

Summary of the minute of each PDS Panel's discussion of Directorate Plans in November 2015

CTE Panel

Directorate Plan for Place – CTE Panel Comments

Louise Fradd, Strategic Director for Place introduced the item. She explained that this month (November 2015) the PDS Panels will be looking at the initial plans. She further explained that Appendix 4 sets out the main financial implications and forms the beginning of a 4 year budget plan.

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Romero asked about the Waste Strategy and has concerns about an increase in landfill tax. The Director explained that the Waste Contract is coming to an end and there will be a review of Waste Services, she assured the Panel that recycling is a key target and will continue to have prominence.

Councillor Romero stated that this Panel is charged with looking at transport options so she suggests that the bullet on the East of Bath Park and Ride should be changed to an aspiration. The Director agreed that it should be reworded in line with the motion agreed at Council. Councillor Carr suggested the wording should not presume an outcome (eg. Park and Ride).

Councillor Bull asked about the reduction in 'Economy and Culture'. The Director explained that this is linked to changes in grants. She further explained that the Council is looking at bringing all grants together, this will be phased and events that will help the economy will be targeted. Councillor Carr commented that we should only cut grants to events that are capable of self-sustaining rather than just keeping the ones that make money. The Director assured the Panel that the Council does work with organisations in this way.

The Panel discussed Transport Services, the Director explained that part of the Strategic Review would be to identify bus routes that originally needed a subsidy but are now commercial so do not need this anymore. This will mean there is an overall saving for the authority. Councillor Jackson raised a concern about cutting rural bus routes, the Director explained that this is only about cutting subsidies to routes that are now viable.

In response to a query from Councillor Butters regarding the WIFI network, the Director explained that she is finalising the business case now and the first phase is to install receivers and obtain an income from advertising the second phase is to rent out the Councils own infrastructure/ducts to service providers.

Councillor Butters gave an example of a bus service currently subsidised by Wiltshire Council which is desirable for this Council to continue, he flagged up

that this authority may need to step in if another Council withdraws a service. The Director stated that each decision is taken on its merits.

Councillor Bull mentioned the loss of Government Grant and asked if this may mean two weekly waste collections in the future. The Director referred to the planned Waste Review where many different options will be considered, she explained that a major issue is replacing the vehicles.

Councillor Romero asked if the Panel could see the detailed business plans. The Resources Director reminded the Panel that they could ask about specific issues.

The Chair summed up the areas of feedback that the Panel had highlighted:

The robustness of income generating prospects:

- Wifi;
- Energy; and
- Grants to events (income from other events)

Directorate Plan for Resources – CTE Panel Comments

Andrew Pate, Strategic Director for Resources introduced the item, reminding the Panel of the items within their remit contained within the Resources Directorate Plan (Community Safety; Libraries; Sustainability and Big Society/Communities). He explained that this month (November 2015) the PDS Panels will be looking at the initial plans. He further explained that Appendix 4 sets out the main financial implications and form the beginning of a 4 year budget plan. He concluded that there was considerable pressure on the Council finances and that there is an emphasis on growing income.

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Butters congratulated the Director on the work in the Plan and asked if any country wide research had been done. The Director explained that the Council is alive to what is happening elsewhere tries to learn from best practice. He further explained that the impact on frontline services here has been a lot less than on other authorities.

Councillor Hale asked for reassurance that everything will be done to protect jobs. He also queried the sentence on page 55 about prevention of 'customer demand' and asked if this meant a move towards low human contact in frontline services. The Director explained that the Council record on redundancies is good and there is a redeployment policy but that he could give no guarantees beyond 2016/17. Regarding the query on 'customer demand' the Director explained that a lot of people prefer to use online services that have 24 hour access and there had been investment in One Stop Shops for those who need support. He also explained that 'lean systems thinking' refers to simplifying processes and cutting red tape.

In response to a query from Councillor Romero on consultants, the Director explained that consultants are used only where the skills are needed at specific times and that this is discussed at the Resources PDS Panel. He further explained that there is a good procurement framework and external and internal references are taken. Councillor Hale asked if there is a breakdown of consultancy fees paid, the Director explained that consultants are used in exceptional circumstances and usually within one off projects so figures would be shown within the figures for each project.

In response to a query from Councillor Butters about Parish and Town Council precepts, the Director explained that this is an area where the authority is looking at working in partnership.

The Panel looked at Appendix 3 – Capital Programme. Councillor Romero asked when the business cases would be visible, the Director explained that there are two levels of approval and a business case is needed before it is taken to Cabinet. He further explained that refinancing details are within the 2016/17 proposals, there is a new approach to how Capital schemes are financed.

Councillor Bull asked about the creation of a new property company to provide market rate housing to rent. The Director explained that there is a strong demand for rented accommodation and that the Council has access to good finance rates so is in a good position. Councillor Charles Gerrish, Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency added that the Council is fortunate in having substantial commercial estate with vacant floors upstairs so can meet a need while making good use of assets. Councillor Carr asked if the property company is focusing on a particular target market and if there are policies in place to help us to be a good landlord. The Director explained that the details of the scheme and business plan will be brought to the December meeting of the Cabinet. The Cabinet Member added that he believed that the authority should be a good landlord and that the company will have elected Members on board to represent residents. Councillor Carr asked if there is consultation regarding housing over shops. The Cabinet Member reassured the Panel that there would be appropriate engagement if there is a perceived issue.

Resources Panel

Directorate Plan for Resources

The Strategic Director for Resources, Andrew Pate introduced the Directorate Plan. He informed the Panel that representatives from the Resources Department are present at the meeting to answer questions and he highlighted the key documents in the plan. He explained that Appendix 4 contained the detail on any financial changes.

The Divisional Director for Finance, Tim Richens explained that the Government spending review had been announced today and he would be going through the details in the next few days. He explained that some assumptions had to be made in the papers and also that these documents contain a one year budget plan with a direction of travel for future years.

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Barrett asked if there is a timescale to report back on each area so that members can monitor the targets. The Cabinet Member explained that a quarterly report on performance against the budget is produced and taken to the Cabinet. There was some discussion around the Panel viewing the budget monitoring reports, the officer explained that the reports are in the public domain and accessible to Panel members. The Strategic Director explained that the information could be shared with the Panel but it would be after it had been considered by the Cabinet, it could be left up to the Chair if it is put on the next available meeting for the Panel.

Following a question from Councillor Becker, the Cabinet Member explained that a quarterly report is a snapshot at a certain date whereas a budget is an average over 12 months.

Councillor Becker asked if members will be briefed on any changes brought about by the changes in Local Government and funding from the Government. The Divisional Director stated that he would be in a position to brief members in the new year.

Councillor Andy Furse asked for further explanation on the following issues in Appendix 1:

- Page 21 'Continue to invest in sustainable energy initiatives...'
- Page 22 'Align school meals service with changing needs of schools ...'
- Page 23 'Explore further opportunities to collaborate better with other public sector partners'.

The Cabinet Member explained that the authority will continue to support sustainable energy initiatives where other projects come forward.

The Strategic Director explained that regarding school meals, the demand from schools changes which is adapted to. Regarding Community Meals, he explained the potential impact of 'Your Care Your Way'. He explained that VAT has now been levied on this service.

The Divisional Director for Strategy and Performance explained that there are many examples of collaboration with other authorities such as in adoption and fostering services. The Cabinet Member added that he has met with Wiltshire and will be meeting with North Somerset in January. He also mentioned that there is an example of collaboration on a large scale around Community

Health and Social Care and the Pension Service is across the whole South West.

Appendix 4

Councillor Goodman asked if the amount shown for the Property Company (p33) is for planned conversions. The Strategic Director explained that all the details of the Property Company would be in a detailed report for the Cabinet next week. Councillor Barrett asked if this company would work alongside Curo. The Cabinet Member explained that Curo is social housing and the proposed Property Company would be concerned with flats above shops in the commercial estate and there would be the potential for new housing developments on Council land where this is in line with planning policy. Councillor Barrett asked if the Property Company will be outsourced, the Cabinet Member replied that an outside agency will manage the day to day lettings and maintenance the Company.

Councillor Dando asked if he could view a template for business cases anywhere. The Divisional Director for Finance commented that there is a template and that the Property Company business case (discussed above) would be available in the papers for the Cabinet meeting next week.

Councillor Dando asked if risk mitigation is considered as part of completing the business case, the Divisional Director explained that yes it is, the Treasury Better Business Case Model has been adopted. He further explained that each business case would be held by the relevant project and can be requested as a background paper.

Councillor Furse commented that bringing properties back in to use is good but maybe some over the shop properties could be brought onto the market for key workers as full market rent may outprice service professionals. The Cabinet Member stated that the Council must assess the type of demand further down the line and this point can be taken into account then. The Strategic Director explained that if the Property Company built housing in the future, the normal affordable housing policy would apply.

Councillor Furse pointed to the 2nd bullet on page 35 regarding service recharges, he stated that it is implied that the current borrowing approach is wrong. The Divisional Director explained that 'service supported borrowing' was a policy in the past but times are different (eg. current low interest rates) and a different climate must be recognised.

In response to a query from Councillor Barrett, the Divisional Director for Customer Services, Ian Savigar explained that Universal Credit will replace housing benefit and there will be funding for the associated administration costs.

Councillor Becker asked if the current low interest rates benefit the Council. The Cabinet Member explained that where the Council seeks to borrow to invest – low rates are beneficial. There is a small return on large balances though so the Council has used its own money to fund some projects. If the rates rise, the Treasury Management Team to deal with buffering the effects of this. He added that a Treasury Management report would be coming to the Council meeting in December 2015.

PHED Panel

Directorate Plan for Place

The Strategic Director for Place introduced this item to the Panel. She explained that a new Corporate Strategy was agreed by Cabinet at their meeting on 4th November 2015 and that it sets out the vision and the Council's direction of travel over the next four years. She added that it is shaped by and will deliver the 'Putting Residents First' manifesto commitments.

She stated that during November, the draft Directorate Plans will be presented to the Policy Development and Scrutiny (PDS) Panels and that each Panel should only concentrate on the parts of the plan relevant to their own remit.

She said that a number of Budget Fair meetings have been scheduled during November in order to provide people with the opportunity to hear about the Council's financial plans for the next four years. There will be an opportunity to ask questions and feed into the discussions on the budget proposals at the meetings.

She informed the Panel that in terms of workforce it is possible that there may be a small number of posts reductions as a result of the proposals put forward and there may also be requirements to amend working patterns. She added that there will be a shift in skills requirements towards a commercial skills focus in order to maximise income generating opportunities and there will be a refocus of skills usage to ensure most efficient and effective use of staff resources.

She stated that initial Financial Planning work to look at the future scale of financial challenge for the Council originally estimated that the likely savings, or additional income required, would be around £38M for this 4-year period. The position has been reviewed in light of both local and national decisions and announcements resulting in a reduction in the estimated financial planning target to just over £30M.

Councillor Lisa O'Brien asked with regard to the delivery of 2,880 new homes by 2018/19 whether developers would be penalised if they had not built the properties they had gained permission for.

The Strategic Director for Place replied that this was not normally a problem, but the Council does not have any powers to penalise developers.

Councillor Lisa O'Brien asked if different social housing providers could be encouraged to take part in the planned delivery of 720 affordable homes by March 2019.

The Strategic Director for Place replied that they do work with various providers, but it is the case that Curo is the largest provider in the area.

The Head of Housing replied that it is the choice of the developer who they work with and that the Council works with a number of providers through the Homes West Partnership. He added that he would welcome further competition to the market.

Councillor Colin Blackburn stated that he was concerned over some of the proposed cuts and asked how income would be generated.

The Strategic Director for Place replied that she had identified a number of key risks within the report and that one of them was a lack of capacity and recruitment difficulties within specific service areas and that this was primarily within engineering. She added that income would be generated by developing the Digital and WIFI network across B&NES to provide WIFI and improved connectivity across the district to generate additional incomes of £100,000 in 2016/17, potentially growing by a further estimated £1,000,000 by 2019/20.

She said that the Bath Quays development of office, retail and residential spaces has the objective of generating substantial future year incomes estimated at £1,200,000 by 2019/20.

Councillor Colin Blackburn asked if the Council had considered moving to fortnightly waste collections.

The Strategic Director for Place replied that the current contract ends in 2017 and that matters relating to sites and vehicles are currently under review.

Councillor Barry Macrae asked if some of the dates within the report were accurate and suggested that they may need some revision. He asked how many Neighbourhood Plans would be completed by December 2015.

The Strategic Director for Place replied that three had been completed and acknowledged that there were more to do, she said that she would review this part of the report.

Councillor Barry Macrae asked how many jobs would be created on the Bath Quays North and South development.

The Divisional Director for Community Regeneration replied that the intention is to create 2,500 jobs across the site. He added that services across the

directorate would look to be procured more efficiently and that another 'market' type event may be held at another time of the year.

Councillor Macrae asked if this would be of benefit to the community.

The Divisional Director for Community Regeneration replied that it is the initial intention to involve the residents more in the event.

The Chairman asked if local salaries were likely to increase.

The Divisional Director for Community Regeneration replied that they are not as high as we would like them to be.

Councillor Colin Blackburn asked how they would make the planned efficiencies within the directorate.

The Strategic Director for Place replied that they were pursuing extending the conversion of street lighting units to LEDs and introducing dimming technology to reduce energy consumption and maintenance costs. She said that this is expected to result in recurring annual savings of £83,000 in 2016/17 growing to £106,000 by 2017/18.

She added that they intended to bring housing support services currently outsourced for Disabled Facilities Grant in house to maximise use of existing skills and reduce commissioning costs and that this was expected to generate budget reductions of £25,000 from 2016/17.

Councillor Lisa O'Brien asked for a little further information regarding the decision to stop printing & posting applications for Parish Consultations.

Councillor Charles Gerrish, Cabinet Member for Finance & Efficiency replied that discussions have been held with the Parish Councils and that routine applications will be communicated electronically and that major ones will be distributed in hard copy.

The Chairman asked if an increase in income could be generated by increasing the fees within Homesearch.

The Head of Housing replied that there is currently a charge of £15 per letting applicable to the relevant Housing Association and that the Council was looking to increase that figure.

Councillor Fiona Darey asked how the pre application review service for Planning Services was working.

The Strategic Director for Place replied that it was working well currently and resulting in shorter reports.

Councillor Colin Blackburn commented that he would like to know of any changes to staff as a result of the plan.

Councillor Charles Gerrish asked for the Panel to contact him if they have further comments on the plan.

Children and Young People Panel

Directorate Plan for People and Communities

The Chair asked from which budget the £2.4m associated with increased employer's national insurance contributions would come.

The People & Communities Director replied that this was sum that would be sourced from the central corporate budget.

Councillor Alison Millar asked how much of a budget impact will there be to the Council when it welcomes Syrian refugees to the area.

The People & Communities Director replied that the key first step is housing and they will need access to good interpretation services in order that we can fully assess the needs of each family member. We can then access families into the services needed including health and education. He added that Government funding is allocated for one year. He stated that it is likely that families will present with a high degree of need given the trauma and dislocation they have suffered and that he had been pleased to hear that some schools will breach their admission numbers if required in order to admit any children.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if the Panel could receive the Alternative Provision Strategy at their next meeting.

The People & Communities Director replied that they could and said that the plan is to double the amount of provision.

The Chair asked how accurate can officers be with regard to their growth assumptions for the area.

The People & Communities Director replied that birth data is used and analysed as the children grow and their care needs change.

The Chair asked for an explanation of the efficiency savings of £450,000 relating to substance misuse and £50,000 relating to sexual health.

The People & Communities Director replied that these figures were regarding adults and related to how the Council manages its resources and the ability to signpost people to services. He added that he did not anticipate an adverse effect on Children & Young People.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if a direct grant to the Music Service was to cease and if so would more children have to pay for lessons.

The People & Communities Director replied that the service was moving towards becoming self-funded and that a grant was available from central Government. He added that the majority of music lessons have always had to be paid for.

The Chair asked if the Panel could see a draft three year plan at their January meeting.

The People & Communities Director replied that clear figures would be available for 2016 / 17. He added that care placement costs would be a focus as we move forward.

Health and Wellbeing Select Committee

Directorate Plan for People and Communities

The Chairman invited Jane Shayler (Director, Adult Care & Health Commissioning) to introduce the report.

Jane Shayler explained that this report sets out the framework for the service planning and budget processes which lead up to the statutory and legal requirement for the Council to set a budget in February 2016. Proportionate equality analysis is being carried out on the proposals within the Directorate Plans.

Jane Shayler explained that there is a single Directorate Plan for People & Communities, which covers all ages. It has also been presented by Ashley Ayre to the Children & Young Peoples' PDS Panel. She would, therefore, focus on the Adult Care and Community Health part of the plan which encompasses provision of statutory services under the Care Act 2014, provision of residential and nursing care, re-ablement, domiciliary care, community mental health services, drug & alcohol treatment, rehabilitation and preventative support, and social work services for people with learning disability or mental health needs and those in intensive supported living and extra care services. I would also provide the provision of preventative services which prevent, reduce or delay care and support needs and slow the escalation of costs in meeting individual care and support needs; delivery of services which support the effective functioning of the wider NHS system and prevent unnecessary hospital admissions or delays to discharge from hospital; securing either directly or through commissioning of the services required to discharge all duties.

Jane Shayler took the Panel through Appendix 4 of the report (Finance & Resource Impacts) and highlighted £450k proposal for Substance Misuse which would involve contract re-negotiation and overall would be likely to

impact on provider organisations with some reduction of staff in those organisations.

The Panel highlighted the following points:

Councillor Ball expressed his concern in reduction of Substance Misuse services. Councillor Ball added that he was aware that the DHI (Developing Health and Independence) had struggled to cope with existing pressure, especially with people who were on waiting list for the programme. It would have a knock on effect if people would not be able to access services. Councillor Ball said the taking £450k out of Substance Misuse services could have large impact on the community where people, who were in detox, live. Councillor Ball concluded by saying that some reduction in services must be considered, but £450k may be a little bit too much for Substance Misuse services.

Jane Shayler acknowledged that there is a risk in terms of increased waiting times for services and on wider implications. Both providers and the commissioners were satisfied that proposals could mitigate those impacts through service redesign, efficiencies from co-location of services to reduce accommodation costs, some reduction in management costs, and a shift from residential to community detox and rehabilitation. People who go through detox would need to be properly motivated, whether it is residential or community detox.

Councillor Gerrish (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources) commented that he viewed the changes as improvements and cited the proposal to offer fewer one-to-one sessions and more group work where peers could support each other. Councillor Gerrish also said that there would be a reduction in management side by bringing two organisations to work together, which would not result in reduction of the front line staff.

Councillor May said that he had worked with Councillor Gerrish on the Council's budget. Councillor May also said that officers should be given credit for setting up these proposals and that practical approach in working with people in detox in the community was, in his experience, preferable to placing people in residential institutions away from their community.

Councillor Organ asked if Transition services (from childhood to adulthood) had improved.

Jane Shayler responded that Transition services had improved significantly. Some years ago, after one Government assessment, B&NES had been placed in the bottom quartile. However, after the last assessment B&NES had moved to the top quartile.

Councillor Jackson expressed her concern on the last paragraph of page 56 of the report 'Greater targeting of prevention and early-intervention services may impact on access to such services for those people with lower level needs. There is also likely to be a reduction in the range and type of services

offered and, therefore, the options given to individuals over the type of service put in place to meet their assessed, eligible care and support needs.' Councillor Jackson believed that this could result in increased Delayed Transfers of Care from hospital

Councillor Jackson asked what we would lose under service redesign in 'Healthy lives, healthy people: community small grants scheme £22k' (page 57).

Councillor Jackson also asked how Public Health intelligence work and remodelling public health programme would save £13k.

Jane Shayler replied that there had been challenges on the delayed transfers of care and this was a particular issue in relation to community hospitals discharge as the community hospitals play an important part in facilitating discharge from the RUH but then it can prove difficult to identify a package or placement as the people being discharged from the community hospitals have complex needs and require ongoing intensive support. Jane acknowledged that there are growing difficulties in Domiciliary Care capacity, particularly in some geographical areas within B&NES and for people with particularly complex needs. Recently, an cloud-based IT system had been developed to match individual need with available domiciliary care capacity. The system had improved the speed at which an individual's assessed needs are matched with a domiciliary care providers able to meet those needs. The system is also gathering valuable information on the geographical shortfall in domiciliary care provision as well as the sorts of complex needs that are proving difficult to meet through "standard" domiciliary care and this will inform future commissioning intentions. Jane emphasised that B&NES still has less of a problem than neighbouring areas in terms of domiciliary care provision.

Jane Shayler commented that Public Health intelligence work and remodelling public health programme saving of £13k would be achieved through sharing and analyse of intelligence between the Council and CCG (ie "in-house") teams rather than contracting with external NHS organisations.

Jane Shayler also said that Healthy lives, healthy people: community small grants scheme of £22k would be a reduction in service as this sum was made available to voluntary organisations to help them achieve various public health related goals. The Public Health team believed that this saving could be achieved without significant impact on service users. Jane Shayler emphasised that despite this relatively small reduction, the Council has, over a long period of time, invested significantly in prevention, early-intervention and self-management and is committed to continuing this as a key priority.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- 1) Note the report;
- 2) Forward Committee's comments and concerns (about the knock on effect) to the Cabinet to consider;
- 3) Note mitigation steps taken by officers; and

- 4) Commend officers for their work and acknowledge that further work has been undertaken in forecasting future budget.