

Cabinet

Tuesday 14 December 2010

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs Pengelly, in the Chair.

Councillor Fry, Vice Chair.

Councillors Bowyer, Brookshaw, Jordan, Sam Leaves, Monahan, Mrs Watkins and Wigans.

Also in attendance: Barry Keel (Chief Executive), Adam Broome (Director for Corporate Support), Carole Burgoyne (Director for Community Services), Anthony Payne (Director for Development and Regeneration), Ian Gallin (Assistant Chief Executive), Claire Oatway (Head of Service - Performance and Quality) Malcolm Coe (Assistant Director for Finance, Assets and Efficiencies), Jayne Gorton (School Organisation and Pupil Access Manager), Tony Hopwood (Programmes Director) and David Northey (Head of Finance).

Apologies for absence: Councillors Michael Leaves, Bronwen Lacey (Director of Services for Children and Young People) and Mark Grimley (Assistant Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development).

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 3.25 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the Cabinet 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.

79. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with the code of conduct, Councillor Jordan declared a personal interest in minute 86, on the proposed transformation of Downham Special School and Woodlands Community School, as a member of the Tor Bridge Federation.

80. **MINUTES**

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting, held on 16 November 2010, are confirmed as a correct record.

81. **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions from the public submitted for this meeting.

82. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no Chair's urgent business.

83. **2011/12 INDICATIVE BUDGET (REVENUE AND CAPITAL) ALLOCATED TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

The Director for Corporate Support submitted a written report -

- (a) setting out the Council's indicative revenue and capital budget, building on income assumptions and their impact on the Council tax;
- (b) indicating that the draft budget brought together the elements of the Council's income and expenditure strategy, summarised by each department, together with its capital strategy. It also reviewed the impact on future revenue and capital plans for 2012/13 and 2013/14;
- (c) advising that, as a Council, preparations were being made for unprecedented reductions throughout the 2010/11 budget period, applying in-year budget reductions of £4m. Full clarification of the Council's settlement and the implications on grant allocations, were still awaited;
- (d) outlining a new approach to the development of this year's budget, by rolling forward the revenue reductions of £4m in 2010/11; revising the assumptions on inflation and growth; challenging down future years spending profiles; stopping some activity linked directly to withdrawn grants and setting new, targets linked to the four top level priorities (to deliver growth; raise aspirations; reduce inequality; and provide value for communities);
- (e) indicating that eleven budget delivery groups had been set up to review expenditure across the Council and target savings had been agreed and applied. These reductions had then been converted into clear three year departmental budgets;
- (f) appending the following documents -
 - departmental indicative budgets;
 - breakdown of revenue 'Invest to Save Reserve';
 - Local Government Act 2003, Section 25 -
Section 1: Analysis of Budget Robustness
Section 2: Adequacy of Reserves;
 - Capital Investment Programme 2010/11 to 2014/15;
 - directorate revenue budget delivery plans.

The Chair introduced the 2011/12 indicative budget advising that, over the next three years, the Council had to make significant efficiency savings from the overall capital and revenue budget. The aim was to protect front line services and delivery plans had been prepared to deliver efficiencies, working towards a significant transformation as it became lean and strategic, with a strong enabling focus. Work

was being undertaken to provide more customer services and better value for money at both council and partnership level.

The Council had also recommitted, with partners, to the vision to make Plymouth one of Europe's finest, most vibrant waterfront cities and developed four key priorities, shared with partners, to help drive that vision.

Councillor Bowyer (Cabinet Member for Finance, Property, People and Governance) outlined the report indicating that it was a measured response providing a solution to the national problem. He outlined the methodology which had been used to develop the budget. He indicated that –

- (g) to improve transparency and public confidence, all items of expenditure over £500 would be published monthly online, beginning from January 2011;
- (h) their policy was to minimise job losses but it was felt that 500 posts would be lost over the next three years to reduce workforce costs by approximately 14%. Negotiations would commence shortly with trades' unions on staff terms and conditions;
- (i) the documents were still in draft, for consultation and scrutiny in January 2011.

Councillor Sam Leaves (Cabinet Member for Performance and Transformation) indicated that the results of the on line budget consultation exercise would be fed into the budget scrutiny exercise on 12 and 17 January 2011 and thanked the public and staff for taking part. Staff at the Civic Centre and at the libraries were also thanked for assisting members of the public in completing 'YouChoose' at PC's in those locations.

It was likely that YouChoose would continue to be available into the new year to provide the public with further opportunities to comment on the budget setting.

Councillors Mrs Watkins, Monahan, Brookshaw, Fry, Jordan (Councillor Jordan also spoke on behalf of Councillor Michael Leaves), Sam Leaves, Wogens and Bowyer outlined the key challenges and the focus of efficiencies in their particular areas.

In response to questions, Cabinet Members were advised that –

- (j) the budget built on plans and strategies already in place to provide better value for money;
- (k) although the detail of the settlement was still being worked through, Cabinet were confident that over the 3 years the delivery plans were still appropriate and deliverable;
- (l) Cabinet Members and officers had been working all year on the delivery plans and only those items which could be delivered,

had been included to savings in year one;

- (m) to ensure that children were safeguarded whilst making budget reductions, a Commissioning and Finance Board had been set up and delivery plans had been put in place to look at new ways of preventing children from needing to come into care, where the risk could be managed differently. This would enable focus on the most vulnerable children;
- (n) a cross departmental programme board was in place to develop and oversee delivery plans for Adult Social Care, together with the introduction of personalised and preventative services;
- (o) there were no changes proposed during the coming year to the waste collection service;
- (p) the potential funding reductions were still being assessed, however the strategy for sport, leisure and culture continued to be in place, with the Life Centre as an important part of the programme;
- (q) with regard to police reforms and reduced funding for partners, community safety partnerships would continue and partners were still assessing the impact of grant reductions. The Leader congratulated the police on the policing arrangements at Plymouth Argyle on Saturday last;
- (r) investment in the web and telephone system would enable overtime, a 24/7 Council for people to access services. Customer services would be improved with increasing services being handled through one telephone number and one conversation.

The Chair thanked finance officers and the Corporate Management Team for putting the proposals together and achieving the earlier publication of the report.

The officers undertook to ensure that the detail in the delivery plans would be reviewed prior to publication of the papers for scrutiny.

Agreed that –

- (1) Leader is authorised to agree the draft Corporate Plan, for the purposes of consultation and scrutiny, in accordance with the budget and policy framework procedure rules;
- (2) the proposed revenue target budget requirement of £194.2m for 2011/12 and five year capital programme of £189.4m is recommended for consultation;

- (3) Cabinet consider findings from consultation, feedback from budget scrutiny and any material changes announced in the final settlement for Plymouth City Council in early February 2011 and recommend the final revenue budget for 2011/12 to Full Council on 28 February 2011.

84. **COUNCIL TAX BASE SETTING**

The Director for Corporate Support submitted a written report on the Council tax base for tax setting purposes, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended by Statutory Instrument 2003/3181.

Agreed that approval is given to the Council tax base for 2011/12 tax setting as 77,066 Band D equivalents, which is the tax base after allowing for an estimated collection rate of 98.5%.

85. **PAVILIONS FUTURE OPTIONS**

The Director for Community Services submitted a written report on the future options for the Pavilions.

The report indicated that -

- (a) the Pavilions was a strategic site which was identified in the Mackay Vision to link the city centre to Millbay;
- (b) approval was being sought to invite expressions of interest in the Pavilions site to establish whether there was any interest in the disposal of the site and, consequentially, the re-provision of ice and arena facilities in the city;
- (c) there had been previous work undertaken that established potential demand for an ice facility and an arena in the city;
- (d) the City Council also needed to remove the subsidy paid to the Pavilions to support capital borrowing for the Plymouth Life Centre.

The attention of Cabinet Members was also drawn to the confidential report referred to in minute 88 below.

Agreed that –

- (1) officers seek expressions of interest (via a soft market testing exercise advertised through the OJEU) in the purchase of the freehold of the Pavilions site based on the re-provision of an arena and ice facility on the site or elsewhere in the city. This exercise will result in a detailed understanding of whether there is any interest in the Pavilions;

- (2) parties expressing an interest in the site will be asked to undertake, as a function of the purchase, to maintain the provision of the arena facility until such a time as a new facility is provided. If the proposal is to redevelop the Pavilions to provide an arena and leisure ice, this may necessitate a gap in provision;
- (3) the outcome of this exercise will be presented to Cabinet in April 2011 for a decision on how to proceed.

86. **PROPOSED TRANSFORMATION OF DOWNHAM SPECIAL SCHOOL AND WOODLANDS COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

The Director of Services for Children and Young People submitted a written report, indicating that -

- (a) removing the management of short break provision from individual schools and co-ordinating it across the city, would provide a more effective service, together with inclusive organisational opportunities for challenging vulnerable and special needs pupils across the city;
- (b) the proposed changes were considered to be in the best interests of children, families and staff at the schools;
- (c) it was proposed to defer implementation of the decision to relocate Downham Special School to Tor Bridge, ensuring that the children's education was not disrupted by ongoing building work on the site;
- (d) the removal of boarding provision from Downham Special School would formalise the arrangements currently in place at the school and the current staffing structure would support the proposed change;
- (e) the removal of boarding provision from Woodlands Community Special School would formalise the arrangements to provide short break stays for children and give vital support to parents and families with disabled children. The current staffing structure would support the proposed change.

Agreed –

- (1) to consult on a proposal to remove boarding provision from Downham Special School. It is proposed to replace it with a stand-alone Short Break Residential Unit at Downham House (registered under Children's Home regulations) although if the proposal was not adopted, the service would remain dual registered as both a residential special school and a children's home;

- (2) to consult on a proposal to remove boarding provision from Woodlands Community Special School. It is proposed to replace it with a stand-alone Short Break Residential Unit (registered under Children's Home regulations) although if the proposal were not adopted, the service would remain dual registered as both a residential special school and a children's home;
- (3) to defer the relocation of Downham Special School to Tor Bridge from September 2011 to September 2012 to ensure that the children's education is not disrupted by ongoing building work on the site and ensure their safety;
- (4) that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, is authorised to determine whether to publish formal proposals to undertake the above changes, affecting Downham Special School and Woodlands Community Special School, in light of the outcomes of and responses to the formal consultation;
- (5) that, if a public notice is published, the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People is authorised to make a final determination about these proposals.

(Councillor Jordan declared a personal interest in the above item)

87. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

Agreed that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

88. **PAVILIONS FUTURE OPTIONS**

The Director for Community Services submitted a written report on future options for the Pavilions, providing further details on contractual arrangements, for noting.

(See also minute 85 above).

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