

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CULTURE & LEISURE SCRUTINY PANEL**

MINUTES of the meeting of the Economic Development, Culture & Leisure Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday, 17 November 2016 at 5.00 pm at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

### **Present**

Councillor Hannah Hockaday (in the Chair)

Councillors Steve Hastings  
Lee Hunt  
Matthew Winnington

### **18. Apologies for absence (AI 1)**

Councillor Denny and Councillor Chowdhury had sent their apologies for absence for this meeting and Councillor Hunt apologised that he could only be present for part of the meeting.

### **19. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)**

There were no declarations of members' interests.

### **20. Minutes of Previous Meeting - 20 October 2016 (AI 3)**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 October 2016 be approved as a correct record.

### **21. Smarter Cities Review (AI 4)**

#### **i) Nick May PCC Head of Information Solutions - Digital Strategy**

Nick May wished to update the panel on the aims for the production of a PCC Digital Strategy:

What is it? - this is a central government initiative to help generate better outcomes and operational efficiencies. Locally the emphasis will be on providing infrastructure which will attract new businesses in to the area and help the economic growth across the city.

Nick was speaking with Directors across the council regarding their departments' use of technology (such as health care, waste management) to improve the quality of life for Portsmouth residents.

The presentation made reference to successfully funded projects in other cities - Manchester, Bristol and Glasgow.

At PCC the way forward is to use innovative technology to improve services, to do more for less cost to the council. Information sharing was also being

expanded, as seen in the closer relationship between social care and health and this could help tackle bed-blocking with the fast exchange of information (with the necessary security measures).

PCC will also be able to have a more mobile workforce through the use of portable devices, with many staff not being '9 to 5' office based. Use of 'cloud'<sup>1</sup> technology was key to this, and a cloud strategy would need to be developed to ensure that information is secure. This would form part of the IT Strategy.

PCC partnership working also meant exploring the sharing of IT infrastructure with Solent NHS and the CCG for the health partnerships - currently some of these staff were sharing office space in the Civic Offices but each organisation had its own WiFi.

The Next Steps - these included:

- Improving 4G and WiFi access across the city (5G is approximately a year to 18 months' away)
- **Ducting Concessions** - some local authorities are already putting their own ducting in roads when they are dug up, which gives the LA ownership and the ability to commission services.

During discussion of the provision of **infrastructure**, Claire Upton-Brown reported that the government is taking forward legislation for internet provision in new developments. The panel members felt that such provision was important for the economic development of the city. Nick May reported that the Tipner & Horsea development would be 'Smart City Enabled' (this could also include sensors monitoring pollution levels on site).

The Combined Authority model for regional funding could bring opportunities for funding for infrastructure as well as City Deal. Nick reported that at the Dunsbury Hill Farm site the high-speed Broadband had been important for attracting businesses.

Other areas:

- Telecare - to encourage independent living for residents
- Investment in 'Eudroom' system to ensure connection for students in the city
- Waste containers sensors - allows efficiencies of emptying regimes
- Coastal defences - can also use sensors
- Building management to ensure more energy efficiency through automated systems

**Funding Opportunities** - the panel were keen to know what was available and being applied for. Nick reported that Manchester Council was at the forefront of maximising grant opportunities by giving resources to the bid process (which was labour intensive). Nick would be looking further at where the potential funding was for projects to benefit Portsmouth. At the current time there was no specific funding for the Digital Strategy. He was therefore

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<sup>1</sup> 'Cloud storage' is where data is stored on remote servers accessed from the internet

working closely with the PCC directorates who will be submitting these as a part of their Directorate Business plans.

ii) Louise Wilders PCC Director of Community & Communication - Digital customer services and income opportunities

Louise Wilders gave a presentation on the customer and communications developments which linked to the Digital Strategy in seeking better outcomes and securing efficiencies. This was through better connectivity and access to public information from PCC and also to promote better quality of life.

**Digital Customers:** The effect of increased interaction with technology is to free capacity, as seen at the City Helpdesk whose staff could then help with more complex cases. The presentation showed that the use of the '**My Portsmouth' App** can be used to report problems (such as fly-tipping) which can be dealt with in a speedier manner. The My Portsmouth App had recorded 2000 reports in the first 6 months of its launch. PCC's 'Channel Shift' project had been to encourage use of technology by residents who are comfortable using digital interfaces, and a move towards a more "24/7" culture so that payments could be made to the council at any time (with the provision of automated cash machines) and claims (such as for benefits) can be made on-line at any time, with the use of 'intelligent forms' (which have built-in prompts). Statistics included:

- 77% of direct debits were now set up by customers online.
- It was predicted that the savings by such changes would amount to £1.7m by 2018/19.

Next Steps - these included:

**Local democracy** - developing the use of the 'Mod Gov' application to trial the app with councillors and to extend the information being accessible to the public. This would also mean less paperwork for councillors.

**Communications & income** - looking at the provision of a digital Flagship - to be more information to the public and to look at targetting the interests of customers - such as the use of 'Beacon Technology' with interaction from smart devices to the digital hoardings used for adverts which would know the location of customers. Louise reported that Edinburgh had 11 digital advertising boards within a heritage site.

**Community involvement** - there is a need to look at engaging with small communities, which could be through social media channels. The presentation included an advert on 'Next Door' which had been successful in America and there could be a role for councillors to play in this. Facebook was already being used to publicise consultation processes and peaks were seen in the receipt of responses following posts on it.

Councillor Lee Mason, Cabinet Member for Resources, reported that the smart forms were designed so they could be completed by all customers, to be inclusive. The cash-machine in the Civic Offices' foyer would be accessible from the outside. He was aware of the benefit in embracing

technology and quoted an example of a social services client in Kent who had been given a tablet device to do on-line shopping so he didn't need a carer to do this for him, which was therefore an efficiency.

The panel members were keen for planning and licensing applications to be publicised using smart technology to keep local communities updated. Officers responded that the functionality was there and this may need to be better explained to the public and widely advertised and its expansion would be considered. There was the need to be careful in the use of the My Portsmouth App to ensure that unsolicited information was not sent to people who had not signed up to, so opt in/out options should be available for advertising by PCC.

Councillor Hockaday as chair thanked Louise and Nick for their very interesting presentations.

## **22. Dates of future meetings (AI 5)**

A provisional date for the next meeting was suggested as Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December at 5pm to hear from Meredydd Hughes (PCC Housing & Property) and the January meeting to hear from Prof. Steffen Lehmann was agreed as 26<sup>th</sup> January at 5pm.

[Post meeting note: The meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> December proved inconvenient so was not confirmed]

The meeting concluded at 6.15 pm.

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Councillor Hannah Hockaday  
Chair