estimated position showed an overspend as follows –
 - £0.956m in the People Directorate;
 - £0.119m in the Place Directorate;
- (c) the current estimated position showed an underspend as follows-
 - £(0.006)m in Corporate Services;
 - £(0.076)m in corporate items;
- (d) there was a forecast net spend of £213.553m against a budget of £212.560m which was a variance of 0.5 percent, although officers and members were working on actions to deliver a balanced outturn;
- (e) following the approval of new schemes, re-profiling and variations, the capital programme had increased to £162.484m as at the end of September 2013;
- (f) the latest forecast at the end of December 2013 was £158.956m which included virements approved at Council in December 2013, other delegated officer approvals and assumed the approval of the recommendations for new schemes.

In response to questions raised by Members, it was reported that –

- (g) in setting the target for the recovery of council tax, an assumption was made that 100 percent would not be achieved; historically the target had been set at 98.5 percent but had reduced to 97.5 percent due to the changes in the Council Tax Support Scheme;
- (h) clarification would be provided relating to the savings that would be achieved if the 131 voluntary release scheme applications were approved.

The Board agreed to seek information relating to the savings that would be achieved in 2014/15, if the 131 expressions of interest for the voluntary release scheme were approved.

126. **URGENT EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

There were no urgent executive decisions to consider.

127. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Co-operative Scrutiny Board considered Cabinet's responses to its recommendations following consideration of the indicate report 'delivering the co-operative vision within a three year sustainable balanced budget'. Cabinet had agreed the Board's recommendations at its meeting held on 11 February 2014.

The Lead Officer advised that the Board's recommendations would be included in the Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring report and progress would be reported to the Board on a quarterly basis.

Councillor Murphy advised that the Park and Ride Bus Service Review Scrutiny Report had been submitted to Cabinet for consideration at its meeting held on 11 February 2014. Cabinet agreed that –

- (1) Scrutiny Recommendation (1) to investigate the feasibility of charging for parking at all three Park and Ride sites, with the intention of covering the operating costs of the site, is rejected for the following reasons -
 - (a) the consequences of charging to park could put off current users of the service and lead them to seek alternatives which may be harmful to the city. These alternatives may include driving into the City Centre which would increase congestion and carbon emissions, or visitors to Plymouth could decide to travel elsewhere which would impact negatively on the local economy;
 - (b) to give a clear message to current and potential users of the park and ride services that the Council is committed to encouraging people to use them through keeping it as straightforward as possible;
- (2) Scrutiny Recommendation (2) is accepted as amended and the park and ride departure charges, charges made to the bus operator, will be renegotiated with the intention of possible increases. The Council's ambition is that any increase will not be passed onto passengers;

- (3) Scrutiny Recommendation (3) is accepted as amended and officers will investigate the feasibility for a new park and ride bus service to be introduced between Milehouse and Derriford Hospital;
- (4) Scrutiny Recommendation (4) is accepted as amended and the potential for increased operating hours will be explored on all park and ride bus services in order to accommodate the users of the service who take advantage of the late night shopping in the City Centre or for those who use the park and ride to visit patients at Derriford Hospital, bearing in mind that visiting hours are up to 8pm. If a subsidy is required for an enhancement to the PR3, the service for Derriford Hospital, the Council will approach the NHS Trust to require a financial contribution;
- (5) Scrutiny Recommendation (5) is accepted and improved journey planning and timetable information will be provided at each of the park and ride sites.

The Board agreed to include recommendations 10, 15 and 17 on its work programme (minute 120 refers).

128. **CO-OPERATIVE REVIEW(S)**

The Board agreed to recommend to Cabinet the recommendations as outlined in the Pledge 90 scrutiny review report.

The Board further agreed the Co-operative Review into personal debt as submitted by the Your Plymouth Panel (to be undertaken in the new municipal year).

129. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.