

City Council

Public Questions and Answers / Order of Proceedings

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CITY COUNCIL MEETING ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

18 September 2023



Please will councillors and members of the public note the below information, including the fire and emergency procedures -

FIRE, EMERGENCY AND OTHER PROCEDURES

Would you please note that –

- Plymouth City Council believes in openness and transparency. Anyone who wishes to report on our public meeting is welcome and the meeting may be filmed, recorded or photographed, provided that doing so does not disturb the good order or conduct of the meeting.
- The meeting is being webcast, and your image may be captured by the cameras and broadcast. A recording will be available on-line immediately following the meeting. If you do not wish to be filmed please inform a council officer before the start of the meeting.
- In the event of a fire alarm, please use the nearest available exit and gather at the front of the Council House on the other side of the car park. For those in public gallery please make your way through the exit at the back (the door through which you entered).
- During the meeting, please ensure any mobile phones are switched to silent mode or turned off.

City Council

1. Apologies

The Lord Mayor's Advisor will report apologies received for the meeting.

2. Minutes

The Lord Mayor will ask Council to approve and sign the minutes of the 19 June 2023 as a correct record.

3. Declarations of Interest

The Lord Mayor's Advisor will invite Members to declare any interests they may have in relation to items on the agenda.

4. Appointments to Committee, Outside Bodies etc

The Lord Mayor's Advisor will report on vacancies on committees, outside bodies etc and of changes notified to Democratic Support.

Councillor Raynsford has replaced Councillor Lowry on the Audit and Governance Committee.

Councillor Raynsford has replaced Councillor Tippetts on the Growth and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Krizanac has replaced Councillor John Stephens on the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Krizanac has replaced Councillor Dr Cree on Licensing Committee.

Councillor Raynsford has replaced Councillor Rennie on the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership Advisory Panel.

Recommendation:

That Council notes changes to political proportionality set out at Appendix A.

5. Questions by the Public

To receive questions from and provide answers to the public in relation to matters which are about something the council is responsible for or something that directly affects people in the city, in accordance with Part B, paragraph 11 of the Constitution.

(Questions and answer will be circulated following the meeting).

6. Announcements

- a) To receive announcements from the Lord Mayor, Chief Executive, Service Director for Finance or Head of Legal Services;
- b) To receive announcements from the Leader, Cabinet Members or Committee Chairs.

7. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 - 2027/28

Recommendation:

That Council approves the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 – 2027/28

8. Capital Monitoring Report

Recommendations:

That Council approves the amended Capital Budget 2023-2028 revised to £556.722m as shown in Table 1.

9. Treasury Management Annual Report 2022/23

Recommendations:

To approve the Treasury Management Annual Report 2022/23.

10. Recommendations from Audit and Governance Committee on Stage One Constitutional Changes

Recommendations:

That Council approves the amendments to Part A, Part B and Petition Scheme Guidance.

11. Updated Pay Policy Statement

Recommendations:

The City Council approves the amended Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24.

12. Councillor Allowance Scheme – Recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel

Recommendations:

That Council approve the following amendments to the allowance scheme, that –

1. There are no changes to the Basic Councillors' Allowance and that this will continue to rise in line with staff pay awards. As pay awards currently being negotiated refer to a single consolidated addition to NJC pay points, the Panel recommends that basic allowances should increase in line with the equivalent percentage increase to the mid-point of the pay spine (pay point 22).
2. Excluding payments to Other Minority Group Leaders (recommendation 6 below), there are no changes to the Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) which will increase in line with staff pay awards (as above).
3. The travel allowance for Councillors should remain the same as the locally agreed rates payable to Council staff, and that they be changed as and when the staff rates are changed.
4. The list of approved duties is applicable to both Travel and Subsistence Allowance and Dependent Carers Allowances and Councillors undertaking approved duties may claim Travel, Subsistence and Dependent carers allowance unless remuneration and/or expenses are provided by the body to which the approved duty relates.
5. An annual stipend of £1500 is provided to Co-opted Members on Committees convened under the Local Government Act 1972.
6. SRAs for Other Minority Group Leaders (excluding the largest opposition group) will be payable based on the number of members in the group. For groups of less than five members, the Leader of the group will receive an annual SRA of £1000, increasing by £1000 for every five additional Councillors.
7. Facilities (group rooms etc) are offered to all Councillors. Groups with less than 5 members will share facilities with similar sized groups and non-aligned independent Councillors.
8. An expenses fund not exceeding £2000 be established in the Lord Mayor's office to cover necessary out of pocket expenses incurred by the Deputy Lord Mayor in the event that they are in receipt of a SRAs for another role and are therefore unable to claim the Deputy Lord Mayor's allowance. Any claims from the fund will be made on receipt.

13. Motions on Notice

The City Council will consider motions from Councillors in accordance with Part B, paragraph 14 of the Constitution.

13 a. Impact of Vaping on Young People

13 b. Motor Neurone Disease (MND)

13 c. Nursery Provision

13 d. Online Meetings

13 e. The formation of a Strategic Working Group to progress the re-opening of Plymouth Airport

13 f. Recognising the Importance of Outdoor Play in Child Development and the Need for a City-Wide Play Strategy

13 g. Council Tax Exemption for Foster Carers

14. Questions by Councillors

Questions to the Leader, Cabinet Members and Committee Chairs covering aspects for their areas of responsibility or concern by councillors in accordance with Part B, paragraph 12 of the constitution. A maximum of 45 minutes is allowed for this item.

QUESTION BY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC

Question submitted by: George Wheeler

To the Cabinet Member or Chair for: Leader, or member responsible for the capital programme

To be asked at the next (Council, Cabinet or Planning Committee) Meeting: Council

Date: 18 September 2023

Question (to be no longer than 50 words):

The 2023-4 budget included provision for a further £20,000 to be made towards replacement of the public toilets in St Budeaux Square. Can you tell me when this work is to be undertaken, please?

Will you be attending the meeting in person to ask your question? No

Response: (for completion by City Council officers and Cabinet Members / Chairs)

You are right in identifying that a £20,000 provision was included in the Council budget for 2023/24. This is directly because of the Plymouth Labour amendment moved as a result of the lobbying by Councillor Haydon.

This administration is committed to the provision of public toilets in the vicinity of St Budeaux Square and shops. Over the past few months, I have had conversations with Councillors Haydon and Dingle about the provision of these toilets. I am happy to support their campaign and want to hear from the people of St Budeaux.

I have already announced that the Council will open a consultation of future provisions of St Budeaux toilets by the end of September. The consultation will run for two months. I will review the findings of the consultation in order to ensure that the new toilets we provide meet local needs and aspirations. I will then commission provision of toilets for St Budeaux.

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QUESTION BY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC

Question submitted by: Dave Curno
To the Cabinet Member or Chair for: Leader of the Council Cllr Tudor Evans
To be asked at the next (Council, Cabinet or Planning Committee) Meeting: Full Council Date: 18/09/23
Question (to be no longer than 50 words): PCC confirmed it would seek peer advice from another Council when considering the Armada Way TPO application and that it had approached another Council. PCC's reply to a FOI request FS-case-541381192 indicates this was not in fact done. Who made the decision not to request recommendations from another Council?
Will you be attending the meeting in person to ask your question? tbc
Response: (for completion by City Council officers and Cabinet Members / Chairs) Thank you for your latest question on Armada Way. The previous FOI was answered factually when we responded: <i>'that Plymouth City Council did not request or receive any recommendation from another Local Authority in respect of the TPO request for Armada Way'</i> . In response to a complaint to the Council's Monitoring Officer about a potential conflict of interest between officers dealing with the Armada Way project and those assessing the TPO request, it was agreed by the Strategic Director for Place and the Monitoring Officer that the TPO should be subject to independent assessment. The Strategic Director for Place did contact a number of Local Authorities to discuss the process for conducting an independent TPO assessment. At no time did the Strategic Director request or receive their review or recommendation on the merits of the armada Way TPO case. The Strategic Director for Place delegated the decision making powers in respect of assessing the request for a TPO to the Head of Development Management. The Head of Development Management appointed an independent Tree Consultant - JK Tree Consultancy - to carry out the

TPO assessment and make a recommendation for the consideration of the Head of Development Management.

It is common practice for Council's to seek advice from independent and appropriately qualified chartered consultants. Therefore, no one made a decision not to request recommendations from other authorities.

QUESTION BY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC

Question submitted by: Mr Ramage

To the Cabinet Member for Finance – Cllr Mark Lowry

To be asked at the next (Council, Cabinet or Planning Committee) Meeting: Council

Date: 18th September 2023

Question (to be no longer than 50 words):

Christian Aid has moved away from using Barclays as its bank because of their record on fossil fuel financing and their lack of commitment to improve in this area.

I have previously asked PCC to review its use of Barclays and received a dismissive reply. Cause for a re-think?

Will you be attending the meeting in person to ask your question? TBC

Response: (for completion by City Council officers and Cabinet Members / Chairs)

We believe that the Christian Aid based their decision on the outcome of a competitive tendering process following a review of their banking arrangements.

There are limited suppliers in the market providing banking services to local authorities (currently two) and the Council has to consider the risk of reputational damage due to all of the administrative changes required when moving to a different banking provider.

The Council adopts the key recommendations of CIPFA's (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) Treasury Management (TM) in the Public Services: Code of Practice, with annual updates, the last update being in March 2023.

When investing in banks and funds, the Council will 'prioritise banks that are signatories to the UN Principles for Responsible Banking and funds operated by managers that are signatories to the UN Principles for Responsible Investment, the Net Zero Asset Managers Alliance and/or the UK Stewardship Code.'

Barclays are signatories to the UN Principles for Responsible Banking and the Net Zero Asset Managers Alliance.

Please note, the Council does not undertake any active investment with Barclays Bank other than through their daily banking activity, as they are the Council's main provider of banking services.

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QUESTION BY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC

Question submitted by: Gin Farrow-Jones

To the Cabinet Member or Chair for: Leader of the Council Cllr Tudor Evans

To be asked at the next (Council, Cabinet or Planning Committee) Meeting: Full Council

Date: 18/09/23

Question (to be no longer than 50 words):

By vote abstaining on the 'meaningful community engagement', Labour effectively approved of the decision for it to be the response to the petition on the trees. Are you satisfied with how the overwhelming opposition to the Armada Way scheme was dealt within the document?

Will you be attending the meeting in person to ask your question? Yes

Response: (for completion by City Council officers and Cabinet Members / Chairs)

Thank you for your question.

Plymouth Labour proposed and passed an amendment during that City Council meeting held on 30 January 2023 to reflect our concerns about the Armada Way scheme. We called for a meaningful community engagement process to take place quickly in February 2023 which prioritised the natural environment and climate resilience. The amendment also called for tree felling to be suspended.

Plymouth Labour and Green councillors were dismayed at the summing up by Councillor Jonathan Drea on the substantive motion in response to the petition and, despite the nature of the debate itself, how he categorised the planned public engagement process.

Labour Councillors therefore showed our frustration by supporting the Labour amendment but not voting in favour of the substantive motion - which was going to pass anyway because of the arithmetic of the City Council at that time.

The way in which the consultation responses were reported on the previous Richard Bingley Armada Way scheme is the subject of on-going legal proceedings. Therefore, it would not be appropriate for me to comment any further on these matters at this time. But what the City Council does know is

that I have committed to undertake an independent review on various aspects of the Armada Way scheme in due course.

QUESTION BY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC

Question submitted by: Lynne Sears

To the Cabinet Member or Chair for: Leader

To be asked at the next (Council, Cabinet or Planning Committee) Meeting: Council

Date: 18th September 2023

Question (to be no longer than 50 words):

Please will someone explain why public questions and their responses are not automatically made available during the meeting since the answers are pre prepared. Since the questions from the last meeting were not published until the minutes were done months later?

Will you be attending the meeting in person to ask your question? Yes

Response: (for completion by City Council officers and Cabinet Members / Chairs)

The current position is that the Lord Mayor will ask the questioner to ask their question. If the questioner is not present or an answer cannot be given on the day of the meeting, the question and response will be published as part of minutes. The Monitoring Officer will have a reply sent to the questioner within 10 working days.

Councillors providing the answers sometimes change prepared responses, and as such responses may not be ready immediately.

In order to ensure that questions and answers are more easily available for all residents, I have directed officers to publish the questions and answers on the council's website the day after the Council meeting.

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