

Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 11 March 2020

PRESENT:

Councillor Winter, in the Chair.

Councillor Churchill, Vice Chair.

Councillors Sam Davey, Jordan, Kelly (Substitute for Councillor Ms Watkin), Mavin, Mrs Pengelly (Substitute for Councillor Drean), Stevens and Wheeler.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Drean and Ms Watkin.

Also in attendance: David Draffan (Service Director for Economic Development), Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council), Hannah Harris (Chief Executive Plymouth Culture), Chloe Hughes (Engagement Programme Manager – The Box), Amanda Lee (Marketing Manager), Kevin McKenzie (Policy and Intelligence Adviser), Nicola Moyle (Head of Heritage Arts and Film), Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing and Co-operative Development), Helen Prendergast (Democratic Adviser), Amanda Ratsey (Head of Economic, Enterprise and Employment).

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 4.10 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.

47. **Declarations of Interest**

In accordance with the code of conduct the following declarations of interest were made –

	Minute Number	Reason	Interest
Councillor Kelly	Minute 52 – Plan for Sustainable Fishing	Sea Angler	Personal
Councillor Jordan	Minute 53 – Vibrant Culture in Plymouth	Former DJ and Chairman of Chaddlewood Farm Community Centre	Personal
Councillor Mavin	Minute 54 – Community Cohesion	Family member works with immigrants and refugees	Personal

48. **Minutes**

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2020 are a correct record.

49. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

50. **Mapping of Corporate Plan to Scrutiny Committee**

The Committee noted the mapping of the Corporate Plan to Scrutiny Committees.

51. **Policy Update**

Kevin McKenzie (Policy and Intelligence Adviser) presented the Policy update which highlighted the following key areas –

(a) Government policy, legislative announcements and news which included

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- Marine Management Organisation: since 2016, the draft South West Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan had been developed with stakeholders, providing a robust and evidence-based plan that was tailored to the economic, environmental and social needs of the south west inshore and offshore marine plan areas;

the Marine Management Organisation had announced that the consultation on the Plan would commence on 14 January and close on 6 April 2020;

- Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Environment Bill: the Government claimed that with the speedy return of the this Bill it underlined its commitment to tackling climate change and protecting and restoring the natural environment for future generations;

(b) Parliamentary legislation included -

- Agricultural Bill;
- Fisheries Bill;
- Rented Homes Bill;
- Local Government (Governance) Bill.

The following responses were provided to questions raised by Members –

- (c) a response would be provided outside of this meeting, regarding the number of consultations that the council had responded to;
- (b) as part of the Natural England project to restore fragile marine habitats, funding would be available to protect the seagrass meadows within Plymouth Sound and beyond.

Councillors expressed their concern relating to the protection of the seagrass meadows from leisure activities, mooring boats and dredging.

Order of Business

With the permission of the Chair, the order of business was changed which is reflected in the minutes below.

52. Tracking Decisions

The Committee noted the progress of its tracking decisions.

The Committee was advised that its recommendation relating to seeking an additional performance indicator for the time taken for a set of journeys at peak and non-peak times to be measured and the difference evaluated, would be considered as part of the annual performance indicator review which would be completed by 31 March 2020.

53. Plan for Sustainable Fishing

Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council), David Draffan (Service Director for Economic Development) and Amanda Ratsey (Head of Economic, Enterprise and Employment) presented the plan for sustainable fishing which highlighted the following key areas –

- (a) the council wanted to be able to help this sector take advantage of the new Fishing Bill and the negotiations following the UK's departure from the European Union;
- (b) the council's ambition was to make Plymouth the new epicentre of English fishing; it was already a sub-regional fishing centre, servicing Cornwall and Devon (between 50 and 60% of the fish sold in Plymouth came from the wider hinterland); this could be taken to a national level of importance with the right support and infrastructure;
- (c) the following organisations were located in Plymouth -
 - fisheries management: Marine Management Organisation;
 - fisheries science: Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science;
 - marine sciences: Maritime and Coastguard Agency;

- (d) Plymouth City Council's draft Plan for Sustainable Fishing sets out how to revitalise the industry in the city; fishing had always been a part of the city's history and the council's recent research had shown that the industry had been growing steadily over the last 20 years;
- (e) the report had been funded from the European Fisheries Funding and developed by the consultants Arcadis;
- (f) the themes in the plan included -
 - the right facilities: regeneration of the Fish Market and the Fish Quay; this could form a key element of the city's National Marine Park plans and celebrated the rich maritime and fishing culture;
 - supporting people with a career in fishing: the average age of a skipper was 54 and a crew member 38; the plan put forward ideas to encourage more women, former military personnel and school leavers into the industry, as well as improving training;
 - sustainability: Plymouth could be a test facility for greener buildings and cleaner propulsion systems for the fleet;
 - policy support and lobbying: lobbying to ensure the best deal for Plymouth fisheries, in the trade negotiations with the EU, to ensure the mixed fleet grew and prospered, as well as lobbying to be an administrative capital of fishing in the UK;
 - the right business support for growth: raising finance to support growth could be an issue, help could be in the form of a new legal body or fishing co-op to help with easier access to finance.

The following responses were provided to questions raised by Members –

- (g) the peak in Plymouth Trawler Agent's turnover in 2016, had been as a result of a significant amount of cuttlefish being sold (which were a high value product); this had not been replicated in later years due to the movement of the cuttlefish;
- (h) in order to draft the strategy, the council needed to identify what the sector required today and in the future; this would enable the council to discuss issues such as wash facilities for boats with Sutton Harbour Holdings (the Company was part of the stakeholder group and had publically stated its commitment to this sector);
- (i) there was capacity for more growth within this sector; it was the council's desire to build on the current infrastructure, whilst also looking at the physical infrastructure to ascertain where larger trawlers could land their catches;

- (j) some fish quota modelling had been undertaken; any additions to the fleet would obviously increase employment and turnover;
- (k) a Fishing Industry Development Manager (Sean McSeveney) had been appointed, as a result of the recommendations arising from the Fishing and Fisheries Select Committee Review which had been held in 2018 (he had been in post for over 12 months); the role was vital in ensuring that both the council and the sector were ready for opportunities that arose from the Brexit negotiations;
- (l) the council would continue to support and expand the Seafood Festival which would help to connect the public to where its food came from;
- (m) Plymouth had a unique opportunity to use the National Marine Park, to bring the city to the forefront in recreational sea angling; holding fishing competition would also increase tourist revenue, as well as promoting the fishing the area had to offer.

The Committee noted the content for the Plan for Sustainable Fishing and the launch of the consultation.

54. **Vibrant Culture in Plymouth**

Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council), David Draffan (Service Director for Economic Development), Hannah Harris (Chief Executive Plymouth Culture), Nicola Moyle (Head of Heritage Arts and Film), Chloe Hughes (Engagement Programme Manager – The Box) and Amanda Lee (Marketing Manager) presented the vibrant culture in Plymouth report which highlighted the following key areas -

- (a) the council had been investing in culture in the city for many years which had resulted in massive growth in this sector; the Box was due to open this year and had seen the £40m project leading the way in contemporary visual art;
- (b) the music sector had suffered from limited investment which had made the grass roots music venues particularly vulnerable; the loss of music spaces within the city included The White Rabbit, Voodoo Lounge and Admiral Stopford Arms;
- (c) despite only operating on average at 53%, the grass roots music venues -
 - programmed 2829 live music events each year;
 - achieved attendance of 294,216 people at events, in the last 12 months;
 - featured 8770 performances;
 - provided opportunities for 31,117 musicians;
 - boosted the cultural economy by over £4m;

- contributed nearly £7m to the wider night-time economy;
- (d) the report's recommendations/action plan would be discussed at a meeting scheduled with the music sector in March 2020;
- (e) the search for new music venues with a capacity of 500 and 1500 would commence and the council would work in partnership with the local music industry and nationally to create opportunities and secure these venues;
- (f) this work supported the emerging visitor plan in creating an après sea experience and thriving night-time economy;
- (g) music would be incorporated within the Culture Strategy refresh with the full engagement of local sector.

The following responses were provided to questions raised by Members –

- (h) whilst there were buildings within the city that could be used as music venues, it was essential to understand the obstacles preventing this from happening; it was also important to stress that the city already had a vibrant music culture;
- (i) funding streams were available for live grass root music venues through grants of up to £40,000 (this could be used for marketing and promotion); the council was providing support to venue owners in order for them to be able to bid for this funding;
- (j) work was being undertaken to review -
 - all council owned properties with a view to re-purposing them for use as a venue;
 - all council owned land, in order to bring forward sites for use;
 - vacant and derelict sites that were coming forward for development which could potentially be re-purposed;
- (k) the feedback from the music industry had been that it wanted a different type of relationship with the council; the industry wished the council to act in a facilitator role; the solution would not be for the council to build or operate venues.

The Committee noted the –

- (1) report and the demonstrable vibrancy of the cultural sector;
- (2) music report and endorsed the adoption of the associated action plan.

The Committee supported the adoption of the Agents of Change Principles and endorsed Plymouth Culture to refresh the culture strategy.

55. **Community Cohesion**

Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing and Co-operative Development), Matt Garrett (Service Director for Community Connections) and Kevin McKenzie (Policy and Intelligence Adviser) presented the community cohesion report which highlighted the following key areas –

- the impact of the UK leaving the European Union;
- hate crime;
- community cohesion;
- proportion of English speaking residents;
- Integrated Communities Green Paper;
- Plymouth City Survey;
- the impact of social housing on community cohesion;
- bringing communities together;
- Welcoming City;
- equality objectives.

Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing and Co-operative Development) advised that the most recently published (June 2019) performance and analysis department report, produced by the Devon and Cornwall Police which recorded hate crime in 2018/19, had shown an 18% increase in the Plymouth force area; across the whole of the force area an 11% increase had been recorded.

A response was provided to a question raised by Members that due to resourcing issues, the performance and analysis report, produced by the Devon and Cornwall Police, did not provide a detailed breakdown of the statistics (within the Plymouth boundary), either by ward or neighbourhood which resulted in difficulties in being able to interrogate this information.

56. **Work Programme**

The Committee noted its work programme.

The Committee agreed that the following items be included on its work programme for the 8 July meeting -

- (1) iMayflower Project;
- (2) review of actions from the Climate Emergency Action Plan and the Corporate Reduction Action Plan 2019/2024;
- (3) transport options/network.