

Cooperative Scrutiny Board

Wednesday 16 October 2013

PRESENT:

Councillor James, in the Chair.

Councillor Mrs Aspinall, Vice Chair.

Councillors Bowie, Bowyer, Casey, Philippa Davey, Murphy and Tuffin.

Apology for absence: Councillor Monahan.

Also in attendance: Paul Barnard (Assistant Director for Planning Services), David Draffan (Assistant Director for Economic Development), Councillor Evans (Council Leader), Richard Grant (Local Planning Team Leader), Tim Howes (Assistant Director for Law, Democracy and Governance), David Northey (Head of Finance), Alison Mills (Head of HR (Corporate Functions)), Giles Perritt (Head of Policy, Performance and Partnerships), Councillor Smith (Deputy Leader), Andrew Stevens (Assistant Director for Customer Services), David Trussler (Interim Director for Customer Services) and Helen Wright (Democratic Support Officer).

The meeting started at 4pm and finished at 6.35pm.

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.

68. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

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

69. **MINUTES**

The Board agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2013 are confirmed as a correct record.

70. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair advised that he had attended the Cabinet meeting held on 15 October 2013, at which, he had provided an overview of the work scrutiny had undertaken to date and outlined future work programme items. The Chair further advised that the Leader (Councillor Evans) wished to convey his gratitude for the hard work that had been undertaken by scrutiny and the value that this had added to the council's business.

Agreed to circulate the Chair's report to Cabinet to all Board Members.

(In accordance with Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Chair brought forward the above item for urgent consideration because of the need to inform councillors.

71. **THE BRILLIANT COOPERATIVE COUNCIL SUSTAINABLE THREE YEAR PLAN**

Councillor Evans (Council Leader) and David Trussler (Interim Director for Corporate Services) provided a briefing on delivering the Brilliant Cooperative Council, which highlighted the following key points –

- (a) the impact of reduced funding from Central Government was being compounded by the rising demand for services such as adult social care for older people, falling income from commercial rents and the rising costs of contracted services and utilities;
- (b) the council was already delivering £17 million savings in this year's budget and following an assessment of its financial position for the next three years, without large scale action, there would be a £65 million shortfall (out of a total revenue budget of just over £200 million);
- (c) the transformation programme was an integral part of delivering the council's cooperative values and objectives;
- (d) plans had been developed which would achieve savings totalling £30 million over three years by finding new ways of working and delivering services;
- (e) due to the unprecedented levels of change that the transformation programme would require, all Members and staff would need to be open to and involved in the change;
- (f) the role of scrutiny would be vital to the success of transformation and it was hoped that the work programmes would be prioritised to ensure that the right level and type of engagement would be provided;
- (g) a presentation was provided to Members, which highlighted the following key issues –
 - context – the strategic and financial challenge and the council's response;
 - developing the 'blueprint' for a brilliant cooperative council;
 - transformation programmes delivering the 'blueprint';
 - member and officer governance arrangements for transformation;
 - work underway.

In response to questions raised by Members, it was reported that –

- (h) staff engagement in this process was a priority; to date 74 face to face meetings had been held with staff across the authority; the aim of the meeting was to help staff to start to understand the big picture;
- (i) there was currently 100 members of staff engaged on the initial stages of the development of the 'blueprint';
- (j) although this was at the start of the council's transformation, savings had already been identified through the invest to save scheme (such as the commissioning of street lighting where existing bulbs would be replaced by LED ones);
- (k) the outline business case for each transformation programme would be available by December 2013;
- (l) an undertaking was given to circulate the membership of the Member Transformation Board.

The Chair thanked Councillor Evans and the Interim Director for Corporate Services for attending.

Order of Business

With the permission of the Chair, the order of business on the agenda was amended, as set out below in the minutes.

72. **CORPORATE MONITORING REPORT**

The Head of Finance and the Head of HR (Corporate Functions) presented the corporate monitoring report, which highlighted the following main areas –

- (a) revenue monitoring position;
- (b) key issues and corrective actions, which included –
 - joint commissioning and adult social care which had showed a worsening variation of £1.599m; in order to address this situation the following actions had been undertaken –
 - ▶ the introduction of a 10 point balanced budget action plan;
 - ▶ the assembly of a project review team which would focus on the high cost of legacy cases;
 - ▶ complete operational review of cases which had commenced since 1 August 2013;
 - ▶ the integration of the Rapid Response Reablement which would ensure that health and social care resources were

deployed to avoid inappropriate admissions to hospital and return people to community based support rather than residential and nursing care;

- ▶ the recovery of direct payments over six weeks;

- (c) delivery plans;
- (d) revenues and benefits;
- (e) capital position;
- (f) workforce full time equivalent;
- (g) workforce head count (number of employees);
- (h) average number of days sick per full time equivalent.

Both the Chair and Vice Chair registered their disappointment at the worsening position of the budget and the lack of information relating to the joint commissioning and adult social care 10 point balanced budget action plan.

The Head of Finance undertook to provide a copy of the action plan to Board members.

The Chair thanked the officers for attending the meeting.

73. **CABINET MEMBER**

The Chair welcomed the Councillor Peter Smith (Deputy Leader) together with Paul Barnard (Assistant Director for Planning Services), David Draffan (Assistant Director for Economic Development), Tim Howes (Assistant Director for Law, Democracy and Governance), Alison Mills (Head of HR (Corporate Functions)), Andrew Stevens (Assistant Director for Customer Services) who provided a brief overview of the current areas of work being undertaken, which included –

- (a) over the last 12 months Heritage and Arts had focussed on a step change in the delivery of the highest quality events and cultural programme for the city, which included –
 - bidding for the United Kingdom City of Culture;
 - sixteen major events including the Route des Princes;
 - the city's most successful marketing and PR campaign reaching 120m people and generating £2.2m of advertising value; this included advertising the national fireworks competition on the 'One Show';
- (b) the focus over the next 12 months for Heritage and Arts, would include -
 - the development of the History Centre (bidding for £12m of Heritage Lottery Funding) and a cultural road map to Mayflower 2020 (working with the Culture Board);
 - 60th anniversary of D-Day; 100th Anniversary World War I and the 350th anniversary of the Royal Marines;

(c) the Sports Development Unit had played a significant role in developing and promoting sport opportunities across the city and currently delivered a number of national initiatives which included Sportivate, summer arts college, breeze cycling and Mars just play football; key achievements of the past 12 months included –

- Quest and Customer Service Excellence accreditation;
- twenty per cent of sports development attendances were from people from deprived neighbourhoods;
- £200k of external funding brought into the city through the Unit's support;

(d) work being undertaken within the library service which included –

- the Plan for Libraries (the service's strategic plan) would outline the foundations of the service's development over the next three years and would include an action plan;
- discussions had commenced relating to how the History Centre would relate to the collections of rare books and historical materials;
- over 4000 children and young people had taken part in this year's national summer reading challenge (Creepy House);
- a sum of £15,000 had been given to the service to increase the amount of information it provided to businesses in the city;

(e) work currently being undertaken with Customer Services, which included –

Call Centre

- 25,000 calls and 2,500 emails per month;
- 95 per cent answer rate;
- 80 per cent of calls answered in 20 seconds;

First Stop

- 3,000 visitors per month;
- 98 per cent customer satisfaction level;

Transaction Centre

- 88.6 per cent of invoices paid within 30 days;
- 69.8 per cent of invoices to small and medium enterprises were paid within 15 days;

(f) key achievements in Customer Services included -

- fourth year in achieving Customer Service Excellence;

- two shortlisted finalists in South West Contact Centre Forum Awards and PCC Star Awards;
- (g) work currently being undertaken in HR which included the -
- recruitment of 74 apprentices;
 - reduction in sickness to 8.22 days per full time equivalent post (target set at 8.49 days);
- (h) work currently being undertaken in Risk and Insurance/Legal Services, which included -
- the introduction of the claims portal;
 - the successful response by Emergency Operations to the Short Sermon Exercise;
- (i) work currently being undertaken in Electoral Services, which included -
- a corporate campaign to promote electoral registration;
 - the annual preparation of Register of Electors;
 - a review of polling districts, places and stations;
- (j) work currently being undertaken in Registration Services, which included -
- improvement of the environment at the Register Office to celebrate life events;
 - celebratory ceremonies in a number of locations around the city;
 - provision of an online certificate application;
- (k) work currently being undertaken in ICT, included -
- the roll out of Lync, Win 7, hot desking, smart meeting rooms and video conferencing to over 70 sites;
 - the delivery of public health integration at Windsor House which involved 184 staff.

In response to questions raised by the Board, it was reported that –

- (l) the Deputy Leader undertook to look into the provision of a telephone in the scrutiny resource room;
- (m) in September 2013 there had been 2.5 per cent of abandoned calls relating to adult social care issues; (the total percentage of abandoned calls was 3 per cent, which was low in terms of industry standards);

- (n) with regard to the paperless office initiative, which had been trialled by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, the Windows 8 tablet was currently being reviewed;
- (o) there were currently 30 vacancies for apprentices and it was anticipated that additional apprentices would be recruited to assist with the transformation programme;
- (p) Board members would be advised whether the call centre could return abandoned calls relating to Adult Social Care.

The Chair thanked the Deputy Leader and officers for attending the meeting.

74. **WORK PROGRAMMES**

The Chair advised the Chairs of the panels of the need for flexibility within the work programmes, in order to be able to scrutinise the transformation programme.

Following a recommendation from the Working Plymouth Panel to include in its work programme the North Plymouth Area Action Plan Inspector's report, the Assistant Director for Planning Services (Paul Barnard) advised the Board that –

- (a) the Inspector's report relating to the Derriford and Seaton Area Action Plan 2006 – 2021 had been published in August 2013;
- (b) the Inspector's report concluded that, with regard to the cumulative consideration of all the factors, the Action Plan did not provide an appropriate basis for the planning of the area over the submitted Plan period and was consequently not sound and cited five specific points;
- (c) the Inspector's findings had created some uncertainty for the whole of the north of the city (together with the North West Quadrant development), as well as creating various complex planning issues that would need careful consideration by the Planning Authority;
- (d) the various landowners that were affected by the Plan were also considering their next actions.

In response to a question raised by the Board, the Assistant Director for Planning Services advised that he would not recommend that this issue was included on the work programme for the Working Plymouth Panel, due to the complexities involved but would be more than happy to brief members outside of this forum.

The Board agreed –

- (1) the work programmes for the Ambitious Plymouth Panel, Caring Plymouth Panel and Your Plymouth Panel;

- (2) its own work programme subject to the inclusion of the fees, charges and concessions policy;
- (3) the work programme of the Working Plymouth Panel subject to the removal of the North Plymouth Area Action Plan Inspector's report.

75. **TRACKING DECISIONS**

The Board considered its schedule of decisions and noted the latest position.

76. **PLYMOUTH PLAN**

The Assistant Director for Planning Services (Paul Barnard) and Local Planning Team Leader (Richard Grant) provided an overview of the Plymouth Plan, which highlighted the following –

- (a) the adopted Core Strategy and the supporting Area Action Plans would be reviewed whilst taking the city's statutory Development Plan forward within the context of the government's new Local Plan system; this would provide the foundations for preparing the new Plymouth Plan and explain how it would provide an integrated and holistic long term plan as to how the city would change between 2013 – 2031;
- (b) the Plymouth Plan needed to provide a focused, strategic path forward, based on a clear understanding of the city's current conditions and trends, challenges and strengths;
- (c) the report submitted to Cabinet in September 2012, set out a broad timetable, as follows –
 - stage 1: conversations (summer 2012 – spring 2013);
 - stage 2: your plan, your city (summer 2013);
 - stage 3: the final plan (summer 2014);
 - stage 4: the legal stages (winter 2014 – autumn 2015);
- (d) during the second stage of the process, 2000 comments had been gathered which were currently being evaluated; the aim was to provide the initial draft results by December 2013 with the final results being available in early 2014;
- (e) it was hoped to be able to engage scrutiny in this process in order to provide a 'sound board'.

Agreed that the Plymouth Plan is considered by the Board and not the Scrutiny Panels.

77. **BUDGET SCRUTINY 2013/14**

The Board considered the draft plan and timetable for budget scrutiny 2013/14.

The Board agreed that –

- (1) the invitation letters to partners are sent out on behalf of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board;
- (2) representatives from the Plymouth Community Healthcare CIC would not be required to attend.

78. **CALL-INS**

There were no call-ins to consider.

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

The Board considered the following executive key decisions in the Forward Plan which were scheduled to be discussed at the Cabinet meeting on 12 November 2013 –

- acquisition and disposal of land at Seaton Neighbourhood;
- Plan for Homes;
- fees, charges and concessions policy;
- contract awards for Domiciliary Care Services; carers emergency respite service and framework agreement.

The Board agreed to undertake post decision scrutiny relating to the fees, charges and concessions policy (and to include this matter on its work programme).

80. **URGENT EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

There were no urgent executive decisions to consider.

81. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Board endorsed and agreed the recommendations of the panels, as follows –

- (1) Ambitious Plymouth Panel -
 - the 'School Transport Provision Review' team is removed from the work programme scheduled for the meeting on 11 November 2013;
 - a 'Dyslexia progress report' item is added to the work programme for the meeting on 3 February 2014;
 - a 'review of the progress of the Culture Board' is added to the work programme for the meeting on 3 March 2014.
- (2) Caring Plymouth Panel –

- pre-decision scrutiny of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy is essential prior to the draft going to the Health and Wellbeing Board in January 2014;
 - explore options and was to review the draft Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy before January 2014, be it at the November meeting or an ad hoc meeting (meeting to be open to other councillors);
- (3) Working Plymouth Panel –
- as per minute 74;
- (4) Your Plymouth Panel –
- that membership of the cooperative review into unauthorised encampments is reduced from nine to five with a political ratio of 3:2. Chair and Vice chair to confirm their respective group nominations to the Democratic Support Officer;
 - that separate briefing reports in respect of roadside memorials, tree management and public funerals are submitted to the next meeting of the panel in order that members can consider more detailed information and review facts prior to deciding whether to take any of these issues further;
 - that a further update on emergency welfare scheme is submitted to the panel in six months' time when the scheme will have been in place for a year;
 - the cooperative review into customer services is deferred pending submission of a situation update report to, and attendance by the Assistant Director for Customers Services, at the panel's next meeting;
 - that a situation report in respect of the level of personal debt in the City and how this is being managed (to include rent arrears) is submitted to the next panel meeting

82. **COOPERATIVE REVIEW(S)**

The Board considered the cooperative review request relating to the finance and transformation programme. Following concerns raised relating to the lack of sufficient time to effectively scrutinise these issues, the Board agreed to hold a briefing session focusing on adult social care and children's services on 13 November 2013.

The Board agreed the membership of the cooperative review relating to the Council Tax (Attachment of Earnings), as follows –

- Councillor James (Chair);
- Councillor Mrs Aspinall (Vice Chair);
- Councillors Casey, Darcy and Tuffin.

The Board further agreed that the review would take place on Friday 15 November 2013 at 10am, in the Council House.

83. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.