

Cabinet

Tuesday 8 December 2020

PRESENT:

Councillor Evans OBE, in the Chair.

Councillor Peter Smith, Vice Chair.

Councillors Mark Coker, Sue Dann, Sally Haydon, Jemima Laing, Mark Lowry, Chris Penberthy, Jon Taylor and Kate Taylor.

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 5.20 pm.

Also present: Kim Brown (Service Director for HR and OD), Laura Hill (Policy and Intelligence Adviser), Jessica (Young Carer), Amanda Lumley (Executive Director Destination Plymouth); Kevin McKenzie (Policy and Intelligence Adviser), Giles Perritt (Assistant Chief Executive), Helen Prendergast (Democratic Adviser), Kerry Powell-Tuckett (Youth Worker) and Darren Winter (Chair of Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change OSC).

Note: The full discussion can be viewed on the webcast of the City Council meeting at www.plymouth.gov.uk. At a future meeting, the Council 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.

64. **Declarations of Interest**

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

65. **Minutes**

Cabinet agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2020 are confirmed as a correct record.

66. **Questions from the Public**

The following question was submitted by Mr Andrew Hill which was answered by Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing and Co-operative Development).
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Question: During 2020 how many travellers have signed Code of Conduct Agreements and how many £20/other payments have been received from travellers for supplying welfare/other facilities. If no/negligible payments/agreements have been received why has the new policy you heralded in January 2019 not achieved its aims?
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Answer: During 2020 all Travelling families staying within Plymouth – either as Unauthorised Encampments or as part of the Temporary Site available as part of the national Covid response have had discussions with Officers about acceptable standards of behaviour and have verbally agreed these.

In terms of payments, the Council implemented a Temporary Site during May – August 2020 as part of our emergency response to the Covid crisis in line with Government Guidance. No charge was made for staying on this site. Due to the current legal framework Plymouth City Council are unable to charge for Unauthorised Encampments.

As with any policy, this is planned delivery and requires a number of preliminary actions to enable this. Work on delivering the policy has been on going throughout the year despite COVID.

The following question was submitted by Mr James Knight which was answered by Councillor Mark Coker (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure).

Question: The Antony Gormley statue has been installed for several months now on the seafront. The access to view the statue for wheelchair users is via the road towards the Waterfront pub. These gates are often locked. Why wasn't disabled wheelchair access considered in the citing of this statue to allow full access that is afforded to able-bodied persons?

Answer: Access to the pier, including for wheelchair users, is via the road in front of the Waterfront public house. The planning application for the statue and its accompanying Design and Access statement demonstrated that this access to the statue would be retained, and improved by surface improvements. It also explained that the site on the pier had been selected to maximise the number of people who would be able to visit the statue. The determination of the planning application also had due regard to Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty. The assessment of the planning application concluded that the positioning of the statue would not cause discrimination on the grounds of disability access.

It appears that the Waterfront publican has closed the gates at the head of this access route, and as a result, access has been denied to the statue. These gates should not be locked to deny such access. Accordingly, the St Austell Brewery (and their licensee) have been reminded of their obligation to keep the gates open under the terms of their lease.

The following question was submitted by Mr Richard Worrall to Councillor Mark Coker (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure).

Question: Plymouth was awarded £51.2m from the Transforming Cities Fund, £35m of which was to fund a bridge linking Plymouth Railway Station to Central Park. Now, plans for the bridge have been shelved in favour of other projects. How was it determined that this award be spent contrary to intended purposes?

Answer: In November 2019, Plymouth City Council submitted its Transforming Cities Fund 2 bid, seeking £116m for 20 schemes that formed the proposed “core package” of sustainable transport initiatives. In March 2020, the Government announced the City Council’s award of £51m.

The Central Park Bridge scheme represented 30% of the original £116 Million bid, and would have represented 70% of the final £51m that had been awarded.

The Department of Transport worked with Plymouth City Council to finalise the package of schemes through detailed dialogue, which continued through to June 2020, when the final funding award and programme was confirmed. The final Transforming Cities Fund Programme agreed by the Department of Transport did not include the Central Park bridge. Given concerns associated with the complexities of delivering a bridge across the main railway line by March 2023, which had already been affected by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was agreed with the Department of Transport that a greater variety of other sustainable transport schemes and initiatives would bring greater benefits for Plymouth. The Transforming Cities Fund is therefore supporting 12 projects, more in accordance with the Transforming Cities Fund strategic objectives, that aim to help the city shift up a gear in tackling climate change and making sustainable transport more attractive and convenient.

Therefore, whilst at the moment, there is no funding available; the City Council will continue to consider how it can improve connectivity between Central Park and the city centre.

67. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

68. **Update from the Director of Public Health on Covid-19**

Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health) provided an update on Covid-19 which included –

- (a) Covid-19 cases continued to fall in Plymouth; the current level was 45 per 100,000 per population which compared very well to England (158) and the South West (78); cases continued to fall in Plymouth, whereas other areas of the country had seen an increase in the number of cases following lockdown; this demonstrated that the residents of Plymouth were still adhering to the guidance and thanked them for doing so; although the cases in Plymouth were low, the virus was still very prevalent;
- (b) Plymouth had moved into Tier 2 following the second lockdown and it was hoped that the Covid-19 cases would be kept at a flat level, as in Tier 1, it was considered that the cases would rise; the winter months would be difficult given that the virus spread more easily in enclosed spaces;
- (c) there was significant capacity for residents to access the PCSR Covid-19 testing across the city; the regional test centre located at the former Seaton Barracks site, the Guildhall and Marjons University (which was open to all residents and not just students); individuals were urged to get a test, if they developed any Covid-19 symptoms;
- (d) Plymouth would look at a measured response to the lateral flow device tests as per the national pilot schemes; the tests produced results in 20 minutes but these did not always give an accurate result;

however, they were useful as an extra level in minimising the risk; these tests were currently being rolled out across the country to particular groups, such as those working with more vulnerable people;

- (e) the Covid-19 vaccine was fantastic news and demonstrated that there was light at the end of the tunnel; the current vaccination required two doses, 21 days apart and a further week to build immunity; there were processes in place to commence vaccinations at Derriford Hospital and logistical planning for rolling this out to the wider community; there was a priority list for the vaccinations with the elderly, high risk, health care workers and care home workers being vaccinated first; this process would take a while to make a real difference, so all measures still needed to be followed hands, face, space, taking a test if showing any symptoms and self-isolating.

69. **Update from the Chief Executive on COVID-19 Reset/Response**

Tracey Lee, Chief Executive provided an update on Covid-19 reset/response which included the following –

- (a) took this opportunity to thank all staff, Members, partners, residents and businesses for working together during the second lockdown; this had once again demonstrated how well the city had pulled together during this challenging period;
- (b) the city was now out of the second lockdown and Council services had resumed to pre-lockdown levels; she extended her thanks to the employees who had managed the seem-less transition across the city;
- (c) the operational emergency planning arrangements continued with internal, strategic and tactical command structures in place which worked across the city with the Council's partners and the Local Resilience Forum (Devon and Cornwall): a dedicated tactical commander was now in place, for a period of six months; it was considered that having such a resource would be helpful, given the level and complexity of the work being undertaken;
- (d) the Council's objectives remained the same, as outlined last month -
 - preserve life and limit harm to the people of Plymouth;
 - maintain public services in line with the local outbreak management plan, taking into account Government guidance and minimising risk to staff, customers and citizens;
 - to provide visible and proactive community leadership;
 - promote the economic and social recovery of the city;

- (e) whilst continuing to provide a response to the pandemic across the city with the Council's partners, work was being undertaken on the re-set plans; this the minimisation of inequalities for individuals and communities, the way we work as a Council (with 80% of staff working at home) and other change; this work would assist the Council in building on what had worked well during the pandemic and also pulling together best practice.

70. **Leader's Announcements**

Councillor Evans OBE (Leader) highlighted the following in his announcements –

- (a) the Council was administering two emergency grant schemes for the National Lockdown which included -
 - the Local Restrictions Support Grant (for businesses required by the Government to close) -
 - 1741 applications had been made with 1225 grants being approved,
 - 283 had been rejected but directed to apply for the Additional Restrictions Grant;
 - overall the Council had paid out £1,744,288 to 1143 applicants, with a further £38,014 being paid today to 25 applicants;
 - a total of 290 applications had been made to the Additional Restrictions Grant (a discretionary grant scheme to support businesses impacted by the lockdown but not required to close);
- (b) for both these grants, the Council's help line had taken and answered 593 calls; businesses that had yet to apply for either the Local Restrictions Support Grant or Additional Restrictions Grant were urged to do so;
- (c) an announcement would be made this week regarding the arrangements for the Tier Two Grants, following the receipt of Government guidance; this process would be automated, as much as possible and payment to eligible businesses would be made every two weeks;
- (d) the Heart of the South West Enterprise Partnership had announced that it would be allocating money from the Government's 'Getting Building Fund' -
 - Plymouth would receive almost £7m to help to get some of the new construction projects off the ground in 2021; the investment in the city's major infrastructure projects would help support economic growth across the city; the Council was expecting this investment would create and safeguard more than 80 jobs;

- the investment would make a significant contribution to the city's recovery from the pandemic; the Council would receive an additional £4.17m for phase two of the Brunel Plaza/train station concourse development; the Council had ambitious plans to transform the station which had not seen significant investment in decades by creating a thriving new plaza with office and retail spaces;
 - approximately £2m would be spent on two of the city's business parks; low carbon, flexible workspaces would be created at Plymouth International, while a former computer complex at the City Business Park in Stoke would be demolished and groundworks undertaken to develop a viable site for future construction;
 - £300k would be spent on helping make around 630 homes across the city more energy efficient; £350k to refurbish the facilities used by welding students and apprentices at City College Plymouth; there was currently high demand for skilled welders across the South West and this funding would enable the college to double the number of welding bays and specialist trainers; in addition, the Council had made an application to the LEP for funding which would help to develop the National Marine Park;
- (e) Councillor Kate Taylor had been nominated and shortlisted for the LGiU Councillor Awards in the Covid-19 Hero category -
- this was a new category for this year to celebrate those who played a central role in helping residents during a period of such extreme hardship, who overcame barriers posed by social distancing, self-isolation and disruption to their own lives to make sure others were able to cope;
 - Councillor Taylor had been nominated as she played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Caring for Plymouth Support Hub which was the Council's response to the Government's shielding programme and an alliance between the Council, Livewell Southwest and 12 voluntary and community sector organisations;
 - the service ensured that shielded residents were provided with emotional support, shopping, medicine collection, support with paying bills and accessing money; almost uniquely and because of Councillor Taylor's leadership the Care for Plymouth Support Hub supported other vulnerable older and disabled people who were affected by Covid-19, not just the ones identified in the Government's cohort.

The Leader took this opportunity to thank all Council staff who had worked incredibly tirelessly over the past nine months and also thanked his Cabinet who had been working just as hard.

71. **Cabinet Member Updates**

Councillor Kate Taylor (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) made the following announcements –

- as of today, there were 20 Covid outbreak settings across the city which included 16 in care homes, two in support living, one in extra care and one in day care services; these outbreaks were being managed incredibly well and all staff were thanked for their continued hard work;
- 16 care homes across the city had received, last week, the lateral flow device kits which would be used to support visitor testing; this provided a further layer of support, to assist the management of the virus; however, this was not a stand-alone measure but one that needed to be used alongside PPE, social distancing and infection control measures in place; it was important to recognise that whilst this was a positive step forward it did not come without risk;
- five identified care homes, across the city had been selected for the first tranche of staff vaccinations which would commence today; the Council was working closely with the University Hospital at Derriford and care home providers to provide logistical support;
- whilst the vaccination was hugely reassuring, residents were urged to continue with the measures in place hands, face space;
- congratulations were extended to the Rob Witton and the Community Clinic at the Plymouth Peninsula Dental School, who were the regional winners of the NHS Parliamentary Awards for the Health Equalities Award category; they had been nominated for this award by Luke Pollard MP; the Community Clinic had been launched to help those people experiencing homelessness that had higher dental needs but were less likely to seek treatment; through this innovative work numerous people had been helped who would otherwise have faced barriers in accessing dental care.

Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet for Housing and Co-operative Development) made the following announcements -

- Sir John Hawkins Square -
 - in response to ongoing calls to change the name of the Sir John Hawkins Square which commemorated the Elizabethan seafarer closely associated with the slave trade, the Council undertook a renaming process, in order to commemorate Jack Leslie, the Argyle footballer, who was the only professional black player in England when he played for the club between 1921 and 1934;

- in line with the Council's policy and national legislation, a member of the public appealed this decision; on Friday District Judge Matson ruled that that the Council's policy met legislative requirements, was properly applied, followed democratic process and that the Council had not been racist in taking this decision;
- public consultation and a pre-application process had commenced for the development of the old Morley Youth centre site at Broadland Gardens; this would be an open market project; the Council wished to set the standard for what new homes should look like and instil a culture among the industry that high standard, well designed, viable sustainable and low carbon homes were the new normal for Plymouth;
- the 24 hectare site to the east of Stoggy Lane and south of West Park Hill in Plympton had been earmarked for housing development in the Joint Local Plan but no formal plans were yet in place; this area was of archaeological interest and a geophysical survey had located a settlement enclosure; a more detailed investigation had been commissioned to evaluate any below-ground archaeological deposits;
- Plymouth Climate Challenge -
 - seven projects had been shortlisted for the Plymouth Climate Challenge, all of which had surpassed their fundraising goals and in one case their stretch target; together they had raised £163,032 from 516 donors; the Council had provided match funding through the City Challenge Fund, with five projects being entitled to a Climate Emergency Bonus; each of the projects also received a cash prize from the Engaged Cities Award;
 - Collins Park Trust, the Plymouth Nappy Library, Avfall and Wild Possibilities had been shortlisted and had raised the funding they needed to make their projects happen;
 - the three finalists were all inspiring and each presented really ambitious and amazing projects; they raised £145,288; due to the work of Pollenize there would be new wildflowers in the city which would encourage more bees;
 - Plymouth would be centre stage at COP26 in Glasgow next year with the Moths to Flame project due to the funding that PEC had raised;
 - the winners were using technology to research Plymouth Sound and were using the findings to inform understanding of the city's history; this had found a substantial amount of discarded rubbish which the project would support in clearing; the project called 1000 Tyres (named after the number of tyres that had been mapped) would be removed and disposed of properly;

- each of these projects had citywide importance, two had national significance and one would have a global reach.

Councillor Sue Dan (Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene) made the following announcements –

- the City Challenge Fund had included some fantastic projects which would impact the whole of the city; when the Council had pledged to become carbon neutral by 2030, it had aspired that the plan would contain actions and not just words and these innovative projects had demonstrated this aspiration;
- Plymouth had signed up to UK100 Cities Network which would be launched on Thursday 10 December 2020; by signing up to this initiative Plymouth would be playing its part in the effort to avoid the worst impacts of climate change;
- the Council had also signed up to the Race to Zero Campaign which was a global initiative that would lobby Governments and share best practice; Plymouth's aspirations would be seen both nationally and globally;
- took the opportunity to thank all the people that had taken part in the City Challenge Fund, as all entries were worthy projects and would help to engage people across the city and change behaviours towards climate change.

Councillor Sally Hadyon (Cabinet Member for Customer Focus and Community Safety) made the following announcements –

- (a) registrations were operating as they had done throughout the pandemic; in line with guidance, the Council were able to commence weddings again from this week (with a limited number of guests) and had many weddings booked in over the Christmas period;
- (b) local track tracing went live last week; this was supported by the massive flexibility and commitment across the team, especially the contact centre and library staff;
- (c) bereavement services -
 - work on the brand new crematorium had started; in November 2020, Kier were chosen as the Council's preferred construction contractor following a competitive tendering process;
 - an archaeological survey had been completed and other work was underway on the site to pave the way for the start of the build;

- there had been a huge amount of work that had been undertaken between the bereavement service management team and the project teams which included Keir, landscapers and the design team to ensure that all operational needs were met.

Councillor Jon Taylor (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Transformation) made the following announcements –

- took the opportunity to welcome Ming Zhang, the new Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills; he wished to put on record his and the Cabinet's thanks to Judith Harwood, the former Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills, for her commitment and hard work over her many years of service which had left the service in a strong position;
- the Government's recent announcement on exams and assessments had provided some clarification relating to GCSE and A-level students sitting exams in 2021; the measures included more generous grading, advance notice of some topics, exam aides (such as formula sheets) and additional papers; students would also be offered a 'second chance' to sit papers, if they missed any through illness, or self-isolation and in extreme cases where a student had legitimate reasons to miss all exams, a teacher informed assessment could be used;
- there had been some changes to primary school assessments; the changes to key stage one included the removal of tests for stats, reading, maths, grammar, punctuation and spelling and the teacher assessment for science; teacher assessments for reading, writing and maths would continue; there were some changes to key stage 2 but most tests and assessments would remain in place; there had also been some changes to the early years testing; the primary performance data would not be published, as it would be difficult to make comparisons to previous years;
- the Government's announcement had been welcomed by head teachers, although there were concerns that the details behind this announcement would not be made available until January 2021 which was getting close to the commencement of the exam period and would also add to the worry and anxiety of young people;
- there had been a lack of solution regarding the loss of learning variances across both the region and schools; some students had been in a better position to access devices and the internet, whilst this had significantly impacted some young people in the city;
- all head teachers had been invited to advise the Council if they had any concerns, so it could lobby Government and also reassure young people impacted by this situation;

- there were four assistance schemes for the most vulnerable children and families in Plymouth that would shortly come on-line or where they already existed would be enhanced; the first part was the Winter Grant Scheme (WGS); this funding would be ring-fenced, with at least 80% earmarked to support with food and bills and would cover the period 18 December 2020 to 31 March 2021; local authorities would receive 50% funding at the beginning of December 2020, with a further 25% being released on receipt of Management Information returns in February 2021 and a further 25% in April 2021;
- the Council would also link up WGS with various initiatives in the city that were supporting the residents who needed help most this winter; these included The Box food parcels providing ingredients for cooking a meal and presents for the children (volunteers would be recruited for delivering these); there were also a plethora of charities and organisations across the city who had plans in place to deliver food this Christmas;
- Plymouth City Council had funded Food Plymouth and 17 other food aid charities, so far, with the intention that food aid in the city would be co-ordinated going forward; the Council would be looking to invest in the development of food co-ops, as a way to combat food poverty more sustainably;
- the WGS and The Box were providing very different types of support and the Council would ensure that these schemes were targeted to the people who could most benefit; assistance with fuel and bills, as part of WGS, would be submitted to PEC direct; PEC would support utility vouchers and direct payments, under their existing arrangements;
- the WGS was not designed to replicate Free School Meals (FSM) in its entirety but this was a key factor; WGS was wider than children with FSM entitlement; not all families who qualified for FSM would need this support; the Council would be using the FSM register, together with other registers to capture and target the most vulnerable families and children; it was clear that this support would need to cover children at risk of going hungry but also support other vulnerable groups;
- the Council's priority was that funds were delivered to the right cohort in time for the Christmas break commencing on 18 December 2020; after due consideration, the Council would be providing eligible families a voucher to the value of £30 to provide support with food; Blackhawk was the voucher provider for this scheme who would be working with schools to distribute the vouchers.

72. **Brexit State of Readiness Report**

Councillor Darren Winter (Chair of the Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee) presented the comprehensive report on the economic impact and business preparedness and the Cabinet's response to the committee's recommendations. Giles Perritt (Assistant Chief Executive) and Kevin McKenzie (Policy and Intelligence Adviser) were also present for this item.

The report outlined the work completed by the committee in identifying the economic impact of Brexit to ensure that research was undertaken and made available to the public, as set out in the Council's Pledge 11 ('not enough work has been done on the economic impact of Brexit, both positive and negative, on the City Council and Plymouth in general. We will make sure that research is undertaken and is made available to the public'). To also draw the attention of Cabinet to the current preparedness of the city's business sector for the end of the Brexit transition period.

Councillor Darren Winter (Chair of the Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee) took the opportunity to thank Giles Perritt (Assistance Chief Executive), Kevin McKenzie (Policy and Intelligence Adviser) and the team for their work for the committee, the committee Members and also Councillor Morris (former Chair of the Scrutiny Committee) for the committee's robust framework.

The key areas highlighted included –

- (a) trade negotiations were ongoing, if no agreement was reached the UK would revert to trading under World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules when the transition period ended on 31 December 2020; the UK had negotiated 25 trade agreements and continued to pursue trade agreements with another 13 countries; where no agreements were reached trade would take place on WTO terms;
- (b) the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) report for November 2020 suggested trading on WTO terms would mean higher unemployment for longer and a deeper recession;
- (c) programmes funded by European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) under the 2014-2020 funding cycle which were worth £5.3bn to the UK had been guaranteed by the Treasury;
- (d) the EU Withdrawal Act (2017) repealed the European Communities Act 1972 and converted the body of existing EU law into domestic law; the UK regulatory framework would gradually diverge from EU law covering the environment, product safety and labour standards;
- (e) free movement would end in January 2021, a points-based immigration system would be introduced and employers would need to register to sponsor EU citizens; applicants must have sponsored job offer, speak English and earn the relevant salary threshold of either £25,600 (or the going rate);

Plymouth had a relatively low wage economy and some of the industrial sectors were dependent on migrant labour; the Government had declined recommendations from the Migration Advisory Committee to include care workers and brick layers on the Shortage Occupation List;

- (f) Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) supported businesses were incredibly important to the city, as these companies were some of the city's largest employers, employing approximately 7,900 people; FDI had reached a high point in the financial year 2019-20, with 12 new projects but the value of the investment in projects had been lower than in previous years approximately £94m;
- (g) Plymouth was the only operational roll on roll off ferry terminal in the South West region and with no Border Control Post (BCP) the continental trade routes would be at risk; the Associated British Ports (ABP) had submitted a bid covering all work being carried out within the port which was eligible for funding including a BCP.

The Cabinet noted –

- (1) the report of the Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the economic impact and business preparedness;
- (2) the additional evidence presented to the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 2 December 2020 relating to business preparedness.

The Cabinet thanked –

- (3) the Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee for its work over the last two years to undertake research into the economic impacts of Brexit;
- (4) Sarah Holmes, Legal Director of Solicitors, Womble Bond Dickinson for her contribution to preparing the city for the end of the Brexit transition period.

The Cabinet agreed –

- (5) to sign off Pledge 11 as completed at the January 2021 meeting of the Cabinet, after a pledge on a page had been prepared.

The Cabinet asks the Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee to –

- (6) review its current terms of reference which are set out in the Council's Constitution, in light of the end of the Brexit transition period;
- (7) make recommendations to Cabinet and Council about how it could be amended to better reflect organisational and city wide need.

The Leader advised that the Cabinet would report back to the Scrutiny Committee in January 2021 regarding the committee's recommendation to change the committee's terms of reference, in light of the end of the Brexit transition period.

73. **Visitor Economy**

Amanda Lumley (Executive Director Destination Plymouth) provided an update on the visitor economy report.

The report outlined the significant impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the tourism and hospitality (visitor economy) sector over the past 10 months. The growth of tourism and the visitor economy had been a great success story for the city with over 25% growth in the last eight years. From just under four million visitors to 5.4 million in 2018 spending over £337m annually and supporting nearly 8000 jobs, over 7% of the city's employment.

Visitor numbers for 2018 were very positive having risen 5% from 5.1 million to 5.4 million with spend increasing from £332m to £337m a 2% increase. This reflected very strong growth in the day visitor market (6%) however, overseas and UK staying visitor numbers were static and reflected the lack of growth in the city's serviced accommodation offer. Within the region, Plymouth had outperformed every other destination in Devon.

On 10 March 2020, Destination Plymouth brought a report to Cabinet together with a new 'refreshed' visitor plan and vision for the sector from 2020 to 2030. The new plan would enable Plymouth's residents to benefit from the visitor economy, supporting quality job retention and creation, whilst also enabling Plymothians to take full advantage of the city's rich history, heritage and unique environment, by promoting opportunities for education, health and wellbeing and pride.

On 23 March 2020, the country was forced to shut down for 12 weeks and the world completely changed overnight. The visitor economy had been one of the hardest hit sectors and had effectively gone into economic shock losing in excess of 50% of annual visitor spend in the city.

The Leader advised that he had received a response from Nigel Huddleston MP the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Sport, Tourism and Heritage, to a letter he had written in August 2020, in which the Under Secretary confirmed that he had held meetings with Amanda Lumley and sought to continue to be appraised of the situation.

The Leader requested that Amanda Lumley (Executive Director Destination Plymouth) provide a visitor economy update to Cabinet in the spring, as data from post-lockdown and Christmas would be available.

The Cabinet agreed –

- (1) to recognise the current difficulties facing the sector and note the contents of the report;
- (2) acknowledge the work that Destination Plymouth was doing working closely in partnership with the Council and the wider city stakeholders to support the sector and the visitor plan to 2030;

- (3) support key sector 'asks' to Government as detailed in the report.

74. **Equality and Diversity Review and Action Plan 2020 - 2021**

Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet for Housing and Co-operative Development) presented the equality and diversity review and action plan 2020-21. Kim Brown (Service Director for HR and OD) and Laura Hill (Policy and Intelligence Adviser) were also present for this item.

Between September and November 2020, the Council undertook a review of the organisational practices on equality and diversity. This report provided Cabinet with a summary of the findings from this equality review.

The report sets out the context for this work and the methodology used within the review which included a mix of workshops, surveys and one-to-one interviews with internal and external stakeholders, including employees, Members and partners.

The report also explored key themes that were identified through this review which included leadership and organisational commitment, organisational culture, workforce development, community engagement and the way services were delivered.

The Cabinet agreed to endorse the –

- (1) new draft equality and diversity action plan 2020-21;
- (2) proposal to develop a corporate equality and diversity group.

75. **Corporate Plan Quarter Two Performance Report (Inc Covid-19 Update)**

Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) presented the Corporate Plan quarter two performance report (including Covid-19 update).

The Corporate Plan performance report detailed how the Council was performing against its priority performance indicators that were agreed at the inception of the Plan. It provided an analysis of performance, as at the end of September 2020, against the Council's key performance indicators (KPIs) which provided a detailed performance update against the Corporate Plan.

The report formed part of the Council's performance framework and was a key part of the Council's aim to achieve a 'golden thread' from the Corporate Plan and its KPIs and delivery plans, through to service and team level business plans and ultimately to individual objectives.

Performance indicators for the theme 'A Growing City' were showing a positive performance and direction of travel in a number of areas. In particular, the number of gross additional homes built continued to achieve its target and the number of jobs facilitated by the Council, inward investment, businesses supported and young people in education and training all increased.

Within the 'Caring Council' theme, 504 households had been prevented from becoming homeless between April and September 2020 which formed a part of the considerable response to the threat of increased homelessness during the Covid-19 pandemic. In quarter two alone, more than 242 individuals 'were the alleged victim in a closed adult safeguarding enquiry' and of those who stated a desired outcome as part of the 'Making Safeguarding Personal' process more than 96% had their outcomes either fully or partially met. The Council also had green indicators for people successfully quitting smoking, excess weight in 10-11 year olds, children with multiple protection plans and repeat referrals to Children's Social Care.

Within the 'How We Will Deliver' theme, business rates and council tax collection performance was showing a slight decline which had been adversely affected by Covid-19. However the levels of sickness among council staff was showing continued improvement.

Within the 'A Broad Range of Homes' theme the Council had exceeded 5000 homes over five years with the delivery of 5500 homes.

The Cabinet noted the report.

76. **Risk and Opportunity Management Strategy 2020 - 2022**

Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) presented the Risk and Opportunity Management Strategy 2020 – 2022 report.

Risk and opportunity management was the culture, processes and structures that were directed towards effective management of potential opportunities and threats to an organisation achieving its objectives and delivering services to the community.

The strategy was intended to reaffirm and improve effective risk and opportunity management in Plymouth, comply with good practice and in doing so, effectively manage potential opportunities and threats to the Council achieving its objectives.

The strategy provided a comprehensive framework and process designed to support Members and officers, in ensuring that the Council was able to discharge its risk management responsibility fully.

Four out of the 15 strategic risks had a risk rating of 'red', these related to finance, demand on children's social care services, education attainment and economic performance. Two risks had been moved onto the Strategic Risk Register from the Operation Risk Register. These related to increased and sustained pressure on the adult social care budget due to the increase in numbers of people or increased complexity of need and risk of market failure.

The strategy was reviewed annually to ensure it remained current and fit for purpose and had been approved by the Audit and Governance Committee on 30 November 2020.

The Cabinet agreed the Risk and Opportunity Management Strategy 2020-22.

77. **Internal Audit Half Year Report 2020/21**

Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) presented the Internal Audit half year report 2020-21.

Due to the impact of Covid-19, it had been necessary for the Devon and Audit Partnership to review its approach in the delivery of the audit work in these rapidly changing and difficult times. It was recognised that tying up key staff, who continued to work under immense pressure responding to the challenges brought by the pandemic, would not be welcomed and the approach adopted had been to liaise with managers and where possible use remote access to information and to minimise client disruption.

The Devon and Audit Partnership continued to liaise closely with management to identify changes in processes and procedures and new areas of expenditure. The risk-based approach had resulted in changes to the audit plan, with new areas being included which in turn necessitated some areas being deferred to next year.

The Cabinet noted the Internal Audit half year report 2020-21.

78. **Counter Fraud Services Half Yearly Report**

Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) presented the Counter Fraud Services half yearly report.

The report summarised the work carried out during the first six months of 2020-21 by the Counter Fraud Services team, in order to counter fraudulent threats to the Council's budget and reputation. The Audit and Governance Committee had noted the report at its meeting held on 30 November 2020. This provided assurance that Plymouth City Council continued to support robust counter fraud measures in order to protect public money.

There had been 235 allegations of fraud, made so far this year which had resulted in 13 recommended prosecutions and 21 recommendations for cautions and other forms of sanctions. Together with various compliance visits a total savings of £377,146.22 had been realised. The Council had accumulated savings over the past five years in excess of £6m.

The Cabinet noted the Counter Fraud Service half yearly report.

79. **Youth Service Presentation** (Verbal Report)

Councillor Jemima Laing (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People) advised that this was an opportunity to look at how the Youth Service had operated during the two Covid-19 lockdowns and how impressed she had been with the way in which the service had adapted in these challenging times.

Kerry Powell-Tuckett (Youth Worker) advised that the service engaged with over 400 young people on a weekly basis in face to face sessions. With the closure of the youth centres across the city on 23 March 2020 due to the pandemic, the service had to adapt to the restrictions that had been imposed.

The following presentation which was narrated by Jessica (Young Carer), also present at the meeting, highlighted how the Council's Community Youth Work team had adapted to the restrictions of Covid-19 which included -

- 23 March 2020 all youth centres were closed;
- the potential impact of Covid-19 on young people;
- Community Youth Service Team initial response;
- young carers (working with 80 young people in a caring role aged 8 – 19 years);
- 'Outyouth' LGBT+ which provided support for ages 11 plus;
- 4MMF – for me and my friends aged 10 to 19 years on the Autistic spectrum;
- pop up team – targeted youth work across the city;
- redeployment;
- Plymouth Youth Service Summer Mix Up;
- feedback;
- Jess's story;
- moving forward.

The Leader firstly thanked Jessica for her powerful narration of the presentation which had provided a real insight into the valued work of the service which had been clearly demonstrated by the testimonials given by the young people. He also wished to thank Kelly Powell-Tuckett for the important work that she and the team undertook.