

Cooperative Scrutiny Board

Wednesday 29 May 2013

PRESENT:

Councillor James, in the Chair.

Councillor Mrs Aspinall, Vice Chair.

Councillors Ball, Bowie, Bowyer, Casey, Darcy (substitute for Councillor Sam Leaves), Philippa Davey, Murphy and Tuffin.

Apologies for absence: Councillor Sam Leaves

Also in attendance: Councillor Tudor Evans (The Leader), Tracey Lee (Chief Executive), Gemma Pearce (Democratic Support Team Leader), Giles Perritt (Head of Policy, Performance and Partnerships) and Helen Rickman (Democratic Support Officer).

The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 6.30 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. CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

The Board noted the appointment of the Councillor James as Chair and Councillor Mrs Aspinall as Vice-Chair at the Annual General Meeting on 17 May 2013.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by members in respect of items under consideration at this meeting.

3. MINUTES

The Board agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2013 are a correct record.

CHAIRS URGENT BUSINESS

4. Scrutiny Terms of Reference

The Scrutiny Lead Officer highlighted the publication of the report on a recent Ofsted review of a large Metropolitan Borough Council which found some services to be unsatisfactory. Part of the criticism by Ofsted was that responsibility for scrutiny of Children's Services was split between too many scrutiny panels resulting in a lack of clear responsibility. The Board felt that action should be taken with regard to the terms of reference in light of this information.

The Board also felt that in light of the increased workload for the Ambitious Plymouth Panel and the cross cutting nature of the business, Human Resources and ICT should be moved from Ambitious Plymouth to the Board's terms of reference.

The Board felt that given the Customer Transformation programme, Customer Services should feature in a panel's terms of reference in its own right.

The Board noted that later in the meeting a new corporate plan had been drafted and that subject to the approval of the final version at Council the 'corporate plan priorities' section of the terms of reference for all panels should be updated to reflect any new priorities approved.

Agreed to recommend to council to –

- (1) move Human Resources and ICT to the terms of reference for the Co-operative Scrutiny Board;
- (2) evidence a link between 'Working Plymouth' and 'Ambitious Plymouth' with respect to 'apprenticeships';
- (3) move Children's social care, adoption and fostering, early intervention and prevention, corporate parenting and the leadership and delivery of all services for children and young people out of the terms of reference for 'Caring Plymouth' and into the terms of reference for 'Ambitious Plymouth';
- (4) to amend the wording of the terms of reference for Caring Plymouth from 'Adult and Children's Health and Social Care' to Adult and Children's Health' to reflect (3) above;
- (5) add 'customer services' to the terms of reference for 'Your Plymouth';
- (6) update the 'corporate plan priorities' section of all terms of reference as and when the draft corporate plan is approved by City Council.

5. **Scrutiny of the NHS**

Board Members raised concerns regarding the most recent serious incident at Derriford Hospital where a man had been administered medication which had allegedly led to his death.

The Chair highlighted the importance of rigorously scrutinising issues of safety and quality at Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust, a duty which had been reaffirmed in the report of the Francis Inquiry (2013), and referred this issue to the Caring Plymouth panel.

Agreed that the Caring Plymouth panel, who have responsibility for the scrutiny of the NHS services, receive the full support of the Co-operative Scrutiny Board to scrutinise all issues of safety and quality across NHS funded services being delivered within the City of Plymouth.

6. **CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION**

The Chair welcomed Board Members to the first meeting of the Cooperative Scrutiny Board. He congratulated Members on their appointment as Chairs and Vice Chairs and members of the Board and highlighted the challenges ahead.

7. **CALL-INS**

The Board received a response to the call-in of the executive decision (ref E7 12/13) – Revised Household Waste Recycling Centre opening hours and waste acceptance criteria.

Agreed to request that the impact of the changes is reviewed in six months' time and the results of that assessment be brought back to the Board.

8. **URGENT EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

There were no urgent executive decisions to consider.

9. **FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS AND PRIVATE BUSINESS**

There was no forward plan of key decisions and private business to consider.

10. **ANNUAL SCRUTINY CONFERENCE**

The Lead Scrutiny Officer briefed the Board on the Annual Scrutiny Conference which would be taking place on 3 June 2013 and highlighted to members that it would be an opportunity to shape the initial work programme for each of the panels.

11. **DRAFT SCRUTINY TEMPLATES**

Gemma Pearce, Democratic Support Team Leader, provided the Board with an update on the draft scrutiny templates.

The Board was informed that –

- (a) the previous project initiation document (PID) had been reduced from six pages to one page in order to make it more succinct and easy to understand;
- (b) in order to make the process less bureaucratic, any Member was now able to submit a PID to the Board and this was not required to go through a panel first;
- (c) the project plan document contained elements of the previous PID document however the first meeting of the review should be dedicated to populating this document;
- (d) the number of panel meetings for the majority of panels had been reduced therefore more in-depth reviews could be resourced by Democratic Support;

- (e) the tracking resolutions document contained the same standard information but looked slightly different;
- (f) the work programme had been developed to help panels to organise their workload as the limit of four meetings for the majority of panels would require meetings to have a more strategic approach; it was designed to aid Members to question why specific agenda items were there and how they would scrutinise their work.

The Board noted the update.

12. **DRAFT SCRUTINY HANDBOOK**

Gemma Pearce, Democratic Support Team Leader, provided the Board with an update on the Draft Scrutiny Handbook.

Members were informed that the handbook was still being drafted and comments and questions should be provided to Democratic Support.

In response to questions raised it was reported that –

- (a) the handbook was aimed at members, officers, co-opted representatives, review witnesses and members of the public;
- (b) the seating plan was included in the handbook in order to provide a visual aid for people attending their first scrutiny meeting;
- (c) panels were encouraged to find relevant offsite venues for scrutiny meetings to encourage community engagement;
- (d) task and finish groups were now called co-operative reviews and could range from a one hour meeting to a collection of meetings covering several months.

The Vice Chair, Councillor Mrs Aspinall, informed Members that as members of the Cooperative Scrutiny Board they were required to chair at least one scrutiny review throughout the municipal year; membership was not limited to panel members.

The Board adjourned at 5.25pm at the completion of this item for 10 minutes in order to allow time for the Leader and the Chief Executive to arrive for the following agenda item.

13. **CORPORATE PLAN 2014 - 2017**

The Leader, Councillor Tudor Evans and the Chief Executive, Tracey Lee, provided the Board with an overview of the Corporate Plan 2014-2017.

The Board was informed that –

- (a) the plan was specifically a document about delivery and not just aspirations and would help to shape the council and ensure it was fit for purpose during a changing financial climate;
- (b) the plan was a succinct document that would be supported by other plans and documents and would collectively set out what services needed to be provided and how this would happen;
- (c) it was vital that there was a clear connection between the vision, outcomes, actions and service plans;

In response to questions raised it was reported that –

- (d) the aim of the Corporate Plan was to specify the type of authority that Plymouth wanted to be and how it would achieve its goals and aspirations. Specifics regarding resources would be detailed in the Medium Term Financial Plan;
- (e) the Corporate Plan was a business plan which would be closely monitored; it was important that the correct measures were in place to improve performance;
- (f) it was recognised that engagement with the local community was important to achieving best outcomes for the city however it was considered that scrutiny would take an active part in this;
- (g) the role of partners was equally important in allowing the Council to meet its objectives; engagement with the Local Strategic Partnership, One Plymouth and other local organisations and groups would have a great influence in the direction of the city and would help to ensure that the best possible service was delivered;
- (h) Members of the senior management team had been tasked with visiting teams across the council to ensure staff were engaged with the Corporate Plan and understood the values;
- (i) the Council's role within the Local Economic Partnership was crucial in supporting the aspirations of local communities; it was important to advertise that 'Plymouth is open for business';
- (j) Officers were confident that tasks and objectives set were achievable; Plymouth was in a strong position as it was below the national average for unemployment, visitor numbers were increasing and the delivery of homes and jobs would be contained within the Local Economic Strategy;

The Board unanimously agreed -

- (l) the Co-operative Scrutiny Board's future role in scrutinising the Council's decision making and performance in the context of the strategic direction as set out in the Corporate Plan;

- (2) to provide a democratic conduit for the voice of citizens and to provide assurance that the voice of citizens is heard within service design, strategic and financial planning;
- (3) to understand the values and the objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan and take them into account in their own roles when challenging decision making and assuring performance;
- (4) to identify and agree how the Co-operative Scrutiny Board will deploy co-operative review groups to scrutinise the delivery of the plan;
- (5) to agree the Co-operative Scrutiny Board's approach to scrutinising a 3 year budget rather than the previous one year cycle as part of the annual budget scrutiny process.