

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL COMMITMENTS

Quarter Two: 2017/18



COMMITMENT UPDATE - QUARTER TWO 2017/18

This report provides an update on activity taken to progress the 19 Commitments made by the Council's Administration in 2016. This report provides an update for quarter two of 2017/18 whilst revision to Corporate Plan monitoring takes place. Thereafter, reporting of Commitments will be once again realigned with Corporate Plan monitoring reports.

The monitoring against Commitments shows that there are no significant issues in terms of delivery at present with one commitment being complete and the remaining 18 commitments reported as 'On Track'.

The table overleaf presents each Commitment with an activity narrative for the period of July 2017 – September 2017. Each Commitment is also given a status of either 'On Track', 'Slippage' or 'Complete'.

| No | Pledge | Quarter 2 Activity Update. | Progress |
|----|--|--|-----------------|
| I. | Provide more jobs, apprenticeships, and work experience opportunities | <p>The latest Plymouth Skills Analysis was published in October 2017 which coincided with our first 'Skills and Labour Market Intelligence' event at Plymouth University, held with schools and their staff. The Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) strategy is now in delivery with the detail of the plan being refined currently by the new STEM coordinator. This will be fully in place by quarter three.</p> <p>A post 16 Review has been completed and has been out for consultation. The feedback from this is now being analysed. The coherent mapping of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) and Labour Market Intelligence help inform schools and their students of the local offer have been identified as key areas for work in relation to the Post 16 priority themes described as 'Informed', 'Enabled' and 'Employed'.</p> <p>The Arts Council has recognised Plymouth as a cultural hotspot and has increased their support for organisations in Plymouth through the National Portfolio programme. The History Centre has received one of the top four largest allocations for new organisations.</p> <p>The events team continues to successfully deliver numerous events in Plymouth, such as Flavour Fest, Lord Major's day and MTV crashes Plymouth. These events continue to strengthen Plymouth's reputation as a vibrant city and - together with our strong and vibrant cultural offer - lead to increased economic benefits, such as through Transat, which in 2016 attracted 50,000 visitors and supported 65 jobs.</p> <p>We continue to apply for and secure external funding, most recently European Maritime and Fisheries Funding (EMFF) to support local fishermen. The council has submitted a £2.4m bid to the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) bid in partnership with Exeter University, Plymouth University, PML and Sir Alister Hardy Foundation for Ocean Science (SAHFOS) to create a Marine Business Technology Centre which will support over 70 marine businesses and lead to additional high value job creation.</p> <p>Plymouth City Council continues to deliver projects aimed at the creation and support of high value sustainable jobs such as the development of Plymouth Science Park Phase 5 which has been completed recently and already has a very high occupancy.</p> <p>We also continue to support businesses through our Business Relationship Programme that want to expand their operations or locate to Plymouth. Becton Dickinson has announced a major £172m investment in its Plymouth site which will create up to 200 jobs and Thales has announced further commitment in Plymouth with a new £1 million facility in Turnchapel Wharf, Plymouth will be Thales's maritime autonomy trials and training centre. The five year commitment by Thales secures 20 jobs.</p> <p>Construction continues across a number of locations with The Box, Oceansgate Phase, Market Hall, City College STEM centre and a series of demolitions to enable further development supporting a total of 505 construction jobs. In the past quarter a number of major developments have been enabled through the planning process including the 1620 Hotel, the Range and Drake Circus <u>Bretonside</u> scheme which sets in place support for a further 1224 jobs in the coming year. Looking forward, we are preparing Phase 2 at Langage. Work on Oceansgate moves a pace and developments towards Phase 2 including funding ERDF applications are in place and work continues in developing a strong pipeline of 10,000 construction jobs.</p> | On Track |

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| 2. | We will fight to maintain jobs and investment in HM Dockyard and Naval Base. | <p>We are due to complete work on 'Oceansgate Phase 1' development to deliver 1,140m² of office and 1,290m² of industrial space in January 2018. This will generate significant market interest leading to an estimated 123 new jobs. In addition, a funding bid for £2.4m of European Development Regional Fund (ERDF) money to create a Marine Business Technology Centre (MBTC) at the site is now going through the final stages of appraisal and it is anticipated that a formal announcement will be made at the end of October.</p> <p>The MBTC will promote innovation and collaboration between high-tech marine institutions and businesses. A new infrastructure design is at tender stage with construction works anticipated to commence during the autumn.</p> <p>A financial tool has been developed that enables the Oceansgate team to model different investment scenarios. An optimum combination of options has been identified that will open the way for the construction of Phase 2 and the servicing of Phase 3. At the same time this will also provide sufficient income to pay for ongoing security costs in Phase 3. The next step will be to test the financial model independently ahead of multiple funding bids for Phase 2 in the autumn. Full Council met on the 24th October to discuss the proposed defence cuts in Plymouth and asked that Devonport Taskforce be re-established to fight for the future of the Naval Base.</p> | On Track |
| 3. | Campaign for fairer public health spending for Plymouth | <p>Through the 'Plymouth Asks' document we have continued to raise awareness of the shortfall in the public health grant, based on need identified in the population of Plymouth. This has not led to assurances of any increase in the grant, however through Thrive Plymouth and the Integration of Health and Wellbeing, we are ensuring that the resources that we, as a city, do have are being spent in the best way.</p> <p>The launch of Year 4 of Thrive Plymouth was held on 10th October 2017 and the year will focus on encouraging the use of the CLANG (Connect, Learning, be Active, take Notice, and Give) approach to Mental Wellbeing. This helps residents, organisation and institutions to improve mental wellbeing through facilitating events and activities which help people to connect, learn, be active, notice and give to their local community. The approach is based on research into mental wellbeing which identified the importance of these five aspects.</p> | On Track |
| 4. | Maintain the campaign for better rail links and protect the airport | <p>The Peninsula Rail Task Force (PRTF) has been engaged with the Department for Transport (DfT) in early stakeholder consultation for the next Great Western Railway (GWR) and Cross Country Trains (XC) rail franchises which commence 2019/20. This consultation engagement seeks to bring PRTF's aims to the fore of DfT thinking as they structure the refranchising outcomes prior to public consultation in summer 2018. The PRTF received an update on the 'Speed to the West' study from GWR and Network Rail, and a scheme to improve 14 miles of 60mph track to allow 75mph travel has been identified between Plymouth and Totnes. Early engagement has taken place with South West MP's to try to secure the funding for the scheme.</p> | On Track |

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| 5. | Continue to deliver more homes for local people on suitable sites. | <p>Since May 2016 851 homes (gross) were completed in the City 2016/17. We had completed 143 homes on 8 Plan for Homes sites, with a further 762 dwellings under construction on 15 sites. We also submitted bids for Starter Homes and Accelerated Construction Funds. We were subsequently (September 2017) awarded £5.4 Million under the Accelerated Construction Fund to support 5 City Council sites to deliver around 590 new homes, subject to site viability and due diligence with the HCA.</p> <p>In August 2017 the delivery strategies for all Joint Local Plan housing sites were completed and work commenced on all commitment sites to enable further proactive housing initiatives to be pursued. Also a £1.6 Million bid for a Heritage Action Zone for Plymouth was submitted to Historic England which seeks to help create 1,296 additional new homes in association with improvements to some of Plymouth's key historic heritage assets.</p> <p>In September 2017 we submitted 4 Housing Infrastructure Fund bids for North Prospect, Woolwell, Millbay and Forder Valley totalling £27 Million to unlock delivery of 3,644 new homes.</p> <p>October 2017 saw the completion of a further 210 affordable homes, and completion of the Plan for Homes flagship self-build Nelson Project for service veterans. The opening ceremony was held on 6th October 2017. We are in negotiation to select delivery partners for Colin Campbell Court, Bath Street & land at Prince Maurice Road and commenced a further 188 dwellings on 3 Plan for Homes sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following actions will be completed by March 2018: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 2017 - Submit OPE6 Land Release Fund bid. • March 2018 – Complete 600 dwelling on Plan for Homes sites. • The following actions will be completed by May 2018: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete 400 affordable home completions on Plan for Homes sites. | On Track |
| 6. | Actively pursue and bring forward plans to regenerate Colin Campbell Court | <p>The development opportunity has been marketed and negotiations are in progress with a preferred developer including possible further acquisitions.</p> <p>Demolition works have been completed at 109, 111 and 113 New George Street.</p> | On Track |

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| 7. | Seek a new high quality hotel for Plymouth Hoe | <p>In July the £50 million hotel and apartment complex was given the go-ahead by City Council planning chiefs. Co-founder and director, Mr Henley hailing it as “a development for the future” and “a vote for progress”.</p> <p>It was confirmed at the meeting construction of the 1620 scheme, an 80-bedroom boutique hotel alongside 88 residential flats on the site of the former Quality Hotel, would begin early 2018.</p> <p>All the groundworks have now been complete and hoarding placed around the site, which overlooks West Hoe Park with views of the Plymouth Sound.</p> | On Track |
| 8. | Accelerate plans to bring more empty homes in Plymouth back into use | <p>We currently, as of October 2017, have seven Empty homes loans in progress to the value of £279,000 and success from enforcement action including two Enforced Sales commenced, threat of two others that resulted in properties being sold and threat of three others resulted in action to sell / bring back into use. There are currently 11 further projects in the pipeline.</p> <p>The annual “Empty Homes Blitz” involving investigation of more than 1,200 long term empty properties (i.e. homes that have been unoccupied for more than six months) identified 469 that were occupied, leaving 697 long term empty homes in the City, which will generate an estimated £1.5 Million of New Homes Bonus over the next 4 years. Since the initiative started in 2014, 3,303 homes have been investigated, with a total of 1,163 homes found to be occupied and therefore added back into the Council Tax Base. This has resulted in a cumulative addition of £7.02 million to the New Homes Bonus received since 2014.</p> <p>Also in October we launched a Marketing and Communication Strategy (‘Empty Homes Plymouth’) to coincide with National Empty Homes Week (16th October – 21st October 2017).</p> | On Track |
| 9. | Prioritise development on brownfield sites | <p>In the Joint Local Plan (JLP) submission, 86% of new homes in Plymouth are proposed to be built on brownfield sites. The JLP protects strategic and local greenspace with 169 sites identified as local greenspace and 1,900 hectares of land allocated as strategic greenspace. We are currently working on a Brownfield Register that will provide the definitive list of brownfield land we consider appropriate for housing development. This will be published December 2017.</p> | On Track |

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| 10. | Review traffic light operations and tackle traffic bottlenecks to keep Plymouth moving- | <p>We have successfully completed the a number of projects to keep the city moving which includes the re-opening of Jubilee Road, bus lane removal to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion on Woolwell Road, and the opening up of the bus lane for use by general traffic to improve traffic flows and reduce congestion on Tavistock Road.</p> <p>There are also projects that are programmed to be completed in the next three months including traffic signal removal in order to improve traffic flow along Notte Street, conversion of the single carriageway road to dual carriageway to improve traffic flow and journey times on the Elburton Road (A379) and amendments to road widths to reduce congestion at the Albert Gate access to HM Dockyard.</p> <p>Finally there are a number of other schemes aimed at removing bottlenecks and improving traffic flow are currently under investigation and design. These include schemes at Crownhill Interchange/Budshead Road, Fore Street /Chapel Street and Greenbank Road/Lipson Road.</p> | On Track |
| 11. | Improve our pavements | <p>Quarter 2 has been highly productive in terms of delivering Category one safety defect repairs (1463) and major treatment works with around 1600m² of footway resurfacing/reconstruction completed across 7 footways and 17,500m² of footway slurry sealing completed across 10 footways. We remain on schedule with our programme of Highway Safety Inspections to ensure pedestrians are safe on our pavements.</p> | On Track |
| 12. | Promote volunteering and recognise individual effort and personal responsibility | <p>We have secured £21k funding to deliver our legacy Cities of Service programmes. We have joined up the 'Grow, Share, Cook' and 'Diabeaters' programmes to deliver deeper impact on health and wellbeing with people with type two diabetes who are now receiving free fruit and vegetables to improve their diet along with cooking skills sessions. More people are using Volunteer Connections than ever with over 1,100 volunteers being matched to opportunities in the last 12 months. Volunteer Connections has seen a 2% increase in people accessing volunteering when compared to the same quarter last year and they are now working with us to produce a plan for volunteering.</p> | On Track |
| 13. | Put customers and our local communities first | <p>Several key projects are underway to improve the service we provide to customers and to ensure that our customers and local communities come first in our thinking and approach. We have initiated a full review of how we approach customer services and are developing a refreshed strategy in this regard. We've also been running the Communities and Engagement programme with the aims of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing a renewed role for Members in their neighbourhoods with the devolution of budgets and decision making to support improvements at ward level; and 2. Aligning people and resources in the Council and other agencies to give a consistent, clear and effective process for bringing services, budgets and members together to help resolve neighbourhood problems. <p>A specific initiative under the programme is Winter Works. Winter Works supports Councillors in working with residents to identify grounds-work priorities within wards which can be addressed through a dedicated week of work by three operatives. The initiative began in October 2017 and will run until late March 2018 with a week of work identified for each Ward.</p> | On Track |

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| 14. | Invite local residents to be more involved in council budget setting plans | <p>The public engagement 'Help us balance the books' for 2018-19 closed on 15 October 2017.</p> <p>The comments received from the public and staff members will be analysed and reported to Cabinet.</p> <p>The report will also form part of the evidence to help inform the Budget Scrutiny process.</p> | On Track |
| 15. | Introduce a city wide initiative to tackle our growing littering problem | <p>The approach to making our streets cleaner involves working together to educate the public, understand if there are underlying issues, and ultimately to enforce where appropriate. This approach involves Street Services staff for education and collection of evidence, and Environmental Protection staff for enforcement.</p> <p>The training of housing provider partner Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) staff has been completed which has improved capability and capacity when identifying fly tipping and collecting data and evidence for enforcement. Further work is underway to increase littering enforcement capacity.</p> | On Track |
| 16. | Continue to support our voluntary, community, and social enterprise sector | <p>The "Our Plymouth" project which was sponsored by the One Plymouth group of city leaders was due to be launched in earlier in 2017. This has been delayed as there has been a collective decision to link its launch with a specific volunteering campaign. We are working with partners to finalise the campaign subject. We held a budget engagement event with the VCS in October 2017 and we are working with them on a number of collaborative external funding bids for social action from both Nesta and The Big Lottery. We have provided a year's worth of free venues for both the Plymouth Welfare Rights Forums and Pop Plus' 'Pop In Thursdays'. We have worked with the VCS to design and deliver the Mayflower Cultural Fund and will be working with them to develop and deliver the Mayflower Community Fund from April 2018. All three of our directly commissioned VCS services linked to sector infrastructure; funding advice and volunteering infrastructure are performing well and meeting all relevant KPIs.</p> | On Track |
| 17. | Freeze parking charges in the city centre until April 2017 | <p>Charges have not been increased in line with this commitment. Consultation on proposed amendments to city wide charges as part of the Parking Modernisation Plan (PMP) took place in January 2107. Following the consultation we made some amendments to the proposals, which were subsequently implemented on 1st April 2017.</p> | On Track |
| 18. | Keep council tax low and balance the books | <p>The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) has been updated to reflect the latest resource assumptions, including council tax, government grants, business rates, etc., as well as the latest cost pressures. Savings through transformation programmes have also been verified and updated as appropriate.</p> <p>A first draft of the MTFS has been produced and was discussed at the Budget Select Committee on 27 September 2017. Members of the Select Committee will then make recommendations to Cabinet on 31 October. An updated version of the MTFS will be presented to Cabinet on 31 October with the final version to be approved in February 2018 when the budget for 2018/19 is agreed, taking into account stakeholder views and council tax levels recommended to Council.</p> | On Track |

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| 19. | Produce an options appraisal to investigate the re-introduction of the "committee" system of governance in April 2017 | In June 2016 the Constitutional Review Group were tasked with developing options for the implementation of a new Committee System form of governance. Following an extensive programme of work which considered feedback from Councillors, Officers and other stakeholders, desktop research and visits to councils currently working within such a system the CRG made recommendations to Council in January 2017 to retain the current Strong Leader and Cabinet model of governance. The CRG are now undertaking work to further develop the role of Councillors as community champions. | Complete |

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