

Cabinet

Tuesday 18 August 2020

PRESENT:

Councillor Evans OBE, in the Chair.

Councillor P Smith, Vice Chair.

Councillors Haydon, Coker, Dann, Lowry, Penberthy, Laing and Kate Taylor.

Apologies for absence: Councillor Jon Taylor

Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health), Tracey Lee (Chief Executive), David Draffan (Service Director for Economic Development), Andy Ralphs (Strategic Director of Customer and Corporate Services), Alison Botham (Director of Children's Services), Craig McArdle (Strategic Director for People), Giles Perritt (Assistant Chief Executive), Kim Brown (Service Director for Human Resources, Laura Hill (Policy Advisor), Kevin McKenzie (Policy Advisor), Philip Symons (Category Manager), Andrew Loton (Head of Performance, Governance and Risk) and Jamie Sheldon (Senior Governance Advisor).

The meeting started at 14:00 and finished at 16:19

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.

13. **Declarations of Interest**

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

14. **Minutes**

Members agreed the minutes of 14 July 2020 as an accurate record of the meeting.

15. **Questions from the Public**

There were no questions received from members of the public.

16. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business from the Chair.

17. **Update from the Director of Public Health on COVID-19** (Verbal Report)

Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health) gave an update on COVID-19 –

- We were seeing a low number of cases in Plymouth – 7 confirmed cases in the last week;

- Had 2000 tests carried out in the last week, so very low number of tests were positive;
- COVID-19 disease is still out there. Over 1000 positive cases across the country, it has reduced but not gone away;
- NHS Test and Trace - Nationally around 70% positive cases are being followed up. In Plymouth our figures are better than that. We have a small number of cases which aren't engaging, so it is Important we identify those contacts;
- NHS Test and Trace system – once someone had tested and become positive, what we do to break the spread of infection is to ask them to self-isolate;
- Important that we think about how we are protecting each other as well as ourselves.

Cabinet noted the update

18. **Update from the Chief Executive on Reset** (Verbal Report)

Tracey Lee (Chief Executive) highlighted the following key points:

- Thanked the residents of Plymouth and the staff working for Plymouth City Council who were all continuing to rise to the challenges that COVID-19 presented;
- We were currently in the Governments contain phase and continued to prevent further outbreak in Plymouth through Test and Trace and the Local Outbreak Management Plan;
- Had been restarting services in a safe way following Government guidance and without causing risks to staff and residents.
- Thanked the Emergency Planners for their work during the pandemic;
- Had moved from the Response phase into the Reset/Recovery phase for Plymouth.

Craig McArdle (Strategic Director for People) provided an update on the Health and Care Reset Recovery Plan for Plymouth:

- Currently there were no current confirmed outbreaks in Plymouth care homes;
- Continued to deliver services during COVID-19 with 600 people living in supported living, over 1000 people in care homes and 1100 people receiving home care were being supported during this period;
- Currently in the process of safely re-opening day centres;
- Continued to develop the Caring for Plymouth Operating Model;

Alison Botham (Director of Children's Services) highlighted the following key points in Children's Services –

- Thanked all staff working in frontline services and all of our partners across Plymouth for their hard work during the pandemic;
- Currently had 337 Children subject to Child Protection plans and our seeing all of those children regularly;
- Currently 362 Children in Local Authority Care and recognised the way in which our Foster Carers and the placements that support those children had responded so well during this challenging time;
- Would return to ensuring all children and their families would receive face to face work in the usual way, however acknowledged the benefits of the virtual methods being used as some young people and families preferred this;
- would have 14 additional placements for children and young people in the City;
- had been working to support schools to be ready to open in September and ensuring the most vulnerable children were not further disadvantaged.

Andy Ralphs (Strategic Director of Customer and Corporate Services) highlighted the following key points –

- Expanded access to Central Library which included bookings for computer access and borrowing of books whilst remaining in line with Government guidance;
- Customers were now using the Select and Collect Service and had been a great success;
- Registration and Coroners services were now running again;
- 80% of Council buildings were now COVID secure risk assessments had been carried out to make sure services were safe;
- Staff continued to work from home and had recently implemented a desk booking system.

Cabinet noted the update.

19. **Leader's Announcements**

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

- The objective remains incredibly simple: to protect existing jobs and create as many new opportunities for our residents as we can during these difficult times.

- Would do this by supporting our key sectors, helping our young people and using the spending power of the Council to kick-start the local economy
- Whilst there was a lot to be optimistic about, with our local economy showing some resilience to Covid19 - it was important to understand that as a City we still have nearly 30% of our workforce on furlough and the government's cliff edge of October will present a major social and economic challenge for this City.
- We must continue to lobby government for the investment Plymouth deserves and needs - the best way I believe Plymouth City Council can support peoples livelihoods right now is by directly investing in the city -
 - 1) Create immediate job opportunities;
 - 2) Give our business community to confidence they need to retain their staff and invest in the future.
- launched Skills Launchpad supporting adults and young people with careers and skills advice. Our priorities are supporting young people with their future choices and helping adults facing redundancies. Feedback had been great and since we launched last week we have already supported nearly 900 people.
- had secured £10m from the LEP this month to drive forward a series of oven ready capital projects in Plymouth including: Brunel Plaza, development of new business parks, Plymouth Science Park, City College and zero carbon homes.
- Smart Sound – had also secured £1.8m to create 200 new jobs in the marine technology sector with a particular focus on autonomous vehicles. This will entail a new 5G network being installed in Plymouth Sound making us a leading player in marine autonomy globally.
- Building for Plymouth – A central pillar of Resurgam was a programme of building and regeneration projects that would create over 2500 construction jobs over the next 2 years.
- Piermasters House – a Restored pier and new barbican restaurant and bar. This project was enabled, funded and driven by our brilliant Head of Land and Property James Watt.
- Broadley Park – We topped out our latest direct development of industrial units 2 weeks ago which would create 25000ft2 of start-up units and 65 jobs.
- We are undertaking feasibility on our fourth and final stage at Langage
- Plymouth International and City Business Park – we are working up 2 further schemes working with the LEP.

- Oceansgate Phase 2 – We secured our first tenant for phase 2 which would be completed in December – ESL Space and Defence Solutions who are a specialist Marine defence contractor.
- We also have a further £50m of development projects in the pipeline that we hope to be able to announce over the next 2 months.
- have confirmed the opening date for the Box as Tuesday 29th September. I am delighted to confirm that we will be holding an extended 3 day residents preview on September 25th, 26th & 27th. Tickets will be available to book from September 10th with an early bird offer for Box members.
- announced that earlier this month we exchanged contracts on Brunel Plaza securing an £80m regeneration scheme for Plymouth and a new £40m health campus for Plymouth University. This scheme is so incredibly important to the future of our city both as a gateway to Plymouth and as a driver of economic growth and jobs.

20. **Cabinet Member Updates**

Councillor Pete Smith - Deputy Leader made announcements including:

- Mayflower 400, the anniversary commemorating the historic sailing of the Mayflower ship to America four hundred years ago, has announced new dates and will now relaunch from this August and run through to July 2020;
- Projects developed in collaboration with the Wampanoag included a Theatre Royal Plymouth production “This Land” which would be available to watch in April 2021 and two major commissions by The Box: “The Wampum Belt” and “Legends and Legacy”;
- On 16 September this year we will be marking the official anniversary with a 60 minute online programme presented by history expert Dan Snow which can be seen via the Mayflower 400 website;
- On 22 May 2021 there would be a mass street dance event on Plymouth Hoe, led by the award-winning Street Factory hip hop group in Plymouth;
- had to make the disappointing announcement earlier this month about temporarily closing the Life Centre until next April. This was a difficult decision but an absolutely essential one to allow the contractor, Balfour Beatty, to carry out repairs, at their own expense, which if not taken care of would put the long-term future of the building at risk;
- All options were explored to ensure that the work was done in the shortest possible timeframe;

- Would be taking this opportunity to make some additional improvements and enhancements so the building meets the needs of customers in the future, which includes measures to make it fully Covid-19 compliant;
- Over the last few weeks we introduced the new “Select and Collect” service at 4 libraries across the city. Last week alone over 1500 people visited these libraries and over 1600 books were issued.

Councillor Jemima Laing - Cabinet Member for Children and Young People made announcements including:

- Congratulated all the young people who had received exam results in Plymouth last week for their hard work;
- Extremely disappointed about the lack of clarity around Autumn exams and the constant U-turns from Government;
- Last week we launched the Skills Launchpad - this was a brand new service for young people and adults who were looking for their training or employment options if they have been affected by COVID.
- The Uniform Store Plymouth was supporting families who were struggling to buy school uniforms for their children – people could donate old uniforms to the Uniform Store to help;
- Urged residents of Plymouth to get in contact if they were thinking about becoming a Foster Carer;
- Beginning a campaign to alert families to changes there may be to bus travel at the start of the new term. Look out for announcements about additional buses or alternative arrangements. In the first instance we need to know from families or young people which buses they get to school so we can anticipate if there will be issues on certain routes;
- Short Break support was an essential service that was offered to families of disabled children. The service offers families support at different levels to enable them to continue to care for their disabled child within their family home.

Councillor Kate Taylor - Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care made announcements including:

- Care homes had started to re-open for visiting and had been provided Government Guidance which we were constantly monitoring to ensure our care homes remained safe;
- The Box on the Box initiative had been watched over 1200 times and they have been awarded a certificate of excellence for the project. Well done to everyone at the Box;

- Had trialled providing mobile phones in partnership with Livewell SW to residents experiencing social isolation so they could have access to the support services they require.

Councillor Sue Dann - Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene made announcements including:

- Chelson Meadow Recycling Centre was now fully re-open;
- Garden Waste collection was starting on August 24 2020;
- Weston Mill Recycling Centre would be re-opened in September for weekends only.

Councillor Sally Haydon - Cabinet Member for Customer Focus and Community Safety made announcements including:

- Well done to the amazing staff in our contact centre who had made it to number one with customer satisfaction rates in June. Statistics showed a 99 per cent satisfaction rate with 389 responses from customers that contacted the council via GovMetric, which is a system used by all local authorities to measure customer satisfaction;
- Since lockdown staff had all been working from home which had been a major transition for them with a new way of working, but clearly they had all risen to the challenge.

21. **Completion of Pledge 69 (To Follow)**

Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) introduced the Completion of Pledge 69 item –

The administration continued with its four year programme to deliver against the 100 pledges, by March 22, for a better, greener and fairer Plymouth. Following the completion of the below pledge in July, the total number of pledges completed was 75 of the 100.

“Pledge 69: Having illuminated Charles Church, we will continue the investment in this important war memorial by restoring the plaques that tell the story of Charles Church”

Cabinet noted the completion of Pledge 69.

22. **Finance Update**

Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) presented the Covid-19 Financial Position Statement -

Updated Cabinet on the revenue position statement for 2020/21 and the implications for budget setting for 2021/22. Stated the importance of recognising that this exercise had been undertaken in difficult circumstances. The Councils budget for 2020/21 was approved by

Council only a matter of days before the country was placed into lockdown as a response to tackling the Covid 19 pandemic. The challenge for the Council in delivering services within the budget was difficult as the Council grappled with responding to the Pandemic.

To help MHCLG collate and understand the pressures facing local authorities, they have introduced a monthly reporting cycle. As at 31 July 2020, PCC had completed four monthly returns to MHCLG.

Cabinet Agreed to –

1. Note financial position for Plymouth City Council as set out in this report;
2. Work with Strategic and Service Directors to consider options to ensure we minimise any call on our reserves to balance the 2020/21 budget;
3. Continue to lobby central government departments to ensure the grant funding and income compensation schemes fully cover the additional costs and lost income incurred by the Council.

23. **Mainstreaming Equality and Diversity**

Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing and Co-operative Development) presented the Mainstreaming Equality and Diversity report.

Updated Cabinet on the request for a review of the Council's approach to equality and diversity and the statutory duties and actions taken to ensure they are met were described. The progress the Council had made in delivering actions and achieving outcomes set out in the Equality and Diversity Action Plan (2018-20), endorsed in July 2018, was reviewed. The response to recent challenges such as COVID-19 and the Black Lives Matter movement was also highlighted. The amended report would be published following the meeting

Cabinet agreed to:

1. Note the progress made by the Council towards the priorities set out in our Equality and Diversity Action Plan;
2. Endorse a more in-depth action learning review into equalities across the organisation which will aim to report to Cabinet in autumn. Terms of reference for the review are appended;
3. Provide equality and diversity leadership and challenge across the organisation by: -
 - Endorsing our updated Equality and Diversity Policy.
 - Endorsing our commitment working towards the 'excellence' level of the Equalities Framework for Local Government (EFLG).
 - Committing to undertake the relevant equality and diversity training
4. And agreed the report as amended

24. **Modern Slavery**

Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing and Co-operative Development) introduced the report.

Councillor Penberthy updated Cabinet on the ongoing Council actions to tackle modern slavery and report progress on the ten commitments set out to prevent modern slavery within the supply chains of Plymouth City Council and its family of companies. Councillor Penberthy also sought agreement for the additions to the published Modern Slavery Statement.

Cabinet agreed to –

1. approve the updated Modern Slavery Statement;
2. note the progress made on the ten commitments;
3. to add the Whistle Blowing Policy to the council's website to make it more freely available to suppliers and contractors.