

Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 10 October 2018

PRESENT:

Councillor Ball, in the Chair.

Councillor Winter, Vice Chair.

Councillors Darcy, Derrick, Kelly, Singh, R Smith, Kate Taylor and Vincent.

Also in attendance: Councillor Dann (Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene), Lou Hayward (Service Director for Street Services), Andrew Loton (Senior Performance Advisor), Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) and Helen Prendergast (Democratic Advisor).

The meeting started at 3.00 pm and finished at 4.50 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the Panel 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.

15. **Declarations of Interest**

In accordance with the code of conduct, Councillor Kate Taylor declared a personal interest (minute 20 refers) as she was an employee of Livewell South West.

16. **Minutes**

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 August 2018 are confirmed as a correct record.

17. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

18. **Street Services Key Performance Indicators including an Update on Pledges 90, 93 and 94 and Tree Maintenance including an Update on Pledge 98**

Councillor Dann (Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene) and Lou Hayward (Service Director for Street Services) presented the Street Services key performance indicators, tree maintenance and an update on Pledges 90, 93, 94 and 98 report.

The following key areas of the report were highlighted –

- (a) the Plan for Trees public engagement event had run from 20 August 2018 to 16 September 2018; during this period a total of 1105 individual responses had been received;
- (b) the results of the engagement exercise would help to shape the City's Plan for Trees and the delivery plan which would set out how the tree maintenance backlog would be tackled, as well as, establishing a new cyclical maintenance programme;
- (c) in the City there were an estimated 40,000 street trees, 200ha of woodlands as well as trees within parks and greenspaces; over 380 trees required immediate attention and over 1000 trees had been identified as having an issue; a full audit of the City's tree stock would need to be undertaken;
- (d) the introduction of the Street Services Information Management System (SSIMS) which through a combination of technology, handheld devices and better data management would assist in transforming how frontline services worked.

The key areas of questioning from Members related to –

- (e) the process that would be adopted for trees that required maintenance work within conservation areas;
- (f) whether consideration would be given to the appropriate type of tree would be planted in certain areas, in order to avoid the current situation of pavements lifting due to tree roots;
- (g) the cost and the impact on the Council's insurance premium regarding tree damage to buildings;
- (h) whether a target had been set for the number of responses received regarding the tree engagement exercise and whether the feedback had been meaningful due to the small percentage of responses that had been received;
- (i) whether there was currently a budget for tree maintenance;
- (j) what measures had been put in place to address the increase in missed bin collections in May, June, July and August 2018;
- (k) the breakdown of calls received regarding Waste Services (ie, complaints, enquiries, etc);
- (l) what enforcement measures were in place to prevent persistent offenders from fly tipping;

- (m) whether there were plans to roll out communal bins in similar areas as in the Drake ward;
- (n) whether there were plans to undertake further meetings across the City at which residents could raise their concerns;
- (o) whilst the audit of trees was being undertaken (which could take a considerable number of months) would the programme of tree maintenance works continue;
- (p) whether the number of calls received included self-service information;
- (q) how benchmarking for street cleanliness was undertaken and what target had been set for Plymouth;
- (r) what measures were being put in place to increase recycling rates within the City.

The Committee noted the report.

The Committee agreed that –

- (1) the pilot scheme for the Street Services Information Management System is scheduled for a future meeting of the Committee (the Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene to provide the timeline for this item);
- (2) data is sought from the Service Director for Customer Services regarding the breakdown of calls received for Waste Services (ie complaints, enquiries, other).

19. **Corporate Plan 2018-22 - Quarter One 2018/19 Update**

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) and Andrew Loton (Senior Performance Advisor) presented the Corporate Plan 2018-22 – quarter one 2018/19. The report provided analysis of quarter one (May to July) performance against the Council's key performance indicators. The report was in a new format for the Corporate Plan to help improve transparency and clarity.

The KPIs had been reviewed with a view to embedding an outcome-focussed performance and learning culture which placed customers at the heart of all that the Council did. Over half the KPIs in the Corporate Plan were new with a specific focus on the Council's contribution to the City and its impact on residents and businesses.

All service level business plans were in the process of being updated to reflect the new Corporate Plan and a refresh of service level balance scorecards would take place to support this.

The key areas of questioning from Members related to whether –

- (a) the new burdens funding (approximately £371,876) would take some pressure off the Council's homelessness budget, considering the high level of homelessness within the City;
- (b) further information could be provided relating to the Plymouth City Survey such as, how many surveys were circulated, how was this achieved and the upkeep of the responses;
- (c) an additional performance indicator for rough sleepers could be included within the report to help clearly identify the number of rough sleepers as currently this was not clear within the report.

The Committee welcomed and supported the new format and the aim of the report. Whilst this was not a reflection on the report, Councillors considered that they were unable to question the appropriate Cabinet Members on areas of concern both within their respective remit and also providing an opportunity for the other scrutiny committees to be able to do the same.

Concerns were raised regarding the following issues –

- (d) 'statutory complaints completed within timescales' - 77% of children and young people complaints received had not been closed within the expected timescales;
- (e) 'percentage of council tax collected' – a gap in the council tax collected and the target of 28.85% had been identified, what was the monetary value of the gap and what was the impact on the overall budget;
- (f) 'average number of households in bed and breakfast accommodation' – the use of bed and breakfast had shown an increase rather than a reduction;
- (g) 'proportion of residents who feel safe' – 47% of 16-24 year olds felt unsafe after dark in the City.

The Committee noted the report.

The Committee agreed to -

- (1) request that a separate performance indicator is included within the report to clearly identify the number of rough sleepers in the City in relation to 'number of households prevented from becoming homeless';
- (2) provide an opportunity for the other scrutiny committees to scrutinise areas of concern within their remit;

- (3) circulate the Corporate Plan in a timely manner, in order to provide Members of the Committee sufficient time to identify areas of concern (within its remit) and request that the relevant Cabinet Members and officers attend the meeting , in order to be better able to undertake efficient scrutiny.

20. **Finance Monthly Report - Month 4**

The Chair advised that neither the Cabinet Member or officers would be present for the monthly finance reports, however they would be available for the quarterly reports. The report had been circulated to the Committee via email in advance of the meeting.

Councillor Darcy registered his disappointment at not having the opportunity to scrutinise the monthly report with the Cabinet Members and officers present.

Councillor Derrick considered that it would be helpful if the report could indicate the changes from month to month.

The Committee agreed to request officers to provide additional information within the report indicating the changes from month to month.

21. **Work Programme**

The Chair advised that a potential date had been identified for the select committee review to consider the Gypsy Roma and Travellers unauthorised encampments. Further information would be provided once a date had been confirmed.

Councillor Kate Taylor requested that the joint select committee review for homelessness be progressed.

The Committee noted its work programme for 2018/19 and agreed to schedule the joint select committee review (with the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee) on homelessness in March 2019.

22. **Tracking Decisions**

The Committee noted the progress of its decisions.

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