

Place and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 6 September 2017

PRESENT:

Councillor Bowie, in the Chair.

Councillor Ball, Vice Chair.

Councillors Churchill, Dann (substitute for Councillor Mavin), Sam Davey, Fletcher, Fry, Martin Leaves (substitute for Councillor Carson), Storer and Jon Taylor (substitute for Councillor Penberthy).

Apologies for absence: Councillors Carson, Mavin and Penberthy.

Also in attendance: Simon Arthurs (Senior Financial Analyst), Dawn Auger (Interim Strategic Director for Transformation – Transformation), Faye Batchelor-Hambleton (Assistant Director for Customer Services), Andrew Hardingham (Interim Strategic Director for Transformation – Finance), Lou Hayward (Assistant Director for Street Scene), Peter Honeywell (Transformation Architecture Manager), Ross Jago (Lead Officer), Councillor Jordan (Cabinet Member for Culture), Councillor Michael Leavers (Cabinet Member for Strategic Street Scene/Environment), Emma Rose (Strategic Development Manager), Dave Saunders (Strategic Development Manager (Customer Services), Mark Vincent (Technical and Contracts Manager) and Helen Wright (Democratic Support Officer).

The meeting started at 1.00 pm and finished at 5.42 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.

10. **Declarations of Interest**

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

11. **Minutes**

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2017 are a correct record.

12. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There was no items of Chair's urgent business.

13. **Registration Service Briefing**

Councillor Jordan (Cabinet Member for Culture), Andrew Hardingham (Interim Strategic Director for Transformation – Finance), Faye Batchelor-Hambleton (Assistant Director for Customer Services) and Emma Rose (Strategic Development Manager) presented the briefing on the Registration Service.

In 2015 the Customer Service Transformation carried out a service review on the Registration Service; the review involved working closely with staff at all levels of the service, as well as utilising insight gained through customer feedback. Following the review eight key improvements were outlined which included provision of death and birth registration from Derriford, prove birth/death/marriage certificate applications online and increase the portfolio of approved wedding venues city-wide.

The key areas of questioning related to –

- (a) the number of jobs that would be lost due to the re-location of the service;
- (b) the number of days that wedding ceremonies would be held in the Council House;
- (c) the loss of revenue due to the uncertainty of whether the service would be relocated;
- (d) the re-location of the emergency operations centre equipment from the Temeraire room;
- (e) the lack of detail regarding how the working process would support the revised working model;
- (f) the difficulty of accommodating the service within the confines of a democratic hub;
- (g) the loss of revenue due to the Council House not being able to accommodate the same level of wedding ceremonies;
- (h) the lack of options contained within the report regarding other potential locations such as the Guildhall and Pounds House;
- (i) whether consultation had been undertaken with members of staff from the Registration Service and members of the public;
- (j) concerns regarding whether the Contact Centre would be able to process the additional calls for the service (when registering births and deaths) and whether these calls could be prioritised;
- (k) the locations across the city where customers would be able to register births and deaths;

- (l) the need to look at the requirements of the service rather than the location.

The Committee agreed to –

- (1) support the disposal of the Lockyer Street site, for a capital receipt, as detailed in the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan;
- (2) support the principle of improving accessibility to services;
- (3) recommend to the Cabinet Member that proposals to relocate the registration service into the Council House are not acceptable, must be reconsidered and alternative accommodation must be explored; in particular the Cabinet Member should consider -
 - whether spaces such as the interview rooms and Members' rooms in Ballard House are currently being effectively utilised;
 - how death registrations may be provided seven days a week;
 - an additional exploration of Pounds House as an alternative wedding venue;
 - wider consultation with Members and the public on the use of the Council House.

14. **Strategic Options for Corporate Services**

Andrew Hardingham (Interim Strategic Director for Transformation – Finance), Dawn Aunger (Interim Strategic Director for Transformation – Transformation), Faye Batchelor-Hambleton (Assistant Director for Customer Services, Peter Honeywell (Transformation Architecture Manager) and Simon Arthurs (Senior Financial Analyst) presented the strategic options for Corporate Services.

Cabinet in February 2013 approved the outline business case for a new model moving PCC IT service delivery to Delt in partnership with NEW Devon CCG; it was envisaged that this model could be expanded to include other services in the future. The services that were proposed to be moved to Delt would be subject to a more detailed analysis of the transfer when the business case and service specifications were developed.

Kevin Treweeks (Unison) and Patricia Small (GMB) outlined the trade unions' key areas of concern, as follows –

- (a) the potential benefits of transferring services to another vehicle;
- (b) the savings or earnings that could be achieved through such a venture;
- (c) the risk of 'breaking' Delt by expanding the organisation;

- (d) the risk to the future political control of transferring some strategic services to this venture;
- (e) currently there was no proper trade union recognition agreement in place in Delt (the staff forum was not an acceptable model).

Diana Beal (Unite) submitted a written submission which the Panel took into consideration.

The key areas of questioning related to –

- (f) why other local councils had not taken the opportunity to join Delt;
- (g) the importance of having trade union representation when dealing with staff transferring to Delt;
- (h) concerns that the focus for the new venture would have to change to ‘revenue hunting’ which could have an impact on the public sector service;
- (i) the proposed services that had been included within the scope and whether they were a best fit for this model;
- (j) concerns that with no trade union agreement in place, terms and conditions could be diluted;
- (k) assurance that the right governance arrangements would be in place with such a venture;
- (l) the importance of Plymouth City Council having overall ownership of the venture;
- (m) concerns that there was no elected member representation on the Delt Board;
- (n) what the process would be to develop the business cases including service specifications.

The Committee agreed to recommend to Cabinet that –

- (1) the Scrutiny Committee supports the mandatory outcomes, as set out within the report but with the addition of ‘jobs and investment being retained on the peninsula’ and ‘that partners are based in the public or voluntary community sectors’ as mandatory rather than desirable outcomes;
- (2) Plymouth City Council to work with Delt to achieve Trade Union recognition before proceeding to business case and service specification development;

- (3) subject to recommendation two, that a cross party working group is established to consider the business cases as they are developed;
- (4) Trade Unions in the Council continue to be involved in the process through the Joint Strategic Consultative Forum;
- (5) the Scrutiny Committee will further consider business cases and service specifications as and when they are developed;
- (6) officers address the issues of future influence of councillors and future public sector ownership of Delt;
- (7) when considering which services to move to business case, the Scrutiny Committee asks that Cabinet work within the principle that transactional services are considered first.

15. **Waste**

Councillor Michael Leavers (Cabinet Member for Strategic Street Scene/Environment), Lou Hayward (Assistant Director for Street Scene), Dave Saunders (Strategic Development Manager (Customer Services) and Mark Vincent (Technical and Contracts Manager) were present to receive questions from the Panel relating to the information that it had requested at the meeting held in March 2017.

Key areas of questioning related to –

- (a) the need to develop a performance dashboard with 2016/17 data used as the baseline for the indicators;
- (b) when the review of the assisted bin collections would commence;
- (c) concerns that a private sector company was advertising for enforcement staff within Plymouth and the wider implications of outsourcing the public protection service;
- (d) the current waiting time for the bulky waste service;
- (e) the current waiting time for the provision of a green/brown bin;
- (f) concerns that new homes and customers with broken bins were having to pay £15 for a new/replacement bins; once the bins had been delivered the broken bins were not being removed;
- (g) the amount of revenue generated through charging for new/replacement bins;
- (h) how the service would enforce bins left on the highway;

- (i) concerns regarding the increase in street litter and the number of incidents of fly tipping.

The Committee agreed that –

- (1) a performance dashboard with quarterly performance trend against indicators using 2016/17 as baseline data, should be developed and available as soon as possible for Committee members;
- (2) new homes and customers with broken bins should not be charged for new bins, the current charging policy is to be emailed to members of the Committee;
- (3) future scrutiny to review the performance and enforcement in November 2017.

16. **Gypsy and Travellers - Unauthorised Encampments**

The Chair advised that this item had been included on the agenda for information, and as no issues had been identified for consideration prior to the meeting, no Cabinet Members or officers had been invited to attend.

Councillor Ball advised that the report had not covered the areas that he considered should have been included and requested that a Select Committee Review be undertaken.

The Chair advised that prior to considering this request Councillor Ball would need to complete the Select Committee Review Plan.

17. **Corporate Plan Quarterly Report - Quarter I 2017/18**

The Chair advised that this item had been included on the agenda for information, and as no issues had been identified for consideration prior to the meeting, no Cabinet Members or officers had been invited to attend.

18. **Capital and Revenue Monitoring Report 2017/18 - Quarter I**

The Chair advised that this item had been included on the agenda for information, and as no issues had been identified for consideration prior to the meeting, no Cabinet Members or officers had been invited to attend.

19. **Tracking Decisions**

The Committee noted the progress of its decisions.

20. **Work Programme**

The Committee agreed to include the following items on its work programme –

- (1) Select Committee Review – Gypsy and Travellers;
- (2) Waste (November 2017).