

Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 10 March 2021

PRESENT:

Councillor Winter, in the Chair.

Councillor Drean, Vice Chair.

Councillors Allen, Mrs Bridgeman, Buchan, Sam Davey, Morris, Riley and Wheeler.

Apologies for absence: Councillor Stevens.

Also in attendance: Sophie Tucker (Senior Support and Research Assistant), Hannah Daw (Performance Officer), Councillor Coker (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure), Paul Barnard (Service Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure), Philip Heseltine (Head of Transport), Debbie Newcombe (Sustainable Transport Co-ordinator), Mike Watson (First Bus), Richard Stevens (Plymouth City Bus), Councillor Jon Taylor (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Transformation), Alison Botham (Director for Children's Services), Ming Zhang (Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills), David Draffen (Service Director for Economic Development), Tina Brinkworth (STEM Consultant), Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (Leader), Councillor Peter Smith (Deputy Leader), David Draffan (Service Director for Economic Development), Hannah Harris (Chief Executive of Plymouth Culture), Councillor Peter Smith (Deputy Leader), Patrick Knight (Economic, Partnerships and Regeneration Manager) and Diane Mansell (Waterfront Manager and Chief Executive of Plymouth Waterfront Partnership), Andrew Loton (Oversight and Governance Manager) and Amelia Boulter (Democratic Advisor).

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 5.22 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.

32. **Declarations of Interest**

The following declarations of interest were made in the accordance with the code of conduct.

Name	Minute	Reasons	Interest
Councillor Drean	Minute 37	Sits on Access Plymouth	Personal Interest
Councillor Buchan	Minute 39	Husband employed at Plymouth College of Arts	Personal Interest
Councillor Mrs Bridgman	Minute 36	Sits on the Plymouth Community Homes Board	Personal Interest.

33. **Minutes**

Agreed the minutes of the meetings held on:

- 4 November 2020 subject to page 4 and typo, should be broader and not boader.
- 2 December 2020 start and end times not included within the minutes.
- 13 January 2021
- 12 February 2021

34. **Chair's Urgent Business**

The Chair reported that the Climate Emergency Report had been circulated to the committee for noting. If members had any comments to feed back to Paul Barnard (Service Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure).

35. **Policy Brief**

Sophie Tucker (Senior Support and Research Assistant) provided the latest national picture in respect of policy announcements and legislation. The report highlighted the following key areas -

- Defra announced £23m disruption support scheme and seafood response fund;
- £20m SME support fund for trading with the EU;
- Immigration settlement scheme;
- Shortage occupation list has been updated for visa reforms;
- Global talent group extended;
- UK Infrastructure bank.

The Committee noted the Policy Brief update.

36. **Corporate Performance Monitoring Report 2020/21 - Quarter 2**

Hannah Daw (Performance Officer) presented the Corporate Performance Monitoring Report 2020/21. Key headlines included:

- Plan for Homes – 1,000 homes to be built every year currently at 952;
- The Box – on-line resources during lockdown restrictions for Elizabethan House;
- Young people in education and the development of the skills launch pad;
- Response to the covid pandemic.

Questions from Members related to:

- The cultural offer and whether there were figures expected when we return to normal capacity?

- Transport and the effect of the extreme weather conditions impacting on roads and pot holes and the reusing of plastic in road repairs and were we contemplating this initiative?
- That the Plan for Homes seemed to be on track and how to maintain this?

The Committee noted the Corporate Performance Monitoring Report 2020/21 and requested that a report on pot holes to be circulated to members.

37. **Public Transport Covid-19 Impact**

Councillor Coker (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure), Paul Barnard (Service Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure), Philip Heseltine (Head of Transport), Debbie Newcombe (Sustainable Transport Co-ordinator), Mike Watson and Richard Stevens were present for this item. The purpose of the report to brief the committee on the impact Covid-19 has had on Plymouth's public transport network, and what is required in terms of its recovery.

Councillor Coker (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure) reported that the industry was at a critical point following the lockdowns. Over the last 12 months they have received support from Government to help them to a breakeven point and were unsure how long this subsidiary would continue. There were questions around the viability of the service. It was crucial that the bus services survive. Community transport has been hard hit and these organisations have had no help at all over the 12 month period and revenue streams had dried up. They have supported the bus industry with the payment of concessionary rates over the past 12 months and would continue to do so.

Richard Stevens (Plymouth City Bus) further reported that when the pandemic hit the effects on the company was considerable. They did not underestimate the impact on the workforce and the measures in place to ensure buses were safe. Financially this had been devastating with passenger levels dropping to 15% and then saw a strong recovery in welcoming people back to using the bus and last lockdown were at 22%. To put this into perspective to break even they need 85% of passenger numbers.

Mike Watson (First Bus) echoed what Richard Stevens had said. They have been able to work in effective partnership with officers with their patronage was at 14.48%. They were in really turbulent time in terms of planning.

Questions from Members related to:

- What could we do to proactively promote green recovery to avoid the shift to using cars?
- Cleaning regime compared to standards to a food restaurant? Would this be made public to give the confidence to the public to use services?
- The ending of the support grant and that operators cannot be expected to continue running services. A recommendation to express great concern on lack of information on the future funding and the crisis it would bring if not resolved soon?

- Have companies given thought to new ticketing proposals?
- Marketing plan to the BBC/ITV to promote a positive marketing campaign to promote bus services.
- The numbers of people arriving and departing in the city and do we have some idea on how many were arriving to ensure that we have everything available to them?

The Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on public transport provision in Plymouth and the actions that have been taken to support local public transport operators and agreed:

1. That the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and infrastructure writes to the Secretary of State for Transport to express concern regarding the lack of clarity on the plans for future funding and support for the Bus industry.
2. That the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure works with local bus providers to support positive communications on a number of media channels, promoting the use of bus travel, the cleanliness and safety measures employed and seek to influence behaviours for travel within the city.
3. To be addressed in quarter 4 to check progress. Release of the national bus strategy which will form a huge part for coming out of lockdown for the country and needs to be published to ensure that our bus industry thrives.
4. That the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure writes to the Secretary of State for Transport to express concern regarding the lack of clarity on the plans for future funding and support for the Bus industry. In particular the expedited release of the Government Bus Strategy.

38. **Skills and Skill4Plymouth**

Councillor Jon Taylor (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Transformation), Alison Botham (Director for Children's Services), Ming Zhang (Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills), David Draffen (Service Director for Economic Development) and Tina Brinkworth (STEM Consultant) were present for this item. The purpose of the report was to provide an update to the Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislation Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Skills and Skills4Plymouth Transformation Programme.

Councillor Jon Taylor (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Transformation) reported that they were financially challenged over the next few years with high numbers of unemployment in the city, with young people leaving school and higher education when jobs would be more difficult to find.

Questions from Members related to:

- The wider financial situation around adult education and the implications for Plymouth?
- Were we looking to use the empty shops to support the tourist industry with more attractions for people to visit for Plymouth?

The Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislation Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the Skills and Skill4Plymouth.

39. **Culture Plan - A Place-Based Culture Strategy for Plymouth 2021-2030**

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (Leader), Councillor Peter Smith (Deputy Leader), David Draffan (Service Director for Economic Development) and Hannah Harris (Chief Executive of Plymouth Culture) were present for this item. The purpose of this report to present the 'Culture Plan - a place-based culture strategy for Plymouth 2021-2030' which would take over from 'The Vital Spark' strategy. This new strategy would run from 2021 to 2030.

Plymouth City Council commissioned arts development companies and audience agencies to work with Plymouth which explored data captured to understand the scale and impact of the Sector. Due to the impact of COVID and subsequent lockdown the strategy was paused to reflect on the appropriateness on developing a long term plan, whilst companies and individuals had been in crisis. The feedback however had been to accelerate progress, the positive of the first lockdown had been to allow the team to stop and reflect and plan this strategy thoroughly looking to the future.

Work had been completed to understand the value of the sector to Plymouth; £34 million spent in Plymouth from visitors; 74% of visitors had been attracted to Plymouth because of its history and heritage; £50 million had been invested in arts and culture in Plymouth in the last five years; £4 million in income has been generated from grass roots music venues; 95 opportunities had been created every week for young people by non-profit cultural organisations in Plymouth; 2,130 jobs had been supported by businesses and organisations in Plymouth; 1 million people go to events organised by creative and cultural organisations in Plymouth every year; 1,200 performance workshops and events had been hosted every year by non-profit cultural organisations in Plymouth; 31,117 musicians played at 2,829 events organised by grass root music venues which were attended by 294,216 people every year.

The consultation process had held 40 1:1 stakeholder interviews from the culture sector and beyond in order to have a sense of what Plymouth unique offer is, what the strategy would be and how Plymouth would position itself moving forward.

Thematics had been tested within focus group consultation workshops and the vision was refined subsequent to those workshops. A few individual groups were less represented and were engaged with through a number of partner organisations such as Marjons University, Beyond Face, Funky Llama, Plymouth and Devon Freelance Task Force and the Barbican Theatres ReBels young people group.

A survey to evaluate the impact of COVID had been undertaken to understand the impact and what Plymouth would be losing from the sector as well as evaluating what Plymouth would gain.

The vision for this strategy was to form Plymouth into a magnet city attracting artists, creatives and social activists. Our City's appeal was characterised by Plymouth's commitment to people and planet which had been evidenced by the cultural offer it reflects by including and valuing our diverse communities.

It's this vision's ambition to:

- (a) Use Plymouth's unique landscape to present culture in unusual spaces, to allow people to enjoy Plymouth's unique assets making use of the waterfront, green spaces and urban environment.
- (b) For culture to be for everyone every day and to be visible and accessible.
- (c) Build a co-creation model to progress the cultural offer and to engage audiences in a different way.
- (d) To provide future jobs and to make use of the physical assets already within the City.
- (e) Achieve equitable activity to build an inclusive sector and City.

There are five programmes of work:

- (1) Our city is our venue; to look at the City's infrastructure to ensure culture can happen, whether this is through installation of Wi-Fi, creating designated zones for culture and performance, creating spaces where there is light of electricity, having under cover spaces or opening up spaces.
- (2) To create a programme for a year of culture and activity and to make this visible and accessible.
- (3) To be an economic driver for jobs.
- (4) Creating community clusters where other services can't get to.
- (5) To be able to explain to people through data the impact that the sector has on the City.

Plymouth City Council has and continues to consult with stakeholders to receive feedback in order to understand what people liked about the strategy and how to get people involved. Out of this work an easy to read and audio document would be created to make the strategy more publicly accessible.

The Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the Culture Plan - a place-based culture strategy for Plymouth 2021-2030 which was approved at Cabinet on 9 March 2021.

40. **Waterfront Business Improvement District (BID) Renewal**

Councillor Peter Smith (Deputy Leader), Patrick Knight (Economic, Partnerships and Regeneration Manager) and Diane Mansell (Waterfront Manager and Chief Executive of Plymouth Waterfront Partnership) were present for this item. The report -

- Summarises the principles and themes of the draft Waterfront BID3 Business Plan 2022-2027;
- Sets out Plymouth City Council's support for the renewal of the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership (PWP) Business Improvement District (BID) for Plymouth's Waterfront;
- Defines the Council's financial and other support for PWP's Waterfront BID3 (2022-27) as well as a commitment to establish baseline agreements for the Council's existing services within the BID area.

Questions from Members related to:

- Traders with floral displays would this be extended?
- App that will be implemented – was it a walking app?
- Levy I additional to normal business rates?
- How are the small businesses advocated?
- Whether there were tensions between residents and businesses?

The Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed the Business Improvement District (BID) proposals. The BID including the Business Plan to be added to the work programme when available with a view to making a recommendation to the City Council regarding exercising its power of veto. This was approved at Cabinet on 9 March 21.

41. **Work Programme**

The Committee noted the work programme and agreed that the work programme to be agreed and formulated by the next committee.

42. **Tracking Decisions**

The Committee noted the progress made with regard to the tracking decisions.

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