

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

Wednesday 25 November 2009

PRESENT:

Councillor James, in the Chair.
Councillor Mrs Watkins, Vice Chair.
Councillors Coker, Fox, Purnell, Roberts, Thompson and Wildy.

Apologies: Councillor Viney was not present due to his declaration of interest.

The meeting started at 3.30 pm and finished at 4.30 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the committee 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.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

2. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

(a) RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PANELS FOR O & S MANAGEMENT BOARD, CABINET OR COUNCIL

The Management Board received the draft scrutiny report from the Joint Growth and Prosperity and Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group in respect of 'Monitoring of Plymouth CityBus Limited Shareholding Project'.

Members of the board who took part in the Task and Finish Group expressed conflicting opinions upon the accuracy of the report, specifically with regards to the second recommendation in which it was stated that 'the whole CityBus Shareholding process be scrutinized following its completion in order for lessons to be learned'.

Concerns were raised by some Members that the report provided little evidence that demonstrable oversight of the process had been achieved, as stated in the PID. It was stated by some that there had been insufficient scrutiny; examples provided by members included the fact that access was not provided to the Task and Finish Group to part 2 documentation, assurances as opposed to factual evidence had been provided by the responsible officer, no interviews had taken place with legal and commercial experts advising the Project Board, criteria were not specified detailing how legal safeguards were chosen and the officer responsible for the PID, the Project Manager, was also involved in the process.

It was noted that commercial sensitivity prevented access to a lot of information and as a result of that special attention was focused upon assurances as provided by the Project Manager.

Councillor Wildy put forward a formal proposal, which was seconded by Councillor Purnell, that recommendation 1 'to note the report and the progress made to date, with special attention to be focused upon assurances from the Project Board regarding financial, legal and commercial probity' should state 'based upon' other than 'focused upon'. It was also stated that recommendation 2 be accepted and read 'the whole CityBus Shareholding process be scrutinised following its completion in order for lessons to be learned if in the future there are other similar transactions in order to show transparency. This proposal was put to the vote and Councillors Coker, Purnell and Wildy voted in favour and Councillors Fox, James, Roberts, Thompson and Watkins voted against. The proposal was lost.

Councillor Roberts put forward a formal proposal, which was seconded by Councillor Fox, that the first recommendation only be accepted. This proposal was put to the vote and Councillors Fox, James, Roberts, Thompson and Watkins voted in favour and Councillors Coker, Purnell and Wildy voted against. This proposal was accepted.

Resolved that the Management Board accept the first recommendation, namely 'to note the report and the progress made to date, with special attention to be focused upon assurances from the project Board regarding financial, legal and commercial probity' and to reject the second recommendation.

3. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.