

Ambitious Plymouth

Monday 30 March 2015

PRESENT:

Councillor Bowie, in the Chair.

Councillor Mrs Beer, Vice Chair.

Councillors Sam Davey, Jarvis, Jordan, Michael Leaves (substitute for Councillor Sam Leaves), Mrs Nicholson, Parker-Delaz-Ajete, Riley, Singh and Tuohy.

Co-opted Representatives: Clare Hamon (Non-Statutory Co-opted Representative).

Apologies for absence: Councillor Sam Leaves, Edith Bayley (Statutory Co-opted Representative).

Also in attendance: Alison Botham (Assistant Director for Children, Young People and Families), Hilary Bracegirdle (Museums and Heritage Manager), Liz Cahill (Strategic Commissioning Manager), Ed Coley (Head of Employability and Skills), Jayne Gorton (Lead Officer), Richard Grant (Local Planning Manager), Judith Harwood (Assistant Director for Education, Learning and Families), Dominic Jinks (Executive Director of Plymouth Culture Board), Louise Kelley (Sports Development Manager), Councillor McDonald (Cabinet member for Children, Young People and Public Health), Brad Pearce (Managing director of Cater^{ed}), Julie Reed (Principal Admin Manager), Councillor Peter Smith (Deputy Leader) and Lynn Young (Democratic Support Officer).

The meeting started at 9.35 am and finished at 12.15 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.

47. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

48. **MINUTES**

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2015 are confirmed as a correct record.

49. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

50. **SKILLS AND APPRENTICESHIPS**

Ed Coley (Head of Employability and Skills) provided members with an overview of the city's opportunities with regard to skills and apprenticeships.

Members were advised that –

- (a) there were a wide range of apprenticeship opportunities for young people in Plymouth;
- (b) there was a relatively low number of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) in Plymouth, although this had increased slightly since this report had been produced;
- (c) there had been a slight decrease in the take up of apprenticeships nationally, although the situation in Plymouth was promising;
- (d) 65 % of apprenticeships were at Intermediate (Level 2), with 34% at Advanced (Level 3) and 1% at Higher (Level 4+);
- (e) there was little take up in moving from Level 2 to Level 3;
- (f) it was important for the city to work with providers (eg City College) to promote the importance of apprenticeships;
- (g) there were a wide range of apprenticeships available in fields such as construction, engineering, marine industry, administration and health and social care;
- (h) there were several initiatives surrounding apprenticeships, including –
 - the '1000 Club' (a campaign set up to recruit 1000 companies in the Plymouth area to commit to support young people into employment, whether that be through work experience, apprenticeship, graduate internships or employment);
 - the 'Apprenticeships Ambassadors Programme' (whereby apprentices would be ambassadors and promote the benefits of the apprenticeship scheme);
 - 'Wage Incentive Project';
- (i) funding was an issue - funding for apprenticeships was protected for 2015-16 and growth was encouraged, however the Adult Skills Budget (ASB) had been cut by 11%

In response to members' questions it was reported that –

- (j) there was an increase in the number of Level 4 apprenticeships available,

however following completion of a Level 3 apprenticeship young people usually went to University to continue with their studies;

- (k) Careers South West (CSW) provided impartial advice to young people;
- (l) apprenticeship opportunities were available to young people from all backgrounds, although comprehensive equal opportunities data was not yet available;
- (m) more vocational degrees should be made available;
- (n) a new Studio School, based at Stoke Damerel Community College had been approved, which would focus on education in health and wellbeing.

Members agreed the recommendations as set out in the report, and recommended that a further two be added –

- (1) a degree level is added for all vocational apprenticeships;
- (2) data on ethnic background is collected from all young people who start an apprenticeship.

The Chair thanked Ed Coley for his report.

51. **PLYMOUTH EDUCATION CATERING SERVICES**

Brad Pearce (Managing Director of Cater^{ed}) and Judith Harwood (Assistant Director for Education, Learning and Families) provided members with an update on the newly created Education Catering Service: Local Authority Trading Company – CATER^{ed}.

Members were advised that –

- (a) Cabinet agreed in June 2014 that the Education Catering Service, in partnership with maintained schools and academies and the Council, be created as a Local Authority Trading Company (LATC) to enable the delivery of a sustainable food service to schools across the city;
- (b) the Company was established as a company limited by share, and registered at Companies House on 15 December 2014, the company is 51% Council owned and 49% school owned;
- (c) schools and academies have separately become members of a separate company – The Schools Shareholder Company in order that they can be represented as a shareholder in CATER^{ed};
- (d) the Board of CATER^{ed} was made up of eight school representatives (along with two council officers, one Managing Director and the potential for two extraordinary non-voting Directors);

- (e) three staff consultation events had been held, and no significant issues had been raised by staff or Trade Unions;
- (f) the Company had been granted access to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) as a Schedule 2 (Part 2) employer and had resolved any outstanding issues regarding any pension shortfalls;
- (g) the Company had arranged to buy back support services from the Council, initially for a period of one year, although it had proved difficult to identify actual services and the associated costs for each service area;
- (h) the Company were currently negotiating with the Council for the continuation of the provision of community meals within the city;
- (i) it was planned that all staff would transfer under TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)) and CATER^{ed} Limited would be fully live on 1 April 2015.

In response to members' questions it was reported that –

- (j) the new Company had been built on strong co-operative values;
- (k) the new Company was a Teckal (a vehicle used by public bodies to pre-privatise or outsource services) company and as such had to do most of their business with the Local Authority;
- (l) in order to be self sufficient, the Company would need to investigate diversifying in the future.

The Chair thanked Brad Pearce and Judith Harwood for their report, and took the opportunity to congratulate Brad and his team for winning the coveted top spot at the national EDUcatering Excellence Awards, scooping the title of Local Authority Caterer of the Year 2013.

52. **FOSTERING/RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENTS**

Liz Cahill (Strategic Commissioning Manager) and Alison Botham (Assistant Director for Children, Young People and Families) provided members with an update on the performance of the Cost and Volume contract for Fostering following submission to Cabinet on 9 December 2014.

Members were advised that –

- (a) the Cost and Volume frameworks were re-tendered during 2014, with the contract award taking place at Cabinet in December 2014. The contract is in place from 1 February 2015 until 31 March 2017. Seven independent fostering agencies were awarded a contract;
- (b) the Cost and Volume framework committed providers to high standards of care, but did not provide any guarantee of business;

- (c) the new contract had only been in force for two months; however savings had already been seen, £23,000 per annum had been saved with one provider alone;
- (d) the new contract was working well, good reports had been received so far, and the contract would be monitored quarterly and scrutinised closely;
- (e) systems were in place to tackle the issue of permanency; an additional requirement of the new contract was for the seven fostering providers to increase their local carer numbers by 20% during the period of the contract. The purpose of this was to help Plymouth City Council place more children and young people locally in a family based placement (as long as it was safe and appropriate to do so) and avoid uprooting them from positive influences in their lives. This should also reduce reliance on residential placements that were a distance away from Plymouth.

In response to members' questions it was reported that –

- (f) a LADO was a Local Authority Designated Officer;
- (g) the group provider meetings were very well attended;
- (h) Liz Cahill would provide the panel with an update every three months.

The Chair thanked Liz Cahill and Alison Botham for their report.

53. **OFSTED IMPROVEMENT PLAN - UPDATE**

Alison Botham (Assistant Director for Children, Young People and Families) and Judith Harwood (Assistant Director for Education, Learning and Families) provided members with an update on the OFSTED improvement plan, which had now been re-named 'Childrens' Services Improvement Monitoring Framework – March 2015'.

Members were advised that –

- (a) a great deal of work had gone in to the production of the new plan since the January meeting of Ambitious Plymouth;
- (b) the new plan contained more information, and had to be submitted to OFSTED by 17 April; it was planned to sign off the final version on 7 April;
- (c) any comments/feedback on the plan had to be submitted to Alison Botham by 3 April;
- (d) there were 17 areas of improvement; a 'RAG' (red/amber/green) rating and 'milestone' information had been added to the new report format;
- (e) the new plan would be submitted to OFSTED, who would note the contents of it and feedback to the Council;

- (f) a sub group of the Childrens' and Young Peoples' Partnership (CYPP) would monitor the progress of the report, and in turn feedback to the CYPP and ultimately to the Health & Wellbeing Board;
- (g) Ambitious Plymouth would receive a quarterly progress report;

In response to members' questions it was reported that –

- (h) Childrens' Services were making reasonable progress;
- (i) comments and feedback on the report were welcome;
- (j) areas for improvement could change in the future as the Service developed, although none would be removed until the Service was satisfied they were resolved;
- (k) particular aspects of the plan would be reviewed if Ambitious Plymouth considered it necessary, or thought insufficient progress was being made.

The Chair thanked Alison Botham and Judith Harwood for their report.

(Councillor Michael Leaves left after this agenda item)

Order of business

With the permission of the Chair, the order of business was amended, as set out below in the minutes.

54. WORK PROGRAMME

The panel reviewed it's work programme and noted the addition of two items for inclusion on the work programme for the new municipal year, as previously requested by Budget Scrutiny –

- (1) information relating to the cost of the recent OFSTED inspection;
- (2) the containment plans within Children's Social Care.

It was noted that the Co-operative Scrutiny Review 'Be-wise to Child Sexual Exploitation' had been postponed until the new municipal year, in order to allow adequate time and resources to complete it.

Following a discussion, it was agreed to add 'Safeguarding' to the work programme as a regular agenda item; in the interim Simon White (Safeguarding Children's Board Manager) would be contacted, in order to determine the focus of his reports.

Following advice from Judith Harwood (Assistant Director for Learning and Communities) it was agreed to add 'Children's Plan' to the work programme.

Under this agenda item, future meeting dates were discussed; panel members were

advised of the current draft dates, which would be confirmed in due course.

55. **PLYMOUTH PLAN**

Councillor McDonald (Cabinet member for Children, Young People and Public Health), Councillor Peter Smith (Deputy Leader), Richard Grant (Local Planning Manager), Louise Kelley (Sports Development Manager), Dominic Jinks (Executive Director of Plymouth Culture Board) and Hilary Bracegirdle (Museums and Heritage Manager) provided the panel with an overview of the Plymouth Plan, focusing on Policies 12, 22, 26 and 37.

Members were advised that –

- (a) the Plymouth Plan was being published in two parts; Members currently had the opportunity to comment on part 1 of the plan as part of the consultation process. The plan itself set out the shared strategic direction for the future of the city and would replace approximately 130 plans and strategies, including the Local Transport Plan, and the Housing Plan;
- (b) policy 12 (Delivering the best outcomes for children, young people and vulnerable adults) was a wide-ranging policy, a key aspect of which related to child poverty. It was necessary for the results of the consultation to be known before the policy could be developed further;
- (c) policy 22 (Delivering learning and talent development as a major civic approach in support of the skills developments of citizens) highlighted the importance of education for the citizens of Plymouth;
- (d) it was vital that young people were given independent careers advice, and were given the opportunity to obtain the skills that employers needed;
- (e) Plymouth Adult and Community Learning Service (PACLS), along with their partners, YMCA and the Shekinah Mission, offered a wide range of part-time learning opportunities, including one day workshops in leisure subjects and work-based learning qualifications;
- (f) the Plan for Playing Pitches in Plymouth outlined the Council and its partners objectives for playing pitches in the city and would be used as evidence to inform decision making relating to pitches;
- (g) the old Sports Facility Strategy needed updating;
- (h) a consultation was available online for people to view and complete if required;
- (i) Sport England now had more clearly defined capital available through its Places People Play Legacy funding programme.

In response to members' questions it was reported that –

- (j) there had been a decline in the take up of part-time courses offered through

(PACLS);

- (k) the organisation of PACLS had changed in order to access grants and other sources of funding;
- (l) accredited courses subsidised other courses;
- (m) a number of learning providers were only able to access funding for accredited courses;
- (n) a number of Plymouth schools had excellent sporting facilities,
- (o) most schools did not offer their sporting facilities to the local community – either because they closed at 4 pm or they chose not to do so;
- (p) the Sports Development Unit were proactively encouraging schools to offer their sporting facilities to their local communities;
- (q) the mission of the Plymouth School Sports Partnership, hosted by Sir John Hunt and Plymstock schools, was to positively impact on the lives of every child and young person attending partnership schools and their parents/carers through the opportunities they provided.

The Chair thanked officers and Cabinet Members for their report, and encouraged any concerns and comments raised by the Ambitious Plymouth scrutiny panel to be fed back to the Plymouth Plan team.

56. **AMBITIOUS PLYMOUTH ACHIEVEMENTS 2014-15**

The Panel reviewed its work programme and was asked to reflect upon its achievements for 2014/15 for inclusion in the annual scrutiny report. Members congratulated themselves on completing their busy work programme which had included –

- Plymouth Education Catering Services – Local Authority Trading Company (now CATER^{ed})
- Transformation of PACLS (now On Course South West)
- City of Culture bid (including an update on the Plymouth History Centre)
- Youth Services
- Transformation of the Integrated Health and Wellbeing Board
- OFSTED

Agreed that the Lead Officer and Democratic Support Officer, in consultation with the Chair, prepare a summary of the panel's achievements for inclusion in the annual scrutiny report.

Under this agenda item, Councillor Parker-Delaz-Ajete expressed her thanks to the Lead Officer and Democratic Support Officer; Councillor Jordan expressed his

thanks to Councillor Bowie and Councillor Mrs Beer in their roles of Chair and Vice Chair.

57. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.