

Place and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 7 December 2016

PRESENT:

Councillor Bowie, in the Chair.

Councillor Ball, Vice Chair.

Councillors Carson, Churchill, Sam Davey, Fletcher, Mavin, Morris, Penberthy and Storer

Apology for absence: Councillor Fry.

Also in attendance: Also in attendance: Councillor Downie (Cabinet Member for Safer and Stronger Communities), Lou Hayward (Assistant Director for Street Services), Judith Harwood (Assistant Director for Education, Participation and Skills), Jane Hunt (Senior Economic Development Officer), Ross Jago (Lead Officer), Ross Johnston (Programme Manager), Councillor Jordan (Cabinet Member for Culture), Alan Knott (Performance and Research Officer), Jono Madeley (Leadership Associate (NtG Health), Heather Ogburn (Service Leadership Adviser (RA and NtG), Councillor Ricketts (Cabinet Member for Transport and Housing Delivery), Dave Saunders (Strategic Development Manager), Sue Smith (Early Years and Childcare Manager), and Helen Wright (Democratic Adviser).

The meeting started at 3.00 pm and finished at 5.00 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the Panel 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.

Please note: This meeting was webcast and can be viewed at –
<http://council.webcast.vualto.com/plymouth-city-council/home?EventId=17651>

20. **Declarations of Interest**

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

21. **Minutes**

The committee agreed that the minutes of the meetings held on 31 August and 5 October 2016 are approved as a correct record.

22. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

23. **Child Poverty Action Plan Update**

Councillor Downie (Cabinet Member for Safer and Stronger Communities), Judith Harwood (Assistant Director for Education, Participation and Skills), Sue Smith (Early Years and Childcare Manager), Jono Madeley (Leadership Associate (NtG Health)), Jane Hunt (Senior Economic Development Officer) and Heather Ogburn (Service Leadership Adviser (RA and NtG)) presented the update on the Child Poverty Action Plan 2016-19 which highlighted the following key areas –

- progress with families on a low income;
- families on a low income: our commitments to delivery by 2019;
- progress with support for parents;
- support for parents: our commitments to deliver by 2019;
- progress with poor dental health;
- poor dental health; our commitments to delivery by 2019;
- progress with narrowing the attainment gap;
- narrowing the attainment gap: our commitments to delivery by 2019.

The key areas of questioning related to –

- developing culture change outside of the Council;
- the impact of Government changes on measures within the action plan (eg the reduction in the number of families in work claiming tax credits in Plymouth by 5% by 2019);
- the progress of the amalgamation of the City's credit unions;
- measures being taken to address the attainment gap;
- the delivery by 2019 of the improvement of dental health in children under the age 16 (with a reduction in the number of children having teeth removed).

The committee agreed –

- (1) to recommend that the portfolio holder make recommendations to Council;
- (2) that officers should explore how to develop credit union champions within communities;

- (3) that future updates to scrutiny on the Child Poverty Action Plan will be by exception as recommended by the Child Poverty Working Group.

24. **The Council's Corporate Plan Monitoring Report and Commitments Progress Report**

Alan Knott (Performance and Research Officer) presented the Council's Corporate Plan monitoring report and commitment progress report which provided the progress against the Council's ambitions and were supported by a set of performance indicators which measured progress against specific targets; the report reflected progress made during quarters one and two of 2016/17 (April – September 2016); the report also set out the progress being made against each of the commitments made by the Council following the election in May 2016.

Key areas of questioning related to –

- clarity of information provided within the report (ie it was not clear as part of the 'deliver 5000 new homes over next five years' performance indicator whether homes had been started, completed or occupied);
- addressing issues relating to the Plan for Sport Strategy regarding the ambition for Caring Plymouth;
- quantifying the percentage for adult residents who volunteered at least once a month;
- the use of plain English within the narrative of the report;
- progress relating to better transport links (rail and air).

The committee agreed that the following items are included on its work programme for future consideration –

- (1) the Plan for Sport Strategy;
- (2) transport links to the city (rail and air).

25. **Parking Modernisation Plan**

Councillor Ricketts (Cabinet Member for Transport and Housing Delivery) and Lou Hayward (Assistant Director for Street Services) presented the report which outlined a number of changes to parking services; the Parking Modernisation Plan included a package of measures and new features covering business permits, hotelier permits, on-street tariffs, Blue Badge tariffs and parking charges; the Plan followed on from previous work to modernise the service and was expected to generate an additional income of £655,000 in 2017/18.

Key areas of questioning related to –

- (a) the potential decrease in Blue Badge visitors to the city due to the car park charge;
- (b) the quality of information contained with the Equalities Impact Assessment;
- (c) the lack of quantifiable information within the report (ie no benchmarking data);
- (d) the operation of the smart meters;
- (e) the charge of £40 for exemption permits.

The committee agreed to hold a select committee review to look at the Plan for Parking which would be open to all non-executive members to attend.

26. **Plan for Libraries**

Councillor Jordan (Cabinet Member for Culture), Dave Saunders (Strategic Development Manager) and Ross Johnston (Programme Manager) presented the briefing report on the Plan for Libraries which set the following key points –

- the library conversation;
- key findings;
- equality impact assessment;
- vision and strategy development;
- reading and literacy
- information and history;
- digital;
- health and wellbeing;
- learning;
- developing a plan;
- designing a communication and engagement approach (consultation);
- delivering the consultation.

The key areas of questioning related to –

- the impact of the proposed library closures on child poverty;
- the engagement of non-library users in the consultation process;
- raising awareness of the services provided within libraries;
- the number of libraries that were currently well used;
- the issuing of library cards to children of school age.

The committee agreed to hold a select committee review to look at the Plan for Libraries which would be open to all non-executive members to attend.

27. **Tracking Decisions**

The committee noted the progress of its decisions.

28. **Work Programme**

The committee agreed its work programme (subject to the inclusion minute 24 (1) and (2) refers (the Plan for Sport Strategy and transport links to the city (rail and air)).

Ross Jago (Lead Officer) advised that information regarding community engagement in the scrutiny process would be made available on the website and shared across social media, in order to provide members of the public the opportunity to raise issues.