

Co-operative Scrutiny Board

Wednesday 19 August 2015

PRESENT:

Councillor James, in the Chair.

Councillor Mrs Aspinall, Vice Chair.

Councillors Mrs Beer, Bowie, Mrs Bowyer, Sam Davey, Ken Foster (substitute for Councillor Ricketts), Hendy (substitute for Councillor Murphy), Jordan, Storer and Kate Taylor.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Murphy and Ricketts.

Also in attendance: Lesa Annear (Strategic Director for Transformation and Change), Ben Chilcott (Chief Finance Officer (CCG's Western Locality), Marion Fanthorpe (Interim Assistant Director for HR and OD), Ross Jago (Performance and Research Officer), Alan Knott (Performance and Research Officer), Guy Marshall (Senior Finance Analyst), David Northey (Head of Corporate Strategy), Councillor Smith (Deputy Leader), Chris Randall (Head of Finance Operations), Jane Stephenson (Head of HR), Alison Ward (Senior Policy, Performance and Partnerships Officer) and Helen Wright (Democratic Support Officer).

The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 5.55 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.

17. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by councillors in accordance with the code of conduct in relation to items under consideration at this meeting.

18. **MINUTES**

The Board agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2015 are confirmed as a correct record.

19. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business to consider.

20. **WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16**

The Chair advised that –

- (a) there were no Panel work programmes to consider, as there had been no meetings of the Panels since the last Board meeting on 29 July 2015, at which the work programmes had been agreed;
- (b) following the recent TAG meeting it had been agreed that the information relating to the Transformation Programme (including the risk log, benefits profile and the merge of the CCO and POD programmes) would be submitted to the September/October Board meeting.

Councillor Bowie considered that August would have been a good time to meet with the City's MPs whilst they were on summer recess. The Lead Officer advised that this matter would be followed up.

The Board agreed its work programme subject to the inclusion of the Transformation Programme information being included on the agenda for the September/October 2015 meeting.

21. **Decisions Taken Under Delegated Authority**

There were no decisions taken under delegated authority to consider.

22. **TRACKING DECISIONS**

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

The Chair advised that the coach station and car park at Mayflower Street contained within the forward plan of key decisions and private business (minute 10 refers) related to the award of the contract and as such it was not normal practice to scrutinise the award of contracts.

Councillor Kate Taylor reported that she had not received the information requested relating to the percentage of bad debt which had been written off that was attributable to customers (eg council tax). The Lead Officer advised that a response had been sought but this matter would be followed up.

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

The Board considered the following executive decisions in the Forward Plan which were scheduled to be discussed at Cabinet between September – December 2015 –

- review and prioritisation of the capital programme;
- retender of education home to school transport contracts;
- integrated health and wellbeing programme phase 2;
- community domiciliary care services contract award;
- review of the Corporate plan 2013/14 – 2016/17;
- medium term financial strategy;
- Plymouth coach station sand car park at Mayflower Street.

The Chair advised that as per the tracking decisions the Plymouth coach station and car park at Mayflower Street related to the award of contract and as such, it was not normal practice to scrutinise the award of contracts.

24. **SCRUTINY ABSENCE REPORT**

The Deputy Leader (Councillor Smith), the Strategic Director for Transformation and Change (Lesla Annear), the Interim Assistant Director for HR and OD (Marion Fanthorpe) and the Head of HR (Jane Stephenson) presented the scrutiny absence report which highlighted the following key areas –

- (a) employee absence was actively monitored and interventions were in place to support managers in the prevention of days lost due to sickness, with an emphasis on stress related absence;
- (b) the impact of sickness on the available working days during the last 12 months was 3.41%;
- (c) the overall target for the Council was an average of 8.49 full time equivalent (FTE) days; the actual average per FTE days lost to sickness was 8.05 FTE days;
- (d) the average days lost in the public sector (local authorities) for sickness absence was 8.7 FTE days; the authority had set a target below the average and proactively managed employee wellbeing initiatives Council wide;
- (e) the leading causes of sickness were reported to be stress, depression, psychological followed by musculoskeletal problems;
- (f) the Council actively managed staff who were off work due to sickness on a day to day basis through its capability policy and procedures; this included Return to Work interviews and Wellbeing meetings;
- (g) sickness absence data was regularly reviewed by managers and Assistant Directors on a monthly basis; HR Advisors also reviewed the top 100 cases each month directly with the relevant line manager to ensure the appropriate action was being taken;
- (h) Council employees had access to an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) which provided guidance on managing work and non-work related stressors through access to a 24/7 helpline and a signposting website as well as up to six free counselling sessions;
- (i) the Council encouraged the use of Occupational Health services wherever relevant; a total of 462 referrals were made to the service in 2014/15.

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

- (j) there had been no impact on the sickness figures due to staff being transferred out of the authority in the short term;
- (k) a new on line system had been introduced (iTrent) whereby managers were able to log more accurately staff sickness absence and the causes of sickness;
- (l) the cost of sickness in 2013/14 was £290,000; this figure covered additional staff resources that had been required to fill posts whilst members of staff were sick; however, the vast majority of work was undertaken by existing members of staff;
- (m) benchmarking information relating to the private sector was not currently available (there was benchmarking information available for local authorities);
- (n) the purpose of the managing attendance (long term sickness) policy was to promote the wellbeing of employees, ensure a safe working environment and recognise the need for clear, fair and consistent procedures; the policy also clearly sets out the steps to be followed in this process;
- (o) absences which were less than four weeks were classed as short term, absences greater than four weeks were long term;
- (p) an employee was entitled to six months full sick pay in a rolling 12 months;
- (q) the decision to appoint agency staff was either taken at manager level or higher; the use of agency staff was less expensive compared to employing a permanent member of staff, as there were no on costs to budget for;
- (r) stress was defined as consistently high levels of pressure which could lead to depression or mental health issues; it was difficult to distinguish between work related stress and stress caused outside of the work place;
- (s) the Council had in place a stress and resilience policy that formed part of the health and safety standard which each department, service unit, school and team was expected to achieve, monitor and audit;
- (t) an undertaking was given to provide information on the top 10 known reasons for short term absences;
- (u) an undertaking was given to provide data on sickness absence within maintained schools;

- (v) it was a real concern that with the reduction in resources, members of staff were not being put under sustained pressure; there were tools in place for staff to actively manage stress, although overall there was no evidence that this was currently an issue.

The Board agreed that the absence report will form part of the quarterly monitoring report provided to the Board which will include –

- private sector comparators;
- local authority comparators (family group);
- breakdown of reasons for short term absence;
- schools (maintained) data.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for attending.

25. **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT - CORPORATE PLAN
SECOND YEAR REVIEW AND PLEDGE UPDATE (JULY 2015)**

The Senior Policy, Performance and Partnerships Officer (Alison Ward) and the Performance and Research Officer (Alan Knott) presented the corporate performance report – corporate plan second year review and pledge update which highlighted the following key areas –

- (a) the report provided the rationale for the reinvigoration of the Corporate Plan;
- (b) the plan on the page provided direction for the Council in terms of values, objectives and outcomes; it continued to be well received both internally and externally for the clarity with which it sets out the vision for the Council;
- (c) the plan outlined the actions being taken in order to deliver the outcomes and measures;
- (d) the review process did not seek to amend the values, objectives or outcomes for the plan (the plan would remain the same);
- (e) a review of the Corporate Plan was undertaken during April/May 2015 which considered the progress after two years of action; the review focused on the key activities and performance indicators underpinning the delivery of the plan and considered if there were any gaps in the current/future priorities;
- (f) the outcome of the review did identify some risks to the successful delivery of the outcome expectations; a number of changes to the key actions and performance indicators to realign the plan to ensure successes were achieved had been recommended, as follows –
- completion of one key action (K42);
 - slight alteration to wording of one key action (K23);

- recommendation for an additional nine performance indicators;
 - removal of one performance indicator (PI7);
- (g) the outstanding pledges had been reviewed and realigned in order to be completed by the end of March 2016; a Pledge from the original 100 Pledges which was incomplete had been added to the list;
- (h) a total of 37 out of the 51 pledges had now been completed against a target of 40; there were three Pledges that were overdue but the activities needed to achieve them were in place and in many cases were virtually complete.

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

- (i) with regard to key action 43 (pioneering in reducing the City's carbon emissions and leading in environmental and social responsibility), the annual targets for carbon emissions were contained within the Plymouth Plan;
- (j) with regard to the new performance indicator (26) (proposed that a measure was included which tracked customer satisfaction would be included in quarter three), this indicator was still being scoped but there were mechanisms in place to capture the information required;
- (k) with regard to the new performance indicator (34) (increase GVA (Gross Value Added) (per head), the indicator provided an opportunity to capture the information at a Plymouth level per head of population and compare that to the rest of the country/Council's family group;
- (l) with regard to the new performance indicator (27) (percentage of residents with no qualifications) both academic and vocational data would be able to be captured as measures were already in place to do so;
- (m) with regard to the new performance indicator (29) (the percent of (adults) residents who volunteer at least once per month) the information was captured as part of the Cities of Service initiative;
- (n) with regard to the new performance indicator (32) (a measure based on safety questions asked of young people in school would be included in quarter three), this indicator was currently being scoped.

Agreed that –

- (1) corporate performance report 2014/15 quarter four and 2015/16 quarter one to be provided to the Board with the exception report at the next meeting;
- (2) key actions and Performance Indicators will be considered within the next available cycle of Panel planning meetings and outcome leads identified in the Plan will need to attend and provide Panels with the following information –
 - current action plan to deliver key actions;
 - resources used/required to undertake activity;
 - key milestones and deadlines;
 - progress toward outcome as illustrated by indicator.

The Chair thanked the officers for attending the meeting.

26. **DRAFT CAPITAL AND REVENUE MONITORING REPORT 2015/16 - QUARTER I**

The Head of Finance Operations (Chris Randall) submitted the draft capital and revenue monitoring report 2015/15 – quarter one which highlighted the following key areas –

- (a) the primary purpose of the report was to detail how the Council was delivering against its financial measures using its capital and revenue resources, to approve relevant budget variations and virements and report new schemes approved in the capital programme;
- (b) the estimated revenue overspend was £2.097m; the overall forecast net spend equated to £195.106m against a budget of £193.009m which was a variance of 1.1%; this needed to be read within the context of needing to deliver £21m of savings in 2015/16 on the back of balancing the 2014/15 revenue budget where £16m of net revenue reductions had been successfully delivered;
- (c) the latest approved capital programme funding envelope which covered 2014/15 to 2017/18 stood at £237.406m which had been approved at Full Council on 23 February 2015;
- (d) the report, for the first time, outlined information on the Plymouth Integrated fund;
- (e) additional management solutions and escalated actions to deliver further savings from the Council's transformation programme would be brought for consideration over the coming months.

In response to questions raised, it was reported that –

- (e) the enhanced voluntary release scheme which had been formally offered to staff within customer services prior to the restructure, would result in staff being able to leave the authority without having to work their notice but still being paid for it;
- (f) the staff take-up of the enhanced voluntary release scheme within customer services had been good; this had negated the need to make staff compulsory redundant;
- (g) an undertaking was provided that further information would be provided regarding the anticipated level of funding that would be achieved through waste services;
- (h) an undertaking was given to seek the views of the Cabinet Member for Finance relating to the identification of funding sources for the capital programme projects;
- (i) the delay in the reviews of business support, HR and Finance service provision would result in these areas not achieving the target saving for this financial year of £0.8m; it was anticipated that a saving of £0.160m would be achieved; the delay had been partly due to the change in Assistant Director level within Finance and HR;
- (j) the plans for transformation required a significant investment in terms of both staff and other resources; it was the intention to mainstream transformation over time, however during the initial period there was no expectation that this would be delivered as part of 'business as usual'; the budget had been set up to allow the benefits from the programme to be placed where they would be realised (the GAME project had been included with the Place Directorate).

Councillor Mrs Beer and Councillor Bowie requested that the Ambitious Plymouth Panel monitor the budget pressures within the Children, Young People and Families department, as the service was currently forecasting a budget pressure of £0.419m.

The Board agreed that –

- (1) highlighted pressures in People department to be considered by Ambitious Plymouth and Caring Plymouth dependant on their terms of reference;
- (2) request that monitoring report identifies funding sources for capital programme projects.

The Board noted the report.

The Chair thanked the officer for attending the meeting.

27. **NHS NEW DEVON CCG WESTERN LOCALITY FINANCE REPORT MONTH 3 2015/16 (INCLUDING THE PLYMOUTH INTEGRATED FUND (PIF))**

The Head of Corporate Strategy (Plymouth City Council) (David Northey), the Chief Finance Officer (CCG's Western Locality) (Ben Chilcott) and the Senior Finance Analyst (Guy Marshall) presented the NHS New Devon CCG – Western Locality Finance report month 3 2015/16 which highlighted the following key areas –

- (a) the report sets out the financial performance of the Western Locality to the end of month 3 (June 2015); the report was in three sections, as follows –
 - locality managed contracts;
 - GP registered population based expenditure;
 - Plymouth Integrated Fund;
- (b) the locality managed contracts reflected the devolved financial management responsibilities of the Locality as approved by the CCG Governing Body; this reflected the position based on the pragmatic reporting of where contracts were managed;
- (c) the GP registered population based expenditure represented the expenditure on contract for the GP registered population of the Western Locality; a subset of this information (for Plymouth practices only) formed the CCG contribution towards the Plymouth Integrated Fund;
- (d) the Plymouth Integrated Fund sets out its performance and the associated risk share arrangements.

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

- (e) the forecast overspend of £0.7m was split across both organisations; it was anticipated that the position would improve in month four with action plans being implemented to mitigate the key risks within the Care Co-ordination Team and the Care Leavers Service;
- (f) the health authority's accounts were different to that of the local authority; a requirement of the budget setting process was to agree a more favourable position at the beginning of the financial year whilst making provision for further in year savings;
- (g) with regard to the learning and disability clients, it was not the intention to remove clients but an attempt to re-allocate and remove inappropriate cases that had been charged against an incorrect budget;

- (h) the Plymouth Integrated Fund was forecast to overspend by £0.7m at the year-end; action plans were being developed and put in place to mitigate the risks.

The Board agreed that –

- (1) section one of the report (locality managed contracts) is considered by the Caring Plymouth Panel;
- (2) sections two and three (GP registered population based expenditure and the Plymouth Integrated Fund) continue to be considered by the Board as part of the Corporate monitoring reports.

The Board noted the report.

The Chair thanked the officers for attending the meeting.

28. **CALL-INS**

There were no call ins to consider.

29. **URGENT EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

There were no urgent executive decision to consider.

30. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Board considered and agreed the recommendations from the Your Plymouth Panel relating to –

- (1) the appointment of a co-opted representative (minute 6 refers);
- (2) the customer services transformation programme update (minute 7 refers);
- (3) unauthorised encampments update (minute 8 refers).

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

There were no co-operative reviews to consider.

32. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business to consider.