

# Cabinet

**Tuesday 15 October 2013**

## **PRESENT:**

Councillor Evans, in the Chair.  
Councillor Peter Smith, Vice Chair.  
Councillors Coker, McDonald and Williams.

Also in attendance: Councillors James (Chair of the Co-operative Scrutiny Board) and Tuffin (Chair of the former Customers and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Task and Finish Group), Tracey Lee (Chief Executive), Carole Burgoyne (Director for People), David Trussler (Interim Director for Corporate Services), Fiona Fleming (Strategic Commissioning Manager), Mel Gwynn (Head of ICT), Darin Halifax (Community Cohesion Co-ordinator), Jo Hall (Senior Adviser Early Years and Childcare), Anita Martin (Group Accountant), David Northey (Head of Finance), Chris Randall (Strategic Finance Manager), Andrew Stephens (Assistant Director for Customer Services) and Nicola Kirby (Democratic Support Officer).

Apologies for absence: Councillors Lowry, Penberthy and Vincent and Anthony Payne (Director for Place).

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 2.45 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.*

## 47. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by councillors in accordance with the code of conduct in relation to items under consideration at this meeting.

## 48. **MINUTES**

Agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2013.

## 49. **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions from the public for this meeting.

## 50. **SCRUTINY UPDATE BY COUNCILLOR JAMES**

With the consent of Cabinet, Councillor James (Chair of the Co-operative Scrutiny Board) attended the meeting and provided an update on scrutiny.

Cabinet were advised -

- (a) of the work of the Co-operative Scrutiny Board to date, which included pre-decision scrutiny of the draft Corporate Plan;
- (b) of the content and outcome of the Annual Scrutiny Conference held on 3 June 2013 which had been arranged to set the scene for the direction of travel for scrutiny for the year and beyond. Chairs and Vice Chairs had been encouraged to meet with Cabinet Members and Directors on a regular basis to discuss areas of high risk, overspend, poor performance, delivery plans and relevant areas within the Corporate Plan;
- (c) that following consideration of the Council's Sustainable Three Year Plan which indicated an estimated shortfall of £65m over the next three years, the Co-operative Scrutiny Board recognised that, in addition to their role of challenging decision making, they also had the role of acting as a critical friend and to provide support. Councillor James assured Cabinet that there would be effective scrutiny in order to add value to this process;
- (d) that there had been one call in and three items for pre-decision scrutiny;
- (e) that the timescales arising from the publication of the forward plan provided little opportunity for pre-decision scrutiny and Councillor James asked that the Board was given more notice of forthcoming items;
- (f) of the future work programme for the Co-operative Scrutiny Board as follows –
  - October 2013: public consultation on the budget;
  - November and December 2013: Member training on the budget; information sessions for scrutiny panel chairs and vice chairs on service area pressures; and a Finance and Transformation Co-operative Review Group;
  - 8, 13 and 15 January 2014: scrutiny of the Council's budget, performance and Corporate Plan prior to recommendations being submitted to Cabinet on 11 February 2014 and the City Council on 24 February 2014;
- (g) of the forthcoming co-operative reviews as follows –
  - park and ride bus services;
  - procedures for dealing with unauthorised encampments;
  - customer services (website and interactive transactions);
  - neighbourhood working;
  - on street parking review: rationalisation of controlled parking zones;
  - health accountability forum;
  - narrowing the gap (school pupils and welfare reform);
  - Plymouth Plan emerging policy development;

- council tax support scheme; attachment of earnings;
- housing benefit spare room subsidy;
- finance and transformation programme (particularly around adult social care).

Councillor Evans asked Councillor James to pass the thanks of Cabinet to all councillors involved in the reviews and he looked forward to seeing the outcomes.

Agreed that, in future, a written report is also presented to Cabinet on the work of scrutiny.

## 51. **LIBRARY MODERNISATION: SCRUTINY REPORT**

Councillor Tuffin (Chair of the former Customers and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Task and Finish Group), attended the meeting and presented the scrutiny recommendations following their review of library modernisation.

Darin Halifax (Community Cohesion Co-ordinator) and Andrew Stephens (Assistant Director for Customer Services) also attended the meeting for this item.

Councillor Peter Smith (Deputy Leader) responded and indicated that he and officers had started to develop a policy having regard to the recommendations. Free wifi was already being installed in libraries and he would keep scrutiny informed of progress.

Councillor Evans (Chair) joined with Councillor Peter Smith to thank Councillor Tuffin for his work, together with the task and finish group members and all those who supported the review.

The recommendations were noted and members were advised that a draft policy on libraries would be submitted to Cabinet in due course.

## 52. **CHILDREN'S CENTRE BUSINESS CASE 2014-2020**

Carole Burgoyne (Director for People) submitted a report on options for the delivery of children's centres, to provide an integrated community based service to all families with children from pre-birth to five year's old. The proposed business case grouped the delivery of the service into six new clusters and all provision would be tendered including local authority delivered and schools' delivered services, alongside existing contracted services.

Fiona Fleming (Strategic Commissioning Manager) and Jo Hall (Senior Adviser Early Years and Childcare) attended the meeting for this item.

Councillor Evans (Chair) also drew Members' attention to the separate private report containing commercially sensitive financial details, referred to in minute 56 below.

Councillor Williams (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People) introduced the proposals and indicated that -

- a) a clustering approach was proposed which would group the designated sites whilst maintaining delivery in all communities and making the best use of a range of community settings. This would reduce the back office costs and burden of inspection that came with a single designated site whilst maximising investment in front line delivery;
- (b) the proposal would provide greater opportunities to plan across health, principally midwifery and health visiting, and other Council services already providing information, advice and parenting support for families;
- (c) there was a commitment from health commissioners to work with the Council to create an integrated early childhood service offer, building on existing joint commissioning intentions and outcome requirements. Further joint working with other partners such as Job Centre Plus, would be developed in line with the new model of delivery;
- (d) this model of delivery would achieve a saving of £0.960m from the Early Years budget;
- (e) a wide ranging consultation had taken place with parents, Children Centre Advisory Groups, and other key stakeholders to inform the future configuration and service delivery.
- (f) a Summary Consultation Report, was submitted providing an overview of key themes that had emerged through this consultation, one of which was a proposal by the Advisory Board for Woodford and Plum Tree to combine these two centres, so that they could be managed more effectively;
- (g) it was recommended that contracts would be awarded for three years with the option to extend for three years, to ensure the new service model had time to fully develop.

Jo Hall also reported on the consultation exercise.

Alternative options considered and reasons for the decision –

As set out in the report.

Agreed that –

- (1) the Council undertakes a tender for children's centres provision in six new clusters, as set out on the attached map and in line with Option 1 set out in the report. This option will include all provision in the tender, including local authority delivered and schools' delivered services alongside existing contracted services and contracts will be awarded for three years with the option to extend for three years;

- (2) Woodford and Plum Tree Children's Centres in Plympton are combined, to enable more efficient management whilst keeping the two designated sites for delivery to achieve consistency for families;
- (3) the designated site for Sweet Peas Children's Centre is closed and replaced with an appropriate delivery site, due to significant running costs.

53. **SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA: DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**

Carole Burgoyne (Director for People) submitted a report on a proposal to delegate the final decision regarding the local schools funding formula, which ensured the equitable distribution of funding across all schools, to the Assistant Director for Education, Learning and Family Support in consultation with the Plymouth Schools Forum and Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.

David Northey (Head of Finance) and Anita Martin (Group Accountant) attended the meeting for this item.

Councillor Williams (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People) introduced the proposals which provided a transparent scheme of delegation.

Anita Martin advised Cabinet Members that the government had reduced the timescales for decision making and the proposal would speed up that process.

Alternative options considered and reasons for the decision –

As set out in the report.

Agreed that the decision making authority regarding the Schools Funding Formula is delegated to the Assistant Director for Education, Learning and Family Support in consultation with the Plymouth Schools Forum and Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.

54. **ICT SHARED SERVICES - DELT**

David Trussler (Interim Director for Corporate Services) submitted a report on the principle of creating a public sector shared services company 'DELT' and the transfer of Plymouth City Council ICT services to this company.

The report indicated that following approval of an outline business case, Cabinet, in February 2013, approved the development of a detailed business case to be worked up between the proposed partners (minute 147 (12/13) referred).

The detailed Business Case was also submitted setting out the basis for establishing a new joint venture company, to share in the first instance ICT, across public sector partners.

Independent reviews of the business case, had broadly supported the approach but made it clear that a large amount of work would be necessary before a successful DELT operation could start and this would be addressed during the due diligence and implementation planning period.

The report identified progress, the current status on risks, and assumptions of the DELT Business Case.

Mel Gwynn (Head of ICT) and Chris Randall (Strategic Finance Manager) attended the meeting for this item.

In the absence of Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance), Councillor Peter Smith (Deputy Leader) introduced the report and indicated that -

- (a) these proposals were being submitted to the current five partner organisations joining the shared service, namely –
  - East Devon District Council
  - Exeter City Council
  - N.E.W. Devon Clinical Commissioning Group
  - Plymouth City Council
  - Teignbridge District Council
- (b) due diligence would be undertaken in the period from October 2013 to April 2014;
- (c) subject to a satisfactory outcome, service level agreements would be drawn up and staff and assets would then transfer to the new organisation.

Cabinet Members commented that the partner organisations could be extended to include the police and that the proposals should be progressed as soon as possible in order to generate the maximum savings.

Alternative options considered and reasons for the decision –

As set out in the report.

Agreed that –

- (1) officers undertake due diligence (including confirmation that the DELT operating model attached to the written report provides best value for the authority), and implementation planning;
- (2) Members note and accept the estimated additional costs of implementation and agree that these are built into the current budget setting process;

- (3) the final decision to proceed is delegated to the Deputy Leader, including award of contract between the Council and DELT, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Interim Director for Corporate Services (or successor). This is providing that it does not exceed 15 per cent of total expenditure estimated or forecast savings are 15 per cent less than indicated in this report; and providing that the degree of risk, as advised by officers, of proceeding after the completion of due diligence and implementation planning is acceptable.

55. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

Agreed that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public are 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.

56. **CHILDREN'S CENTRE BUSINESS CASE 2014-2020 (E3)**

Further to minute 52 above, Carole Burgoyne (Director for People) submitted a private report on commercially sensitive financial details relating to the proposal for the delivery of children's centres.

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