

Note of SO58 urgent decision teleconference with Chief Executive - the Hive - Friday 27 March 2020

Purpose: David Williams, Chief Executive, asked that a telephone conference facility be used for him to consult on the urgent decision required on the Hive Partnership Agreement with PCC.

Reason for urgency: this item was identified as needing decision from the cancelled Special Cabinet of 26th March 2020 9.15am, for which papers had been published (item 8 refers), due to the Coronavirus measures meaning public meetings were suspended.

Teleconference Attendees:

Cllrs - Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE (Leader of the Council), Donna Jones (Leader of the Opposition)

Tom Wood (Cabinet Member for Resources), Steve Pitt (Cabinet Member for Culture & City Development) and Opposition spokespersons - Jeanette Smith, Claire Udy

Also present - Cllr Luke Stubbs, Deputy Leader of Opposition and representing Cllr Linda Symes

Officers - David Williams Chief Executive and Stephen Baily Director of Culture, Leisure & Regulatory Services, Peter Baulf City Solicitor

The SO58 referral and paper on the HIVE had been circulated to all the required consultees on 26th March by Democratic Services (JW); this item covers 2 portfolios, Resources and Culture & City Development.

The Chief Executive asked the Director of Culture, Leisure & Regulatory Services to present his report. Stephen Baily introduced his report for which the proposed agreement was intended to take effect as from 1st April 2020, hence the urgency. The report set out the proposed governance arrangements and the 4 goals of the HIVE, which included providing support to the voluntary and community sector and to have model that could respond to challenging situations, such as the current Coronavirus pandemic. The agreement formalised the close working relationship with PCC and a model of community engagement; this would help in attracting funding and moving to charitable status. The HIVE had received 1800 enquiries in a year, dealt with 105 organisations and supported 150 volunteers and given funding advice to 135 small groups, which had been before needing to respond to the recent Coronavirus situation.

Members' Comments

Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson, Leader, commented that the HIVE had shown how important it is in responding to the Coronavirus pandemic and the effect on the local community, so the formal agreement was needed. The HIVE staff were doing brilliant work in these circumstances.

Cllr Jeanette Smith had intended to make a deputation at Cabinet, had it taken place on 26 March, to raise her concern at the reference to budget reduction for the HIVE, which needed to be challenged in the current situation and she asked if the Section 151 Financial Officer had been asked to make a release of monies (£200k) referred to in the Business Case? The Council and the HIVE are working as partners to tackle Covid-19 and a lot of charities and voluntary organisations are struggling due to this situation and therefore funding should be made available to assist. Cllr Smith urged that funding be looked at and not reduced (as indicated) in 2021.

Cllr Tom Wood supported the proposal to put the partnership arrangement between PCC and the HIVE on a formal footing, which was essential in the current climate (and would have been the right thing to do regardless).

Councillor Luke Stubbs asked about the structure of the agreement being 2-way and not 3-way to include the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Stephen Baily responded that he believed there is a separate agreement with CCG, and would look into this to confirm by email.

Cllr Donna Jones referred to section 3.8 which recommended the governing board composition of PCC and trustees; she felt this was sensible for normal times but asked that the Leader consider inviting other representatives to partnership meetings from the other groups in the current emergency situation? She also asked about the budget for staffing (Section 7.1) and arrangements; it was reported that the figure of £179,100 included staffing, who worked in partnership, rather than on secondment. The Leader agreed that there should be cross-party input throughout the Coronavirus response. Councillor Jones asked that both she and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Cllr Stubbs be kept informed by telephone meetings.

Councillor Steve Pitt commented that elements of the report had been based on "business as usual", setting out a transition fund. However in the short term the HIVE was responding to the national emergency and the need for extra resources straight away was acknowledged and this formal process would allow this to happen. Staff and volunteers were working around the clock to help local residents.

Chief Executive's Decision

David Williams took on board the comments raised at this teleconference meeting, and took the silence from other members as assent as all members had been given access to the necessary documentation which formed part of this consultation process.

Requested Actions:

- i) Chris Ward would be asked to provide a note on the financial situation; Stephen Baily would liaise with Chris Ward.
- ii) The Leader took on board the comments made regarding keeping members of the opposition informed of progress
- iii) Stephen Baily would respond on the CCG partnership position.

DECISION: The Chief Executive approved the Strategic Partnership agreement and that this agreement is appropriately communicated across each directorate within PCC.

(This decision would be reported to all members via the Members' Information Service on 27 March 2020)

Meeting duration: 9.30 - 9.50am