

Co-operative Scrutiny Board

Wednesday 19 November 2014

PRESENT:

Councillor James, in the Chair.

Councillor Mrs Aspinall, Vice Chair.

Councillors Mrs Beer, Bowie, Darcy, Sam Davey (substitute Councillor Philippa Davey), Jordan, Sam Leaves, Murphy, Parker-Delaz-Ajete and Kate Taylor.

Apology for absence: Councillor Philippa Davey

Also in attendance: Peter Honeywell (Transformation Programmes Manager), Giles Perritt (Assistant Chief Executive), Chris Randall (Head of Finance Operations) and Helen Wright (Democratic Support Officer).

The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 5.10 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.

77. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

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

78. **MINUTES**

The Board agreed that the minutes of the meetings held on 24 September 2014 and 22 October 2014 are confirmed as a correct record.

79. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

80. **WORK PROGRAMMES**

The Board submitted its work programme for consideration together with the work programme for the Caring Plymouth Panel.

The Board agreed its work programme subject to the assurance of transformation portfolio being considered in February 2015 and the meeting with the City's MPs being arranged for January 2015.

The Board further agreed the Caring Plymouth Panel work programme.

81. **DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

There were no decisions taken under delegated authority to consider.

82. **TRACKING DECISIONS**

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

The Board was advised that with regard to minute 55 (24 September 2014) the prevention and intervention strategy had been included on the Caring Plymouth Panel's work programme.

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

The Board considered the following executive decisions in the Forward Plan which were scheduled to be discussed at Cabinet between December 2014 – March 2015

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- review and prioritisation of the capital programme;
- Plymouth City Centre – Business Improvement District renewal 2015 – 2020;
- City Deal – land transfer agreement to transfer areas of South Yard from the Ministry of Defence to Plymouth City Council;
- Plymouth employment and skills plan;
- 2015/16 to 2018/19 sustainable balanced budget and council tax 2015/16;
- cost and volume for fostering contract award;
- adoption and implementation of anti-social behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014;
- major events 2015;
- implementing the Care Act 2014;
- collaborative enforcement, shared problems, shared solutions;
- residential and nursing care home fair price for care.

The Board agreed that –

- (1) the Plymouth Employment and Skills Plan and the Major Events Plan 2015 are included on the work programme for the Working Plymouth Panel, for post scrutiny, as these items were being considered by Cabinet on 9 December 2014;
- (2) the residential and nursing care home fair price for care is considered as part of the budget scrutiny process.

The Board requested that the Ambitious Plymouth Panel monitor the cost and volume for fostering contract following its submission to Cabinet on 9 December 2014.

84. **CAPITAL AND REVENUE MONITORING REPORT 2014/15**

The Head of Finance Operations presented the Capital and Revenue Monitoring Report 2014/15, which highlighted the following key areas –

- (a) the estimated revenue overspend at the end of the year was £3.703m as at September 2014; the overall net spend equated to £208.383m against a budget of £204.680m which was a variance of 1.81 percent;
- (b) this needed to be taken within the context of setting £16m of management and net transformation savings in 2014/15 on the back of balancing the 2013/14 revenue budget where £17.8m of net revenue reductions were successfully delivered;
- (c) the key pressure points were still in Adult Social Care where, although client numbers were broadly in line with the set budget, the average cost per care package per client was significantly higher (which reflected the more complex needs to clients that the Council was supporting);
- (d) there was a significant increase in placement with young people placed in independent foster care which had increased by five to 74 against the target budget of 60; residential placements had reduced by three to 27 against a target budget of 18 but with a significantly number of these placements being high cost due to the complex nature of these children's needs; due to 'Operation Triage' taking place in September, an additional 15 young people had to be accommodated and this had put additional pressure on the placement budget;
- (e) additional management solutions and escalated actions to deliver further savings from the Council's transformation programme were being worked up in order to address the in-year forecasted overspend;
- (f) the latest capital budget covering 2013/14 to 2016/17 stood at £216.398 which was approved at Full Council on 15 September 2014 (including Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry at £7.445m);
- (g) the forecast had been amended to remove estimates in relation to 2013/14 and to incorporate income projections in respect of 2017/18 together with updated forecasts for the 2014-2018 period; the revised 2014-18 Capital budget for approval was £210.154m;

Following questions raised by members, it was reported that –

- (h) an additional cost of £629,000 had been incurred due to the discovery of asbestos whilst undertaking demolition works at the Mayflower car park;

- (i) a survey of the Council's estate was in progress to identify the priorities for maintaining the stock and meeting the contractual obligations in order to protect the level of rental income;
- (j) agency staffing figures were regularly reviewed to ensure that staff were being utilised appropriately; the strategic directors had been tasked to look at their spend on agency staff; the structures of areas with high levels of agency staff would be reviewed;
- (k) it had always been anticipated that driver behaviour would improve in relation to the enforcement of the bus lanes and as such the income stream would reduce;
- (l) The Council had been notified since the publication of the monitoring report that the bid to the Department of Education Innovation fund for £3.5m had been unsuccessful; the implications of not receiving the funding would need to be factored into next year's budget;
- (m) the work undertaken by EDGE within the GAME transformation programme related to the vehicle fleet and how to make better use of it across the Council; ie review routes, capitalise on vehicle 'dead time' etc;
- (n) the reported overspend included the savings achieved through the transformation programme.

The Board requested a summary of the rent occupancy levels, a comparison of numbers (for this year and the previous two years) per areas (eg individual industrial estates, City Centre, etc) and a comparison by year/per area of the number and amount of rent free/reduced years that had been offered.

The Board noted the report.

The Chair thanked Chris Randall (Head of Finance Operations) for attending the meeting.

85. **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 2 2014/15**

Peter Honeywell (Transformation Programme Manager) presented the corporate plan performance monitoring quarter 2 report, which highlighted the following key points –

- (a) the quarter 2 report outlined progress and emerging trends of the Corporate plan and progress of the new 50 Pledges;
- (b) the majority of the Corporate Plan key actions were on target to achieve their milestones in order that the outcomes were completed by the end of 2016/17;

- (c) of the 42 key actions -
 - one (K41) (not on target) (RED);
 - four (milestones had not been completed but there were mitigating factors which means that the outcome is not at risk (AMBER) (K27(B), K39, K44, K49);
- (d) of the 25 performance measures tracking outcomes of the Corporate Plan, the majority were performing well; one (P17 – the percentage of residents who believed they could influence decisions affecting their local area) was below target; action was being taken to find better ways of improving the measure;
- (e) 16 measures were performing well; the remaining five (P10, P18, P21, P22 and P23) were 15 percent or less below target; there were two performance measures which were still to be developed and no data currently existed;
- (f) the Local Government Ombudsman found that only 10 complaints out of 82 had been upheld.

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

- (g) whilst a number of the Pledges had been completed there were a number which remained outstanding; Pledge 19 would be completed in December following consideration by Cabinet;
- (h) an engagement campaign would be launched in January 2015 to encourage people to register to vote; the University of Plymouth had also undertaken a campaign to encourage its students to register;
- (i) it was acknowledged that the Your Plymouth Panel’s review of the Customer Service Strategy 2015-2018, chaired by Councillor Kate Taylor had achieved some good outcomes;
- (j) the data used for Pledge 17 (percent of residents who believe they can influence decisions affecting their local area) was based on historical surveys such as the ‘place survey’;
- (k) there was a focus within the Council’s Customer Service Strategy 2015-2018 for improving communications with its customers and making it easier for them to interact with the Council; work was being undertaken to enable the better use of small screen device when accessing Council services;
- (l) a total of 77 complaints/enquiries had been considered by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) in 2013/14; although the LGO had made 82 decision in 2013/14 (the discrepancy with the figures had

arisen as five complaints/enquiries had been received in the previous year 2012/13).

The Board requested information relating to –

- (m) the locations that had been identified within the city for 20mph zone schemes (Pledge 23);
- (n) looking at the process to make it easier for residents to participate in the online consultation for the Plymouth Plan;
- (o) the provision of a detailed breakdown of the complaints which had been upheld and those that had not which had been considered by the Local Government Ombudsman.

The Chair thanked Peter Honeywell (Transformation Programmes Manager) for attending the meeting.

86. **CALL-INS**

There were no call-ins to consider.

87. **URGENT EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

The Chair reported that he had signed an urgent executive decision relating to the Plymouth Adult and Community Learning Service (PACLS) – Business Case.

The item had been included in the Forward Plan published on 13 October 2014 as a key decision but since that date, legal advice had been received stating that confidential information would need to be presented to Cabinet on 11 November 2014, in order for members to make a decision. The item could not be delayed to the next Cabinet meeting on 9 December, as there would be insufficient time to implement the Project Plan and establish the new trading company (it was also a sub-section of the integrated health and wellbeing board programme which was also being considered by Cabinet on 11 November).

The Chair further advised that although the decision was urgent, it could still be called-in.

The Board noted the decision.

88. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Board agreed the recommendation received from the Working Plymouth Panel to permit it to respond to the city centre BID consultation process.

89. **CO-OPERATIVE REVIEW(S)**

There were no co-operative reviews to consider.

90. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.

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