

Cabinet

Tuesday 12 November 2013

PRESENT:

Councillor Peter Smith, Vice Chair, in the Chair.
Councillor Vincent, Vice Chair for the meeting.
Councillors Lowry, Penberthy and Williams.

Also in attendance: Tracey Lee (Chief Executive), Anthony Payne (Director for Place), Malcolm Coe (Assistant Director for Finance, Efficiencies, Technology and Assets), Paul Barnard (Assistant Director for Planning Services) and Nick Carter (Housing Delivery Team Leader).

Apologies for absence: Councillors Evans (Chair), Coker and McDonald.

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 2.20 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.

57. **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.

58. **VICE CHAIR FOR THE MEETING**

Agreed that Councillor Vincent is appointed Vice Chair for the meeting.

59. **MINUTES**

Agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2013.

60. **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Two questions were submitted by members of the public for this meeting, in accordance with Part B, paragraph 11 of the Constitution.

In the absence of the questioners, written responses would be sent to them as set out below –

Question No	Question By	Cabinet Member	Subject
3 (13/14)	Mr B Mardon	Councillor Coker, Cabinet Member for Transport	On street parking variation in use spaces Ref 2013.180370
<p>On Radio Devon a Council spokesperson said introducing parking charges which at present are free, were to resolve traffic problems. What are the problems and in which areas do they occur? Would more free parking resolve these issues?</p>			
<p>Response: The problems being referred to during the interview relate to where I have to balance competing demands for parking. Such an example is that of free parking in dense city centre type locations, where people also live, resulting in residents often experience parking difficulties due to commuter use.</p>			

Question No	Question By	Cabinet Member	Subject
4 (13/14)	Mr F E Sharpe	Councillor Vincent, Cabinet Member for Environment	Sherford development costs
<p>Please can it be disclosed how much cash the proposed Sherford Development has cost Plymouth City Council to date with nothing to show?</p>			
<p>Response: Planning, transport, environmental and legal officers, and others, have been involved in Sherford-related planning processes over several years. This has involved research, the consideration of alternative development options, public meetings and statutory public local inquiries concerning the formulation of planning policies that have subsequently been adopted by various Local Planning Authorities. In addition the consideration of planning issues concerning delivery of a Sherford development in accordance with an acceptable master plan and the requirements of the Planning Committee has also been undertaken.</p> <p>There are no detailed records of the staff time involved in dealing with the Sherford development over a considerable number of years. Any complex legal Section 106 agreement costs are recovered by the Council from the developer. The Section 106 funding agreement runs into several millions in support of transport, environmental, cultural, sporting and social infrastructure. The impact of the construction of Sherford on the Plymouth economy will also be significant. When looked at against the economic benefits this will deliver, the investment of staff time can be seen as small compared to the overall benefits that will accrue to the city and the sub-region.</p>			

It is true that development has still to commence in accordance with the approved plans, although the project is expected to commence in 2014.

A new delivery team for Sherford has been funded by a non-ring fenced grant award funded by central government to South Hams District Council. Accordingly this team will have no revenue costs to the City Council and therefore Plymouth Council Tax payers.

61. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

62. **THE PLAN FOR HOMES**

The Director for Place submitted a report on proposals to establish a programme of initiatives to help achieve a step change in the delivery of homes within Plymouth. The Plan for Homes aimed to bring forward 1,000 homes per annum over the next five years to address the severe housing needs within the city and to support the growth agenda.

The report also sought agreement to include within the Capital Programme a significant Affordable Housing Loan Facility and to the release of further City Council-owned sites in support of the Plan for Homes and the delivery of more affordable homes.

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) introduced the proposals and indicated that the loan facility would be available only to registered social landlords and co-operative associations, not to private developers.

The City Council, at the meeting on 25 November 2013, would be asked to sign up to the 'Say Yes to Homes' Campaign.

Members' attention was also drawn to the Plan for Homes and Get Plymouth Building brochures which were available to members at the meeting.

Paul Barnard (Assistant Director for Planning Services) reported that the draft plan had been considered by the Working Plymouth Scrutiny Panel on 25 September 2013, and their suggestions had been incorporated into the document. A progress report would be submitted to the panel after a year, as requested.

Alternative options considered and reasons for the decision –

As set out in the report.

Agreed –

- (1) the Plan for Homes as set out in the report;
- (2) to delegate to the Assistant Director for Planning Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, the identification of city council-owned sites in support of the Plan for Homes;

- (3) to welcome the support from the Working Plymouth Scrutiny Panel for the strategy of the Plan for Homes.

62a **The Plan for Homes: Recommendation to the City Council**

The City Council is Recommended to include the Plan for Homes within the Capital Programme from 2014/2015 until 2019/2020 with an allocation of up to £50 million (subject to due diligence) in support of the affordable housing loan facility to the Plymouth Housing Partnership.

63. **FEES, CHARGES AND CONCESSIONS POLICY**

The Assistant Director for Finance, Efficiencies, Technology and Assets submitted a report on an over-arching Fees, Charges and Concessions Policy to provide a clear statement of Plymouth City Council's corporate approach to fees and charges incorporating concessions.

This policy set out the principles that the Council would use when levying a charge for services that were provided and why the Council were doing so. It would ensure that the Council adopted a consistent and fair approach to fees and charges, and that they were used to deliver the Council's overall objectives whilst protecting, wherever possible, the most vulnerable citizens of Plymouth. It also set a direction of travel about principles to be used when waiving charges and the conditions that would be applied in these circumstances.

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) introduced the proposals and reported that the framework would assist the council in being fair, open and honest when considering fees, charges and concessions. He also thanked Councillor Penberthy for his assistance with the policy.

Councillor Penberthy indicated that the policy would ensure that everyone would pay something towards Council tax and that if the Council supported groups, it would review what contribution had been made by them towards the city. The report would also link to the Civil Society Policy which would be considered by Cabinet in the new year.

Alternative options considered and reasons for the decision –

As set out in the report.

Agreed that –

- (1) the revised Fees, Charges and Concessions Policy is approved as submitted;
- (2) the Leader's Scheme of Delegation is amended to reflect the delegations.

CORPORATE MONITORING REPORT AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2013 (INCLUDING CAPITAL SCHEMES AND PROGRAMME APPROVALS)

The Corporate Management Team submitted a report outlining the finance monitoring position of the Council as at the end of September 2013 and provided details on how the Council was delivering against its financial measures using its capital and revenue resources. Approval was also sought to relevant budget variations, virements and new capital schemes.

Human Resources and Organisation Development data including workforce and sickness statistics were also submitted.

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) introduced the proposals and reported that

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- (a) an overspend of £1.52m was forecast at year end;
- (b) officers and members were working hard to achieve a balanced budget at year end;
- (c) sickness was continuing to reduce.

Councillor Peter Smith emphasised that although sickness levels were consistently reducing, current efforts needed to be maintained as sickness remained too high.

Malcolm Coe also reported that officers were striving to ensure that the budget was balanced at year end.

Alternative options considered and reasons for the decision –

As set out in the report.

Cabinet noted –

- (d) the revenue monitoring position and actions being taken;
- (e) the increase in the medium term capital programme forecast to £162.484m;
- (f) the Human Resources and Organisational Development data.

Agreed –

- (1) the revenue budget virements as set out on page 10 of the report;
- (2) the new capital schemes indicated in table A totaling £0.881m.

64a Capital Programme Approval: Recommendation to the City Council

The City Council is Recommended to increase the capital programme by the increase in the allocation to enable the Civic Centre decant, totaling £0.627m .

65. **CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK MONITORING REPORT**

The Chief Executive submitted a report on the progress of delivery of outcomes identified in the Corporate Plan, highlighting cause for celebration as well as delays and issues requiring corrective action.

In the absence of Councillor Evans (Council Leader), Councillor Peter Smith (Deputy Leader) introduced the proposals and advised that the report would be considered by the Co-operative Scrutiny Board on 27 November 2013.

Tracey Lee (Chief Executive) indicated that this was the first report monitoring the actions to deliver the corporate plan and she was pleased with the progress made to date. Cabinet Members were also advised that the report could be refined in the light of feedback.

The report was noted.