

Ambitious Plymouth

Monday 7 September 2015

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs Beer, in the Chair.

Councillor Bowie, Vice Chair.

Councillors Dann, Sam Davey, Deacon, Downie, Jordan, Mrs Nicholson, Singh and Tuohy.

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

Also in attendance: Pete Aley (Head of Neighbourhood and Community Services), Jayne Gorton (Lead Officer), Louise Kelley (Sports Development Manager), Councillor McDonald (Cabinet member for Children, Young People and Public Health), Anne Osborne (Head of Service for (CYPIC)), Julie Reed (Principal Admin Officer) and Lynn Young (Democratic Support Officer).

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 11.06 am.

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.

15. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

16. **MINUTES**

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2015 are confirmed as a correct record

17. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

18. **WORK OF THE SPORTS DEVELOPMENT UNIT**

Pete Aley (Head of Neighbourhood and Community Services) and Louise Kelley (Sports Development Manager) provided the panel with an overview of the work of the Sports Development Unit.

Members were advised that –

- (a) the main aim of the Sports Development Unit (SDU) was to increase

- participation in sport and recreational activity across the city;
- (b) the unit was keen to focus on working within the most deprived neighbourhoods of the city;
 - (c) the unit had close links with community groups, sports clubs, and national organisations such as Sport England;
 - (d) the unit was very successful in securing significant amounts of external funding – in 2014/2015 this had amounted to in excess of £260,000;
 - (e) participation in the unit's activities had shown a year on year increase for the past five years, with approximately 40,000 attendances in 2010/11 to approximately 63,000 in 2014/15;
 - (f) a 14% increase in attendance from people living within the most deprived areas of the city had been achieved over the last five years;
 - (g) a number of high profile projects had been delivered in the city, including the hugely successful Ping! initiative (a table tennis project funded by Sport England and managed and delivered by Table Tennis England in partnership with local authorities and a wide range of creative and cultural organisations), which would be repeated again next year;
 - (h) the unit was working on developing stronger links with Public Health, and already supported the Thrive Plymouth (4-4-54) campaign, specifically helping to tackle inactivity.

Following members' questions it was reported that –

- (i) the Ping! initiative was helping to reinvigorate table tennis in the city, encouraging people to take up the sport and encouraging others to return to it;
- (j) a wide range of data was available in relation to the success of the various programmes run by the SDU;
- (k) the amount of funding available for each programme varied, and depended on the target group;
- (l) it was acknowledged that participation rates for people with disabilities was low, time and cost was a big factor in providing suitable support for participants;
- (m) a range of activities had been developed at the Plymouth Life Centre for people with disabilities, and included a Boccia Club, wheelchair rugby and basketball;
- (n) SDU had secured funding to develop and promote inclusive sport in Plymouth over the next three years;

- (o) the Plymouth School Sports Partnership co-ordinated sport and physical activities for Plymouth schools (Primary, Secondary and Special schools);
- (p) the 2 universities in the city were delivering externally funded programmes to increase sports and physical activity participation amongst staff and students;
- (q) the SDU targeted inactive citizens, and offered recreational/social, low cost activities, such as 'No Strings Badminton', to encourage participation;
- (r) the University of St Mark and St John (Marjon) run a 'Making a Difference Programme', designed to support Plymouth's young athletes through access to world-class facilities, coaching, sport science support and national and international competitions, enabling the city's young people to achieve their full potential;
- (s) the SDU comprised of seven members of staff – two of whom were office based;
- (t) the unit was working hard to provide sporting opportunities for various communities and women. Activities had been provided for members of the Kurdish and Filipino communities, and various women-only activities were provided at the Life Centre;
- (u) 'cardio tennis', fun and informal recreational tennis, was aimed specifically at adult beginners;
- (v) the unit worked with Elder Tree to encourage participation amongst the elderly community – sessions of 'seated aerobics' were available to people aged over 70 - and the unit would become more involved in this area of work when they became more involved with Public Health;
- (w) Sport England had a very tight definition of what activities were classified as 'sport' and more activities (such as walking) were now included in this definition, as it was recognised that some activities were a 'stepping stone' towards participation in sport;
- (x) the unit was actively involved with various community groups, and were members of the Mental Health forum;
- (y) the unit makes use of volunteers to run many of their sporting activities, including running and cycling;
- (z) a number of students at Plymouth University and Marjon acted as volunteers for various sporting activities, and this was an area the unit were looking to develop more in the future;
- (aa) the cost of each activity varied depending on the amount of funding it attracted, but allowed activity to be offered for free or at low-cost.

The Chair thanked Pete Aley and Louise Kelley for their report.

19. **CHANGES RESULTING FROM THE ADOPTION BILL**

Anne Osborne (Head of Service for (CYPIC)) and Councillor McDonald (Cabinet member for Children, Young People and Public Health) provided the panel with an update on the changes resulting from the Adoption Bill.

The panel were informed that -

- (a) the aim of the Education and Adoption Bill (if passed) was to give to the Secretary of State the power to direct one or more named local authorities to make arrangements for any or all of their adoption functions to be carried out on their behalf, by one of the local authorities named, or by another agency;
- (b) the Department for Education (DfE) released a paper called 'Regionalising Adoption' in June 2015, and asked for expressions of interest from adoption agencies to move towards regional adoption agencies;
- (c) funding of £4.5 million was available and Local Authorities had been invited to bid for a grant;
- (d) Adopt South West (ASW) launched in April 2015 as a co-operative regional partnership and was a partnership between Plymouth City Council, Devon County Council, Torbay Council, Barnardos SW and Families for Children;
- (e) it was possible that some of the smaller independent adoption agencies would merge and create larger agencies, which would lead to economies of scale and provide access to a larger pool of adopters;
- (f) the creation of ASW had resulted in a call centre number, a website, and a television campaign.

Following members' questions it was reported that –

- (g) ASW had submitted a bid for a grant from the £4.5 million fund;
- (h) some previous funding bids had been unsuccessful;
- (i) there had recently been changes in the recruitment of adopters, and the timescale for approval had been reduced;
- (j) adopters who could take older children, sibling groups and children with complex needs were being actively sought;
- (k) successful matching of children took a considerable amount of time;
- (l) it was not always possible to place older children in Plymouth, and it was often necessary to recruit adopters further afield in Devon and Cornwall;

- (m) ASW had been launched as a co-operative regional agency, which was not a legal entity or agency. The status of ASW would be looked at again if the bid for funding was successful;
- (n) Cornwall Council had been invited to join ASW, and a variation to the funding agreement had been drafted in preparation;
- (o) the recent television campaign had been successful, resulting in an increase in people interested in adopting;
- (p) it was important to convey the message that there was no such thing as the 'ideal' or 'perfect' adoptive family, and as such, people from all walks of life would be considered as an adopter.

The Chair thanked Anne Osborne and Councillor McDonald for their report.

20. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The panel discussed the draft work programme for 2015 – 2016 and agreed to recommend to the Cooperative Scrutiny Board the following items for inclusion:

- (1) work of Plymouth School Sports Partnership;
- (2) update on the changes resulting from Adoption Bill.

21. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.