

Cabinet

Tuesday 7 February 2017

PRESENT:

Councillor Bowyer, in the Chair.

Councillor Nicholson, Vice Chair.

Councillors Mrs Beer, Mrs Bowyer, Darcy, Downie, Jordan, Michael Leaves, Ricketts and Riley.

Also in attendance: Tracey Lee (Chief Executive), Carole Burgoyne (Strategic Director for People), Anthony Payne (Strategic Director for Place), Andrew Hardingham (Interim Joint Strategic Director for Transformation and Change (Finance)), Paul Looby (Head of Financial Planning and Reporting), David Northey (Head of Integrated Finance), David Draffan (Assistant Director for Economic Development), Charles Hackett (Chief Executive Officer, Mayflower 400), Councillors Bowie and Mrs Aspinall and Amelia Boulter (Democratic Support Officer).

Apologies for absence: Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health)

The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 5.00 pm.

Note: The full discussion can be viewed on the webcast of the City Council meeting at www.plymouth.gov.uk. At a future meeting, the Council 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 members in respect of items on the agenda.

58. **Minutes**

Agreed the minutes of the meeting held on the 17 January 2017.

59. **Questions from the Public**

Two questions were submitted by members of the public. Rhea Brooke and Nicky Williams were present at the meeting to ask their questions.

Question submitted by: Rhea Brooke
To the Cabinet Member for Culture – Councillor Jordan
Question: What equality analysis has been undertaken on each of the libraries proposed for closure and each of the proposed options for the future of library services and where a significant negative impact has been identified how will these be mitigated? When will this information be completed, published and available to the public?

The Consultation EIA states that an easy read format of the Plan for Libraries summary, large print and printable versions of the consultation document will be available on the website. As of the 28 January 2017 this was not available on the PCC website. When will the Cabinet Member rectify this omission and will he extend the consultation period in order that all members of the community have an equal timescale to respond to the consultation?

Has an accessibility audit been carried out on each of the library buildings? Where is this considered within the weighting factors in Appendix C? When will this information be completed, published and available to the public?

Where other venues are being proposed for the Library Service e.g. Click and Collect what assessment has been made of their accessibility including opening times etc.? Where venues such as Children's Centres are proposed what safeguarding assessment has been undertaken?

What specific considerations have been made to identify and mitigate against the impact on those with limited disposable income who are seeking employment for each of the libraries that are proposed to close?

Response:

Regarding Equalities Impact Assessment –

An Equality impact assessment (EIA) has been completed for the public consultation on Plan for Libraries proposal. Individual EIA's will be carried out on all libraries when the final proposal is submitted to Scrutiny Committee after the consultation ends

Regarding Accessible Formats -

We apologise that there has been a delay in providing the accessible formats as described through the EIA. Although we have not yet received any requests for an alternative format, we will ensure that an Easy Read version of the Plan for Libraries summary is available by Friday 24 February in our libraries and on the website. We will also ensure that the large print version of the consultation documentation is available in libraries by Friday 17 Feb. The documentation can be made available in different languages and braille upon request. Printable versions of the consultation documentation are already available on the website and in all our libraries. Our library staff are fully trained to assist members of the public to complete the consultation online.

The survey software the Council uses complies with the minimum accessibility standards as set out by the government. The consultation portal will work with screen readers such as Browse Aloud - and the font size can be increased on the screen for the visually impaired. The company that provides the consultation portal does not currently provide a list of additional accessibility software that is compatible. However, if someone raises a specific accessibility software request with the Council, then it can be put forward for consideration to their Product Manager.

The consultation period will run until Wednesday 19 April and will not be extended. It is considered that members of the public who require an accessible format will still have sufficient time to contribute their views to the consultation. Indeed we are putting in extra measures as above to encourage their engagement.

Regarding Accessibility and Alternative Premises -

Accessibility audits were undertaken on existing libraries when the Accessibility and Equality Act 2010 was introduced. All libraries constructed or redeveloped after 2010, comply with Part M of Building Regulations 2010 (amended in 2016). Accessibility Audits have been carried out by Disabled Go on all of the libraries apart from Central Library. These were carried out by their independent surveyors.

A full accessibility assessment of alternative premises will be made when the Plan for Libraries proposal is being finalised. Consideration will be taken on any premises accessibility. We welcome suggestions on alternative premises from the Public and Councillors, These will be assessed on their accessibility and suitability. Before agreeing outreach venues, advice will be sought from the PCC Early Years Team to ensure that the proposed service delivered from the Children's Centre is appropriate and fulfils safeguarding requirements

Regarding access to Information Technology –

Our proposal will ensure a minimum of 12 public access PC's at each location. (Central library has 42 PC's) This will enable us to provide quality job clubs in each of the 7 proposed locations with trained library staff and partner organisations. The Library Conversation told us that 72% would like help with job seeking and 71% with digital skills training, so we propose to develop a consistent and enhanced offer addressing these requests.

Question submitted by: Nicky Williams

To the Cabinet Member for Culture – Councillor Jordan

Question:

In what week was the library visit survey carried out, what was the methodology and why were those dates chosen?

Why has the Council chosen to use demography from the 2011 census rather than the 2015 population data used by the Office for National Statistics? How will the impact of proposed neighbourhood population trends for the next 10-15 years be included e.g. rising birth rates, housing growth?

Where within the weighting factors (Appendix C) is consideration given to the location and relationship between the existing library and other neighbourhood and community facilities as well as the specific needs of different demographic groups other than by age?

Is the Cabinet Member for Culture able to confirm that closing Efford library will not result in significant monies having to be repaid to the DCLG and the EU who helped support building the scheme?

What is the financial impact on local residents of the cost of travelling by public transport to the remaining 10 proposed locality libraries from the neighbourhoods where there are proposed library closures, given that 2/3rds of visitors walk to their local library?

The School Library Service has been ruled out of the scope of this consultation. Which schools access the City Council Library Service and what is the cost to the Council of providing this service?

Some schools will have based their annual (three year) budget plans on children being able to access their local library during the school day. What formal consultation has been undertaken with schools in the proximity of libraries proposed for closure?

Response;

Regarding the library visit survey -

The library visit survey was carried out on w/c 18th May 2015 and w/c 16 Nov 2015. These surveys are carried out in the same months every year. These dates were chosen because they represent an average week i.e. not school holidays. The methodology used is that library staff and volunteers manually record every person that enters the library. This is national standard practice which is reported to CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy)

Regarding demographic data -

We have chosen Census data as it is nationally recognised as comprehensive and robust. The Plymouth Plan provides information on future trends which will be taken into account as well as library specific information e.g. Conversation. Most of the libraries identified to remain in the Plan for Libraries proposal are located in or are close to the three growth areas identified in the Plymouth Plan. St Budeaux library is the exception

We consider that to not apply weighting was the fairest way to interpret the data across the ten criteria. The Equality Impact Assessment carried out on every library will address factors such as demographics, literacy levels, language needs etc. It is expected that the development of the outreach service will address the potential partnerships with community facilities and needs of different demographic groups

Regarding Efford Library -

Efford neighbourhood did benefit from South West Regional Development Agency Funding for some regeneration initiatives. It is not possible at this stage to confirm whether any monies will need to be repaid. Due diligence will be undertaken to ensure that any monies are repaid where required.

Regarding Financial Impact on Library Users -

80% of our current users use the 7 libraries proposed for staying open. For the remaining 20% of current users and new users we feel that having a library within a 2 mile radius of an household is an acceptable offer. We would also encourage members of the public to use the on line service. Enhancing the digital offer is a key part of this Plan for Libraries proposal

Regarding the Schools Library Service -

Our proposals do not affect the school library service. The schools library service is a traded service and information regarding budgets is restricted as it is commercially sensitive. We are in the process of engaging with all schools and encouraging their feedback on any concerns

60. Chair's Urgent Business

There were no items of Chair's Urgent Business.

61. Mayflower 400 National Trails Programme

Councillor Jordan introduced the Mayflower 400 Trails Programme and highlighted that the funding would go towards developing historic trails so that visitors could follow in the footsteps of the Pilgrim Fathers, the renovation of two Elizabethan houses on the Barbican and a new Mayflower monument as well as maximising the anniversary of the Mayflower 400.

Cabinet agreed to –

1. Commit to leading and participating in the National Trail Programme of heritage and cultural works and activities to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the sailing of the Pilgrim Fathers to America on the Mayflower 400 ship in 2020 and the other necessary supporting projects outlined in this report.
2. Recommend provision of £5m to be included in the Council's Capital Budget to deliver the project. Procurement activities and contract award decisions in relation to the projects will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Constitution. Given the prestigious nature and firm timeline associated with the anniversary, early engagement with procurement should be undertaken to develop a pipeline of activity.
3. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director for Place to submit funding bids to support these projects including bids to the Heritage Lottery Fund, Arts Council, and Coastal Communities Fund using up to £5m of Council funding for match funding/leverage requirements.
4. Note that there will be a revenue requirement to the National Trail. The ongoing maintenance requirements will be confirmed in the project Business Case(s) considered by the Leader before the funding is committed to the Capital Programme.

62. **Response to the Budget Scrutiny Report on the Budget 2017 - 18**

The Leader welcomed Councillor Bowie, Chair of Place and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Councillor Mrs Aspinall, Chair of Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Following agreement at the Co-operative Scrutiny Board in 2015 both Scrutiny Committees have scrutinised the budget through two short sessions. This follows the significant scrutiny which took place on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) in the autumn and scrutiny of major policy decisions which has been ongoing throughout the year.

The Place and Corporate Scrutiny Committee considered that the budget presented was not sufficiently detailed and as such the Committee was unable to judge whether the Draft Budget was effective and in line within the Corporate Plan, and has recommendations on how the budget should be broken down in the interests of openness and transparency.

The Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee raised significant concern on whether a sustainable, quality service and savings could be delivered in 2017/18 given rising demand and chronic underfunding of services by national government. As such the Committee recommends to full council to call upon national government to deliver a fair and sustainable settlement for the future of local social care.

Thanks were given to all of the members involved throughout the scrutiny of the budget.

Councillor Darcy provided a response to the recommendations made by the scrutiny committees.

Response to Place and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Recommendations -

Recommendations	Response
1. To thank the Executive, Senior Management Team and Scrutiny Councillors for their patience and contribution to the process.	I would also like to thank Members of the Scrutiny Committee for all their hard work and contribution to the budget process and thank officers for their hard work in bringing forward the budget proposals.
2. That the Committee considered that the budget documentation presented was not sufficiently detailed and as such the Committee was unable to judge whether the Draft Budget was effective and in line within the Corporate Plan.	Members received a number of policy and financial reports which have culminated in the budget Scrutiny meetings. The Medium Term Financial Strategy is the key financial planning document and supports the Corporate Plan and delivery of Plymouth's priorities.
3. To recommend to Cabinet that the budget, when presented to council should include, a breakdown of proposed 2017/18 budget levels across departments and that transformation stretch savings and efficiencies in 2017/18 must be presented with some comment on how those savings are likely to be made.	Accepted. Further details will be provided within the Budget report to Council on 27 February 2017.

Recommendations	Response
4. To establish a standing Select Committee on the Budget.	Accepted.
5. To note that a four year settlement has now been accepted by the city council and recommend to the cabinet member for finance that the draft budget for 2018/19 is presented to cabinet in September to enable scrutiny of the draft budget to be completed by the standing select committee by January 2018.	The four year settlement does provide the City Council with greater clarity as to its financial planning. I will discuss with the Section 151 Officer to report back on a timetable for the draft 2018/19 budget.
6. To recommend to the Cabinet Member for Finance that, working with the Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance and the standing Select Committee, a Budget template is developed for clear and consistent annual reporting of proposed budgets which is accessible by members of the public and is provides a sufficiently detailed budget and savings proposals for meaningful scrutiny.	I will discuss with the Section 151 Officer any revised reporting requirements with respect to the budget and information presented to Scrutiny Committees.

Response to Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee Recommendations -

Recommendations	Response
1. To thank the Executive, Senior management Team and Scrutiny Councillors for their patience and contribution to the process.	I would also like to thank Members of the Scrutiny Committee for all their hard work and contribution to the budget process and thank officers for their hard work in bringing forward the budget proposals.
2. To note the draft report.	Noted.
3. Express the Committee's significant concern on whether a sustainable, quality service and savings can be delivered in 2017/18 given rising demand on chronic underfunding of services by national government. As such recommend to council to call upon national government to deliver a fair and sustainable settlement for the future of local social care.	The City Council will continue to lobby government and press for a sustainable local term funding package to meet the increasing demands and pressures within adult social care and will continue to work with our health partners to provide an efficient service that meets the needs of local residents.

63. **Budget 2017 - 18**

Councillor Darcy presented the Budget 2017 – 18 which sets out the resources available to deliver the Corporate Plan. The Cabinet are also required to recommend the 2017/18 Budget to Council.

Cabinet agreed –

1. That Cabinet recommends the 2017/18 Budget to Council.
2. That Cabinet recommends the 2017/18 Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy to Council.
3. That Cabinet recommends the increased Capital Budget of £861m to Council.
4. The Medium Term Financial Strategy to be updated to reflect the new Capital Budget.

64. **Capital and Revenue Monitoring Report 2016/17 – Quarter 3**

Councillor Darcy presented the Capital and Revenue Monitoring Report 2016/17 – Quarter 3 that outlines the finance monitoring position of the Council as at the end of December 2016.

Cabinet agreed to –

1. Note the current revenue monitoring position and action plans in place to reduce/mitigate shortfalls.
2. Approve the non-delegated revenue budget virements (shown in Table 5).
3. Increase the Capital Budget 2016-21 is increased to £478m (shown in Table 6).