



Oversight and Governance

Chief Executive's Department
Plymouth City Council
Ballard House
Plymouth PL1 3BJ

Please ask for Jamie Sheldon
T 01752 668000
E jamie.sheldon@plymouth.gov.uk
www.plymouth.gov.uk
Published 05 July 2024

CABINET – SUPPLEMENT PACK

Monday 8 July 2024
2.00 pm
Council House, Plymouth

Members:

Councillor Evans OBE, Chair

Councillor Laing, Vice Chair

Councillors Aspinall, Briars-Delve, Coker, Cresswell, Dann, Haydon, Lowry and Penberthy.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf. This meeting will be webcast and available on-line after the meeting. By entering the Warspite room councillors are consenting to being filmed during the meeting and to the use of the recording for the webcast.

The Council is a data controller under the Data Protection Act. Data collected during this webcast will be retained in accordance with authority's published policy.

You can watch any of our webcast meetings on [YouTube](#). For further information on attending Council meetings and how to engage in the democratic process please follow this link – [Get Involved](#)

Tracey Lee
Chief Executive

Cabinet

3.

Minutes

(Pages 1 - 4)

To sign and confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2024.

Items from scrutiny

6.

NHS End of Life Care

(Pages 5 - 10)
7.

Response to Foster Carer Recommendations

(Pages 11 - 18)

Items for decision

8.

Achieving Excellence - A strategy for Children's Services 2024-27

(Pages 19 - 54)
9.

Productivity Plan

(Pages 55 - 66)
10.

Provisional Capital and Revenue Outturn Report 2023/24

(Pages 67 - 82)

Items for discussion

11.

Medium Term Financial Forecast 2024/25 – 2028/29

(Pages 83 - 102)
12.

Corporate Plan Performance Report Quarter 4

(Pages 103 - 138)
13.

Care Experience as a Protected Characteristic

(Pages 139 - 146)

Cabinet

Monday 20 May 2024

PRESENT:

Councillor Evans OBE, in the Chair.

Councillor Laing, Vice Chair.

Councillors Aspinall, Briars-Delve, Coker, Cresswell, Dann, Haydon and Penberthy.

Apologies for absence: Councillor Lowry.

Also in attendance: Councillor Lowry (attended via Microsoft Teams), Liz Bryant (Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer), Emma Crowther (Head of Strategy & Planning), Anthony Payne (Strategic Director for Place), Jamie Sheldon (Senior Governance Advisor).

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 2.17 pm.

Note: The full discussion can be viewed on the webcast of the City Council meeting at www.plymouth.gov.uk. At a future meeting, the Council will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

1. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

2. **Minutes**

The minutes from the meetings held on 11 March 2024 and 18 March 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

3. **Questions from the Public**

The following question was submitted by Mike Sheaff

Question: Sir Mark Lacock KC, Chairing the inquiry into the tree felling in Sheffield explained, 'the Council has referred to a need for "truth and reconciliation". The Inquiry will be guided by that.' Can I please request you include this in the Terms of Reference for the Chair of the Armada Way inquiry?

Response: The Sheffield Tree Inquiry is not comparable to the Independent Learning Review that the Council has committed to undertake and as a consequence, the Terms of Reference have an entirely different focus. When I committed to undertake an independent learning review in July 2023, as stated at that time, my intention was to focus on improvement for the future, rather than blame for past actions. Inevitably truth will form a part of the review under the Terms of Reference as drafted but only in the

	context of learning from what happened and how that can inform improvements in processes and procedures for the future.
--	---

4. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's Urgent Business.

5. **Cabinet Appointments 2024 - 25**

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (The Leader) introduced the Cabinet Appointments 2024 – 25 item:

The Leader proposed an amendment to appointments naming Councillor Sally Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Events, Cemeteries and Crematoria) as the external appointment for the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership and replacing Councillor Sue Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Sport, Leisure and HR&OD).

Cabinet agreed:

1. the proposed amendment;
2. The appointments contained within the report for the 2024/25 municipal year.

6. **Armada Way Independent Learning Review**

Liz Bryant (Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer) introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- a) In July 2023, the Leader announced his commitment to conduct this review and set out terms for the scope of the review;
- b) This commitment was formalised into a court order as part of the judicial review proceedings;
- c) The terms of the order were: it would be an independent learning review, the terms of reference needed to be approved at this meeting and reflect the matters that the Leader committed to in July 2023;
- d) The review would commence immediately upon the completion of the extant court proceedings or the finalisation of the terms of reference;
- e) Once started, the review had to be completed within three months of commencement, the findings must be presented to City Council, published on the Council's website, and made available for public inspection;

- f) As the Commissioning Officer for the review, Liz Bryant would be looking at suitable candidates for undertaking the review as an independent reviewer;
- g) Although the terms of reference were due to be approved at the meeting, there would be an opportunity for the independent chair to review them and to make agreed amendments prior to the commencement of the review;
- h) The terms of reference dealt with the principles and purpose of the review, the issues that would be considered as per the court order and the way in which the review itself would be conducted;
- i) In line with the conduct of the review, it was proposed that an independent Chair would lead the review. The independent Chair would be someone with suitable local government expertise and would be supported by advisors possessing legal and environmental regeneration and planning expertise;
- j) The review would be supported by Plymouth City Council administrative officers and there would be a panel of Officer Advisors which would be chaired by Liz Bryant who would support the review. These officers would have had no previous involvement in the Armada Way Scheme;
- k) It was expected that the reviewers would want to speak with Officers, Member and there would be stakeholder engagement by means of seeking written representations from members of the public, which would focus on the terms of reference;
- l) Interviews with officers and members would be private discussions;
- m) CVs would be sought from suitably qualified professionals of local government to establish a suitable Chair and panel members;
- n) Panel members would be remunerated for undertaking the work;
- o) At the end of the review a draft report would be produced;
- p) Any officers or members who were interviewed as part of the review would have the opportunity to review the transcripts of their interview to ensure factual correctness and this would be taken into account prior to the report being finalised.

In response to questions, it was explained:

- q) The wording on the report was directly extracted from the court order, and therefore the Review must commence immediately once the outstanding Court proceedings have been completed;
- r) There were two sets of court proceedings, which were the contempt of court proceedings regarding the induction, and the application for permission to appeal against the Judicial Review outcome;
- s) The proposed timeframe before the commencement of the review was at least three months, however this was not confirmed and was subject to change.

Cabinet agreed:

1. That the Terms of Reference included at Appendix I were approved to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Order of the High Court of 25 March 2024 (the Court Order) which stated:
'The Terms of Reference for the review would be approved at a meeting of Cabinet scheduled for 20 May 2024';
2. That the Monitoring Officer proceeded with the commissioning of an Independent Chair and Independent Learning Review (ILR) members to conduct the ILR which would identify suitably independent candidate to fulfil the roles requires to conduct the ILR. This would ensure that the ILR was conducted by individuals who had the relevant expertise and were independent of Plymouth City Council and would ensure further compliance with the Court Order which stated:
'The Commissioning Officer for the Review would be the Defendant's Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Offer, Liz Bryant'.

Cabinet



Date of meeting: 08 July 2024

Title of Report: **NHS End Of Life Care**

Lead Member: Councillor Mrs Mary Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care)

Lead Strategic Director: Gary Walbridge (Interim Strategic Director for Adults, Health and Communities)

Author: Gary Walbridge

Contact Email: Gary.Walbridge@plymouth.gov.uk

Your Reference: N/A

Key Decision: No

Confidentiality: Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

In response to concerns around End of Life Care performance in Plymouth, as well as statistically higher hospital deaths at University Hospital's Plymouth (UHP) than national averages, the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (H&ASC OSC) considered End of Life Care on 20 February 2024 (reconvened on 06 March 2024). The Committee identified that there were many multi-organisational efforts being undertaken to improve End of Life Care performance, as well as to reduce deaths in hospital settings however, there was significant work to be done. This report sets out the findings and recommendations of the H&ASC OSC from this session, for cabinet to review and action as appropriate.

Recommendations and Reasons

1. That the Cabinet recognises the importance of End of Life Care for the citizens of Plymouth, and thanks the Scrutiny Committee for its diligent work.
2. That the Cabinet endorses further review at Scrutiny of the improvement plan being undertaken by the NHS and partners in relation to End of Life provision and the consideration of any further recommendations that the Committee deems appropriate.
3. That Cabinet notes the Cabinet Member response at appendix two.

Reason: To ensure that End of Life Care is adequate for Plymouth's citizens.

Alternative options considered and rejected

None identified.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Consideration of End of Life provision supports the Corporate Plan through:

- Working with the NHS to provide better access to health, care and dentistry;
- Keeping children, adults and communities safe;
- Being a strong voice for Plymouth.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

None identified for the Council at this time.

Financial Risks

None identified for the Council at this time.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

None identified for the Council at this time.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

None identified

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Appendix one H&ASC OSC Recommendations 20 February 2024 – End of Life Care							
B	Cabinet Response to Scrutiny Recommendations							

Background papers:

**Add rows as required to box below*

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin		Leg	LS/00 0031 97/4/ LB/03 /07/2 4	Mon Off		HR		Asset s		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Gary Walbridge (Interim Strategic Director for Adults, Health and Communities)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes Date agreed: 03/07/2024											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Mary Aspinall (Mary Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) Date approved: 03/07/2024											

Appendix one H&ASC OSC Recommendations 20 February 2024 – End of Life Care

The Committee Recommended that:

1. NHS Devon and partners return to a future scrutiny session to bring an update on performance against the End of Life Care improvement Plan. This is to include delivery of the Palliative Care framework, findings of the Estover Pilot Project, and additional information on the below recommendations.
2. NHS Devon and Partners take into account and record peoples preferences for place of death.
3. NHS Devon and partners return at a future time to report on falls prevention measures being undertaken and related performance.
4. NHS Devon and partners work to reduce the delay in testing and diagnosis to enable maximum choice for patients spend their remaining time in the way/location that they wish.
5. NHS Devon adopt processes to include patients' relatives in the planning and administration of care for their loved ones (where applicable, and consent given). This includes consultation in the development of a Treatment Escalation Plan (TEP).
6. The Council, in partnership with City organisations and individuals, seek to promote and recognise St. Luke's communication of "Care in the community" and "the hospice coming to you", rather than the misconception of patients having to be admitted to a hospice.
7. The Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities (Cllr Penberthy), ensures that the Housing Needs Assessment considers housing standards, and their appropriateness, for individuals with a variety of medical needs (Accessibility and quality).

APPENDIX TWO CABINET RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

End of Life Scrutiny Recommendations



Recommendation:

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities (Cllr Penberthy), ensures that the Housing Needs Assessment considers housing standards, and their appropriateness, for individuals with a variety of medical needs (Accessibility and quality).

Response:

The Plan for Homes 4 was launched in March and aims to deliver at least 5,000 new homes in Plymouth over the next five years. One of its key initiatives is to address specialist and supported priority housing needs. As we develop the delivery plans for Plan 4 Homes, I will ensure that appropriate consideration is given to this area and will be pleased to discuss this during future consideration of the plan by the Housing and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

This page is intentionally left blank

Cabinet



Date of meeting: 08 July 2024

Title of Report: **Foster for Plymouth: Foster Carer Summit and Council Tax Allowance**

Lead Member: Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications)

Lead Strategic Director: David Haley (Director for Childrens Services)

Author: Karen Blake, Head of Service Children, Young People and Families Service

Contact Email: karen.blake@plymouth.gov.uk

Your Reference:

Key Decision: No

Confidentiality: Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

On 07 November 2023 the Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee met to consider the item 'Council Tax Exemption for Plymouth City Council Foster Carers' following an amendment to a Motion on Notice heard at Council on 18 September 2023.

Following a thorough discussion by the Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, they agreed to recommend to Cabinet 'that a Council Tax Exemption for foster carers is considered following the conclusion of the consultation on proposed new support and retention offer to our Foster Carers'.

At the meeting of Cabinet on 11 December 2023, Cabinet agreed to:

1. Thank the Education and Children's Social Care and Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their proposal of a council tax exemption for foster carers;
2. Note the recommendations from the committee and commit to providing an update on the issue at an appropriate future meeting of the Committee, once the entire revised package of support for Plymouth City Council foster carers had been agreed.

Plymouth City Council held a Foster Carer summit on 31 January 2024 to consider and co-design a new and improved support and retention offer to our Foster Carers. Three elements of the financial offer progressed within phase one and the wider support and development element of the offer would progress within phase two.

Recommendations and Reasons

1. To note the content of the report and the work undertaken to support Plymouth City Council's Foster Carers;
2. Endorse a new foster carers financial package that includes a Council Tax Allowance within the agreed 2024/25 financial envelope;
3. Note the annual uplift to the Fostering Allowances since 01 April 2024, of 6% (including the new reward payment) and the commitment to continued annual reviews of allowances in line with the financial year;
4. Note the uplift in Festival, Birthday and Holiday Allowances since 01 April 2024;
5. Note the work being undertaken in Phase two, to co-design the support and retention offer to Plymouth City Council's Foster Carers;
6. Endorse the co-design of the support and retention offer.

Alternative options considered and rejected

1. No alternative options considered. The Foster Carer Summit highlighted the need for a support and retention package to maintain the number of foster carers by Plymouth City Council. The work would significantly contribute to in-house fostering sufficiency and reduce the overall placement budget.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

This recommendation aligns to the Council's mission and values of Democracy, Responsibility, Fairness and Cooperation as set out in the Corporate Plan. The support and retention package would help to keep children and communities safe.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The projected costs per financial year have been factored in to the budget.

This recommendation is key to the work undertaken to increase in house fostering sufficiency and reduce the overall placement budget.

On top of the placement costs, there will be a positive financial impact in placing a greater number of our children in care in or close to Plymouth as there will be reduced travel and costs for the child, their family, the social worker and IRO.

Financial Risks

This is an invest to save proposal and relies on the recruitment of new Foster Carers, the transfer of existing IFA Foster Carers and the retention of existing in-house foster carers to make savings to the overall placement budget.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

There will be a positive environmental impact if we are able to place a greater number of our children in care in or close to Plymouth as there will be reduced travel for the child, their family, the social worker and IRO.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council’s duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.
Click here to enter text.

Appendices

*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Briefing report title							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	CH.2 4.25.0 12	Leg	LS/00 0013 12/1/ AC/3/ 7/24	Mon Off		HR	CS.24 .25.01 0	Asset s		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Haley (Director for Children’s Services)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes Date agreed: 01/07/2024											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Children’s Social Care, Culture and Communications) Date approved: 04/07/2024											

This page is intentionally left blank

FOSTER FOR PLYMOUTH: FOSTER CARER SUMMIT & COUNCIL TAX ALLOWANCE



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Plymouth City Council held their first ever Fostering Summit on 31 January 2024 to consider and co-design our new and improved Support and Retention Offer to Our Foster Carers. The summit was attended by over 45 people with a wide range of roles and experience of fostering and provided a valuable opportunity to hear Foster Carers' experiences, feedback and ideas about how we can best support them and attract more foster carers to Foster for Plymouth.

There were some key themes from the group discussions which relate to financial support, practical and emotional support, perks and benefits, foster carers training, practice improvements and training for Children's Social Care and EPS.

The proposed changes to the offer will be implemented in two phases. This report sets out the three elements of the financial offer which have been progressed in phase one and the wider support and development elements of the offer through phase two.

INTRODUCTION

Plymouth City Council are committed to providing a robust, comprehensive, creative, competent and confident fostering family. We know that our Support Offer to Foster Carers is at the heart of our mission to improve the lives of children in care and to support our compassionate and committed Foster Carers.

Plymouth City Council held their first ever Fostering Summit on 31 January 2024. The aim of the summit was to consider and co-design our new and improved Support and Retention Offer to Our Foster Carers.

The summit was attended by over 45 people with a wide range of roles and experience of fostering in Plymouth. 18 Foster Carers and Connected Carers attended with a wide range of experience between them. They were joined by elected members, the Director of Children's Services, Service Director, Head of Service, Service Manager, Team Managers and Social Workers from the Fostering Teams and the Fostering Panel Chair. Other Foster Carers represented their views in writing or through the Foster Carer Ambassadors.

The summit provided a valuable opportunity to hear Foster Carers' experiences, feedback and ideas about how we can best support them and the children they look after as well as attract more foster carers to Foster for Plymouth.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

There were some key themes from the group discussions:

Financial Support: This includes an increase to financial allowances to allow for cost of living increases, making the reward payment equal across all ages of children and council tax exemption/reduction.

Practical and Emotional Support: This includes a clear, written Support & Retention Offer to our Foster Carers, and in house team of support services available (A wellbeing team, therapist, CAMHS, education support), greater support from the Virtual School and SEND Team and Out of Hours support which is consistent and have the right expertise,

Perks and Benefits: This includes free access to Plymouth City Council amenities or events and leisure cards for carers.

Training for Foster Carers: This includes childcare support to make attending training easier.

Practice Improvements and Training for Children's Social Care and EPS: There were a range of ideas shared which related more to the consistency of practice from professionals supporting children, young people and foster carers. This included the vital importance of communication and respect of each other's roles, timeliness of providing information, applying for passports and supporting children who are experiencing difficulties in education.

PROPOSALS AND NEXT STEPS

In order to ensure the three key proposed changes to the financial offer are progressed, the proposed changes will be implemented in two phases.

PHASE I – Key Changes to the Financial Offer to Our Foster Carers

The following elements were proposed and approved in the 2024/2025 Council Budget.

Annual Uplift to Fostering Allowances

A 6% uplift to the allowance (including the new reward payment) from 01 April 2024 with a commitment to an annual review of allowances in line with the financial year. After the 6% uplift, the weekly fostering allowance for children aged 0-10 was below the minimum weekly allowance set by government and as such these amounts have been uplifted slightly more than 6%.

The projected costs of £549,297 per financial year have been factored in to the agreed budget uplift in the 2024/25 budget. This has been implemented with Foster Carers receiving the uplifted allowances since 01 April 2024.

Reward Payments

The reward payments, which were previously less for children aged 0-10 than they are for those aged 11-17, are equalised at the higher level.

The projected costs of £299,877 per financial year have been factored in to the agreed budget uplift in the 2024/25 budget. This has been implemented with Foster Carers receiving the equal reward payments since 01 April 2024.

Festival, Birthday and Holiday Allowances

The Festival, Birthday and Holiday Allowances have been uplifted in line with the weekly maintenance allowances.

The projected costs were factored in to the agreed budget uplift in the 2024/25 budget. This has been implemented with Foster Carers receiving the uplifted festival, birthday and holiday allowances since 01 April 2024.

Council Tax Allowance

Foster Carers have been informed of Plymouth City Council's decision to implement a council tax allowance for Plymouth City Council Foster Carers from 01 April 2024. This will include arrangements for those living outside of Plymouth to reclaim their payments.

The projected costs of £235,734 per financial year have been factored in to the agreed budget uplift in the 2024/25 budget. We are seeking an endorsement of a new foster carers financial package that includes a Council Tax Allowance within the agreed 2024/25 financial envelope and the endorsement of the co-design of the support and retention offer;

PHASE 2 – Co-design of the Support and Retention Offer to Our Foster Carers

There have been discussions with Foster Carers in the Foster Carer Forum to progress the wider non-financial elements of the Support and Retention Offer to Our Foster Carers.

A working task and finish group will continue to meet on a regular basis to develop and shape the practical, emotional support, the training offer and other benefits.

We note that many of the issues and ideas raised in the summit relate to consistency and quality of practice. These elements will be addressed through the Children's Services Improvement Plans. The One Children's Service Induction is being updated and will include workshops with Foster Carers for all new staff alongside a proposal for sessions where Foster Carers, Social Workers and the wider professional network come together and share their views, ideas and learn together, with a particular focus on communication, value and respect.

The Foster Carer Summit will take place on an annual basis in January to ensure regular review and co-design off the Support and Retention Offer to Our Foster Carers.

This page is intentionally left blank

Cabinet



Date of meeting:	08 July 2024
Title of Report:	Achieving Excellence – A Strategy for Children’s Services 2024 - 27
Lead Member:	Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Children’s Social Care, Culture and Communications)
Lead Strategic Director:	David Haley (Director for Childrens Services)
Author:	Vivien Lines
Contact Email:	Vivien.Lines@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

Following extensive consultation with staff, children and young people, Children’s Services has developed a new three-year strategic plan, Achieving Excellence, to drive improvement and transformations in the service over the 2024-27 timeframe.

This report sets out the key drivers to the plan and the ten strategic priorities that are proposed for Children’s Services 2024-27 together with high level milestones for delivery over this timeframe and the intended outcomes.

Recommendations and Reasons

That Cabinet:

1. Agree the Children’s Services Strategic Plan, Achieving Excellence - 2024 – 27;
2. Agree the proposed milestones for the delivery of the ten Strategic Priorities are implemented in Children’s Services as set out in the attached three-year milestones.

Reasons

The strategic plan and the proposed ten strategic priorities put forward (as detailed in the attached appendix) are informed by key service drivers including;

- The priorities set out in the Plymouth Plan and A Bright Future, the partnership plan for children and young people;
- Responding to the findings of Ofsted Inspections of our Local Area SEND provision and children’s social care services (ILACS);
- Responding to the national reform agenda, including for children’s social care (Stable Homes Built on Love) and the SEND reform agenda;

- Our data and quality assurance tells us that outcomes for children and young people in Plymouth are not yet consistently good in key areas, including school attendance and educational achievement and outcomes for priority vulnerable groups;
- Children, young people and families have told us that they do not always experience strengths and relationship-based approaches;
- The need to stabilise and manage our budget position in response to increasing costs and demand and ensure that there is sufficient provision in key areas;
- -The need to develop a stable, skilled and well trained and supported workforce;
- To maximise opportunities to embrace new technology and modernise our working practices.

The plan builds on the direction of travel created by the Children's Services Target Operating Model (TOM) during 2023, to transform our approach and improve outcomes for children, young people and families. The plan sets out how we will develop earlier and more effective help for children and families to prevent problems and needs from escalating where possible, through a locality model of delivery and working closely with partners, and how this will improve outcomes for children and young people from the early years through to preparation for adulthood.

Adopting a three-year plan creates a framework for service delivery where we can drive change and improvement in priority areas over the longer term making lasting, sustained and impactful change. All service areas within Children's Service have revised and developed service plans that align to the ten priorities. These provide clarity and focus on delivering the priorities within the teams. The ten priorities are based on a 'One Children's Service' approach where we are building collaborative approaches across Children, Young People and Families service and the Education, Participation and Skills Service, particularly in key areas such as improved early intervention and inclusion for children and young people who are vulnerable to poor outcomes, improving attendance and outcomes for whole families and preparing young people for success in adulthood with improved education, training and employment outcomes.

The plan sets out how we will transform and improve key services to improve outcomes for children and families, this includes creating the conditions within the organisation to enable us to achieve excellence. It includes how we will build on the work we have started to develop a stable, highly skilled, well supported and high performing workforce. A new approach to leadership and management development, which the whole Council will benefit from, and a refocused workforce development programme that will support us to recruit, support, develop and retain the right people with the right skills and develop a high performing workforce. This includes through the 'High Expectation, High Support, High Challenge' culture we are developing. Performance management and quality assurance are also identified as key pillars to achieve excellence, helping us to know that we are on track and operating a learning framework where we know ourselves well and continuously improve.

Many of our strategic priorities cannot be delivered on our own. We are working with Partners through our Strategic Systems Leadership Board and Corporate Parenting arrangements to develop shared strategic priorities and a partnership delivery plan which will inform the refresh of our partnership strategy A Bright Future. This includes key areas of partnership engagement in and governance of the development of a comprehensive early help offer across Plymouth, work with schools and Trust Leads to develop more inclusive approaches and reduce absence from school and work with health partners to improve access to and outcomes for health services, particularly for priority groups.

The plan describes our vision for children's services by 2027, where children and families receive the help they need when they need it and we prevent problems from escalating wherever possible. When families do need support from our statutory services we step in seamlessly with timely and high quality assessment and intervention, meeting identified needs using evidence based and value for money approaches which are delivered within Plymouth wherever possible.

Alternative options considered and rejected

None

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Keeping children safe and Education and employment outcomes for all.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications

The delivery of the three-year strategic plan will include work to reduce financial pressures in key areas, including reducing demand on higher cost statutory services, improving placement sufficiency and costs of children in care, SEND sufficiency, home to school transport and stabilising the social care workforce.

Financial Risks

None identified.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications

None identified.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

Equalities impact has been considered in the development of the plan and equality of opportunity and equality of opportunity for vulnerable groups and those with protected characteristics will be delivered as part of the implementation of the three-year strategy. Programme Governance will include the management and mitigation of any risks that arise and a risk and issues log will be in place throughout the implementation.

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Achieving Excellence – A three year strategy							

Background papers:

**Add rows as required to box below*

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)
----------------------------------	--

	If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services, January 2024							

Sign off:

Fin	DIN. 24.25. 032	Leg	LS/00 0031 97/2/ LB/27 /06/2 4	Mon Off		HR	CS.24 .25.00 9	Assets		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Haley (Director for Children's Services)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes Date agreed: 26/06/2024											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor <i>Jemima Laing</i> ((Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications)– <i>approved by email.</i> Date approved: 27/06/2024											



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**

High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



Achieving Excellence

A Three-Year Strategic Plan to develop, sustain and embed good and outstanding practice for all children, young people and families in Plymouth.

2024-27



Introduction



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**

High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



Plymouth's Corporate Plan sets out a commitment to keeping children, young people and families safe, alongside improving education, skills and health outcomes and a commitment to prevention and early intervention, using our resources wisely, providing high quality services and engaging communities and empowering staff. Our Children's Service has developed this new three-year plan to take forward these commitment, being **ambitious for all children and young people in Plymouth**, focusing on ensuring services work seamlessly with families to identify needs early, responding quickly and effectively to prevent them from escalating, providing the right help, support and protection at the right time to improve wider outcomes.

We have agreed a vision with our partners, set out in '**A Bright Future 2021-26**', that all children and young people in Plymouth will live full and happy lives, receive good quality health services, attend high quality education, have fun and stay safe. All children and young people in Plymouth will make a good start in life, will be well supported when they need extra help and build the skills, knowledge and resilience they need to transition into adulthood successfully.

Most children and young people in Plymouth have a positive experience of services and experience good outcomes. However, we know that some children and young people are not yet well enough supported and included to achieve their full potential. We want all children, young people and their families to benefit from provision in their local communities which meets their needs and helps them to make good progress. This is particularly the case for children and young people who may be more vulnerable to poor outcomes because of their family circumstances or their additional needs.

We have made solid improvements in key areas, stabilising services and providing the firm foundations needed for the future. This three-year plan takes us into the next phase where over the next three years we are **Achieving Excellence**, and will develop, sustain and embed good practice so that all children and young people achieve their potential. We have engaged with staff, children, young people and families and what they told us about what is important to them and what we need to do differently has informed this plan. Young people told us they want to live in a City that is **"Equal, Kind and Safe"**, where professionals in their local communities build relationships with them and their needs are met. Staff told us they want a stable workforce and support to develop the skills and partnerships they need to build relationships with families and communities, help families early and improve outcomes for all children, young people and families.

In this plan we set out our **ten priorities for service improvement and transformation** developed with children, young people and our staff and the milestones that we will achieve over the next three years. These ten priority commitments will ensure we develop, sustain and embed consistently good and outstanding practice approaches, achieving our vision and transforming children and young people's lives.

This includes how we will work with partners so that together we deliver '**A Bright Future**' for all children, young people and families in Plymouth.

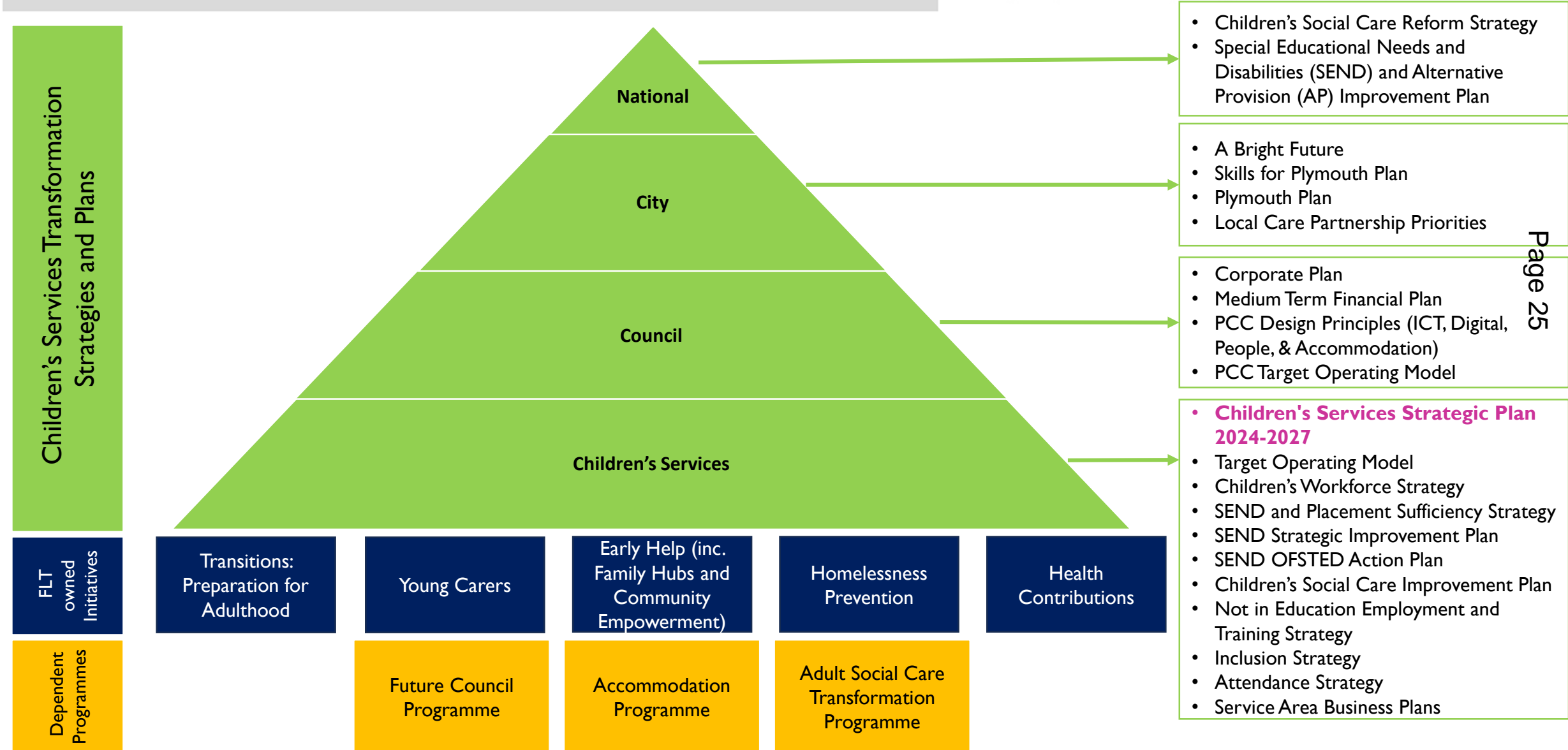
Our planning framework



CHILDREN'S SERVICE



High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



Distance travelled – key highlights



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**

High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



We are making good progress; The Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services in January 2024 confirmed that children's social care services 'require improvement' to be good.

- **Some strong practice identified;** Participation with young people, Academy programme for newly qualified social workers and support to young people missing or at risk of homelessness.
- **Key improvements noted;**
 - No children were identified as being at risk of harm during the inspection.
 - Priority actions identified in the focused visit of the Front Door (Dec 22) have been fully addressed.
 - Strong improvements across our practice obsessions of case summaries, supervision, visits and plans.
 - Strong and effective engagement of Members, senior leaders & staff across the Council in improvement.
 - We now know our strengths and areas for improvement with improved quality assurance.
- **More to do;** to strengthen practice in key areas, improve consistency in assessment and planning and partnership approaches to improve outcomes for children, including at the early help stage.

Education, Participation and Skills, some key achievements;

- Stronger focus on attendance and attainment for vulnerable children, Graduated Approach to support inclusion, improving support to children and young people at key points of transition.
- Increasing the number of special school places for children within the city
- Downham House our short breaks residential provision has received a 'Good' Ofsted rating
- Our Home to School Transport Team have expanded the independent travel training programme to support more young people who qualify for support getting to school.
- More supported internships (from 9 to 60), and an increase in Approved Apprenticeships.
- **The Local Area Plan;** good progress following our SEND inspection in 2023.



ILACS findings - help and protection

Practice strengths identified include;

- Improved responses by the MASH, including the evaluation of information, consent, thresholds, access to advice.
- When children and families do access early help services, their needs are assessed and understood well, plans are strong and subsequent interventions support positive changes.
- Child protection investigations are timely and appropriate.
- Increased tracking and manager oversight for children in pre-proceedings has prevented drift and delay.
- Most children at risk of coming into care receive intensive and creative support to remain with their families.
- Many social workers know their children well and build positive relationships with them.

Areas for improvement include;

- The quality of management oversight and decision making.
- Not all children and their families benefit from seamless, timely and appropriate early help and support.
- When concerns are raised about children out of office hours, the response is not always effective.
- Not all allegations made against professionals are managed well or well recorded.
- The quality of assessment is inconsistent with around half seen taking too long to complete and lacking a thorough analysis of children's experiences. Some children wait too long for a multi-agency plan to address their needs.
- Disabled children receive an inconsistent service. Too many children are not attending school as much as they should. This is an additional risk for vulnerable children.

ILACS - Children in care

Practice strengths identified include;

- For most children, decision-making for them to come into care is appropriate and in their best interests.
- Children in care are supported well to maintain safe and meaningful contact with family and friends. When it is safe and appropriate for children to return to their parents or extended family, this is achieved well.
- Most children in care receive visits from their social workers in line with their needs, and most children benefit from meaningful relationships with their social workers.
- Assessments are increasingly written to children and capture children's histories, their wishes and feelings.
- The fostering service has started to make well-considered and ambitious improvements. Their aspirations are underpinned by significant support and investment.

Areas for improvement include;

- Too many children enter care in an unplanned way or in response to a crisis.
- Some children still experience too many changes of social worker.
- Permanence for children is not always considered as early as it could be.
- IROs oversight is not routinely impacting on the content or pace of children's plans.
- Children who are looked after in Plymouth are not all getting their health and dental needs assessed in a timely way.
- UASC do not currently benefit quickly enough from access to the services and support they require.
- There are still too many older children in care who are not in full-time education. The impact of the Virtual School for these children is not yet strong.

ILACS - Care Leavers

Practice strengths identified include;

- Care-experienced young people mostly benefit from Personal Advisers (PAs) who know them well and PAs are relentless in helping them emotionally and practically at times of crisis.
- Children benefit from PAs being allocated to them at 16. This means PAs can work alongside children's social workers and better help children prepare for and move to adulthood.
- Care-experienced young people benefit from a strong and well-thought-out offer of support and have a good awareness of their entitlements.
- Despite inconsistencies in the quality of Pathway Planning, some care-experienced young people's outcomes far exceed their expectations, a testament to the efforts of these young people and the tenacity of PAs.

Areas for improvement include;

- Once children reach 18, arrangements for specialist health support are not as strong. Not all have access to adult social care services when they need it and accessing mental health services can be challenging.
- Pathway planning for and with care-experienced young people is underdeveloped. Plans are not always clear enough and are not always updated within the required timescales or when young people's situations change.
- Too many care leavers are not in education, employment or training and plans in place are not yet impacting.
- Not all care-experienced young people are living in accommodation that matches their needs.
- Support for young people who are care experienced and are in or have been in custody is inconsistent and as a result, plans about release are not always coordinated well.

ILACS - Impact of Leaders



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**

High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



Strengths identified include;

- The leadership team of the council recognises and understands what needs to happen to ensure that services for children improve.
- Most agencies are working more collaboratively and effectively at a strategic level and can challenge each other.
- Ensuring that there is a sufficient range and number of foster placement and other accommodation options for children remains a significant challenge. Realistic plans are in place, but significant delivery is to follow.
- The local authority has an outward-looking culture and leaders continue to seek advice and support from a range of sources to help drive service improvement.
- The strengthening of quality assurance is helping leaders to better understand the quality of practice and the impact for children.
- Leaders have taken effective action to stabilise and increase the workforce. Staff are supported well by the social work academy,

Areas for improvement include;

- While there is a plan to deliver early help through family hubs, at present early help services are neither a cohesive offer nor well integrated with statutory services.
- The wider management team has yet to ensure that they consistently demonstrate the recording of the rationale for decisions about children in their electronic case records.
- Not all learning activity, including audit activity and supervision for staff, is currently being used as well as it could be to drive improvements in practice, either with individual children or at a strategic level.
- The effectiveness of some aspects of joint working across the council and with partner agencies, in particular, housing, health, schools and education providers, and adult social care services.
- More needs to be done, for example with housing organisations, to help improve care experienced young people's access to housing options that more consistently meet their needs.

ILACS areas for improvement

The inspection identified that more improvement is needed to ensure children and young people benefit from consistently good support. A number of areas for improvement were identified and are included within this plan;

1. The effectiveness of the response to worries and concerns for children out of office hours.
2. The Local Authority Designated Officer's (LADO) quality of practice and advice, oversight and recording of allegations.
3. The effectiveness of some aspects of joint working across the council and with partner agencies, in particular, housing, health, schools and education providers, and adult social care services.
4. The quality and availability of accommodation for children and young people.
5. The timeliness of health assessments for children in care.
6. How well children and young people are supported to access appropriate education, training and employment.
7. How effectively the local authority works with schools and education providers to bring down the current high rate of children being excluded.
8. The arrangements to plan for and support children with additional needs to smoothly transition to adult services.

A new three-year plan



High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



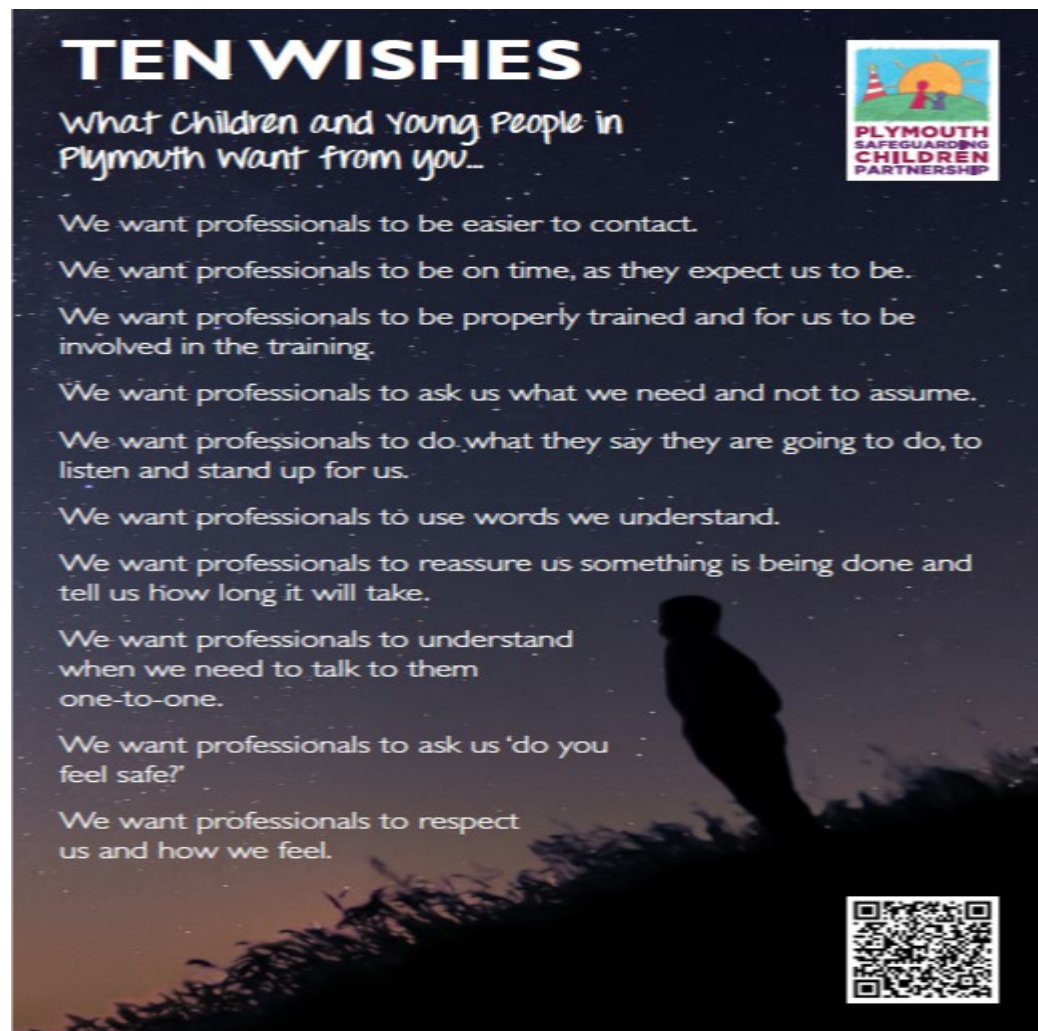
What's important to us;

- Ownership and accountability across the partnership based on 'High expectations, High Support and High Challenge'.
- Delivering evidence of improved outcomes for children and young people.
- Commitment to trauma informed, strengths based and restorative behaviours and practice approaches.
- We will codesign transformation with staff and regularly report on progress.
- We will codesign transformation with children, young people and families and regularly report back on progress.
- Families get the help they need when they need it, evidence-based approaches prevent needs from becoming more complex.
- Commitment to family led models of working helping families to find their own solutions wherever possible.
- Seamless pathways operating between early help, targeted support and statutory provision for families.
- Where statutory interventions are needed, they will be timely and high quality.
- Approaches support the development of confident and effective partnerships to deliver improved outcomes.
- A stable, highly skilled and well supported workforce is enabled to carry out their roles effectively
- Staff have the tools and systems that support them to do their jobs.
- The development of more integrated approaches within Children's Services and with partners.
- Commitment to a One Children's Service approach and Council wide benefits from our approach to transformation.

Headlines from engagement with children and young people



High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



[Ten-Wishes-The-why-and-the-how-booklet](#)
[Ten Wishes Film](#)

The three-year plan needs to set out how we can all be 'Equal, Kind and Safe'.

- There can be lots of record keeping during visits which takes away from us building a relationship with you.
- Regular changes of worker make it difficult to build relationships. We don't want to tell our story more than once.
- We need more support to understand the role of their worker, what their meetings are for and they need to be more involved in their own plans.
- Access to good mental health support is important.
- All professionals need to understand the impact of trauma.
- There needs to be good support and understanding in Plymouth for children and young people with SEND.
- Accommodation for care leavers is not good enough.
- More support is needed to help us stay in education and find employment.
- We need to make sure foster carers are well supported and allowances and savings are operating well.
- There is a need for more safe spaces for young people to meet and positive activities for all age groups within local communities.
- We should be allowed to go to the toilet in school when we need to.

Ten priority commitments

Priority 1- Early help



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**

High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



A strong and effective early help offer which reaches children, young people and families who need it when they need it and improves outcomes and destinations for all children and young people and families.

We know that more families in Plymouth would benefit from earlier help to address challenges when they first emerge. Ofsted found that at present, early help services are neither a cohesive offer nor well integrated with statutory services. We will build on our locality family hub approach to ensure all families have access to the early help support they need when they need it, from birth to adulthood. This means working closely with partners to clarify and deliver our early help offer to families and children across all ages, and developing resources to ensure families can find the help they need and access it easily. We will improve information sharing between agencies and strengthen our pathways to early help so that children, young people and families are supported by the right service at the right time improving outcomes and reducing the need for statutory interventions.

As a key part of supporting improved early identification and inclusive approaches, we will finalise and implement our Ordinarily Available Provision and Graduated Approach to ensure a common set of expectations about the provision and practice that is available and expected in all settings, schools and providers for children and young people with SEND. We will develop approaches to support children to develop good speech, language and communication skills at an early age as we recognise this to be crucial to young children's development and an essential key to learning, for communicating and building relationships with others as well as making sense of the world around them.

We will continue the development of a clear offer to all schools to reduce absence and improve attainment, particularly for children with SEND. We will work closely with schools, settings and providers to understand the root causes of absence, creating a sense of belonging for children and young people and to support early intervention and inclusive approaches. This includes ensuring we have in place a range of appropriate, interesting and exciting further education and careers opportunities in place to meet a wide range of needs and aspirations.

Key elements;

- Continue implementation of locality family hubs.
- Finalise and implement Partnership Early Help Strategy and agree and operate effective partnership governance.
- Early identification and intervention offer to support inclusive approaches and support early language development.
- Skills and adult learning offer to support opportunities for young people and family empowerment.

Priority 1 Early help Key milestones



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**

High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



Key elements: Continued implementation of family hubs. Finalise and implement Partnership EH Strategy, agree effective partnership governance. Fully develop early identification and intervention offer to support inclusive approaches and early language development. Skills and adult learning offer support family empowerment.

Key Milestones 2024/25	Key Milestones 2025/26	Key Milestones 2026/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement family hubs as agreed, review Children's Centre offer. Develop and implement partnership Early Help Strategy and governance. Agree partnership measures to implement agreed strategy (agreed approach to EH assessment, lead professional arrangements, information sharing, recording, workforce strategy). Develop a citywide data base that supports the identification of need. Implement Outcomes Star. Implement PSCP strategies; Neglect, CSA, Adolescents, DA. Implement guidance on Ordinarily Available Provision and Graduated Approach across all schools and settings. Implement SEND early help funding offer to schools. Implement an integrated consultation model for SEND. Codesign local offer website with the parent carer forum. Complete trials of evidence-based universal early language development programme. Develop approaches to identify and support vulnerable pupils to stay in full time education. Effective systems in place to identify barriers and support young people at risk of becoming NEET. Undertake gap analysis of family learning programmes and develop curriculum where needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend family hub offer across localities and age groups to be a 0-18 offer. Increase number of Early Help assessments completed and reduced rates of statutory assessment. More families receive early help support and evidence of improved outcomes. Guidance and best practice embedded and well understood by schools and settings. Local offer website providing easy and accessible information implemented. Evidence-based universal early language development programme in place across the city Evidence-based packages of support are in place for at risk of NEET young people. Fully implement approaches to identify and support vulnerable pupils to stay in full time education. Reduced rates of exclusions and improved attendance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive partnership locality based early help offer in place across 0-18. Confident EH workforce undertaking assessments which lead to families receiving the right help. More families supported at an early help stage. Schools are significantly inclusive with a culture of belonging. Schools share best practice around SEND. Requests for assessment and rates of EHCPs in line with or lower than national averages. Language strand of GLD at least in line with national average. Attendance and exclusions in line with national averages for all children. More young people supported at an early stage to progress into ambitious post 16 and employment pathways. Below average unemployment rates in under 25s

Outcomes include

- Children, young people and families will** benefit from a comprehensive offer of early help and interventions that are timely and have a positive impact.
- Children and young people will** be supported to reach their potential through effective early identification of additional needs and support from evidence-based inclusive approaches.
- Children and young people will** experience improved attendance and attainment.
- Children and young people will** experience schools and settings that welcome every child and support them to thrive.

Priority 2 – Targeted help



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**

High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



Targeted help for priority vulnerable groups that meets needs when they first emerge and prevents them from becoming more complex.

Some children and young people in Plymouth are not yet experiencing good outcomes because their additional vulnerabilities are not yet being identified and met well at an early stage. We will improve how we use data to identify children and young people who are vulnerable to poor outcomes and are in need of additional help seeking to prevent problems from emerging, or to prevent needs from becoming more complex.

We will continue to operate an effective 'Front Door' ensuring timely information sharing and decision making, appropriate thresholds and management of consent. We will develop clear pathways between early help, targeted help and statutory services to avoid 'wrong doors', ensuring families get the right help quickly and reducing the experience of repeat referrals.

Working with partners, we will deliver evidence-based interventions to priority vulnerable children and young people to improve outcomes for them by reducing risk factors and increasing protective factors. This includes where children are vulnerable as a result of their SEND, or those living with domestic abuse, parental mental ill-health and parental substance misuse or those adolescents at risk of being exposed to contextual harm.

We will utilise family led decision making models, putting families at the heart of planning, building on the strengths in their wider and community networks to develop resilience through supporting family led plans.

Key elements;

- Practices which build family and community networks and support more children to remain safely in their families.
- Reshaping the targeted help offer to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and reduce the number of families receiving statutory assessments.
- Develop and implement clear pathways between early help, targeted help and statutory social work for families and partners.
- Targeted approaches to improve educational attendance and attainment for vulnerable groups.

Priority 2 Key Milestones

Key elements: Practices which build family and community networks and support more children to remain safely in their families. Reshaping the Targeted help offer to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and reduce the number of families receiving statutory assessments. Develop and implement clear pathways between early help, Targeted Help and statutory social work and confirm pathways to support for families and partners. Targeted approaches to improved educational attendance and attainment for vulnerable groups.

Key Milestones 2024/25	Key Milestones 2025/26	Key Milestones 2026/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued delivery of a timely response in the MASH and appropriate application of consent and thresholds. Review criteria for 'MASH' response to support improved decision making. Develop MASH as a single point of entry to both targeted and specialist services. Extend targeted help offer; more vulnerable families receive a co-ordinated and evidence-based intervention when they need more help, reducing the need for statutory interventions. Development of clear and agreed pathways across early help, targeted help and statutory services. Refocused Edge of Care offer to further prevent unplanned admissions. All families are offered a family led support plan when they need help. Continue to focus FGCs on vulnerable families. Virtual School makes visible the needs of the cohort of children who have ever had a social worker and those not in full time education are prioritised by all partners. Reduction of families experiencing repeat referrals. Improved outcomes for priority groups of children and young people. Deliver attendance strategic priorities via attendance plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove the gateway to targeted support so that families can get targeted help more easily. FGCs lead to the right children needing child protection plans and increase the use of connected carers when care is needed. Reduction in number of children and families requiring statutory interventions. Reduction in unplanned entrants to care. Extended Virtual School CPD offer is in place across services. Further reduction in families experiencing re-referrals. Children at risk of poor attendance are identified at the earliest point and targeted support put in place. Reduction in % of children with persistent or severe absence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families describe receiving help when problems first emerge that prevents problems from escalating. Evidence of improved early outcomes. Reduction in need for statutory interventions. Reduction in numbers of children needing care and when they do an increase in children placed with connected carers. Improved full time education and reduction in in-year transitions of children who have ever had a social worker Further reduction in % of children with persistent or severe absence.

Outcomes include

- Children and young people and families will** receive timely and effective targeted support when they are vulnerable, to have their needs understood and met at the earliest opportunity.
- Children and young people will** benefit from evidenced based targeted interventions that prevent needs from escalating.
- Children, young people and families** will benefit from family led models of support which build on the strengths and capacity in their extended family and community networks.
- Children and young people will** be supported to remain within their families and when they do need care, an increase in children placed with connected carers.
- Children and young people will** benefit from targeted support to achieve good rates of school attendance and a low rate of exclusions.

Priority 3 –Timely and effective social work practice

Timely and effective social work practice which keeps children and young people safe, both in their families and in our care when this is needed and improves wider outcomes.

This plan will ensure that wherever possible children and families receive early and targeted help to prevent needs from escalating or becoming more complex, reducing the need for statutory interventions. However, when problems are more complex or children and young people may not be safe, we will ensure a timely and high-quality response, reducing risks and keeping families together wherever possible.

We will ensure consistently timely and comprehensive assessments, in line with our trauma informed, strengths based and restorative practice approach, which inform effective planning, keep children and young people safe and improve their wider health and education outcomes. We will ensure the voices of children, young people and their family are central to assessment and planning.

Where it is needed, we will ensure that children and young people benefit from outcome focused child protection plans and legal proceedings which progress in a timely way. If it is needed, children will come into our care in a timely and well-planned way with a focus on early planning for permanence, including returning to their family where this can be achieved safely. We will develop practice to ensure the right children are subject to child protection plans, legal proceedings or in our care at the right time. When they are in our care, care and pathway planning will be ambitious and support children and young people to achieve good wider outcomes.

We will ensure that all workers and all children and young people benefit from high quality supervision and management oversight which facilitates reflective discussion and supports children's plans to progress. In response to what children have told us, we will strengthen relationship-based practice and improve our 'endings', when a new worker becomes involved or when our involvement ends.

We will finalise the prompt action taken to strengthen practice in specific parts of the system where this is identified as needed

Key elements;

- Good assessment and planning for every child and young person which supports needs being met in a timely way.
- High quality supervision and evidence of the impact of management oversight for all workers/children.
- Improvements in priority areas; Out Of Hours, LADO, Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children, Children's Disability Team.

Priority 3 Key Milestones



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**



High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge

Key elements: A good assessment, planning and endings for every child and young person which supports needs being met in a timely way. High quality supervision and evidence of the impact of management oversight for all workers/children. Improvements in priority areas; Out Of Hours, LADO, Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children, Children's Disability Team.

Key Milestones 2024/25	Key Milestones 2025/26	Key Milestones 2026/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved approaches in priority areas post Ofsted; LADO, OOH, UASC, CDT. Timely and consistent quality of assessment & response in IRTs. Additional CSW Team in place to meet levels of demand and maintain caseloads at acceptable levels. Assessments, planning and endings to be service obsessions and improve in quality in line with practice standards. Develop and implement unborn baby practice and assessment tool and a pathway to ensure early assessment. High quality supervision and management oversight for all. Timely PLO practice and earlier permanence planning. Implement a revised Academy offer based on the Plymouth practice approach, focused on core priorities/priority teams. Improved evidence of impact of Independent Chairs on planning and outcomes for children and young people. Improved early permanence planning with close tracking. Improved support to care leavers in custody. Improved accommodation & EET outcomes for all care leavers. Implement the agreed approach to locality ways of working. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional CSW Team ends in Q4. Caseloads sustained at acceptable levels. Consistently good assessments and planning. Children experience fewer changes of SW. SW teams work effectively with partners, including through co-located models where agreed. The right children are subject to CIN, CPPs, the PLO and in care at the right time and more timely outcomes when this is needed. Disabled children receive high quality assessments and plans that ensure they receive the right support. Children in care and care leavers experience good health, education and employment outcomes. UASC benefit from the right support at the right time. Refocus Academy offer and continued focused WFD offer in light of QA evidence. Robust, timely and evident management oversight. Practitioners experience high quality supervision. Children's voices are at the heart of planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-located locality teams support improved outcomes. Fewer families receive a social work response. Where a statutory response is needed QAF evidences that a clearly articulated practice approach underpins a high-quality assessment and planning for all children and young people. Fewer children are in our care and more children in care with connected carers when care is needed. Case decisions are tracked and reviewed, and unnecessary delays are avoided. Children in care and care leavers continue to experience good health, education and employment outcomes. Supervision is restorative, timely, reflective, high quality and leads to improved practice and outcomes for all children. Management oversight is clearly evidenced.

Page 39

Outcomes include

- Children and young people will** be safeguarded in a timely way when this is needed, building capacity in their family networks to enable them to remain in their care.
- Children and young people will** benefit from high quality assessments informing work that is well planned and which helps them to make the changes needed.
- Where children and young people need to come into our care** planning will be aspirational, deliver good outcomes and support young people to maintain relationships with their family network.
- Children and young people will** receive high-quality, relationship based and child-centred support and timely interventions that improve outcomes,
- Children and young people will** have access to a range of effective services and support that promote stability, permanence, educational success and routes into employment, and positive health outcomes.

Priority 4 - The right homes for cared for children at the right time



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**

High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



The right homes for cared for children at the right time, which meets their needs and enable more children to live in family settings closer to Plymouth.

Many of our children and young people in care are in family homes where they are stable and their needs are well met. However, too many of our children are living in residential care and sometimes at some distance from Plymouth,

We will ensure that more children will be looked after in a family setting, close to Plymouth, where they can continue to access their school and local services and maintain relationships with their family network. This includes placing sibling groups together, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and older children with more challenging behaviours with our foster carers. We will develop a specific fostering offer for emergency placements and a model of high resilience fostering, to support carers where children have more challenging or risk-taking behaviours. We will utilise evidence-based approaches to ensure children are in the right placement at the time and will work closely with local, regional and national residential and fostering providers to develop more local provision in line with local need. This includes considering becoming a provider of residential care.

We will further strengthen our approach to ensuring all children have an agreed and early permanence plan in place, including reunification and utilising connected carers. As part of this we will implement improved support to special guardians to ensure positive outcomes for children leaving care through this route.

We will ensure that as young people move into independence, they will have access to a range of accommodation options which meet their needs.

Key elements;

- Use of tools and assessment to identify children ready for step down from residential and step-down planning.
- Foster For Plymouth recruitment and retention and increased use of connected carers.
- External local market growth plan.
- Achieving permanence for children, including through reunification and improved support to Special Guardians.
- Work with Housing and accommodation providers to improve access to accommodation and develop a range of supported options.

Priority 4 Key milestones



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**



High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge

Key elements: Use of tools and assessment to identify children ready for step down from residential and step-down planning. Foster For Plymouth recruitment and retention and increased use of connected carers. External local market growth plan. Achieving permanence for children including through reunification and improved support to Special Guardians.

Key Milestones 2024/25	Key Milestones 2025/26	Key Milestones 2026/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of evidence-based assessment process to identify children ready for step-down from residential care to a family setting. • Improved quality of placement request forms. • Implement refocused foster carer recruitment strategy leading to a net gain of 15 carers, including through regional approaches. • Implement commitments made following Fostering Summit. • Implement first Mockingbird constellations. • Develop and implement high support model of foster care. • Recruit to new Special Guardianship Support Team and agree model of support to special guardians. • Improved approach to assessment and support of connected carers. • Develop model to increase supported lodgings provision. • Model of emergency fostering aligned to the edge of care offer. • Develop options appraisal and business case for options for expanding residential provision within Plymouth. • Develop strong communication and planning across social care and EPS to include the child's education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further cohort of children identified for step-down from residential care to a family settings. • Continue to achieve net gain of 20 in house foster carers offering placements to all age groups. • Increase sufficiency of foster placements for priority groups, including UASC, sibling groups and short breaks for disabled children. • Embed Mockingbird and implement further constellations. • Further extend emergency foster care, high resilience foster care offer and supported lodgings. • Embed special guardianship support offer. • Take forward agreed approach to extending residential provision in Plymouth. • Increase % of children experience the right placement from when they first come into care. • Increase % of children and young people placed in family settings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only children who need to be are in residential settings. • Continued increase in in-house foster carers and % of children in care placed in family settings close to Plymouth. • Further extend and embed Mockingbird model. • Further development of provision in line with updated Sufficiency Statement. • Young people are provided with 'Staying Put' when this is appropriate to their care plan. • Further scale up agreed residential model in Plymouth. • Children experience the right placement from when they come into care. • Placement stability performance at least in line with good LAs.

Page 41

Outcomes include

- **Children and young people will** come into care in a timely and well-planned way when this is needed.
- **Children and young people will** have access to a home that meets their needs from when they first come into our care.
- **Children and young people will** be placed in family settings closer to Plymouth. Children will only be placed in residential care when this meets their needs & is appropriate to their agreed plan.
- **Children and young people will** be placed with their siblings when this is right for their needs.
- **Children and young people will** be supported to maintain good relationships with their extended family networks.

Priority 5 – Sufficient provision which meets local need



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**

High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



Sufficient high quality and value for money education and short breaks provision to meet local need (Early Years, SEND and Alternative Provision).

Too many children in Plymouth are not accessing high quality early years provision or are not yet in a local provision which meets their specific needs. We will continue to work with settings to increase the sufficiency of high-quality early years provision across the City and to increase take up by eligible families.

The overall focus of this plan is to ensure that wherever possible children and young people with additional needs are included in mainstream and special school provision. This will include focused work to support young people with additional needs to remain in mainstream provision. We will develop and implement a responsibility-based model of Alternative Provision (AP), bringing leaders together to develop a local system to ensure that where it is needed, children and young people are placed in high quality AP settings which meet their needs and enable them to achieve good educational attainment on par with their mainstream peers.

However, in line with national trends, the growth in number of children with SEND has led to there being insufficient capacity locally to meet this need in coming years. We will prioritise working with schools and providers to ensure there are sufficient good school places for all children and young people, including for the increased number of children and young people with SEND. We will prioritise continuing the work we have started with partners to develop additional specialist places in Plymouth through investing in capital projects that develop the SEND estate and create the capacity within Plymouth to meet the needs of specific children and young people across all age groups and meet predicted needs over the next 5-10 years.

Key elements;

- Ensuring sufficient high quality Early Years provision and take up.
- The development of a responsibility-based model for Alternative Provision.
- Development and implementation of a strategy for sufficiency of SEND provision that meets need and emerging need.

Priority 5 Key milestones



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**



High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge

Key elements: Ensuring sufficient high quality Early Years provision and take up. The development of a responsibility-based model for Alternative Provision. SEND provision that meet need and emerging need.

Key Milestones 2024/25	Key Milestones 2025/26	Key Milestones 2026/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened Alternative Provision (AP) offer, governance and support arrangements in place for allocation and monitoring provision. Develop model for AP specialist taskforce in AP settings. Develop plan for the delivery of a responsibility-based decision-making, funding and commissioning of AP. High-level costed sufficiency proposals and implementation plan agreed for specialist SEND and AP provision Review current resourced provision and develop plan for increased capacity for identified needs across the city. Effective oversight and termly provision statements in place for high priority groups of children and settings. Effective processes in place to allocate specialist resources and exceptional provision including oversight of spend. Monitoring cycle in place for specialist independent provision. Review current short breaks provision and develop appropriate local offer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear vision and purpose for the Alternative Provision system underpins the operation of day-to-day processes. Co-located, blended teams deliver support with and from AP. Phased roll out of increased resourced provision. Phased roll of out of capital works to increase special school provision. Service level agreements embedded through the termly monitoring meetings. Decision-making groups and financial controls in place setting out trajectories and mitigation arrangements. Reduced demand for Home to School Transport An updated short breaks offer, and commissioning approach has been co-produced that is flexible, equitable and accessible and meets needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A successful range of pathways enable children in need of AP to achieve good outcomes and successful transitions. Co-ordinated, responsive AP support responds to children's needs quickly and appropriately. Resourced provision understood by families and take-up of these places is strong. Increased special school provision meets local needs and leads to reduction in use of high-cost independent placements. Embedded service level agreements through the termly monitoring meetings with improved attendance and outcomes for children and young people. Embedded decision-making groups, with High Needs Block managed within budget and a trajectory for year-on-year reduction of the use of non-maintained independent placements.

Outcomes include

- Children and young people will** access and regularly attend the most appropriate early years setting, school or college for their needs – whether mainstream or specialist.
- Children and young people will** access additional support when it is needed through a fair, consistent and transparent process.
- Children, young people and families will** co-design services and be involved in evaluating their effectiveness and our local offer will be understood by children, families and professionals.
- Children and young people will** experience a reduction in the use of independent non-maintained school as more children access their local school.
- Children and young people will** experience a high-quality education placement, suited to their needs, that equips them with the skills and attributes they need to make a positive contribution to their community and to succeed in life.

Priority 6 - Preparation for adulthood



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**

High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



Preparing all children and young people well for adulthood and ambitious employment.

We want planning and preparation for adulthood to start early for all young people, bringing professionals together with young people and their families using person centred approaches to ensure all young people develop good independent living skills and have an early and clear plan in place for their transition to adulthood, including appropriate accommodation, training and employment outcomes. We will ensure that local arrangements and plans are ambitious and set out clear aspirations for young people's futures.

We will work with partners to ensure priority groups of vulnerable children and young people are provided with effective additional support at key stages of transition to ensure they make a success of moves and changes at key points.

We will ensure that children's social care and adult's social care operate effective arrangements to agree and implement eligibility for support in adulthood and ensure an early plan is in place with a smooth and stress-free transition of support, including effective planning with health for any continuing care needs.

We will work with partners, including health, housing and training and Skills providers, to confirm additional support at adulthood for priority vulnerable groups, including young people with SEND, care experienced young people, young people in the criminal justice system, young parents and young carers. We will ensure clear pathways to support are agreed, well publicised and operate effectively.

Key elements;

- Strengthening support at key points of transition.
- Earlier planning with partners and professionals who are skilled and confident in preparation for adulthood..
- Confirming and implement expectations for priority/vulnerable groups with partners.
- Delivering Lifelong learning and Unlocking Plymouth's Potential.

Priority 6 Key milestones



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**



High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge

Key elements: Strengthening support at key points of transition. Earlier planning with all partners. Confirming and implementing expectations for priority/vulnerable groups with partners (including young people and residents with SEND, Care leavers, young people in criminal justice system, parents and carers, young carers). Lifelong learning and delivering Unlocking Plymouth's Potential.

Key Milestones 2024/25	Key Milestones 2025/26	Key Milestones 2026/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an updated strategic framework for Preparing for Adulthood in Plymouth. Develop revised and agreed person-centred pathways to support effective transitions between all stages of education and into employment and adult services. Develop and implement partnership operational approach to support early pathways to adulthood. Mapping and gap analysis completed across the four delivery plans within the Plan for Economic Growth. Further development of apprenticeships and supported internships. Enhance young people's exposure to role models, work experience and training routes into sectors and occupations, including via support from 3 universities. Embed and extend T Level delivery in the city, including working with employers to offer industry placement opportunities Develop the use of Family Hubs to support careers guidance and sign-posting to residents. Develop robust processes for transitions of children with an EHCP. Baseline the academic, vocational and functional skills offer across the city. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operate effective person-centred pathways and transitions for all priority groups. The development of skills built across the four delivery plans within the Plan for Economic Growth. Join up training and skills provision across the city to deliver a united and streamlined skills offer. Increase traineeships and apprenticeships at higher levels and in STEM industries. Ensure talent pipeline of graduates and people with higher level skills is enhanced and aligned with priority growth sectors. Deliver improved approaches to supporting identified groups including care leavers into employment. Develop and implement support for entry level, basic and functional skills (including maths, English, digital, employability and transferable skills). Young people with an EHCP are accessing appropriate pathways to transition into adulthood. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early and well co-ordinated planning and support for key transitions in place for all eligible young people. Young people have high levels of satisfaction at key transitions Evidence of improved outcomes for priority groups. Skills routes to meet the future economic needs of the city are in place. A greater variety of businesses adopting apprenticeships and supported internships and more young people taking up these opportunities. Fewer NEETs, including in identified priority groups. Ringfenced ambitious employment pathways across the city for vulnerable young people.

Page 45

Outcomes include

- Children and young people will** experience early, well co-ordinated multi-disciplinary planning and preparation for adulthood.
- Children and young people will** benefit from support and provision to fulfil their potential.
- Children and young people will** experience person-centred planning and support to enable successful transitions.
- Children and young people will** experience well co-ordinated training and skills provision across the City and benefit from increased opportunities to be supported into employment.

Priority 7 - Workforce development



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**

High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



A stable, highly skilled, well supported and high performing workforce.

We are making Plymouth a place where people will want to come and work in our Children's Service and stay with us to develop further and progress their careers. We are putting workforce development approaches in place based on a 'High Expectation, High Support, High Challenge' culture. Our Children's Workforce Strategy sets out how we will recruit, develop, support and retain the right people with the right skills. We will build on progress to date with a refocused approach to recruitment for priority groups of staff, stabilise the workforce and put in place a renewed approach to workforce development.

We will deliver the bespoke management and leadership development programme to all managers focused on supporting staff through change and building a high performing workforce. Our Academy will continue to support routes into social work and deliver a high quality ASYE programme and a focused offer to support practice improvement in priority areas and will develop the offer across the children's workforce and wider partnership, including prioritising the development of a programme of SEND professional development.

We will also clarify and implement career progression pathways for all staff groups providing clear pathways for both practitioners and managers.

We will ensure all our staff have access to a high-quality learning and development offer aligned to their role and career progression pathway, have manageable workloads that enable them to deliver relationship driven practice and access to high-quality support and supervision.

Key elements;

- Workforce/service/team charters based on 'High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge'.
- Targeted recruitment for priority groups (experienced SVs and EPs).
- Retention and WFD; including a refocused Academy Offer, the development of an apprenticeship offer and career progression.
- Partnership workforce development in priority areas (including early help and SEND).
- Leadership and Management Development Programme to develop high performing managers and leaders.

Priority 7 Key milestones



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**



High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge

Key elements: Workforce charters based on 'High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge'. Targeted recruitment for priority groups. Retention and WFD; including a refocused Academy Offer and SEND and partnership WFD in priority areas. Leadership and Management Development Programme to develop high performing managers and leaders.

Key Milestones 2024/25	Key Milestones 2025/26	Key Milestones 2026/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a revised Academy offer based on our agreed practice approach and focused on our core practice priorities. • Prioritise attendance and track attendance and impact of WFD. • Commission and deliver a management/leadership development programme to develop skills and behaviours. • Run management 'masterclasses' on performance and financial management. • Review spans of control, team structures and implement career progression opportunities for all staff groups. • Actively recruit priority groups (EPs, managers & qualified social workers). • Develop Team Charters and undertake a skills audit. • Improved retention and % of permanent SW staff. • SW caseloads at target levels & increase in 'good' supervision. • Deliver a programme of SEND and education of children with a social worker professional development. • Identify early career opportunities including apprenticeships to grow our own talent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver revised Academy offer in light of evidence from the QAF to focus on core practice improvement priorities in priority areas. • Extend the Academy to provide learning and development offer across the Children's Services Workforce. • Improved SEND capacity and expertise in mainstream education from early years to post-16. • Improved retention and % of perm staff in priority groups, including EPs and exp. SWs. • Children experience fewer changes of SW. • SW caseloads at target levels and increased % of supervision rated 'good'. • Lead the development of a Children's Workforce Strategy across the partnership. • Improved skills and confidence in SEND and education of children with a social worker across the workforce. • Reduced absence and improved levels of staff satisfaction • Apprenticeship frameworks in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanently staffed teams with highly skilled and well supported workers. • improved capacity and expertise in mainstream education from early years to post-16. • Social Work caseloads at target levels. • Retention and % of permanent social work staff in line with good LAs. • Models of group supervision in place to support multi-disciplinary approaches. • Best in class Academy delivering comprehensive programme of workforce development across the children's workforce in line with identified priorities. • Academy leading partnership workforce development. • Reduced absence, including persistence absence.

Page 47

Outcomes include

- **Children and young people will** benefit from skilled and engaged professionals, and experience better leadership and management oversight of practice and outcomes.
- **Children and young people will** benefit from a stable and sustainable workforce that is supported to provide high-quality, effective support and interventions that meet their needs and aspirations.
- **Children and young people with SEND will** benefit from a highly skilled and supported workforce from early years to post-16.
- **Children and young people will** benefit from reduced professional absence and professionals who demonstrate increased professional satisfaction.

Priority 8 - Performance management & quality assurance



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**

High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



A performance management and quality assurance learning framework that listens and responds to the voices of children, young people and families, 'closes the loop' and supports improvement.

We have made improvements to how we use data and quality assurance to support improvement. However, there is more to do. Ofsted found that not all learning activity, including audit activity and supervision for staff, is currently being used as well as it could be to drive improvements in practice, either with individual children or at a strategic level.

We will strengthen our approach further by bringing together a wider range of qualitative information, including complaints and participation with children, young people and families, alongside evidence from audit activity to effectively evaluate the quality of practice, articulated in our practice standards, across our key improvement priorities. We will develop this into a full learning framework.

We will strengthen how this is used to support improvement in practice with stronger communication and 'closing the loop' on learning with teams including through the Academy curriculum. We will extend quality assurance approaches across key areas of practice in children's services, including EHCPs, and further develop our approach to partnership quality assurance to evidence the impact of partnership practice development on outcomes for children and families.

We will further strengthen our performance management framework, ensuring we are using performance reporting to evaluate core improvement priorities and the quality of practice and to inform targeted improvement activity. We will use scorecards and performance surgeries to track performance over time and enable teams and service areas to keep sight of how our performance compares with 'good' and 'outstanding' local authorities.

Key elements;

- Ensuring practice standards are clear and embedded across Children's Services.
- Strengthen quality, quantity & impact of QA across Children's Services, building on practice strengths and closing the loop on learning.
- Strengthen partnership quality assurance processes.
- Performance data which measures and reports the right things and supports improvement.

Priority 8 Key Milestones



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**

High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



Key elements: practice standards are clear and embedded across Children's Services. Strengthen quality, quantity and impact of QA across Children's Services, building on practice strengths and closing the loop on learning . Strengthen partnership quality assurance processes. Performance data which measures and reports the right things and supports improvement.

Key Milestones 2024/25	Key Milestones 2025/26	Key Milestones 2026/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a focused programme of quality assurance activity and a 'close the loop' approach that supports improvement in children's services. • Track actions from audit ensuring required improvements are made. • Deliver Practice Weeks to evaluate a specific practice theme and ensure learning is shared and acted on. • Expand quality assurance across children's services, prioritising EHCPs. • Further strengthen engagement of children, young people and families' in quality assurance and wider participation. • Operate Performance Boards across the service. • Provide regular reporting that enables distance travelled on priority improvements to be monitored. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality assurance brings together a range of qualitative information from audits, complaints and engagement with children and families, to provide a full evaluation of practice strengths and areas for further development. • Feedback to staff highlights good practice and supports further improvements to be made. • Quality assurance provides evidence of impact of improvement work. • Performance Boards evidence progress on KPIs across key practice areas in line with agreed targets. • Children and young people are listened to and are holding us to account for the improvements we are making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Boards evidence progress on KPIs across key practice areas at least in line with SNs. • Quality assurance brings together a range of qualitative information from audits, complaints and engagement with children and families, to provide a full evaluation of practice strengths and areas for further development. • Quality assurance provides evidence of impact of improvements being made and services are identified as 'good'. • The voice and experience of children and young people is consistently listened to and acted on.

Outcomes include

- **Children, young people and families will** feel listened to and be heard, and their voices will influence service design and delivery.
- **Children and young people will** benefit from continuously improving services and both increased timeliness and quality of responses.
- **Children and young people will** experience improved outcomes as a result of a QA system which focuses on their lived experiences and the impact of practice.
- **Children and young people will** benefit from a quality assurance framework which ensures that identified learning is evaluated, disseminated to staff and acted on.
- **Children and young people will** experience good planning and outcomes from effective oversight of planning and challenge by Independent Chairs and appropriate escalation to ensure outcomes are improved when needed.

Priority 9 - Strong partnerships



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**

High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



Strong partnerships and partnership governance arrangements deliver effective joint arrangements which improve outcomes for children and young people, particularly in priority areas.

We know that we can't deliver the priorities in this plan on our own. We are committed to delivering a refreshed 'A Bright Future' for children and young people in Plymouth with our key partners across the City. We have some strong partnerships in place already, but there is more to do to ensure they are effective at delivering the improvements we know are needed in key areas. This includes in early help, in targeted interventions for priority groups such as children with SEND, in improving health outcomes for children in care and housing and accommodation options for care leavers.

We will meet the expectations of Working Together 2023, implementing strengthened multi-agency expectations for all practitioners involved in safeguarding and child protection.

We will develop partnership quality assurance approaches which help us to evaluate whether the partnership approaches we are implementing are effective and deliver the desired outcomes.

Key milestones in 2024-25;

- Strengthen partnerships with housing, health, schools and education providers and adults social care to govern and drive progress in priority areas through a refocused Strategic Systems Leadership Board Chaired by the DCS.
- Refresh our partnership priorities and strategy 'A Bright Future' for 2024-26.
- Strengthen coordination between the SSLB, the Plymouth Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Safer Plymouth Partnership including three monthly meetings of all chairs and co-ordination of workplans and agendas.
- Develop, implement and embed effective partnership governance of early help.
- Develop and implement a partnership accountability framework and quality assurance to support evaluation of the impact of partnership improvement work in priority areas.

Priority 10 - Enablers

Enablers which support staff to do their jobs well;

As part of this plan, in response to feedback from staff during the development of this plan, we will prioritise creating the conditions within the service that enable staff to do their jobs well.

Including;

- **System development;** ensuring systems support staff to do their job, freeing them up from administration to spend more time with families.
- **Recording practices;** are clear and understood and support child focused practice.
- **Performance data;** ensuring we are measuring and reporting the things that make a difference and tell us about the quality of practice and the impact of practice on outcomes for children, young people and families.
- **Commissioning;** helping to us to ensure we have high quality provision in place to meet need, both now and in the future, and which represents value for money to the Council.
- **Maximising funding streams;** maximising opportunities to bring funding into the Council.
- **Reducing bureaucracy;** reviewing schemes of delegation and processes to ensure staff are freed up from unnecessary bureaucracy.

Key indicators of success

We will measure the success of this plan by tracking our impact against some key outcome measures for children, young people and families including;

- ✓ An increase in early help assessments and evidence of the impact of these on outcomes for children.
- ✓ Improved education attainment and attendance, particularly for vulnerable groups and reduced exclusions.
- ✓ Increase in targeted interventions and evidence of impact on wider outcomes.
- ✓ A reduction in statutory interventions, including social work assessments and EHCPs.
- ✓ Timely responses across the system.
- ✓ The right children on CPPs, subject to PLO and in care at the right time.
- ✓ More children in care living in foster homes close to Plymouth.
- ✓ Improved health, education and employment outcomes for our children in care and care leavers.
- ✓ Children and young people in the right accommodation in line with their needs.
- ✓ Sufficiency of high-quality Early Years settings, school places, short breaks and SEND provision close to Plymouth.
- ✓ Young people progressing into meaningful post 16 opportunities.
- ✓ An increase in audits identifying practice that is good or better.
- ✓ A stable workforce with reduced workforce turnover and reduced absence.

Where we will be in 2027



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**

High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



What we will achieve

The impact this will have

The Partnership delivers an effective early help offer in localities

10 Families access information and a partnership early help offer which enables them to parent effectively.

Evidence-based targeted interventions reach families who are vulnerable to poor outcomes

10 Interventions reach families that need it when they need it, prevent needs from escalating and ensure all children and young people make good progress.

Inclusive approaches are in places across all schools and settings

10 Improved attendance and educational achievement for all children and young people, particularly those who need more help.

Social work assessment, planning, supervision and management oversight is consistently 'good'

10 Children and young people will be safe within their families wherever this is possible.
10 When this is not possible, children and young people will benefit from aspirational planning and outcomes and have access to the right homes and accommodation when they need it.

▪ Mature and effective partnerships with health, housing, schools and settings deliver effective approaches on shared priorities

10 Improved attendance and attainment for all children and young people
10 Children and young people in care experience good health and education outcomes
10 Care leavers in accommodation that meets their needs and supported into employment.
10 All young people develop the knowledge and skills they need to flourish in the workplace.

▪ Provision in Plymouth meets need

10 Young people's needs are met in high quality and inclusive settings in or close to Plymouth.

▪ The workforce is stable and managers and staff are high performing

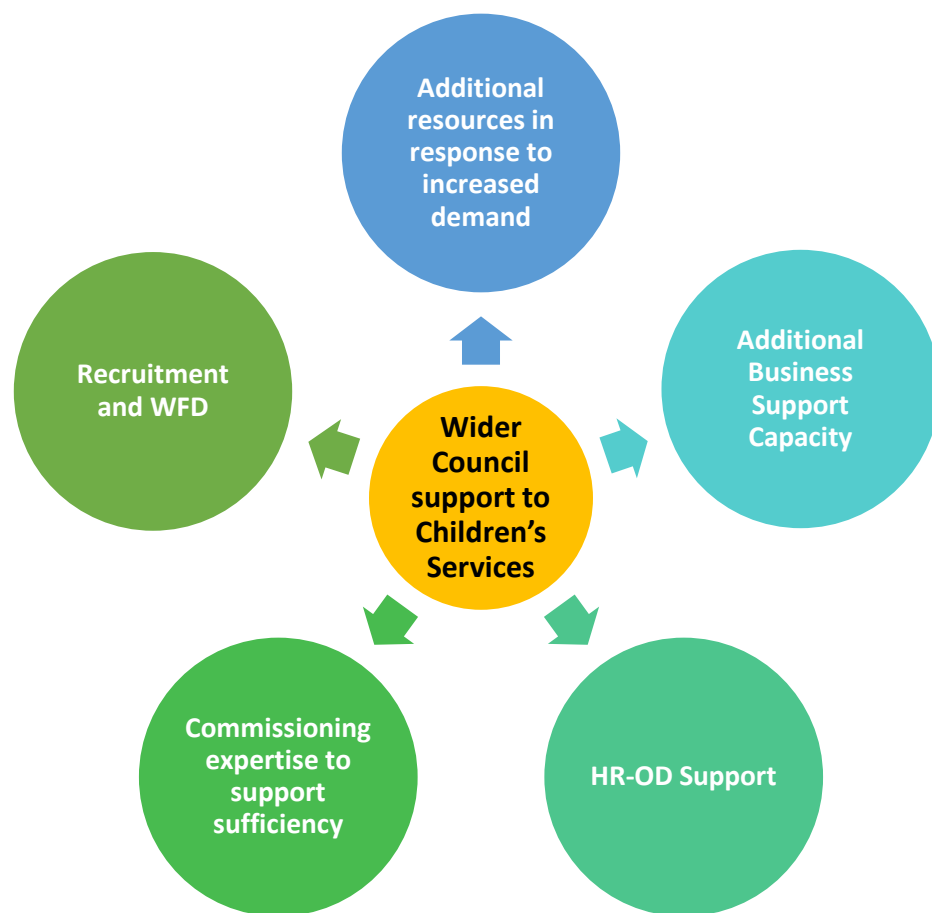
10 Children, young people and families benefit from relationship-based practice.
10 Staff progress their careers in Plymouth.

Taking a Council wide approach

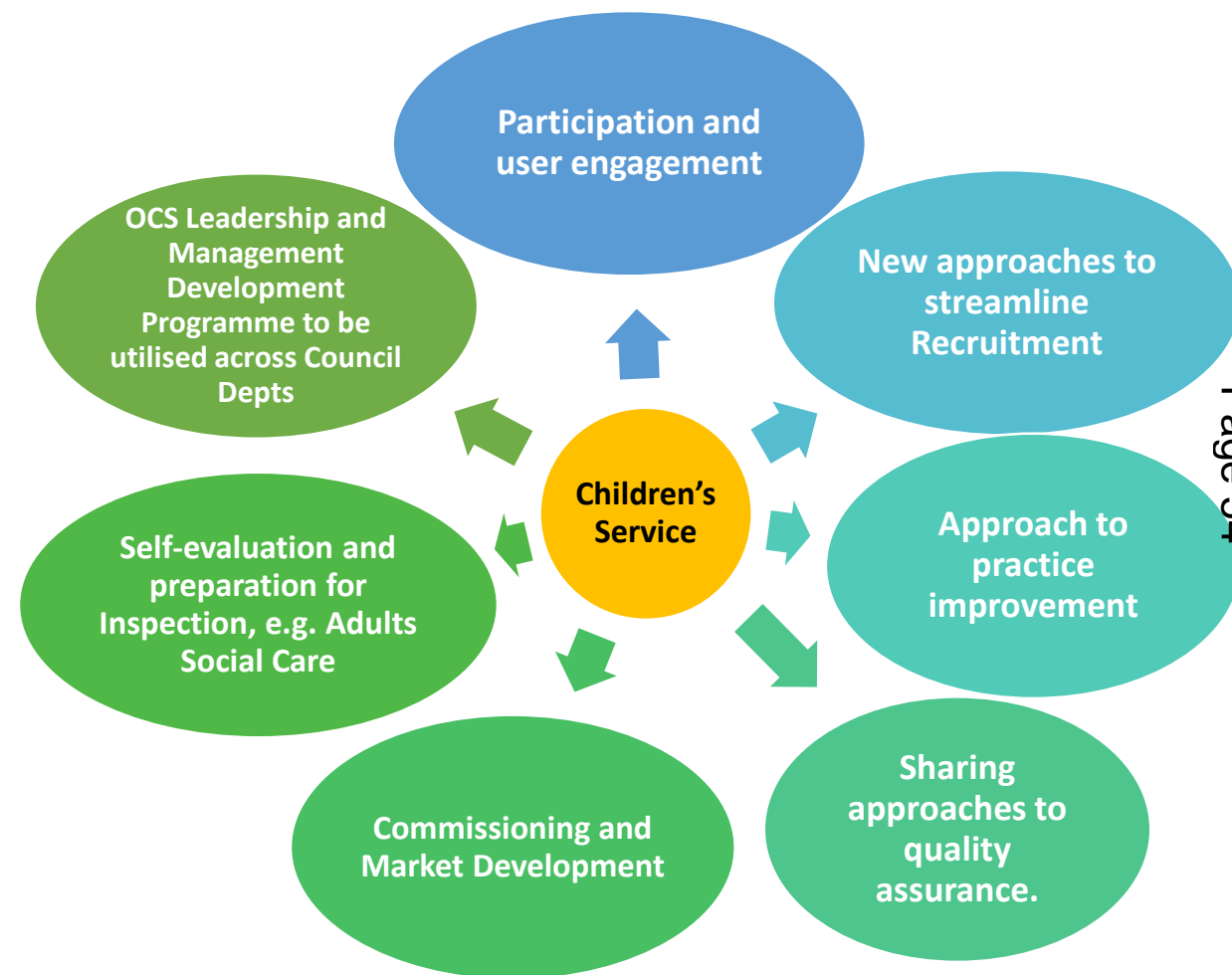


**CHILDREN'S
SERVICE**

High Expectations, High Support, High Challenge



Wider Council Commitment to Children's Services



Children's Services sharing approaches across the Council

Cabinet



Date of meeting: 08 July 2024
Title of Report: **Productivity Plan**
Lead Member: Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (Leader)
Lead Strategic Director: Tracey Lee (Chief Executive)
Author: Sarah Gooding, Policy and Intelligence Advisor
Contact Email: Sarah.gooding@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference: PP080724
Key Decision: No
Confidentiality: Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

This report sets out the Council's response to the formal request from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DHLUC) in April 2024 to publish a Productivity Plan. The Productivity Plans are to be returned to Government by 19 July 2024.

Recommendations and Reasons

1. Council endorses the content of the Productivity Plan and agrees to submit to Government.
Reason: Government have requested member oversight and endorsement of the Productivity Plan. The plan will also be published on the Plymouth City Council website.

Alternative options considered and rejected

1. Plymouth City Council does not submit a Productivity Plan as requested.
This option has been rejected as there has been a specific request from Government and, although not a legislative requirement, not publishing a Productivity Plan could be detrimental to the reputation of the Council.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The Plymouth Plan sets out a clear strategic vision and direction of travel for the city. Through the Corporate Plan, the Council then aligns its plans and priorities to deliver against the Plymouth Plan. In doing this, the Council ensures that it is as productive as possible and allocates its resources accordingly.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

There are no implications as the Productivity Plan is outlining actions the Council is already undertaking.

Financial Risks

There are no financial risks as the Productivity Plan is outlining actions the Council is already undertaking.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

There are no implications as the Productivity Plan is outlining actions the Council is already undertaking.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.

There are no other implications as the Productivity Plan is outlining actions the Council is already undertaking.

Appendices

*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Plymouth City Council's Productivity Plan 2024							
B	Letter from Simon Hoare MP, former Minister for Local Government, 16 April 2024							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
N/A							

Sign off:

Fin	CH.2 4.25.0 09	Leg	LS/00 0031 97/7/ LB/04 /07/2 4	Mon Off		HR	CS.24 .25.01 1	Assets		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Tracey Lee (Chief Executive)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes Date agreed: 03/07/2024											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (Leader) (verbally agreed) Date approved: 04/07/2024											

PRODUCTIVITY PLAN

July 2024

Policy and Intelligence Team



I. INTRODUCTION

- Plymouth is one of the largest cities on the south coast, with a population of approximately 264,700 and is the most significant economic centre in the South West Peninsula.
- Plymouth is home to HM Naval Base Devonport (HMNB), the largest naval base in Western Europe and has one of the country's eight Freeports.
- The city has higher than average levels of deprivation and health inequalities. Plymouth is within the 20 per cent most deprived districts in England and has two LSOAs in the most deprived one per cent in England. More information on the city and its residents can be found in the [Plymouth Report](#).
- Since 2014, Plymouth City Council has led the development and implementation of the [Plymouth Plan](#), a ground-breaking strategic plan which looks ahead to 2034.
- We have had to put in a lot of hard work over many years to find long term, sustainable solutions to the financial challenges that we have faced. Our funding from central government has reduced and not kept pace with the rising demand pressures on our high cost, statutory services including adult social care, children's social care packages and more recently unprecedented demand on:
 - Emergency housing
 - Homelessness provision
 - School transport
 - Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)
- Our Children's Services Directorate ended the 2023/24 financial year with additional net costs of £11.629m, which related to specialist residential placements for vulnerable children and SEND School Transport. Community Connections, within the People Directorate, reported additional pressures that year of £2.298m directly relating to provision of emergency accommodation for homeless families. Adults Social Care had pressures on care package budgets of £6.430m although this was partially offset by short term grant funding.
- The Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) is the Government's measure of funding required by a local authority to meet net revenue expenditure after allowing for income generated from Council Tax. It is used to distribute Revenue Support Grant to local authorities. Centrally, the SFA was reduced over several years to 2019/20, and hence the amount of Revenue Support Grant distributed to local authorities. The inflationary uplifts applied since 2020/21 don't go very far in restoring the reductions made in previous years.
- Our Council Tax base is very low, with 85 per cent of our properties rated in Bands A to C. For every quarter percent (0.25%) increase in the Council Tax in 2025/26, it will yield an additional £0.350m.
- Plymouth's SFA in 2014/15 totalled £114.3m. For 2024/25 this has reduced to £75.6m.
- The LGA has described Plymouth City Council as '*a Council with ambitious plans for the future, illustrated by a clear strategic approach and underpinned by a set of realistic delivery plans.*'
- Both the citywide Plymouth Plan and the Council's [Corporate Plan](#) provide a clear vision and set of priorities, and these are key to the design and delivery of services.
- Between 2011 and 2021 the population of Plymouth grew by 3.2 per cent and it is forecast to grow another 3.3 per cent by 2043. Plymouth also has an ageing population with a projected rise in the 75+ population of 60.3 per cent in the next 20 years.
- This population growth, particularly in the over 75s, has implications for future demand for services and we have already made changes to how we deliver services and will continue to streamline services and seek efficiencies going forward.

2. TRANSFORMATION OF SERVICE DELIVERY

The combination of growth in demand, ambitious plans and reduction in grant funding for Councils has required us to respond strategically to deliver services over the last 12 years.

2.1 Our first wave of change in our transformation covered:

- In 2014 we **integrated social care** with our CIC community health services provider and set up joint commissioning arrangements and an innovative s75 arrangement with the CCG. These arrangements created both savings and a streamlined service provision for patients and clients.
- Our **Growth and Municipal Enterprise** strand concentrated on increasing the council's income through maximising the New Homes Bonus (NHB), increasing the commercialisation of place-based services including the introduction of an asset investment fund with the twin aims of rejuvenating the city and increasing business rates income. In the first four years this produced an additional income of £13.6m.
- **Corporate programme:**
 - Improving customer services with user led digital services and a focus on “getting it right for customers, first time” saving around £1m pa.
 - Improving skills retention and staff engagement through modernisation of our approach to people management and organisational development.
 - Saving money by reducing our accommodation - exit of the Civic Centre (investment of £6m to achieve cost avoidance of £69m - refurbish the office space).

2.2 Our second wave of Transformational change covered:

- **New ways of working** - exploiting collaboration tools to work more efficiently including hybrid working – allowing the Council to maintain delivery during lockdown.
- Creating a **‘one council’ approach** - delivering business support and transactional services under a single organisation structure to focus on economies of scale and innovation – saving £1.8m.
- **Optimising our assets** - continued programmes to streamline, simplify and share technology, rationalising our corporate estate and further developing our family of companies.
- Delt Shared Services Ltd was founded in 2014 by Plymouth City Council and NHS Devon to run IT services for both partners. Since its creation Delt has grown from revenues of around £9m pa to revenues of over £25m pa, and employment in Delt has grown from a headcount of 95 to around 250 currently.
- Delt has also broadened the range of services it provides from IT to payroll, printing, facilities management, procurement and finance, to public sector clients in Plymouth and the wider South West.
- We have also undertaken end to end reviews of services, such as Street Services to maximise efficiency and to help create new income streams generating a gross benefit of over £1.5m pa through commercial offers for waste services.

2.3 Our current Transformation portfolio:

- **Focus on services where there is the biggest demand -**
 - Ensuring Plymouth responds to the changes in client demand and regulatory expectation for Adult Social Care services.
 - Implementing plans to continue to keep children safe in the city and manage demand to balance the budget for these services.
 - Creating greater capacity in the city and reducing dependency on temporary (B&B) accommodation by investing £15m in a property portfolio which will drive £1m savings pa and avoid a further £1m of increasing costs pa.
- **The way we work**
 - Further accommodation rationalisation – exit of two major office buildings saving £900k pa holding costs and likely capital receipts of between £1m and £2m.

- Investing in technology (specifically robotic process automation) to drive efficiencies and aid decision making through turning data into intelligence.
 - Community empowerment – working with our communities more closely to ensure some of the most difficult social issues are addressed.
- Through innovation and modernisation of our services to deliver our target operating model, in the period from 2014/15 to 2023/24 we have delivered cumulative savings of £185.2m, of which the 2023/24 savings were £23.4m.
- Alongside the large transformation programmes, the Council has also delivered efficiencies from smaller change initiatives delivered across the organisation. These changes have created savings and many other commercial opportunities. The combined effects of the transformation and smaller initiatives has helped avoid having to make further cuts to essential services.
- We have streamlined our senior management structure, driving out a £0.960m saving in 2013/14 through a major restructure of our management layers and spans of control, with a further reduction of £0.200m in 2023/24. We are the leanest we have ever been and will constantly keep our structures under review to determine the best way of delivering services.
- More recently the Council has embarked on two new commercial ventures, The Plymouth and South Devon Freeport Company, which is a partnership between the public and private sector established in 2022 following our successful bid to host one of the eight English freeports, and the Plymouth Sound National Marine Park Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), established to create the country's first National Marine Park.

3. TECHNOLOGY AND DATA

- The Council continually seeks to improve the use and quality of data to provide better insight about our population and our customers and improve the services that residents receive as well as supporting strategic planning across the organisation.
- A Data to Intelligence Programme Board has been set up with the purpose of developing a Data Strategy by March 2025 and steering the implementation of activity. The Strategy aims to address data quality, data management and the use of data to provide customer intelligence. To support this, assessment against the [Local Government Data Maturity Assessment Tool](#) is being used across the Council to determine our current data maturity status which will help inform areas for improvement.
- Some of the major challenges and barriers we face around better management of our data include the sheer volume of data and data sets we hold, legacy systems and barriers to upgrading those, and data protection and consent issues requiring data to be used for permitted purposes only.
- All our digital development work takes a "user centred design" approach and draws on data as well as more direct forms of customer feedback to improve how we deliver our services.
- We are also anticipating that AI tools will help us to interpret our data through more powerful searching and faster analysis of the data.
- Plymouth City Council is currently using a Low-Income Family Tracker which combines data from the Council, Department of Work and Pensions and Department of Health and Social Care to help identify and target families in need of most help with cost-of-living challenges. This is being used to identify households where additional benefits may be due, allowing targeted communications and support.
- We are also starting to experiment with large language model chat bots (CoPilot) to determine whether it can support with the preparation of responses to information access requests, and we anticipate that automation could generate tangible savings in the future.
- Our approach to working with people who have complex needs usually including homelessness, substance misuse and significant mental health challenges, has taken an approach to data sharing where all relevant health professionals have access to the same data, enabling people to tell their story once, and receive a joined-up offer of support which reduces organisational hand-offs and

barriers. This group of people often use large amounts of resources but often with poor outcomes, and our approach has improved efficiency and outcomes.

4. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND PLANS TO REDUCE ‘WASTEFUL SPEND’

- The costs associated with maintaining reasonable quality in the delivery of our services and local environment for residents, businesses and visitors continues to be very challenging. Over two thirds of the Council’s net budget is spent on providing support for our most vulnerable, such as Adults and Children’s social care, but we must not overlook pressures within Street Services around waste collection, as well as the enduring need for highway maintenance.
- The Council’s [Medium Term Financial Strategy](#) (MTFS) provides the strategic framework to achieve long-term financial sustainability for the Council, considering known and anticipated pressures together with local and national and international issues which impact on finances. In year, the Council will monitor its revenue and capital budgets on a quarterly basis with reports going to Cabinet and Scrutiny committee monthly.
- Plymouth City Council has a strong framework of corporate governance and performance management which can be seen in our integrated performance management reporting process; this regularly reports on progress against our strategic objectives.
- Other methods of performance and financial monitoring include inspections, reviews and external audits such as Ofsted inspections, an external review of performance by Ernst and Young and regular use of the LGA Peer Challenge process.
- We have a rigorous programme of benchmarking data using all the tools available (e.g., LG Inform and Oflog) and benchmarking is embedded in our performance reporting.
- Our EDI related activity is firmly mainstreamed throughout the organisation, and everyone has a role to play to ensure we meet our statutory duty set out in the Equalities Act 2010, and for ensuring that our services are inclusive and responsive, our workforce is reflective of the diversity in the city, and we are considerate of equality and diversity in our decision making.
- Our central Policy and Intelligence Team is responsible for the facilitation of this mainstreaming, but there is no dedicated resource or inclusion team in the Council.
- We conduct Equality Impact Assessments on key decisions when it is reasonable and proportionate to do so, and we assess the policies and practices of organisations we are contracting to provide services on our behalf to ensure that they are compliant with relevant statute. To avoid any wasted effort this check is now carried out at the contract award stage.
- We have active participation in our Armed Forces Covenant and have recently reiterated our promise to the Armed Forces community that they will be treated fairly and not disadvantaged in our city. We are focusing on quality jobs utilising the skills of our veterans, giving them and their spouses guaranteed interviews if they meet the essential job criteria. We are collaborating with businesses across the city to create jobs and retain service leavers and veterans. We are ensuring our Armed Forces community has equal access to affordable good housing, service children in our schools get the support they need and that veterans, serving families and their children are getting good health and wellbeing support.
- Agency staff are used for several reasons, for example to cover seasonal demand, sickness absence, on-going capacity issues such as vacancy cover for children’s social workers and both short and longer-term project work. The total expenditure on agency in 2023-2024 was £9,658k. The current percentage of the pay bill that is spent on agency staff is 7.84 per cent. Spend on consultants equates to 0.5 per cent of the total pay bill. All placements over £300/day are signed off by the Chief Executive and scrutinised by relevant Service Directors, which would include an assessment of a business case to include effectiveness and value for money.

5. BARRIERS PREVENTING PROGRESS

- **Multi-Year Settlements**, to include council tax referendum limits, to enable local authorities to plan for the longer term.
- Compel DWP to **share their data** to enable more automated processing in areas such as blue badges, benefit claimants etc.
- Greater **freedom to spend ringfenced grants** to allow more local decision making.
- Stop the **‘begging bowl’** culture of bidding for funding and end “cliff edge” funding where services need to cease as funding ends. An end to bidding for funding from different pots to ensure services are less fragmented.
- Appropriate resourcing for new burdens such as “Stable Homes, Built on Love” and the National Transfer Scheme for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- Address **SEND** issues – increase funding to meet eligibility criteria or reduce eligibility criteria to match available funding.
- Address need for funding **high-cost children’s services** including temporary accommodation, enabling a pivot towards long-term early help and prevention.
- Reform **home-to-school** transport entitlement to make it more proportionate and affordable.
- Clarification of **Social Care Reforms**, including charging and ensure adequate funding is provided.
- Information as soon as possible on the potential income, and obligations, for LAs from **Extended Producer Responsibility (Packaging)** reforms.
- Increase the Public Health Grant to take account of the health and wellbeing needs in coastal communities.

This page is intentionally left blank



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Simon Hoare MP
Minister for Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

16 April 2024

Dear Chief Executive

Productivity in Local Government

As you know, the Government is reviewing productivity across all public services and local government is, of course, part of that exercise. The recent [Local Government Finance Settlement](#) announced that councils would be asked to produce productivity plans. This letter formally begins that process.

May I first thank you for your very helpful engagement with my officials. Your views and thoughts have been valuable in shaping this approach to make it as useful as possible for all of us.

Local government has already done a huge amount in recent years to improve productivity and efficiency. However, lockdown and post-lockdown has proved challenging, and you are looking for new ways to go further. These new plans will help us understand what is already working well across the whole country, what the common themes are, whether there are any gaps and what more we need to do to unlock future opportunities. We will share these important lessons across the sector.

Productivity is not one-dimensional, and I would encourage you to consider the various facets that encompass the drive for greater productivity. When developing your plans, please think broadly and include reference to not only how you run your organisation, but also how you run the public services you provide and how you provide place leadership. It is with this wide view that we can ensure we are providing value for money for residents.

I am not looking to impose excessive burdens. I am not issuing you with a formal template or a detailed list of criteria to meet. I expect your plans to be three to four pages in length, and to set out what you have done in recent years, alongside your current plans, to transform your organisation and services. I do not want to specify a list of metrics you must report, but I do want to understand how you will monitor and assess your plans to assure yourselves and your residents that they will be delivered.

The plans should consider the below themes and where appropriate, should reference the work your council undertakes alongside other public services, such as the NHS and police.

1. How you have transformed the way you design and deliver services to make better use of resources.

Questions to consider:

- how has the organisation changed in recent years to become more productive? You may wish to consider what you have done around staffing, structures, operating models etc;
- how do you measure productivity in your organisation?
- what changes have you made to improve services, and what effects have those had?
- what are your current plans for transformation over the next two years and how will you measure the effects of those changes?

- looking ahead, which service has greatest potential for savings if further productivity gains can be found? What do you estimate these savings to be?
- what role could capital spending play in transforming existing services or unlocking new opportunities? If you have already used capital spending to boost growth or improve services, we would be interested in learning more;
- what preventative approaches you have undertaken and can the value of these be quantified?
- are there wider locally-led reforms that could help deliver high quality public services and improve the sustainability and resilience of your authority?

2. How you plan to take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources.

Questions to consider:

- what are your existing plans to improve the quality of the data you collect; how do you use it and how do you make it available to residents?
- are there particular barriers from legacy systems?
- how often do you share data with other organisations, and do you find this useful?
- Are there opportunities to use new technology to improve workflows and systems, such as predictive analytics and AI?

3. Your plans to reduce wasteful spend within your organisation and systems.

I know we will share the aim to reduce waste wherever we can and, while you have all made huge strides in recent years, no organisation is ever 100% efficient. You should set out your plans to reduce wasteful or “gold-plated” spend.

Questions to consider:

- how do you approach identifying and reducing waste in the organisation? How do you monitor progress?
- where have you followed invest to save and what was the result?
- how much time and money do you spend on staff EDI training (internal and external), networks, and other programmes? How many EDI Champions do you have as an organisation? How do you log and report the time and money spent on EDI related activity? How do you assess the effectiveness of that training?
- what percentage of total staff budget is spent on a) agency and b) consultants? How do you assess value for money on agency & consultancy spend and what are your plans to reduce use / costs? How many of those consultants or agency staff have been in place for over a year?
- what governance structures do you use to ensure accountability of spend?
- do you share office functions with other councils and if so, how useful do you find this?
- if you share external training costs with neighbouring councils, how do you factor out duplications of service between your council and your upper-tier council (if you have one)?

- if you have one, what is your assessment and experience of working with an elected mayor, combined authority, or devolution deal?
- what proportion of your paybill is spent on trade union facility time?

4. The barriers preventing progress that the Government can help to reduce or remove.

There will be barriers preventing you from going as far or as fast as you would like to. I would like your plans to set those out, so that we can understand how government, or the market, can help you overcome these barriers to go even further.

Questions to consider:

- what are the barriers preventing you from improving productivity further within your organisation?
- what are the barriers preventing you from improving services further?
- are these barriers consistent across multiple services?
- what would you need to remove those barriers? What do you need from government, the market or elsewhere?

Your plans must be returned by 19 July 2024, by email to productivityplans@levellingup.gov.uk.

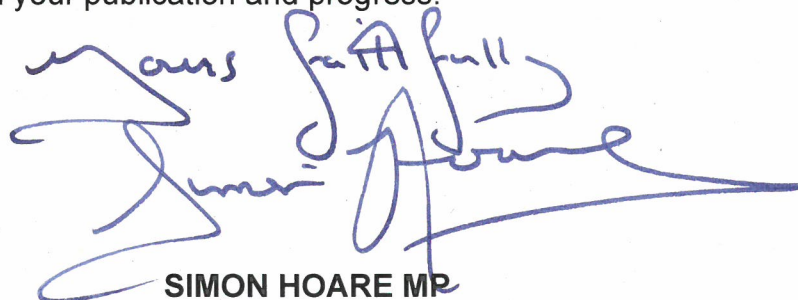
You must ensure that there is member oversight and endorsement of the plan before it is submitted, and the plan must also be uploaded to your website so that residents can see it. You should consider how you will update the plans and report on progress on a regular basis. The plans should also contain relevant metrics and key performance indicators to allow you and your residents to monitor progress.

Once received, we will review the plans to identify common themes and issues across the sector. We are keen to highlight best practice that others can learn from.

Individual plans will not be rated or scored, and we will not produce any kind of league tables. We are interested in understanding what is happening across the sector.

We are setting up a panel to consider the themes and evidence that comes from the plans. I will chair the panel and bring together experts from the sector and beyond, including Oflog and the LGA. They will consider the issues emerging from the plans, the implications for future national policy design, the role of government in supporting further change and the role of the sector in going further. The panel will advise national government and local government, and I believe this collaborative approach will ensure the most effective outcomes.

I look forward to updates on your publication and progress.



SIMON HOARE MP
Minister for Local Government

This page is intentionally left blank

Cabinet



Date of meeting: 08 July 2024
Title of Report: **Provisional Capital and Revenue Outturn Report 2023/24**
Lead Member: Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance)
Lead Strategic Director: David Northey (Service Director for Finance)
Author: David Northey (Service Director for Finance)
Contact Email: David.northey@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference: DJN/Fin2024Outturn
Key Decision: No
Confidentiality: Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

This report outlines the Provisional Outturn position of the Council for the year ending 31 March 2024. Full details of the Provisional Outturn position for each directorate is set out in the body of the report.

An Executive Summary setting out the key areas is included in Section A. The figures remain provisional at this stage and will be confirmed once the external audit is complete.

Recommendations and Reasons

1. Note the Provisional Revenue Outturn position for the year to 31 March 2024;
2. Note the Provisional Capital Outturn position for that year including the Capital Financing Requirement of £91.361m;

Reason: It is a statutory requirement to provide an outturn report and is provisional as it is subject to external audit.

3. Recommend the report to City Council 16 September 2024.

Alternative options considered and rejected

None – our Financial Regulations require us to produce regular monitoring of our finance resources including a revenue and capital outturn position which culminates in the production of the 2023/24 annual statement of accounts.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The financial outturn report is fundamentally linked to delivering the priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan. Allocating limited resources to key priorities will maximise the benefits to the residents of Plymouth.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

Robust and accurate financial monitoring underpins the Council’s Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The Council’s MTFP is updated regularly based on on-going monitoring information, both on a local and national context. Any adverse variations from the annual budget will place pressure on the MTFP going forward and require additional savings to be generated in future years. This outturn position will feed into the revised MTFP to be presented to Full Council at the meeting in September 2024.

Financial Risks

Financial risks concerning period 12 reporting are discussed in the body of the report and relate to the attainment of a balanced outturn position in financial year 2023/24.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

There are no impacts directly arising from this report.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

The reducing revenue and capital resources across the public sector has been identified as a key risk within our Strategic Risk register. The ability to deliver spending plans within budget is paramount to ensuring the Council can achieve its objectives.

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Use of available (un-earmarked) Reserves							

Background papers:

**Add rows as required to box below*

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	CH.2 4.25. 008	Leg	LS/00 0031 97/6/ LB/03 /07/2 4	Mon Off		HR		Asset s		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Northey (Service Director for Finance)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes Date agreed: 14/05/2024											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) Date approved: 23/05/2024											

Plymouth City Council

Finance Monitoring – 2023/24

Provisional Outturn for year to 31 March 2024

SECTION A: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY PROVISIONAL REVENUE FINANCE OUTTURN

The primary purpose of this report is to detail how the Council has delivered against its financial measures using its capital and revenue resources, to approve relevant budget variations and virements, and report new schemes approved in the Capital Programme.

Table 1: End of year revenue forecast

	Net Budget	Outturn	Variance
	£m	£m	£m
Total General Fund Budget	218.440	218.440	0.000

As shown in Table 1, the Council has balanced its budget reporting a breakeven position. The overall net spend matches the net budget of £218.440m.

Within this overall balanced position the following headline financial issues are reported:

- A nil variance on a gross expenditure budget of £560m. This is a significant achievement during a year with continuing cost and demand pressures on services, particularly within Children's Services.
- The 2023/24 budget included ambitious savings targets totalling £23.435m, which were not all achieved in full.
- The drawdown of £1.953m of usable reserves throughout the year and the use of £9.307m of Corporate resourcing adjustments.
- Drawdown from the Working Balance of £8.7m has **not** been required.

The Provisional Capital Outturn for 2023/24 is £91.361m. This is within the approved Capital Budget of £398.200m for 2023-2028 reported to Full Council on 8th March 2024. Please see Table 3 in Section C of this report.

The Outturn position remains 'Provisional' pending audit review.

SECTION B: PROVISIONAL REVENUE FINANCE OUTTURN

I. Introduction

- I.1 This Outturn Report is the final report in the monitoring cycle for the financial year 2023/24 and reviews the Council's financial performance for the year ended 31 March 2024. The year was again affected by factors outside the Council's control, including inflationary increases, a cost of living crisis and a significant increase to National Living Wage. The Council also needed to respond to growing cost and demand pressures within Services, and meet savings plans built in to the 2023/24 budget.
- I.2 From an early forecast pressure of £8.140m in the first monitoring report in May 2023, we have achieved a balanced position. This takes account of additional costs and unachieved savings targets totalling £25.106m and drawdown from usable reserves of £1.953m.
- I.3 Negotiations at national level for pay in Local Government in 2023/24 reached agreement in November 2023. We were required to top up the 4% provision set aside in the Budget, resulting in an additional cost of £1.190m.
- I.4 Cost and demand pressures continue to impact Council Services. The Children's Services Directorate ended the year with additional net costs of £11.629m, which related to specialist residential placements for vulnerable children and SEND School Transport. Community Connections, within the People Directorate, reported additional pressures this year of £2.298m directly relating to provision of emergency accommodation for homeless families. Adults Social Care had pressures on care package budgets of £6.430m offset by short term grant funding. Social Care, Homelessness and SEND Transport are all consistently appearing as pressures areas in Council budgets across the country
- I.5 All departments across the Council continue to manage their staffing costs and manage the vacancies within the service. Directorates have vacancy savings target built in to their budgets.
- I.6 The outturn also includes additional costs of £0.105m incurred as part of Operation Foster; the Keyham WW2 Bomb emergency. This spend was below the threshold amount required by the Government's Bellwin Scheme for financial support so was an additional cost to the Council and has been accounted for in this outturn.
- I.7 The Capital Programme has an impact on the revenue budget, in terms of the borrowing costs for projects. Following a full review, the planned programme was delayed and spend re-profiled to ensure grant funding was drawn down prior to any borrowing requirement. In 2023/24 we recorded a net saving of £1m against the Treasury Management budget due to investment income received being higher than interest incurred. In 2024/25 we will be exposed to the full impact of interest rate increases on our borrowing.
- I.8 The Provisional Revenue Outturn figures will now feed into the Council's formal Statement of Accounts, which will include the Balance Sheet position. The Council's Section 151 Officer must publish the draft Statement of Accounts by 31 May 2024, or give an explanation to the public of any delay.

2. Revenue Finance Outturn 2023/24

- 2.1 Council approved a gross revenue budget of £560.189m with a net revenue budget of £218.440m for 2023/24 at its meeting in February 2023. Table 2 below provides a summary of the Council's overall revenue expenditure and compares the Provisional Outturn with the approved net budget.

Table 2 End of Year Revenue Outturn by Directorate.

Directorate	Net Budget	Provisional Outturn	Over / (Under) Spend	Status
	£m	£m	£m	
Executive Office	6.403	6.739	0.336	Over
Customer and Corporate Services *	51.070	53.682	2.611	Over
Children's Directorate	63.493	75.123	11.629	Over
People Directorate	96.345	99.517	3.172	Over
Office for the Director of Public Health	2.829	2.802	(0.027)	Under
Place Directorate	29.617	28.875	(0.742)	Under
Corporate Items	(31.318)	(48.298)	(16.979)	Under
TOTAL	218.440	218.440	0.000	Even

*The Customer and Corporate Services Directorate includes the Council's Treasury Management activities which are subject to a separate outturn report considered by Audit and Governance Committee.

- 2.2 The Executive Office, Customer and Corporate Directorate, Children's Directorate and People Directorate recorded overspends against budget; the remainder coming in under budget. Expenditure on Corporate Items shows a large underspend mainly due to resourcing adjustments and release of available reserves. These are set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.3 The balanced position to the net budget as shown above in Table 2 needs to be considered in the context of a budget that included £23.435m of additional in-year savings. More than 40% of these savings were targeted to the major demand-led areas, namely the Children's Directorate with a target of £4.575m to achieve, and the People Directorate had targets of £5.780m.

3. Position by Directorate

Executive Office

- 3.1 The Executive Office, which includes Policy, Communications, the Legal department, the Electoral team, Procurement, Civil Protection and Member Support, ended the financial year with an overspend of £0.336m on a budget of £6.403m. The main budgetary pressures were unachieved efficiencies within Performance and Communications, 3 additional by-elections in Electoral Services and additional special responsibility allowances within Member Support.

Customer and Corporate Services

- 3.2 With a budget of £51.070m, the Directorate finished the financial year £2.611m over budget. This reflects a mix of variations across the departments.
- 3.3 ICT reported pressures of £1.578m due to unachieved legacy and in year savings. The Treasury Management budget within Finance achieved additional savings of £1.044m through increased interest received and reduced brokerage costs. Customer Services reported a pressure of £0.297m again relating to unachieved savings targets.
- 3.4 Facilities Management (FM) budgets in aggregate show an overall pressure of £1.542m. This includes pressures of £1.264m on Repairs and Maintenance budgets, and £0.695m additional costs associated with the vacated Windsor House and Midland House.

Children's Directorate

- 3.5 The Children's Directorate reported an adverse outturn position of £11.629m against the £63.493m budget. Within the Directorate, Children, Young People and Families (CYPF) recorded a £8.893m overspend, and the Education, Participation and Skills (EPS) department had an overspend of £2.737m.
- 3.6 Within CYPF pressures were experienced due to continued high numbers of packages in Residential, Supported Living & Bespoke settings, with an increased number of placements costing between £12k – £25k per week plus Supported Living placements in situ averaging 15 more than the previous financial year. Children in Care and associated costs accounted for all of the pressure reported. Due to increased volumes of placements the Service were unable to achieve savings targets that were associated with reductions in numbers of Looked After Children.
- 3.7 Within EPS, SEND Home to School transport saw additional costs of £1.827m, reflecting inflationary pressures on transport costs and an increasing number of high cost routes, as high needs students are placed outside of the City.
- 3.8 Three of PCC's maintained schools ended the year with a deficit, and are under licensed deficit agreements or receiving support from the Schools Finance team where applicable.
- 3.9 The provisional outturn for the Dedicated Schools Grant is an overspend of approximately £5m, which when added to the brought forward surplus from 2022/23 leaves a deficit balance of £4m. This will be moved to a DSG Adjustment Account to be treated separately from PCC's other balances under permitted accounting directions. The deficit relates to increasing costs for independent sector provision for high needs pupils.

People Directorate

- 3.10 The People Directorate is reporting an overall overspend of £3.172m, of which £2.298m is within Community Connections and relates to continued pressures for emergency nightly paid accommodation to meet the increasing homelessness demand,
- 3.11 Within Adult Social Care, the budget for Care Packages had a pressure of £6.430m, this was offset by additional short term grant funding received, vacancy savings and released funding from reserves and provisions. The final outturn figure was £0.874m.

Office of the Director of Public Health (ODPH)

- 3.12 The office of the Director of Public Health is reporting an underspend of £0.027m. The Public Health Grant is ring-fenced, and not included in the outturn position of the Council. Departments included within the ODPH Directorate include the Public Protection Service; Trading Standards; Environmental Health; Registration, Bereavement and Leisure Management. Bereavement experienced additional Service Borrowing pressures, this was offset by savings within other areas from increased income for services and grant maximisation.

Place Directorate

- 3.13 The Place Directorate's outturn position is an annual underspend of £0.742m. £5.9m of the £7.3m 2023-24 savings targets have been delivered resulting in a £1.4m shortfall. This shortfall includes route optimisation delays, lower received adjudication sums and lack of clarity on funding support linked to the Environment Act. Management actions to compensate for pressures have included non-essential spend limitation where possible, savings through the re-negotiation of commercial contracts e.g. waste contracts, better commercial lease renewals, income maximisation and careful management of risks.

Corporate Items

- 3.14 Corporate Items is showing a favourable variation of £16.979m, despite covering additional costs for the following;
- An additional pressure of £1.190m due to the pay award announced in November 2023, which was an average increase of over 5% compared to the budgeted 4% estimate.
 - There were also additional costs of £0.105m relating to Operation Foster (Keyham Bomb Incident) which were required to be met Corporately. These fell short of the Bellwin scheme threshold for Government financial support, which in 2023/24 for Plymouth was £0.437m
 - The Council also incurred a HSE Fine of £0.200m, for failures associated with exposure to hard arm vibration whilst carrying out grass cutting and arboriculture work. This fine has been included in this outturn.
- 3.15 The favourable position was achieved through £8.116m savings made within Corporate and contingency budgets. Additionally, £7.159m additional resource adjustments from Non-Domestic Rates and the Devon Business Rates pooling gain, and £2.148m from Council Tax. £0.890m was released to Corporate budgets and £1.063m to Directorate budgets from usable reserves not required (total £1.953m). There is a breakdown of the resourcing adjustments and reserves released in Appendix I.

Recommendation

That Cabinet:-

- I. Note the Provisional Revenue Outturn position for the year to 31 March 2024.

SECTION C: CAPITAL FINANCE REORT FOR THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME PROVISIONAL OUTTURN 2023/24

4.0 Capital Programme outturn 2023/24

The Capital Programme expenditure for 2023/24 is £91.361m. This is an increase of £4.708m (5%) from 2022/23 outturn at £86.653m. This is shown by Directorate in Table I below and within the approved five year Capital Programme of £398.200m for 2023/24 – 2027/28 reported to Full Council on 8 March 2024.

Table I – Capital Spend - Outturn 2023/24

Capital budget 2023/24	Directorate	Latest Forecast December 2023	Approval	Repro-filing	Variation & virement	2023/24 Capital Spend
£m		£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
173.823	Place	87.578	1.385	(24.091)	(0.426)	64.446
8.008	People	8.764	0.662	(0.815)	(1.111)	7.500
0.382	Children's Services	3.540	0.326	(0.213)	(0.013)	3.640
7.672	Customer & Corporate Services	4.718	1.028	(0.568)	(0.064)	5.114
10.682	Office for Director of Public Health	11.580	0.033	(1.009)	0.057	10.661
200.567	TOTAL	116.180	3.434	(26.696)	(1.557)	91.361

(Brackets) denote underspend

- 4.1 The 2023/24 programme outturn expenditure totals **£91.361m**. During 2023/24 a further analysis using historical monthly actual figures to overall outturn for years 2018 – 2023 had projected an outturn forecast closer to £90m at quarter 3 based on current year actual spend with a 10% contingency threshold. This form of forecasting will continue to be used to planning external borrowing as has demonstrated to be accurate.
- 4.2 The Capital Programme changed during the year as the phasing of schemes was reviewed, approvals for additional schemes and resourcing were agreed. As part of the original five year Capital Programme set in February 2023 for £363.957m, this included £200.567m forecast for 2023/24 based on 31 December 2022 projections.
- 4.3 Throughout the year the Capital Programme has continued to experience the ongoing challenges through high inflation and increasing borrowing costs. This has resulted with targeted review and reprofiling of projects being financed by corporate and service borrowing. Forecasts were updated following a further successful change request submitted to Department of Transport for Transforming Cities Funding Tranche 2 being granted allowing an extension of spending plans into 2024/25.

5.0 Capital Financing 2023/24

The table below shows the final financing of the 2023/24 Capital Programme.

Table 2 – Financing of 2023/24 Capital Programme

Method of financing	Total £m	Funding %
- Capital receipts	3.924	4%
- Grants (e.g. gov't, HLF, LEP, Environment Agency)	41.268	45%
- Contributions, S106 & CIL (neighbourhood element)	0.855	1%
- Borrowing:		
- Corporately funded (Corporate revenue budget)	25.158	28%
- Service borrowing (Service held revenue budget funded)	20.156	22%
CAPITAL PROGRAMME FINANCING 2022/23	91.361	

Grants: The Council has been successful in obtaining grants from government agencies and other sources to help fund £41.268m/45% of the Capital Programme in 2023/24.

Corporate Borrowing: Over recent years there has been a large increase in corporate borrowing to help fund capital projects. The cost of interest and loan repayments MRP (Minimum Revenue Provision) is directly charged to the revenue budget through Treasury Management with costs borne through future council tax collection. Additional budget will be required to fund the future interest and loan repayments and this will be reviewed each year as part of the capital and the revenue plans in the MTFP.

Service Borrowing: Service departments that pay for their capital project to make changes to their service will pay for the cost of borrowing from savings made from the improved services. The cost of borrowing is based on the amount of the loan, the interest rate and the life of the individual assets. The interest cost is calculated using interest rates provided by the Treasury Management Team and is based on the term of the borrowing. The interest rates remain fixed for the full term of the borrowing so that the service knows the full cost of borrowing, with any additional costs being picked up corporately.

Revised Capital Programme 2023 – 2028

- 6.0 Tables 3 and 4 below present the latest approved programme and a breakdown of the movement in programme since last reported on 8 March 2024.

Table 3 - The revised Capital Programme for the period 2023 – 2028:

Directorate	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Forecast	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Forecast	2027/28 Forecast	Total Programme
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Place	64.444	155.370	84.459	42.075	11.629	357.977
People	7.500	26.532	9.830	0.220	0.000	44.082
Children's Services	3.640	0.546	0.130	0.000	0.000	4.316
Customer & Corporate Services	5.116	5.287	1.545	0.710	0.280	12.938
Office for the Director of Public Health	10.661	6.167	0.105	0.000	0.000	16.933
TOTAL	91.361	193.902	96.069	43.005	11.909	436.246

Table 4 The Capital budget consists of the following elements:

Description	£m
Capital Programme as at 31 December 2023 for 5 year period 2023 - 2028	398.200
New Approvals – January to March see Appendix 2 for breakdown	42.345
Variations – January to March 2024	(4.198)
Re-Profiling into future years outside 5 year programme	(0.101)
Capital Programme as at 31 March 2024	436.246

Proportion of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

- 7.0 Although capital expenditure is not charged directly to the revenue budget, interest payable on loans and MRP (Minimum Revenue Provision) are charged to revenue. This net annual charge less investment income is known as financing costs; this is compared to the net revenue stream and presented as a percentage in table below. The 2023/24 percentage matches the previous year's.

	2022/23 actual £m	2023/24 actual £m
Financing costs (£m)	34.384	38.590
Proportion of Net Revenue	17.4%	17.8%

- 7.1 It is now a requirement of the CIPFA Prudential Code that this percentage is reported on a quarterly basis. The Prudential Code sets out the method of calculation, which is 17.8% of net revenue to service our borrowing for 2023/24.

- 7.2 Excluding the amount of borrowing charges associated with Service Borrowing, including the Property Regeneration Fund, which is borrowing to create income, the ratio is still high, with an actual for 2023/24 of 9.77%,. This compares to 5.6% in 2019/20 and reflects the higher cost of borrowing.

	2019/20	2022/23	2023/24
Finance % excluding Service Borrowing	5.57%	9.23%	9.77%

Treasury Management Borrowing

- 8.0 External borrowing taken out by the Council increased by £97m to a total £649.5m, this is reflecting in an increasing proportion of financing costs. The table below shows a breakdown across external borrowing sources with average rates. The main source of increased borrowing has been through the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) in latter period of financial year.

	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	Current Av. Rate
Short Term	75.0	85.0	1.58%
PWLB	395.5	482.5	3.32%
LOBO	64.0	64.0	4.34%
Long Term	18.0	18.0	4.37%
TOTAL	552.5	649.5	3.23%

Recommendation

That Cabinet:-

- Note the Capital Outturn Report including the Capital Financing Requirement of £91.361m.

Appendix I.**Use of available (un-earmarked) reserves and resource adjustments**

Item	£m
Resourcing adjustments	
Additional Business Rates (NDR) Additional income not included in the budget due to timing of NNDR1 return, including additional s31 grant income and increased Transitional Protections	(4.955)
Devon Business Rates Pool Gain Always budget low @ £250k as unknown until end of the financial year. If possible, try to hold balance of any surplus for capital financing. Released additional £1.5m for Mth 5 (Aug) when 1 st estimate agreed with advisors; balance released upon completion of 2 nd estimate in March (Mth 12)	(2.204)
Additional Council Tax Prior year over collection – not confirmed ahead of budget setting	(2.148)
Total resourcing adjustments	(9.307)
Usable reserves not required – released to Corporate budget	
Pension Deficit Reserve	(0.029)
Land Charges Reserve	(0.097)
Redundancy Reserve	(0.059)
Insurance Reserve	(0.361)
Investment Fund	(0.344)
Usable reserves not required – released to Directorate budgets	
Economic Development Bad Debt	(0.343)
Integrated Finance Provision	(0.500)
ASC Bad Debt Provision	(0.120)
Community Connections Bad Debt Provision	(0.100)
Total usable reserves released	(1.953)

Appendix 2. Breakdown of new capital approvals

Service / Directorate	Governance	New Approvals	5 Year Programme Approvals
			£m
SPI	Executive Decision	Eastern Corridor SCN Colesdown Hill Underbridge	0.850
SPI	Executive Decision	Plym Stonehouse & Durnford St Tidal flood alleviation	0.100
SPI	Executive Decision	National Cycle Network Barrier Removal	0.020
SPI	Executive Decision	Asbestos Claims by PCH	1.154
SPI	Executive Decision	Woolwell to The George (Widening & Park & Ride)	3.161
SS	Executive Decision	Highways Capital Allocation	8.207
ED	Executive Decision	National Marine Park	10.198
ED	Executive Decision	Brickfields - Relocation of Hockey Pitch	0.202
ED	Executive Decision	Plymouth and South Devon Freeport Holland/Sandy Road	0.250
ED	Executive Decision	Plymouth and South Devon Freeport Sherford Business Park	1.200
ED	Executive Decision	Mayflower 400 - Waterfront Event Infrastructure	0.016
ED	Executive Decision	Future High Streets Fund - Civic Centre	6.050
ED	Executive Decision	UKSPF: City College Plymouth	0.040
ED	Executive Decision	UKSPF: Real Ideas Organisation	0.050
ED	Executive Decision	UKSPF: PCC & YMCA Plymouth	0.050
ED	Executive Decision	Plymouth & South Devon Freeport Langage Spine Road Design	2.459
CPE	Executive Decision	PATH: Temporary Accommodation	1.500
CPE	Executive Decision	PATH: Single People Accommodation	0.700
CPE	Executive Decision	Young Devon: Single People Accommodation	0.297
CPE	Executive Decision	Efford Youth & Community Centre	0.116
CPE	Executive Decision	Honicknowle Youth & Community Centre	0.084
CPE	Executive Decision	Frederick Street Centre	0.399
CS	Executive Decision	Sir John Hunt - Devolved Capital	0.018
CCO	Executive Decision	Downham House Improvements	0.057
CCO	Executive Decision	Woodland Fort Community Centre Fire alarm	0.022
CCO	Executive Decision	Southway Library, Southway Drive Roof repairs	0.021
CCO	Executive Decision	Rees Centre Replacement Doors	0.013
CCO	Executive Decision	Elliot Terrace Improvements	0.038
CCO	Executive Decision	Chelson Meadows Replacement Doors	0.017
CCO	Executive Decision	Tinside Pool Pump Replacement	0.036
CCO	Executive Decision	Repairs to Plymouth Guildhall	0.018
CCO	Executive Decision	Chelson Meadow - Welfare Facilities making good area for 4 new	0.006
CCO	Executive Decision	Accommodation Strategy	0.009
CCO	Executive Decision	Tothill Bowls Club	0.034
CCO	Executive Decision	Prince Rock Exhaust Extract	0.008
CCO	Executive Decision	Salt Barn Prince Rock Roof Replacement	0.026
CCO	Executive Decision	Repairs to Plymouth Guildhall	0.292
PH	Executive Decision	Brickfields - Relocation of Hockey Pitch	0.716
		Total Capital Approvals	38.434

Service / Directorate	Governance	New Approvals	5 Year Programme Approvals
			£m
SPI	S151	Automated Traffic Counters	0.050
SPI	S151	Plymouth Major Road Network	0.009
SPI	S151	Lipson Vale Phase 1 Trefusis Pk Flood Defence	0.030
SS	S151	Street Furniture Replacements	0.000
SS	S151	Ply & S.Devon Community Forest	0.050
SS	S151	Grass Cutting Equipment	0.019
SS	S151	Replacement of Hire Vehicles	0.049
SS	S151	Kramer Telehandler	0.053
SS	S151	HGV Ramp at Prince Rock	0.119
SS	S151	Central Park Improvements	0.037
ED	S151	National Marine Park - New Horizons	0.093
ED	S151	Mount Edgumbe Orangery Toilets	0.002
ED	S151	National Marine Park	0.001
CPE	S151	Douglass House Site Development	0.162
CPE	S151	Disabled Facilities (incl Care & Repair works)	2.450
CS	S151	Ham Drive - Garden Enhancement	0.011
CS	S151	Mill Ford - Kitchen Ceiling Asbestos	0.001
CS	S151	Longcause - Fire Alarm System	0.021
CS	S151	Lipson Vale - Playground	0.056
CS	S151	Ham Drive - Devolved Capital	0.001
CS	S151	Longcause - ICT Projects	0.028
CS	S151	Eggbuckland Vale Toilet Adaptions	0.038
CS	S151	Cann Bridge - Hydrotherapy Pool	0.004
CS	S151	Sir John Hunt CC - Fencing and Security	0.027
CS	S151	Mill Ford	0.101
CS	S151	Cann Bridge (Downham) - Modular Units Fit Out	0.047
CCO	S151	Midland House Staff and Services Relocation to Ballard House	0.065
CCO	S151	Devil's Point Tidal Pool	0.020
CCO	S151	Accom Strat Phase 2 Windsor House Vacation	0.179
CCO	S151	Chelson Meadow – Pedestrian Access	0.016
CCO	S151	IA Solutions	0.083
CCO	S151	Jack Leslie Way	0.089
		Total Capital Approvals	3.911

Glossary	
CPE	People
CS	Childrens Services
SPI	Strategic Planning & Infrastructure
SS	Street Services
ED	Economic Development
PH	Public Health
CCO	Customer & Corporate Services

This page is intentionally left blank

Cabinet



Date of meeting:	10 July 2024
Title of Report:	Medium Term Financial Forecast 2024/25 – 2028/29
Lead Member:	Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance)
Lead Strategic Director:	David Northey (Service Director for Finance)
Author:	David Northey (Service Director for Finance)
Contact Email:	David.northey@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	DJN/Fin2024 MTFF
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

Under the Council's Financial Regulations, the Responsible Financial Officer (Section 151 officer) is required to report the medium-term budget prospects. Cabinet is asked to consider the Medium Term Financial Forecast for the period 2024/25 to 2028/29.

The Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF) reflects the latest funding projections and sets out the forecasted budget shortfall in each year. The Forecast does not set out projected savings over the plan period or how the gaps will be closed. All savings required for the period will be incorporated into the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to be presented to Council.

This report outlines the current resources, income and expenditure assumptions for the period 2024/25 to 2028/29. It builds on the Outturn position recorded for 2023/24 and acknowledges that the Final Settlement 2024/25 was again a one-year settlement.

An appendix is included setting out the key resources and additional spend requirements.

Recommendations and Reasons

1. Note the Medium Term Financial Forecast 2024/25 – 2028/29;
2. Note the Capital Programme including the Capital Financing Requirements;

Reason: It is a statutory requirement to provide an outturn report and is provisional as it is subject to external audit.

3. Note a revised Medium Term Financial Strategy will be presented to Cabinet and recommended to City Council.

Alternative options considered and rejected

None – our Financial Regulations require us to produce regular monitoring of our finance resources.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The financial forecast report is fundamentally linked to delivering the priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan. Allocating limited resources to key priorities will maximise the benefits to the residents of Plymouth.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

Robust and accurate financial monitoring underpins the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The Council's MTFP is updated regularly based on on-going monitoring information, both on a local and national context. Any adverse variations from the annual budget will place pressure on the MTFP going forward and require additional savings to be generated in future years. This medium term Financial Forecast will feed into the revised MTFP to be presented to Full Council.

Financial Risks

There are no risks resulting from this MTFP.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

There are no impacts directly arising from this report.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

The reducing revenue and capital resources across the public sector has been identified as a key risk within our Strategic Risk register. The ability to deliver spending plans within budget is paramount to ensuring the Council can achieve its objectives.

Appendices

*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Medium Term Financial Forecast							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	CH.2 4.25.0 04	Leg	LS/00 0031 97/8/ LB/04 /07/2 024.	Mon Off		HR		Asset s		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Northey, Service Director for Finance											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 14/05/2024											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance)											
Date approved: 29/05/2024											

Plymouth City Council

Medium Term Financial Forecast 2024/25 – 2028/29

I. Introduction

- I.1 Local authority forecasting is by its very nature difficult to complete with absolute certainty since there are so many variables that need to be considered and assessed.
- I.2 This forecast will set out a summary of the key assumptions that been incorporated to drive all applicable aspects of the financial planning process.
- I.3 It needs to be acknowledged that the Final Settlement 2024/25 was again a one-year settlement. There were a few exceptions, with indications of possible future specific grants, but these too have been known to change during the current financial year.
- I.4 This MTFF covers a 5 year period from 2024/25 to 2028/29, recognising that the 2024/25 financial year is already set as an approved budget, whilst latter years are provided for illustrative purposes only. With a forecast in place, we can ensure the MTFS and annual budgets are prepared in line with the Plymouth priorities, whilst identifying sustainable, alternative and increased sources of income. This is particularly important during the current period when the Council continues to face the twin challenges of reducing resources and increasing demand for services, as well as significant external pressures.
- I.5 Plymouth City Council continues to deal with many of the same financial challenges as most other upper tier Authorities across the country. Most local authorities are experiencing increasing demand for key priority social care services which is placing a strain on available resources.
- I.6 The costs associated with maintaining reasonable quality in the delivery of our services and local environment for residents, businesses and visitors continues to be very challenging. Over two thirds of the Council's net budget is spent on providing support for our most vulnerable, such as Adults and Children's social care, but we must not overlook pressures within Street Services around waste collection, as well as the enduring need for highway maintenance.
- I.7 Cost and demand pressures continue to impact Council Services. The Children's Services Directorate ended the 2023/24 financial year with additional net costs of £11.629m, which related to specialist residential placements for vulnerable children and SEND School Transport. Community Connections, within the People Directorate, reported additional pressures that year of £2.298m directly relating to provision of emergency accommodation for homeless families. Adults Social Care had pressures on care package budgets of £6.430m although this was partially offset by short term grant funding. Social Care, Homelessness and SEND Transport are all consistently appearing as pressures areas in Council budgets across the country.

2. Corporate Plan

- 2.1
- The vision for our city remains for Plymouth to be one of Europe’s most vibrant waterfront cities, where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone. The MTFS is framed by the Council’s Corporate Plan and how we will achieve the vision.
- 2.2
- Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, filling in potholes, creating cleaner streets, building new homes, green investment, jobs and skills and better access to healthcare and dentistry are front and centre of the administration’s vision for Plymouth’s future.
- 2.3
- At the heart of the plan is the council’s ambition to make Plymouth a fairer, greener city where everyone does their bit, making Plymouth a great place to grow-up and grow old, whilst minimising the impact of the cost of living crisis.
- 2.4
- This will be achieved through continuing to collaborate with partners across the city and using evidence and our experience to make intelligent decisions. The plan outlines six priorities and the things both the council and others in the city are doing to achieve them. There is a strong recognition of the importance of the work of other organisations the council works with in delivering a city where people age well, where older residents are supported and empowered to live life to the fullest.

OUR PLAN

BUILD A BETTER PLYMOUTH



CITY VISION: Britain's Ocean City

One of Europe's most vibrant waterfront cities, where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone

Plymouth
Britain's Ocean City

OUR MISSION: Making Plymouth a fairer, greener city, where everyone does their bit

WE BELIEVE IN:

DEMOCRACY
Because we listen and hear what people want

RESPONSIBILITY
Because we care about the impact of our decisions and actions

FAIRNESS
Because we want to address inequality and inequity in our city

CO-OPERATION
Because we achieve more together than we would alone

WE WILL:

Make Plymouth a great place to grow up and grow old

Minimise the impact of the cost of living crisis

OUR PRIORITIES:

Working with the Police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour

Fewer potholes, cleaner, greener streets and transport

Build more homes - for social rent and affordable ownership

Green investment, jobs, skills and better education

Working with the NHS to provide better access to health, care and dentistry

Keeping children, adults and communities safe

DOING THIS BY:

Providing quality public services

Trusting and engaging our communities

Focusing on prevention and early intervention

Spending money wisely

Empowering and engaging our staff

Being a strong voice for Plymouth

www.plymouth.gov.uk/ourplan

3. Settlement Funding Assessment

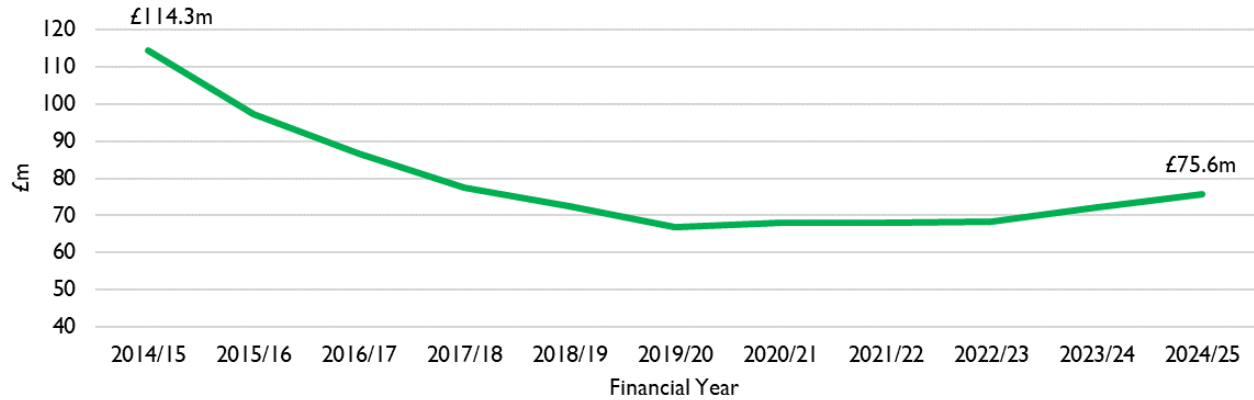
3.1

The Settlement Funding Assessment is the Government's measure of funding required by a local authority to meet net revenue expenditure after allowing for income generated from Council Tax. It is used to distribute Revenue Support Grant to local authorities. In line with the Government's plans in the previous decade to reduce public sector spending, the Settlement Funding Assessment was reduced over several years to 2019/20, and hence the amount of Revenue Support Grant distributed to local authorities. For 2024/25 there has been an inflationary increase in the SFA, with real- terms additional resources announced in the 2023 Autumn Statement being allocated via specific grants rather than being applied to the SFA. The inflationary uplifts applied since 2020/21 don't go very far in restoring the reductions made in previous years.

3.2

The chart below shows the settlement funding assessment for Plymouth City Council since 2014/15.

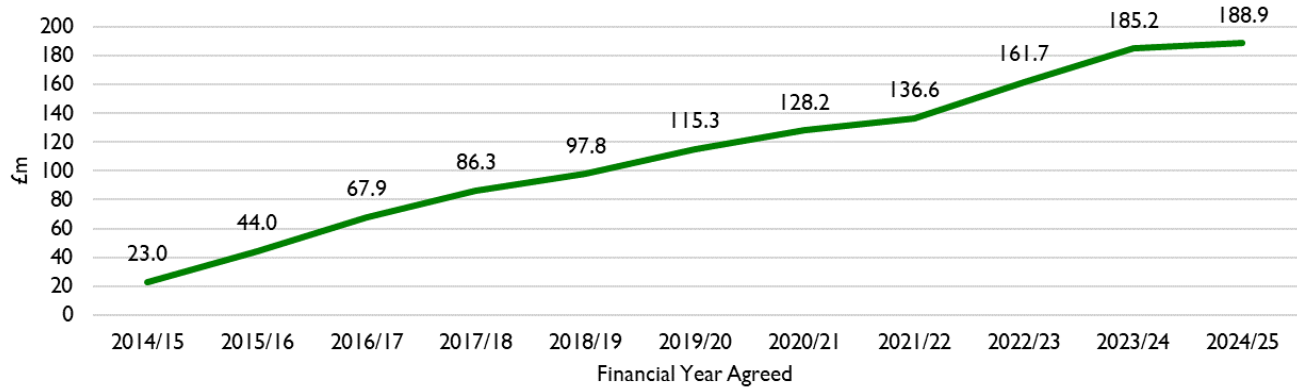
Plymouth City Council - Settlement Funding Assessment
2014/15 to 2024/25



4.0 Savings

4.1 In response to the reducing Government funding, plus additional expenditure pressures, the council has agreed a cumulative total of £188.9m savings in the period 2014/15 to 2024/25. It is becoming more and more difficult to sustain this level of savings required to balance the annual budgets. We are facing increasing cost pressures reflecting general inflation and the cost of living crisis, plus increasing demand on our statutory services including adult and children’s social care plus homelessness. We will continue to make savings from delivery efficiencies and grant and income maximisation, to protect the delivery of essential services.

Plymouth City Council - Cumulative Savings
2014/15 to 2024/25



5.0 Financing the Council

Financial Planning Assumptions

The Medium Term Financial Forecast is based on the national and local economic context and local strategic direction. This table below sets out the Council’s key funding assumptions, with percentages indicating the year-on-year changes. The resultant impact on the resources is set out in a later table.

A key assumption is that the Devon-wide Business Rates Pool continues into future years covered by the MTFs, however there is still uncertainty as to whether Rate Pools will remain, particularly if there is a fundamental review of the rating system.

Table 3 Key Funding Assumptions

2024/25	Item	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
£1,840.70	Increase in Core Council Tax Charge	2.99%	2.99%	2.99%	2.99%
£35.06	Increase in Adult Social Care Precept	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
75,389	C. Tax Base (No. of Band D equivalents)	76,598	77,085	77,573	78,060
49.9p	Increase in Small Business Rates Multiplier	3.30%	1.60%	1.40%	1.40%
£12.328m	Increase in Revenue Support Grant	3.30%	1.60%	1.40%	1.40%
£16.191m	Increase in Top Up Grant	0.57%	0.02%	0.66%	0.66%

Key Financial Planning Considerations

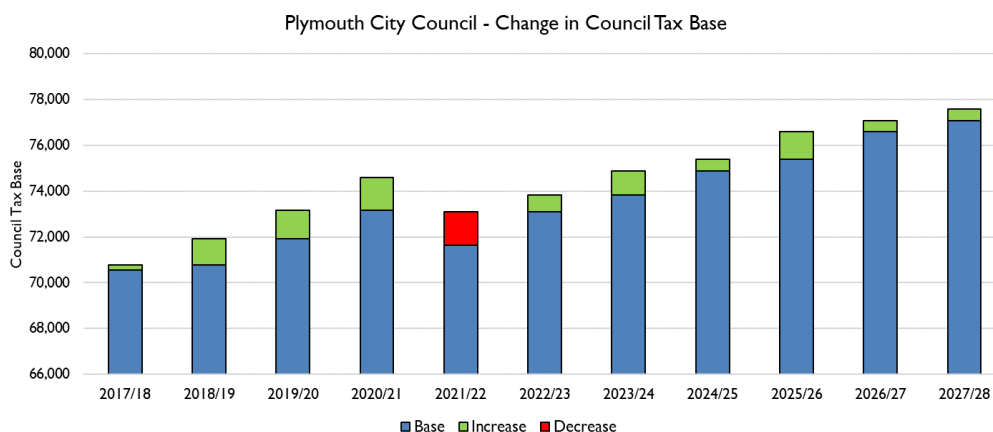
- Continuing Revenue Support Grant (RSG) with annual inflation uplift.
- The cap on Council Tax increases, reflecting Central Government's direction of the confirmed 2.99% for 2024/25.
- The forecast assumes there will be a further 1% Adult Social Care precept in 2025/26 with 1% modelled for future years.
- The final decision on core Council Tax and ASC Precept changes will require Full Council approval as part of the annual budgets.
- Uncertainty to future funding due to the delay in 100% Business Rates Retention. Assumption is the current system remains, with assumed annual inflation uplift.
- Reductions in other Government grant funding without matching reductions and responsibility for related services provision.
- Uncertainty about any future Fair Funding Review.
- A continuing range of increasing costs to meet the demands on the Council and maintain key services, particularly in Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care and Homelessness.
- Increased costs of meeting new initiatives.
- General inflation relating to external spend and contracts have not been accounted for on the understanding that smarter procurement practices will continue to contain significantly increased spending.

6.0 Council Resources

Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept

- 6.1. In the Local Government Finance Settlement Local Authorities were given the ability to apply an increase in core Council Tax of up to 3% and an increase in the adult social care precept of up to 2% for 2024/25 without the need for a local referendum. These increases were applied. The Autumn Statement 2023 was silent on the threshold for the core and continuation of the Adult Social Care Precept, however when set the Government will assume we will maximise this when referencing Council's Core Spending Power. For Plymouth, every quarter percent (0.25%) increase in the Council Tax would yield an additional £0.350m in 2025/26.
- 6.2. The Council Tax base assumed for each financial year is detailed in the table below. The tax base for future years includes assumptions about growth in the number of residential properties and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on the number of local council tax support claimants (LCTS). The assumed collection rate continues at 97.5%, which is considered both

realistic and prudent due to the current economic climate.



- 6.3. The 2021/22 tax base assumed an increase in the number of LCTS claimants due to the pandemic, however this was not as severe as anticipated, hence there was a 'bounce back' effect in 2022/23.

Council Tax Income - Assumed

	2024/25 Forecast £m	2025/26 Forecast £m	2026/27 Forecast £m	2027/28 Forecast £m	2028/29 Forecast £m
Council Tax - General	136.13	145.52	152.36	159.03	166.41
Council Tax - Adult Social Care Precept	2.64	1.40	1.47	1.54	1.62
Collection Fund Surplus	0.71				
Total Council Tax Income	139.48	146.92	153.83	160.57	168.03

Business Rates

- 6.4. Under the Government's funding arrangements for Local Authorities the Business Rates Retention Scheme means Councils retain a proportion of their Business Rates, including growth, which is currently 49% of receipts. Authorities also take the risk of reductions in Business Rates during times of recession, although there are 'safety net' arrangements in place to protect against very large reductions. Local Authorities are compensated by way of S31 grant for reductions to Business Rates arising from changes in Government policy since the retention scheme was introduced e.g. additional reliefs and a lower uplift or freezing of the Business Rates multiplier.
- 6.5. From 2025/26 onwards there continues to be uncertainty over what the Government will do in terms of introducing a Business Rates reset, developing the Business Rates Retention Scheme and the potential to remove the ring fence on Public Health Grant potentially including it as part of the retention scheme. Other considerations and implications include the Health and Social Care White Paper and the delays to social care reform proposals. In the absence of any other information, it is assumed that the same level of funding will be embedded into whatever the new system will be in the future. The MTFS will be updated as soon as any more detailed information becomes available.
- 6.6. A key assumption is that the Devon-wide Business Rates Pool continues into future years covered by the MTFF, however there is still uncertainty as to whether Rate Pools will remain, particularly if there is a fundamental review of the rating system.
- 6.7. The MTFF is modelled assuming gains from the pool continue and are included in 2025/26 at £2.250m, then £2m with £1.750m assumed in 2027/28 and 2028/29.

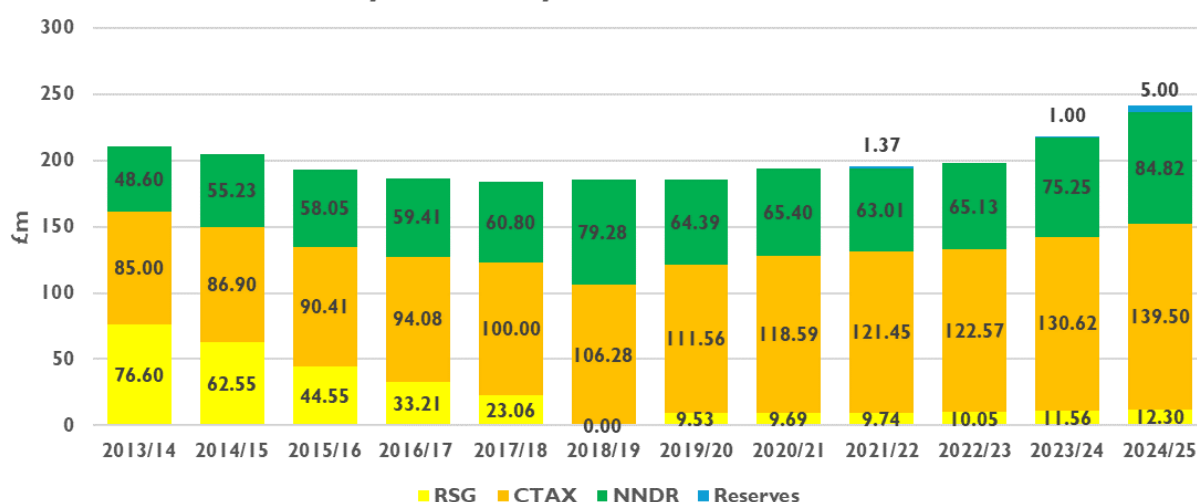
Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

- 6.8. Revenue Support Grant is a Central Government grant given to Local Authorities which can be used to finance revenue expenditure on any service. The amount of Revenue Support Grant to be provided to authorities is established through the local government finance settlement.
- 6.9. In past years, RSG has been a major source of funding for the Council however since the austerity measures in the previous decade were introduced this grant has been reduced drastically. In comparison to 2013/14 which is the first year of a straight comparison, with the introduction of rates retention, the authority's RSG was £76.6m In 2024/25 this is now £12.328m. an increase from the previous year's allocation £11.562m. The MTFF assumes inflationary uplifts in RSG for 2025/26 onwards based on the assumed increase in the business rates multiplier.
- 6.10. Feeding the Core Resources into the financial model gives the following assumed resources available. Although the resources increase from the 2024/25 base of £241.622m to an assumed £268.086m in 2028/29, most of the increase is from local income.

Table 3 Core Resources

	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
RSG	(12.328)	(12.702)	(13.464)	(14.002)	(14.562)
Council Tax	(139.479)	(146.922)	(153.831)	(160.571)	(168.026)
Business Rates	(84.815)	(85.120)	(85.273)	(85.382)	(85.4986)
Reserves	(5.000)	-	-	-	-
Core Resources	(241.622)	(244.744)	(252.568)	(259.955)	(268.086)

Plymouth City Council - Core Resources



In summary, the overall core resources have increased from £210.2m in 2013/14 to a revised £241.6m in 2024/25, an increase of £31.4m. However, this can be analysed as a reduction in RSG from £76.6m to £12.3m (a reduction of £64.3m); an increase in Business Rates from £48.6m to £84.82m (an increase of £36.22m); and the largest increase is in the Council Tax income with an increase of £54.5m (from £85m to £139.5m).

7.0 Government Grants

New Homes Bonus (NHB)

- 7.1 The allocation for New Homes Bonus payment in 2024/25 is £0.043m. It reflects the Government changes which is now simply a one-year retrospective payment, and it should be noted this allocation settlement is for one year only and there is still no indication of what the replacement will be.

Services Grant

- 7.2 The Government continued the grant to 2024/25 and Plymouth's allocation is £0.407m, a reduction of £1.952m (83%) from the previous year. We have assumed this continues at this level for the duration of the MTFF period.

Social Care Grant

- 7.3 The Council also receives a Social Care Grant. The additional payment is £6.806m in 2024/25 increasing the grant from £21.702m to a revised £28.508m. No additional allocation was confirmed in the Settlement for future years, but we have assumed modest growth of £3.500m in 2025/26 and an additional £2m per year thereafter.
- 7.4 The Settlement was again silent on additional funding for the pressures within Children's Social Care, although, in line with last year's allocation, we are again advised this grant encompasses both Adult and Children's.

Adult Social Care Market Sustainability Grant

- 7.5 Plymouth City Council has been allocated £5.618m from the Government's Adult Social Care Market Sustainability Grant for 2024/25. This is a ring-fenced grant intended for Local Authorities to make tangible improvements to Adult Social Care, and to address discharge delays; social care waiting times; low fee rates; workforce pressures; and to promote technological innovation in the sector. This is an increase of £0.659m from 2023/24 but includes the rolled in Market Sustainability Workforce Grant of £1.953m. The assumption is this will remain at this level.

Adult Social Care Discharge Fund

- 7.6 The Adult Social Care Discharge Fund introduced in 2023/24 has continued into 2024/25 with a £3.022m grant allocation for Plymouth, to form part of Better Care Fund plans, and is aimed at reducing delayed transfers of care. In 2023/24 the allocation was £1.813m. The assumption is this will remain at this level.

Better Care Fund (BCF) and Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF)

- 7.7 Since 2015, the BCF has been crucial in supporting people to live healthy, independent and dignified lives, through joining up health, social care and housing services seamlessly around the person. This vision is underpinned by 2 core objectives, to 1) enable people to stay well, safe and independent at home for longer; and 2) provide people with the right care, at the right place, at the right time.
- 7.8 The BCF achieves this by requiring integrated care boards (ICBs) and local government to agree a joint plan, owned by the health and wellbeing board (HWB), and governed by an agreement under

section 75 of the NHS Act (2006). This continues to provide an important framework in bringing local NHS services and local government together to tackle pressures faced across the health and social care system and drive better outcomes for people. 94% of local areas agreed that joint working had improved as a result of the BCF in 2021 to 2022.

The 2024/25 allocation is £24.720m.

- 7.9 The Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF) was first announced in the 2015 Spending Review. This is paid as a Specific Grant to us as the local authority with a condition that it is pooled into the existing local BCF plan with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). This is additional funding for the provision of Adult Social Care and this is therefore not an on-going revenue stream and cannot be subsumed into “business as usual” to close the funding gap for adult social care. There are clear ministerial guidelines on the areas this money can be used for and Plymouth City Council, working in partnership with key stakeholders such as NHS Devon will ensure the funds are invested in transforming the social care system and reducing delayed transfers of care.

The 2024/25 allocation is £12.933m.

Public Health Grant

- 7.10 The Public Health Grant is another key source of income and is used to improve the health of the population, particularly to tackle large differences in health outcomes that we see between local areas. The grant allocation for 2024/25 is £16.737m. The funding is ring-fenced and does not have an impact on the budget resources as set out in this report.

	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m
Public Health Grant allocations	15.330	14.925	15.322	15.504	15.940	16.460	16.737

- 7.11 This Government Grant supports the Council's Public Health responsibilities. Grant conditions apply including responsibilities for 0-5 children services.

- 7.12 Grant funds may only be spent on activities whose main purpose is to improve the public health of our local population. This includes some specific requirements around health improvement, sexual health, drug and alcohol services, children and young people's PH services, NHS Health checks and health protection, as well as providing healthcare public health advice to support the commissioning of health and wellbeing services.

Housing Benefit Subsidy

- 7.13 Normal housing benefit payments are subsidised at 100%. Housing Benefit Subsidy Grant is estimated to be £58m for 2024/25, down from the high of £79m in 2018/19. However, overpayments attract only a 40% subsidy rate.

Dedicated Schools Grant

- 7.14 The largest specific grant that the Council receives is the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) which is a net £81m for 2024/25 and £260m gross including monies allocated for academies. The funding is spent either directly by Schools, (Primary, Secondary and Special), through their formula allocations, or by the authority on their behalf. The Schools Forum, (a representative group of Head Teachers and relevant stakeholders), are consulted on the local authority's formula distribution and the amounts administered centrally.

- 7.15 Any over or under spends on the DSG are carried forward to the following financial year with a neutral impact on the Council's general fund. However, accumulated school balances do form part of the Council's overall reserves and provisions. The provisional outturn 2023/24 for the Dedicated Schools Grant is an overspend of approximately £5m, which when added to the brought forward surplus from 2022/23 leaves a deficit balance of £4m. The deficit relates to increasing costs for independent sector provision for high needs pupils.

Pupil Premium

- 7.16 In addition to the Dedicated Schools Grant the Council also receives additional schools funding through the Pupil Premium. This allocates additional funding to schools that have pupils who are eligible for free school meals; looked after by the City Council; have parents who are currently serving in the armed forces.

8.0 Income Collection

- 8.1 The MTFF assumptions are based on achieving the collection targets as set out. Bad debt provisions are kept under regular review by the Section 151 Officer.
- 8.2 These collection rates have been achieved through the Covid-19 and subsequent financial years. They will be kept under monthly review.

Type of debt	Target %
Council Tax	97.5
Business Rates	97.5
Commercial Rent:	97.5
Sundry Debt	97.5

9.0 Right sizing the Budget

- 9.1 Additional costs accepted within the MTFF are exceptional in nature with the inherent assumption that spending departments will absorb the increased cost of service demand and inflation through proactive management action and efficiencies through "business as usual" operations. A clear business case must be approved through the Corporate Management Team (CMT) to incorporate future year funding allocations.
- 9.2 The additional costs and adjustments within the 2025/26 to 2028/29 MTFF are detailed below. These are additional costs which are kept under constant review as part of on-going budget monitoring but are seen as required to meet budget requirements. These estimates are based on pre-2023/24 Outturn and will need further analysis and updates to feed into the September 2024 Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 9.3 Pay awards have been significantly increased over recent years. A one per cent increase in our payroll roughly equates to circa £1m added revenue spend within our base budget. Looking forward, we have assumed a three per cent award for each year, although with inflation expected to reduce, the later years could be settled at below this mark. No additional funding has been allocated towards our pension deficit following the buy-out in 2019/20.
- 9.4 To balance the additional funding required to balance the 2024/25 Budget, we took a one-off drawdown from usable reserves. This is reflected in the 2025/26 forecast as a reduction to the core spend.
- 9.5 To assist in the delivery of major items within the Children's Directorate for 2024/25 savings plans, we used the mechanism of drawing down a sum of £1.448m of capital receipts. This needs to be adjusted in the 2025/26 allocations to reflect it was a one-year only sum of money.

- 9.6 We have previously “borrowed” funds from our accumulated Section 106 Monies Fund. To ensure the budget is adjusted for this, the £2.7m needs to be added back into the base costs. It is proposed that this is smoothed over a period of three financial years to ease the pressure.
- 9.7 The Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 - 2027/28 approved in September stated our intention to work towards restoring a minimum 5% Working Balance. This reserve was steadily built up over the years and stood at £9.4 million as at March 2017. It currently stands at £8.7m. This equates to approximately 3.6% of the Council’s net revenue budget. By 2027/28 this would need to be £13.4m, an increase of £4.7m to equate to 5%, which is about the average for Unitary Councils.
- 9.8 The council is committed to passing on to our Adult and Children’s Social Care providers the additional cost of the annual review, and increase, of the National Living Wage (NLW). This increasing cost is shown separately in our additional costs analysis but in reality is a key driver in the increasing costs of providing our Adult Social Care packages and services.
- 9.9 For our own workforce, the Council pays the Foundation Living Wage.
- 9.10 The 2024/25 Budget included a net adjustment of £0.4m to the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) as a one-year only adjustment to the Capital Financing Strategy. This needs to be reversed in 2025/26.
- 9.11 The 2024/25 Budget included a one-year only adjustment (release) from the Adult Social Care provision for bad debt. This needs to be reversed in 2025/26.

Table 4 Sensitivity to 1% Change

SENSITIVITY TO 1% CHANGE IN INFLATION ASSUMPTIONS		£m
Pay Award		1.000
National Living Wage		0.575
Interest Rate changes to borrow £1m		0.010
General Contract Inflation (excluding Social Care contracts)		0.100

Other Costs pressures

- 9.12 There are continuing demand pressures in both adults and children’s social care. We are seeing no reduction in demand or cost pressures in both homelessness and bed and breakfast accommodation or in delivering our statutory responsibility to provide home to school transport for our most vulnerable children.
- 9.13 Additional allocations have been made in this forecast but remain a risk, given the Council’s comparatively low levels of financial reserves. Each allocation is based on existing cost and volume analysis and carries its own risks due to the continuing changing economic conditions.
- 9.14 We are awaiting the confirmation of our request for a Capitalisation Direction to adjust the 2019/20 accounts. The 2024/25 Budget was set on this request to DLUHC. The receipt of an “In Principle” letter has provided assurance to the Section 151 Officer that we can proceed, but there remains a risk if the Capitalisation Direction is not received.
- 9.15 There is no additional budget allocation for the homelessness and bed and breakfast services. This reflects the investment of over £10m in the purchase of properties within the city to provide emergency accommodation.
- 9.16 Utilities have been a significant additional cost in recent years. However, through office rationalisation, carbon reduction investment and recent falling prices, we have modelled a reduction from the additional £4m allocated in the 2023/24 budget in our MTFF going forward.

- 9.17 There is an allowance of £1m in 2025/26 to cover anticipated increased ICT costs, mainly following the revision to the initial 10-year contract award for the provision of services from DELT. The original contract saw inflationary increases remaining with the provider.
- 9.18 In addition to the allowance within Adult Social Care to support the anticipated increase in the National Living Wage, the includes an allocation of a further £3.5m to cover both inflationary increases on the cost of packages of care and additional demand.
- 9.19 Within the Children's Directorate there is an allocation of £3m to offset cost increases which cannot be expected to be covered by the service.
- 9.20 These increases are partially offset by a forecasted increase in the Social Care Grant of £3.5m in 2025/26 followed by an assumed £2m increase for the following years. The level of Social Care Grant for 2024/25 is £25.833, an increase of £4.13m from 2023/24. This increase is not confirmed by central government, but we have seen increases each year. In the absence of any further information on future levels of funding the MTF assumes that this will continue to increase.
- 9.21 The Children's Directorate is also working very hard to mitigate the increasing cost of meeting the Council's statutory requirements for home to school transport that meets children's needs as cost effectively as possible. The Service is currently considering a range of options, including more opportunity for children to be trained and supported to travel independently to school, enhanced mileage rates for parents, increased use of personal budgets and options appraisals to increase mini-bus travel. Whilst work continues, this forecast includes an uplift of £0.750m in 2025/26.
- 9.22 Both cost and demand for SEND services continues to increase. There is an indicative increase of £0.750m to cover these pressures.
- 9.23 The government has introduced new statutory requirements for the collection of households' waste. Although new grant funding is expected, the early indications suggest there will be a shortfall between the funding received and the cost of the new service requirements. An additional £0.500m has been allocated at this stage.
- 9.24 Significant investment will be required to achieve the Council's 2030 net zero target. A Climate Emergency Investment Fund was created in 2022/23 and projects continue to come forward for approval. This forecast allocates an additional £0.250m from the revenue budget to supplement monies already in the base revenue budget to support capital investment.
- 9.25 The Council must ensure sufficient funding is available to meet the requirements of the agreed projects within its Treasury Management Strategy, which is updated annually to reflect projects as they are developed for delivery. The Treasury Management Strategy is an integral component of our financial governance. The forecast includes a £7.2m uplift to the budget.
- 9.26 These additional cost pressures total over £12m in 2025/26 as set out in Appendix I.

10.0 Capital Budget

- 10.1 Planned capital expenditure and the associated financing is detailed within the budget report noted by Council in March 2024. Amendments to the budget are approved by Council on a quarterly basis. The programme has been reviewed and re-profiled in light of the economic environment (increasing inflation and interest rates) and changing priorities.

The March report amended the Capital Programme for the period 2023/24 to 2027/28 to £398.2m.

Five-Year Capital Programme by Directorate

Directorate	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Children's Services	3.540	0.304	0.130	-	-	3.974
People	8.764	21.506	9.030	0.220	-	39.520
Place - Economic Development	22.994	50.562	33.427	26.232	10.415	143.630
Place - Strategic Planning & Infrastructure	36.503	79.843	13.142	3.291	0.622	133.401
Place - Street Services	28.081	19.462	1.768	0.105	0.044	49.460
Customer & Corporate Services	4.718	5.166	2.206	-	-	12.090
Office for Director of Public Health	11.580	4.440	0.105	-	-	16.125
Total	116.180	181.283	59.808	29.848	11.081	398.200
Finance by:	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Capital Receipts	4.306	3.587	1.414	0.245	0.611	10.163
Grant Funding	53.783	74.934	2.136	0.023	0.022	130.898
Corporate Funded borrowing	30.211	54.820	15.023	0.478	0.043	100.575
Service dept. supported borrowing	23.809	44.283	38.826	25.987	10.373	143.278
Developer contributions	2.859	3.526	2.323	3.071	0.032	11.811
Other Contributions	1.212	0.133	0.086	0.044	-	1.475
Total	116.180	181.283	59.808	29.848	11.081	398.200

- 10.2 Officers will remain proactive at securing external grant funding wherever possible to continue to deliver significant, ambitious capital investment in the city. The budget will be continually updated as further details of funding are made available.
- 10.3 Projects seeking to fund proposals from service borrowing will be required to meet the principle of “Invest to save”. Business cases will evidence that a loan to fund capital spend can be repaid from the net revenue benefits achieved from the investment, as evidenced in a discounted cash flow.
- 10.4 We remain committed to a significant capital investment programme. The Council will engage with partners in major regeneration of the city, not only contributing towards improvements, but also to sustain local work opportunities, for example, the construction industry. We will ensure that we maximise the outcomes and revenue savings generated through capital investment. For example, we will grow businesses in the city and build more houses to generate business rate income, and Council tax.

Key Financial Strategies**Treasury Management**

The Treasury Management practices, principles and schedules are in place to ensure the Council's Treasury Management Policy Strategy is adhered to and that working practices are in place to meet the approved strategy. It is reviewed annually and affects the Council's budget in terms of borrowing costs and investment returns. The Treasury Management Strategy sets the authorised limits and operational boundaries within which investment and borrowing decisions are taken and risks managed. Effective treasury management will provide support towards the achievement of its business and service objectives.

We maintain regular engagement with our Treasury Management advisors, Arlingclose, and constantly seek their advice on our strategic direction and key operational decisions.

Full Council will receive reports on its treasury and investment management policies, practices and activities including, as a minimum, an annual strategy and plan before the year, a mid-year review and an annual report after its close, in the form prescribed in its treasury management practices and investment management practices.

Borrowing Limits

The Council must have regard to the Prudential Code when setting its Authorised Borrowing Limit, which essentially requires it to ensure that total capital investment remains within sustainable limits and that the impact upon its future Council Tax and Council rent levels is acceptable.

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy

The Council is required to put aside cash each year from its revenue budget to provide for the repayment of loans taken out to finance capitalised expenditure. The Government's Capital Financing Regulations place the duty for an authority to make an amount of Minimum Revenue Provision which it considers to be "prudent". The prudent provision is to ensure that debt is repaid over a period reasonably in line with that over which the assets provides benefits.

Flexible use of Capital Receipts

A Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy was submitted to Council as part of the 2024/25 budget process. Flexible use supports local authorities to deliver more efficient and sustainable services by allowing local authorities to spend up to 100% of their fixed asset receipts (excluding Right to Buy receipts) on the revenue costs of transformation projects.

The Councils Reserves

The Council has created a number of specific reserves and provisions in order to plan in advance for known and anticipated future revenue costs. We will regularly review the appropriateness and use of these reserves throughout each financial year. As a minimum, all specific reserves will be reviewed on an annual basis in as part of the end of year accounting closedown.

Unusable Reserves

The Council holds a number of unusable reserves in the Balance sheet. Some are required to be held for statutory reasons and some are needed to comply with proper accountancy practice. The largest balance is the Asset Revaluation Reserve at £268m; the revaluation reserve contains the gains made by the Council arising from increases in the value of its Property, Plant and Equipment. Unusable reserves also include the accounting valuation of the pension fund. The Pensions Reserve absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for post-employment benefits and for funding benefits in accordance with statutory provisions.

The Council also holds a number of Usable Reserves which are those reserves that the Council may use to provide services, subject to the need to maintain a prudent level of reserves and any statutory limitations on their use (for example the Capital Receipts Reserve may only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt, or with Council approval to finance transformation projects).

Main reserves held at the end of the 2023/24 financial year.

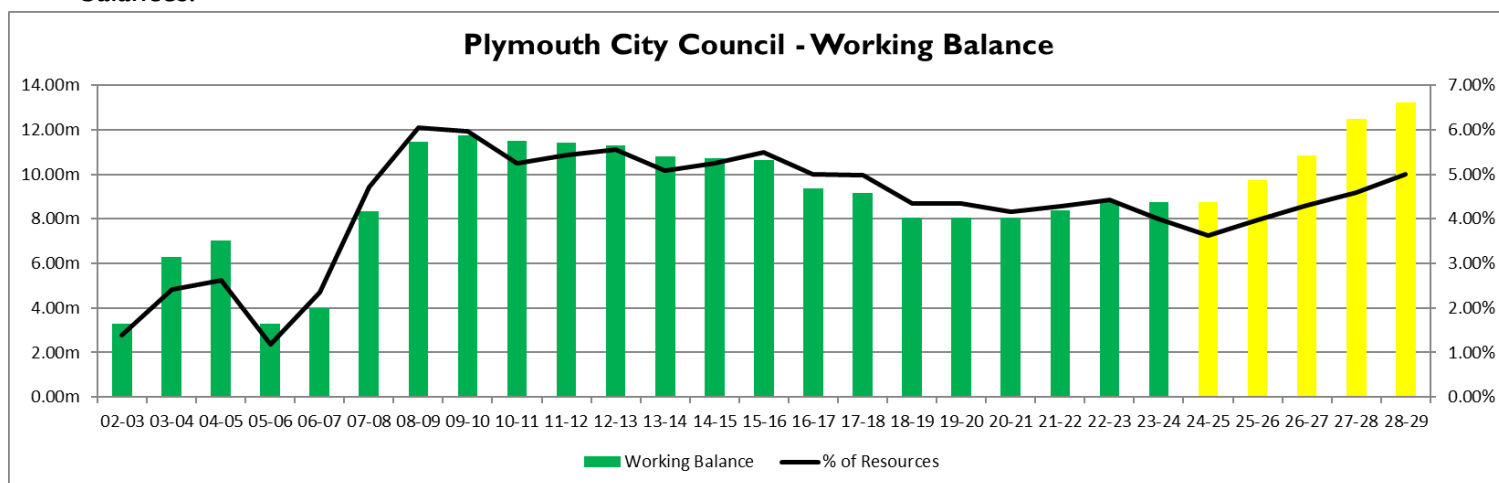
Reserves	31 March 2023 £m	31 March 2024 £m
General Fund Balance (Working Balance)	8.743	8.743
Earmarked General Fund Reserves	45.552	43.571
Capital Receipts Reserve	17.207	14.339
Capital Grants and Contributions Unapplied	38.688	39.855
Total Usable Reserves	110.190	106.508
Total Unusable Reserves	320.791	365.306
Total Reserves	430.981	471.814

Reserve use and retention is an important part of the medium term financial strategy.

A brief description of the purpose of each of our significant reserves and provisions is as follows:

General Fund Balance (Working Balance)

The Council's Working Balance is the revenue reserve that is put aside to cover any significant business risks that might arise. As previously stated, this MTFS works towards restoring a minimum 5% Working Balance. Given the significant constraints that will be placed on public sector spending for the foreseeable future, the Council's reserves should be adequate to cover potential risks. Plymouth has significantly improved its approach to risk management over recent years. Our strategic and operational risk registers are comprehensive and are regularly reported to, discussed and challenged by senior officers and members. Given the size of the financial challenges in this MTFF it is even more appropriate that we are working to restore our working balance. The green shaded areas are actuals; the yellow are forecast balances.



Proportion of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

Although capital expenditure is not charged directly to the revenue budget, interest payable on loans and MRP (Minimum Revenue Provision) are charged to revenue. This net annual charge less investment income is known as financing costs; this is compared to the net revenue stream and presented as a percentage in table below. The 2023/24 percentage matches that of the previous year.

	2022/23 actual £m	2023/24 actual £m	2024/25 forecast £m
Financing costs (£m)	34.384	38.590	45.877
Proportion of Net Revenue	17.4%	17.8%	19.4%

It is now a requirement of the CIPFA Prudential Code that this percentage is reported on a quarterly basis. The Prudential Code sets out the method of calculation, which is 17.8% of net revenue to service our borrowing for 2023/24.

Excluding the amount of borrowing charges associated with Service Borrowing, including the Property Regeneration Fund, which is borrowing to create income, the ratio is still high, with an actual for 2023/24 of 9.77%, This compares to 5.6% in 2019/20 and reflects the higher cost of borrowing.

	2019/20	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Finance % excluding Service Borrowing	5.57%	9.23%	9.77%	11.51%

Treasury Management Borrowing

External borrowing taken out by the Council increased by £97m to a total £649.5m, this is reflecting in an increasing proportion of financing costs. The table below shows a breakdown across external borrowing sources with average rates. The main source of increased borrowing has been through the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) in latter period of financial year.

	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	Current Av. Rate
Short Term	75.0	85.0	1.58%
PWLB	395.5	482.5	3.32%
LOBO	64.0	64.0	4.34%
Long Term	18.0	18.0	4.37%
TOTAL	552.5	649.5	3.23%

Appendix I.

Provisional Gap	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Additional Core Resources £m				
Revenue Support Grant	(0.374)	(0.762)	(0.539)	(0.560)
Council Tax	(7.443)	(6.908)	(6.740)	(7.455)
Business Rates	(0.305)	(0.153)	(0.109)	(0.116)
Total Additional Core Resources £m	(8.122)	(7.823)	(7.388)	(8.131)
Right Sizing the Budget				
Salary and Pension inflation	4.000	4.120	4.244	4.371

Reverse one off drawdown of Reserves	5.000	-	-	-
Flexible use of Capital Receipts one-off	1.448	-	-	-
Repay S106 monies	0.900	0.980	0.900	-
Replenish Working Balance	1.000	-	-	-
National Living Wage	4.660	3.000	3.000	3.000
Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) one-off	0.400	-	-	-
Adult Social Care Bad Debt one-off	0.500	-	-	-
Total Right Sizing the Budget £m	17.908	8.100	8.144	7.371
Other Costs/Adjustments				
Climate Fund – Revenue borrowing	0.250	0.250	-	-
Social Care Grant	(3.500)	(2.000)	(2.000)	(2.000)
ASC Demand Growth	3.543	3.781	4.035	4.000
Children's Demand Growth	3.000	3.000	3.000	3.000
SEND Home to School Transport / SEND	1.500			
Environmental Bill	0.500			
Treasury Management Costs	7.200			
ICT	1.000			
Energy Costs	(1.000)			
Total Other Costs £m	12.493	5.031	5.035	5.000
TOTAL Provisional Gap £m	17.279	5.308	5.791	4.240

This page is intentionally left blank

Cabinet



Date of meeting:	08 July 2024
Title of Report:	Corporate Plan Performance Report, Quarter Four 2023/24
Lead Member:	Councillor Chris Penberthy, Cabinet member for Housing, Co-operative Development and Communities
Lead Strategic Director:	David Haley, Strategic Director for Childrens Services
Author:	Ross Jago (Head of Governance, Performance and Risk)
Contact Email:	Ross.jago@Plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	CPRUQ4.2324
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

This report provides the Cabinet with an overview of how the Council is performing against its priority performance indicators that were agreed as part of the Corporate Plan 2023-2026 in June 2023.

Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, filling in potholes, creating cleaner streets, building new homes, green investment and better access to healthcare and dentistry are front and centre of the administration's vision for Plymouth's future. This report provides an analysis of performance as at the end of March 2024 against these Corporate Plan priorities.

The key performance indicators (KPIs) and their associated targets detailed in this report are for the fourth quarter of 2023/24 (January to March 2024).

Where it has been possible, a longer time series of data points has been used to prepare for greater utilisation of control charts. Control charts will help us to establish whether performance is stable and operating within expected variation or experiencing abnormal variation. This will prevent overreaction to normal performance variability whilst prompting quick response to anomalies.

In addition, we have used various data sources (E.g. Department for Education Statistics and LG Inform) to provide comparators (local, national or CIPFA comparator group) to provide contextual reference points for evaluating our performance. This is currently available for –

- Public Satisfaction with Traffic Flow (Annual comparator - National Highways and Transport Network average)
- KS4 pupils achieving 5+ in English and Maths (Annual comparator - Southwest and national Average)
- Employment Rate – (Quarterly comparator – Southwest, national and CIPFA averages)
- Social Care Quality of Life Impact (Annual Comparator – Southwest and national averages)
- People who easily find information on care services (Annual Comparator – Southwest and national averages)
- Repeat Child Protection Plans – (Annual Comparator – CIPFA comparator mean at Q1)
- Children in Care rate per thousand - (Annual Comparator – CIPFA comparator mean at Q1)

- Adult social care users who feel safe (Annual Comparator – National Average)
- Adult social care users who are satisfied (Annual Comparator – CIPFA Mean)
- Percentage of two years olds benefiting from funded early education - (Annual Comparator – Southwest and national averages)

This report forms part of the Council's Delivery and Performance Framework and is a key part of our aim to achieve a 'golden thread' from the Corporate Plan and its KPIs and delivery plans, through to service and team level business plans, and ultimately to individual objectives.

Areas of good performance this quarter include:

- A measure regarding "black carriageway jobs," almost all of which will be potholes (at least 40mm deep and 300mm long). In March, 92% of all BLCW jobs were completed within timescales. Within the month, 349 BLCW jobs were completed and 358 were created.
- There was a significant uplift in the number of anti-social behaviour incidents reported to the council between Q1 - Q2 2023/24. During quarter three number of incidents nearly halved with further reductions across the course of quarter four.
- Pupils attending schools judged good or better by OFSTED, since Q1 2023/24 this measure has been on an upward trend with the number of Children attending a good school increasing by almost 10%, with a three percent increase in quarter four
- Across the course of the year the number of complaints resolved within timeframe has improved from 70% in Q4 2022/23 to 88% in Q4 2023/24.
- 2460 voters were added to the electoral register, from 196,442 in 2023 to 198,902 in 2024.

Performance challenges are:

- The percentage of children starting a Child Protection Plan who have previously been on a Child Protection Plan. Which increased by 8% across the final quarter of 2023/24.
- Dental waiting lists – An additional 123 adults have been added to the dental waiting lists in Q4.

Updates to Annual Indicators will be included in the quarter 1 2024/25 report.

Recommendations and Reasons

That Cabinet notes the Corporate Plan Performance Report, Quarter Four 2023/24.

Reason: To update Cabinet on the performance of the Council in terms of progress in delivering against the Corporate Plan.

Alternative options considered and rejected

The Corporate Plan Performance Report is a key reporting document that provides transparency on the Council's performance and as such reporting this performance is considered best practice.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

This report is fundamentally linked to delivering the priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The Medium Term Financial Strategy is a core component of the Council's strategic framework and has a vital role to play in translating the Council's ambition and priorities set out in the Corporate Plan 2023-26.

Financial Risks

Fin	DJN. 24.2 5.03 5	Leg	LS/0 0003 197/ 5/LB/ 03/0 7/24	Mon Off	N/A	HR	N/A	Asset s	N/A	Strat Proc	N/A
<p>Senior Leadership Team approval: David Haley, Strategic Director of Childrens Services</p> <p>Date approved: 04/07/2024</p>											

Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet member for Housing, Co-operative Development and Communities)

Date approved: 20/05/2024

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2023-2026

The Plymouth City Council Corporate Plan 2023-2026 sets out our vision of Plymouth being one of Europe's most vibrant waterfront cities, where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone. It was approved by Full Council in June 2023.

At the heart of the plan is the Council's ambition to make Plymouth a fairer, greener city where everyone does their bit, making Plymouth a great place to grow up and grow old, whilst minimising the impact of the cost of living crisis.

Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, filling in potholes, creating cleaner streets, building new homes, green investment and better access to healthcare and dentistry are front and centre of the new administration's vision for Plymouth's future.

The Corporate Plan priorities are delivered through specific programmes and projects, which are coordinated and resourced through cross-cutting strategic delivery plans, capital investment and departmental business plans.

The key performance indicators (KPIs) and their associated targets detailed in this report are for the fourth quarter of 2023/24 (December 2023 to April 2024).

OUR PLAN

BUILD A BETTER PLYMOUTH



CITY VISION: Britain's Ocean City

One of Europe's most vibrant waterfront cities, where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone

Plymouth
Britain's Ocean City

OUR MISSION: Making Plymouth a fairer, greener city, where everyone does their bit

WE BELIEVE IN:



WE WILL:

Make Plymouth a great place to grow up and grow old
Minimise the impact of the cost of living crisis

OUR PRIORITIES:

- Working with the Police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour
- Fewer potholes, cleaner, greener streets and transport
- Build more homes - for social rent and affordable ownership
- Green investment, jobs, skills and better education
- Working with the NHS to provide better access to health, care and dentistry
- Keeping children, adults and communities safe

DOING THIS BY:

- Providing quality public services
- Trusting and engaging our communities
- Focusing on prevention and early intervention
- Spending money wisely
- Empowering and engaging our staff
- Being a strong voice for Plymouth

www.plymouth.gov.uk/ourplan

Priority	Key performance indicators	2022/23 Baseline	Previous performance	Latest performance	
Working with the Police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour	Number of anti-social behaviour incidents reported to the Council (Q)	543	132	105	▼
	Number of early interventions to anti-social behaviour (Q)	222	39	46	▲
	Crime rate per 1,000 residents (Q)	22.59	21.48	N/A	
Fewer potholes, cleaner, greener streets and transport	Reported Black Carriageway Defects Completed (Q)		New Measure	92%	
	Cleanliness Index (APSE) (Q)	84.3%	77.5%	77.1%	▼
	Public satisfaction with traffic flow (A)	39%	38%	39%	▲
Build more homes - for social rent and affordable ownership	Net additional homes in the city (A)	6,562	6,177	6,562	▲
	Total new affordable homes (gross) (A)	115	50	115	▲
	Employment rate (Q)	73.2%	74.2%	73%	▼
Green investment, jobs, skills and better education	Percentage of young people aged 16 to 17 going to, or remaining in, education, employment or training (EET) (Q)	92.4%	93.0%	93.6%	▲
	Pupils attending schools judged as good or better by Ofsted (Q)	81.0%	87.6%	90.6%	▲
	Corporate scope 1 and scope 2 CO ₂ e emissions (tonnes CO ₂ e) (A)	6,155	6,789	6,155	▼
	PCC investment in low carbon infrastructure (3 year average) (A)	£8,458,112	£5,862,152	£8,458,112	▲
	Key Stage 4 pupils achieving Grade 5+ in English and maths (achieving the 'Basics') (A)	46.0%	46.0%	41.3%	▼
Working with the NHS to provide better access to health, care and dentistry	Number of No Criteria to Reside patients at an acute setting (daily average during the quarter) (Q)	36	34	27	▼
	Number of children (<16 years) on the NHS dental waiting list year-on-year from 2022-2025 (Q)	NEW	4,211	4,189	▼
	Number of adults (>16 years) on the NHS dental waiting list year-on-year from 2022-2025 (Q)	NEW	18,008	18,131	▲
	Social care-related quality of life impact of Adult Social Care services (A)	19.7	19.7	19.5	▼
	Proportion of people who use services who find it easy to find information about services (A)	62.3%	62.3%	61.4%	▼
Keeping children, adults and communities safe	Repeat child protection plans within a child's lifetime (rolling 12 months) (Q)	25.7%	22.9%	30.2%	▲
	Children in care (rate per 10,000) (Q)	94.0	100.7	99.1	▲
	Percentage of closed adult safeguarding enquiries where the desired outcomes have been fully or partially achieved (Q)	98.6%	93.7%	92.7%	▼
	Adult Social Care service users who feel safe and secure (A)	87.9%	87.9%	87.5%	▼
	Residents who feel safe (during the day) (A)	89%	90%	89%	▼

Enabler	Key performance indicators	2022/23 Baseline	Previous performance	Latest performance	
Providing quality public services	Stage one complaints resolved within timeframe (Q)	80.6%	84.7%	88.50%	▲
	Percentage of people who receive social care who are satisfied (A)	67.0%	67.0%	66.8%	▼
Trusting and engaging our communities	Eligible adults registered to vote in local elections (A)	196,442	196,442	198,902	▲
	Residents who know how to get involved in local decisions (A)	27%	34%	27%	▼
	Residents who think people from different backgrounds get on well (A)	42%	55%	42%	▼
	Percentage of Plymouth City Survey respondents who volunteer or help out (A)	38%	42%	38%	▼
Focusing on prevention and early intervention	Number of Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) contacts received (Q)	NEW	3,801	3,956	▲
	Number of MASH referrals received (Q)	2,347	1,023	1,152	▲
	Repeat MASH referrals to Children's Social Care (rolling 12 months) (Q)	19.4%	20.5%	20.3%	▲
	Number of households prevented from becoming homeless or relieved of homelessness (Q)	828	332	233	▼
	Percentage of people accessing the Stop Smoking Service who have quit (Q)	54%	48%	42%	▼
	Proportion of people who received short term service, where sequel was either no ongoing support or support of a lower level (A)	82.5%	82.5%	71.0%	▼
	Child obesity at Year 6 (A)	35.1%	35.1%	33.6%	▼
	Percentage of two year olds benefiting from Funded Early Education (A)	72.6%	72.6%	72.8%	▲
	Total persistent absence in all schools (A)	28.1%	28.1%	24.4%	▼
Spending money wisely	Forecast spend against budget (£million) (Q)	£0.000m	£4.766m	£0m	▼
	Council tax revenue per dwelling (A)	£1,283	£1,283	£1,359	▲
	Social care spend as percentage of core spending power (A)	Not yet available	-	75.3%	-
	Debt servicing as percentage of core spending power (A)	Not yet available	-	11.9%	-
Empowering and engaging our staff	Days lost due to sickness (average per rolling 12 months) (Q)	9.37	10.31	10.63	▲
Being a strong voice for Plymouth	Advocacy / Lobbying Update				



Our Priorities

Lead Cabinet Members

Councillor Sally Haydon, Councillor Chris Penberthy

Lead Officer

Matt Garrett, Service Director for Community Connections

Enabling Plans

Safer Plymouth Plan

Relevant Scrutiny Panel

Housing and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

Progress Update

Anti-Social Behaviour

We have -

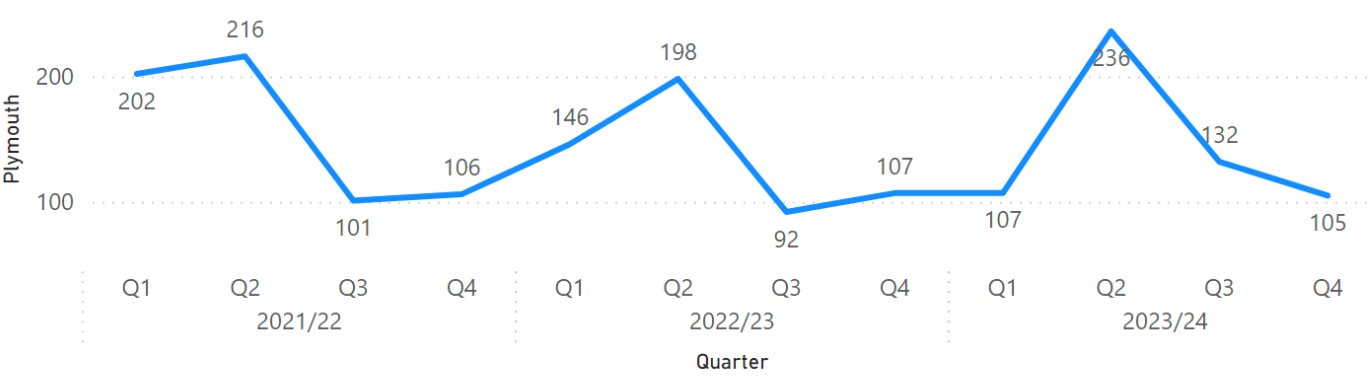
- Worked with colleagues, partners, and local businesses to create a plan to address the increase in anti-social behaviour within the city centre.
- Facilitated six requests for Anti-Social Behaviour Case Reviews, resulting in many recommendations being made to resolve complex anti-social behaviour cases.
- Worked in partnership with the police under Project Night-eye to identify individuals exhibiting predatory behaviour in the night-time economy and made use of civil tools and powers to try and prevent them from committing offences.
- Secured funding via the Shared Prosperity fund to translate some of our anti-social behaviour resources into other languages.
- Undertaken a workshop, commissioned by the Home Office, to support agencies within Safer Plymouth embed the 'Principles of ASB' within their organisations.
- Worked in partnership with Crime Stoppers to set up two new 'Crime Stoppers Zones' within the city centre and Whitleigh areas of Plymouth.
- Carried out significant community engagement, including with some of the city's diverse communities.

Our detached youth workers continue to work within communities daily, engaging with young people and offering opportunities for diversion away from anti-social behaviour.

Modern Slavery

- We have been working towards building a comprehensive understanding of the number of suspected victims of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking in the city.
- Work is ongoing with all departments to ensure we raise awareness of Modern Slavery, train staff to necessary levels, and report and record suspected cases.

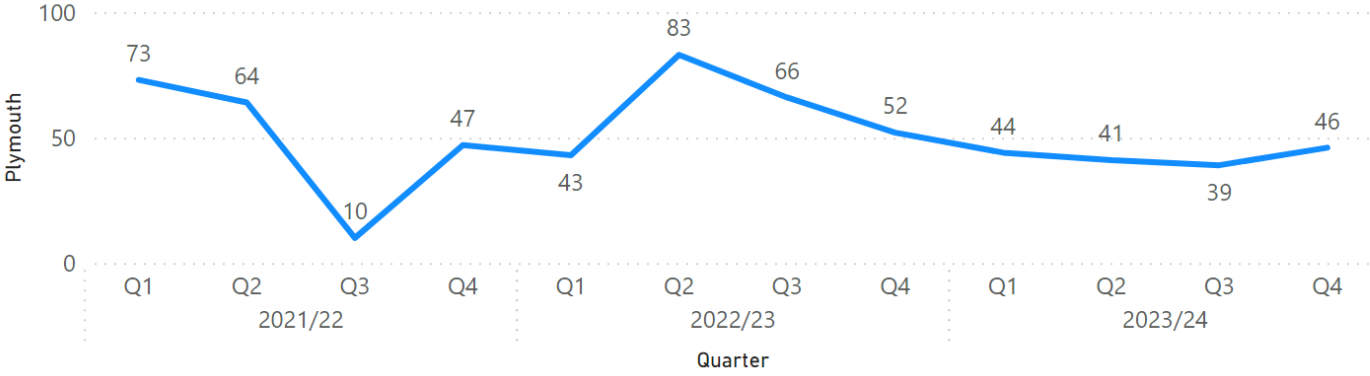
Number of anti-social behaviour incidents reported to the Council



This is a demand measure that reports on the number of anti-social behaviour reports to the Council via our online reporting form, which is used by the public and our Community Connections advisors who take telephone queries.

There was a significant uplift in the number of incidents reported between Q1 - Q2 2023/24. During quarter three number of incidents nearly halved with further reductions across the course of quarter four.

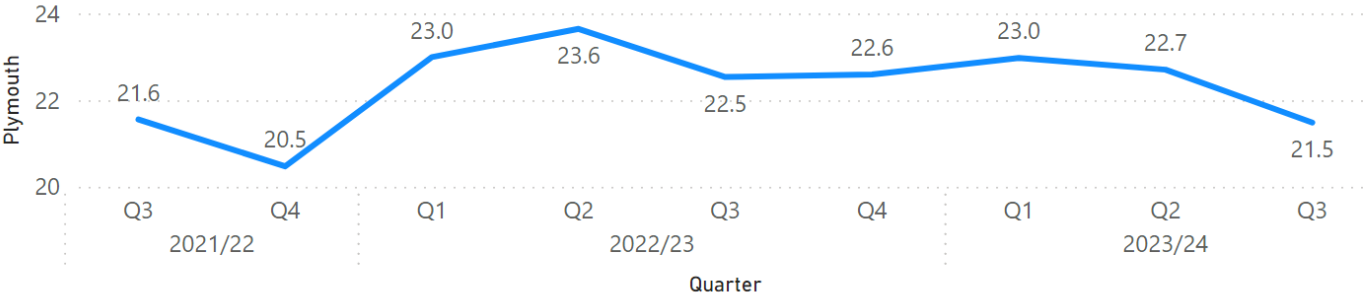
Number of early interventions to anti-social behaviour



This indicator shows the number of early interventions issued by the Anti-Social Behaviour Team to help prevent an escalation in offending. Early interventions include ASB1 letters; ASB2 letters; Acceptable Behaviour Contracts; referrals to IMPACT (youth diversionary programme); and Community Protection Notice Warnings.

The level of early interventions have remained steady throughout 2023/24, in the last quarter numbers of interventions have increased and are broadly in line with numbers undertaken in 22/23 and 21/22.

Crime rate per 1,000 residents



This indicator shows all crime recorded as a rate per 1,000 population.

The data is nationally published crime data submitted by Devon and Cornwall Police.

The crime rate has remained at around 23 crimes per thousand since quarter one of 2022. The most recent quarter available shows a slight drop of 0.3.

Data for quarter 4 2023/24 is not yet available.

Lead Cabinet Members
Lead Officer
Enabling Plans
Relevant Scrutiny Panel

Councillor Tom Briars Delve, Councillor Mark Coker
Philip Robinson, Service Director for Street Scene
Plan for Plastics, Highways Maintenance Plan, Net Zero Action Plan (NZAP), Plan for Trees, Local Transport Plan.
Housing and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

Progress Update

The 10 new mechanised sweepers rolled out earlier in the year are being put to work across the city. The machines benefit from integrated weed brushes; power wash attachments; and suction hoses which operatives will use to target tricky dirt and litter traps between parked cars. One of these machines is dedicated to the City’s key roads providing a higher frequency of sweep on footpaths. Another machine will be dedicated to rear lanes which has specially fitted steel brushes designed to tackle weeds in cobbled areas. The targeted deployment of these machines will help reduce the use of weed spraying in these locations.

A programme is in place to regularly wash the bins and remove stickers and regular surface washing continues, specifically targeting high footfall areas, outside food outlets and following events. A new Team Leader for the City Centre is providing additional focus on keeping the areas clean and tidy, including working with the redevelopment project teams to ensure new areas opened up in New George Street are kept in good condition.

The cleansing service already deploy 5 x barrow rounds in high demand areas around the City. A further round has is being added for Lipson and Mount Gould areas following increasing volumes of complaints and observed issues around litter etc. The cleansing service continue to work closely with Enforcement colleagues to target areas and are continuing to work together to secure the Defra funded investment in re deployable cameras to target rear lane fly-tipping. These cameras have been delivered and the team are working with collages across Highways, Environmental Protection, Communications and Delt to get them up and running. A full litter pick on the A38 was completed in March with a total of 1.5 tonnes of waste collected.

Lead Cabinet Members	Councillor Tom Briars Delve, Councillor Mark Coker
Lead Officer	Philip Robinson, Service Director for Street Scene
Enabling Plans	Plan for Plastics, Highways Maintenance Plan, Net Zero Action Plan (NZAP), Plan for Trees, Local Transport Plan.
Relevant Scrutiny Panel	Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Progress Update

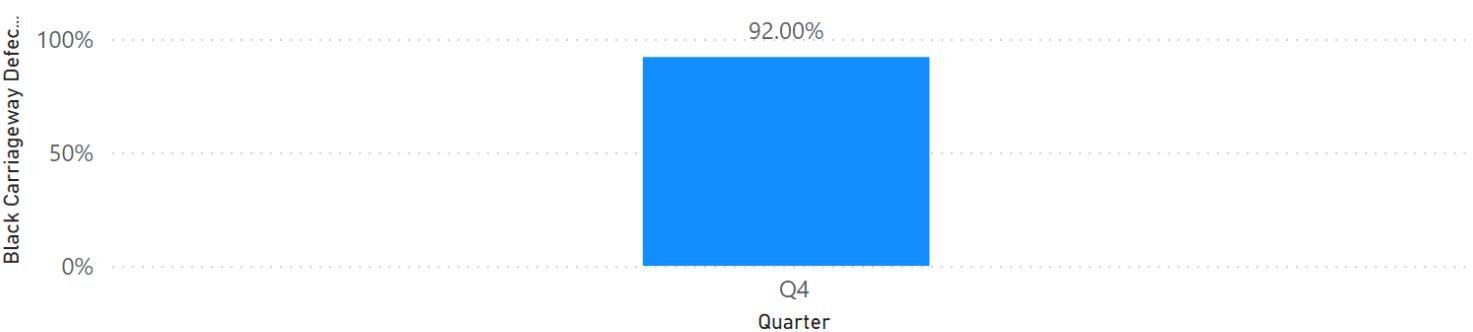
A city wide weed treatment is underway by an external contractor. This targeted treatment is helping to keep the streets clean and weed free. As part of a trial to reduce chemical usage we have removed the main roads from this treatment cycle and have bolstered our sweeping efforts in these locations. Whilst this requires increased resources it is so far proving successful.

An additional drainage gully machine joined our 2 dedicated machines for 3 months, this has resulted in all our 9000 Main Rd Gullies being cleared in a single season. This change of process has reduced our flood incidents attributable to such asset failure by 90%. A change of process (suspension of jetting) is now being rolled out to normal routine maintenance of ward gullies, accelerating city wide cyclic cleaning programmes. In house asset maintenance programming has replaced a previously outsourced service, resulting in efficiencies and reducing costs.

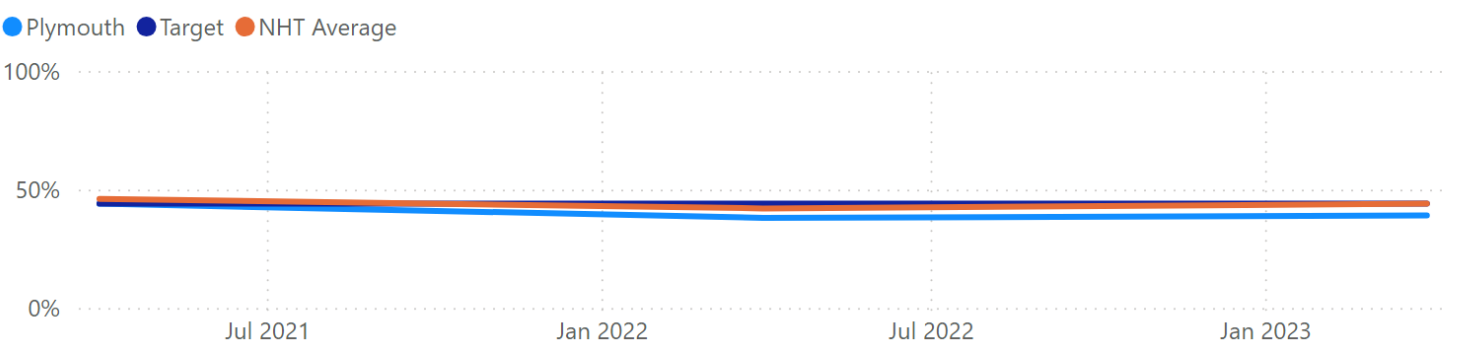
Procurement of a Centralised Management System, for the control of our 35,000 streetlights has now been completed. The first batch of 11 control base stations have been installed across the city and are operational. The Nodes, to which these base stations communicate, are on order with a trial area successfully commissioned. The installation will result in a reduction of energy consumption and carbon emissions of 40%.

Marsh Mills, one of the busiest junctions in the southwest, carrying up to10,000 vehicle movements a day has benefitted from a new MOVA enabled signal controller, replacement cabling and state of the art LED signal heads. The new arrangements, which required approval from National Highways due to the slip road proximity to the A38, will increase the junction capacity by 13%, improve efficiency of movement.

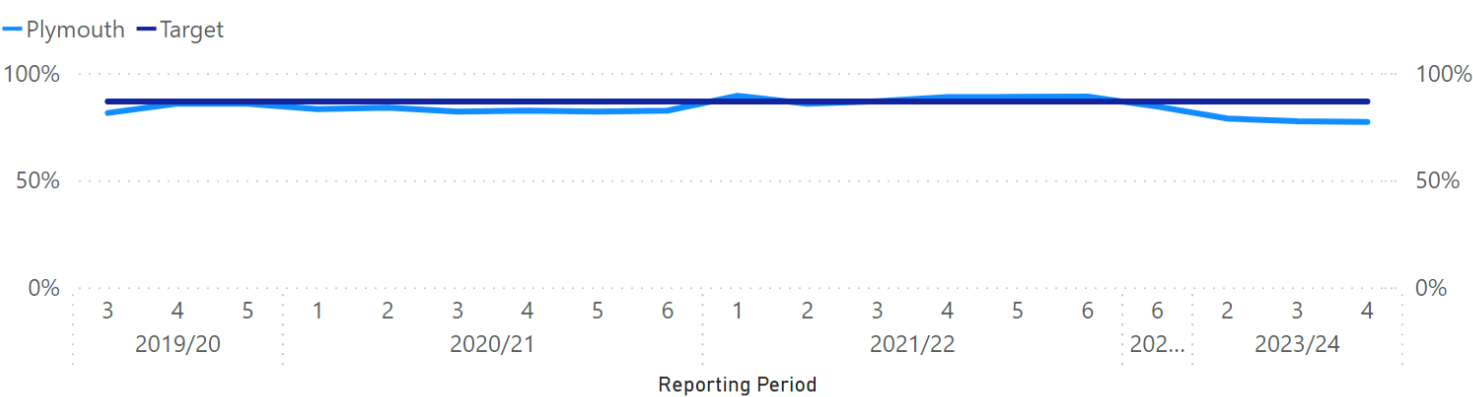
Reported Black Carriageway Defects Completed



Public satisfaction with traffic flow



Cleanliness Index (APSE)



South West Highways have established KPIs. This measure includes all jobs categorised as "black carriageway jobs" (BLCW) – almost all of which will be potholes (at least 40mm deep and 300mm long) – and all priority categories, which determines the required timescale for completion for each job.

In March, 92% of all BLCW jobs were completed within timescales. Within the month, 349 BLCW jobs were completed and 358 were created.

Following the successful trial of the Velocity forced air application system to repair our Highway Defects, the process will continue to be delivered across the city for year 2024/25. Last year we successfully treated circa 10,000 defects and the securing of the unit will see a further improvements in repair rate into next year

Public satisfaction with traffic levels and congestion on Plymouth's roads collected via the National Highways and Transport (NHT) Network annual survey. This is annual data which will be updated for 2024 in the coming weeks.

Plymouth has seen a downward trajectory since July 2021, although this is a slight reduction and in line with both target and NHT average.

The cleanliness and condition of streets is measured using the Land Audit Management System (LAMS), which allows us to compare ourselves to other members of the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) performance network.

Changes to the local delivery of the inspection process are complete, training has been delivered to our inspectors and the new process for inspection is in place. Whilst the new inspection regime is established further, movement in this indicator can be expected but is likely to be in within acceptable range of the target.

Lead Cabinet Members

Councillor Chris Penberthy, Councillor Mark Lowry

Lead Officer

Paul Barnard, Service Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure

Enabling Plans

Plan for Homes, Plymouth Alliance Accommodation and Homelessness Prevention Strategy and Delivery Plan

Relevant Scrutiny Panel

Housing and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

Progress Update

Launched Plan for Homes 4, approved at Cabinet on 11th March 2024, which reinforces our ambition to deliver a minimum of 5,000 new homes over the next five years. We will be developing a detailed Delivery Plan over the next 4-6 months which will set out actions and timescales for the delivery of the 10 strategic initiatives in Plan for Homes.

Projecting the completion of circa 200 new affordable homes for the year 23/24, providing a wide range of homes for rent and affordable homeownership to meet our priority housing needs. Tenure split of 18% social rent, 58% affordable rent, 22% shared ownership and includes 10 wheelchair user homes. This is a significant increase upon 22/23 baseline of 115 affordable completions.

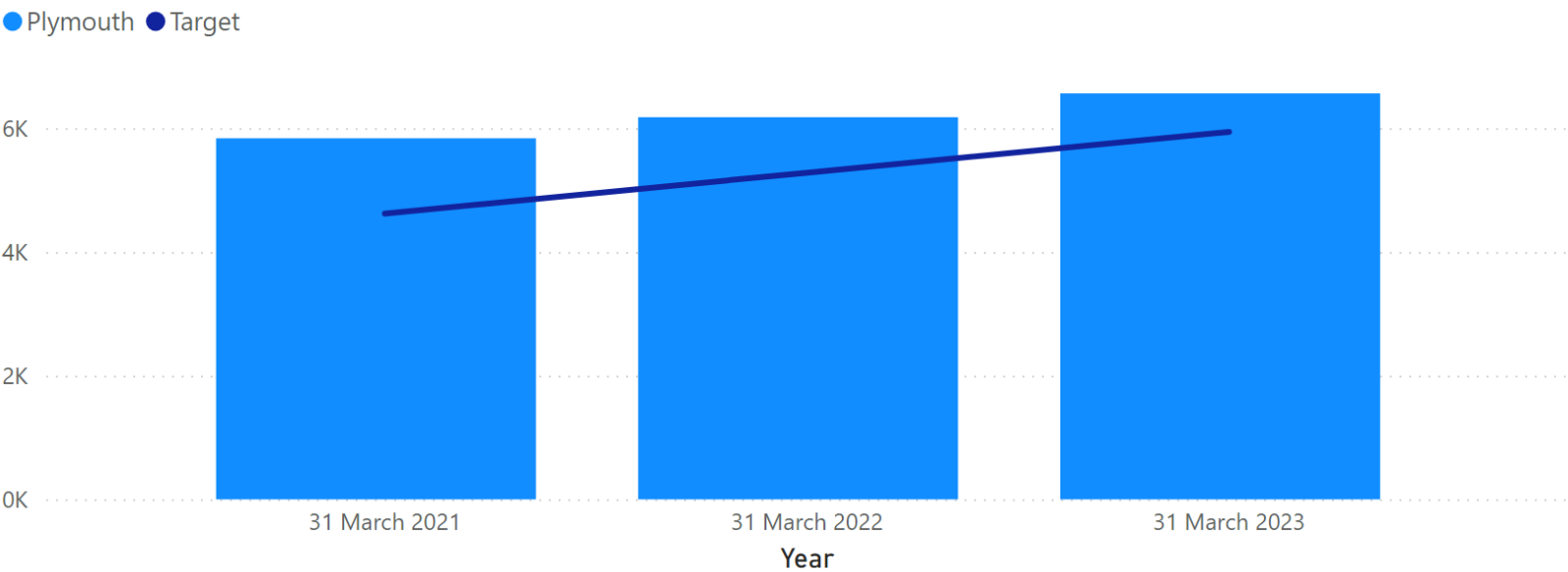
Partnership working with Livewest for the completion and occupation of 24 social rented homes at St Budeaux Library, including four wheelchair units.

Completed the transfer of three PCC Plan for Homes sites to our Registered Provider partners to support the delivery of 95 affordable homes and ensure securing Brownfield land Release Funding of circa £900k to help unlock development.

Worked with partners to secure planning consent for 18 one-bedroom social rented flats at Victoria Place and planning consent for the regeneration of Healy Place that will see obsolete homes replaced by 33 new affordable homes.

Two CPO’s approved by Cabinet on 11th March to support bringing two LTE properties back into occupation.

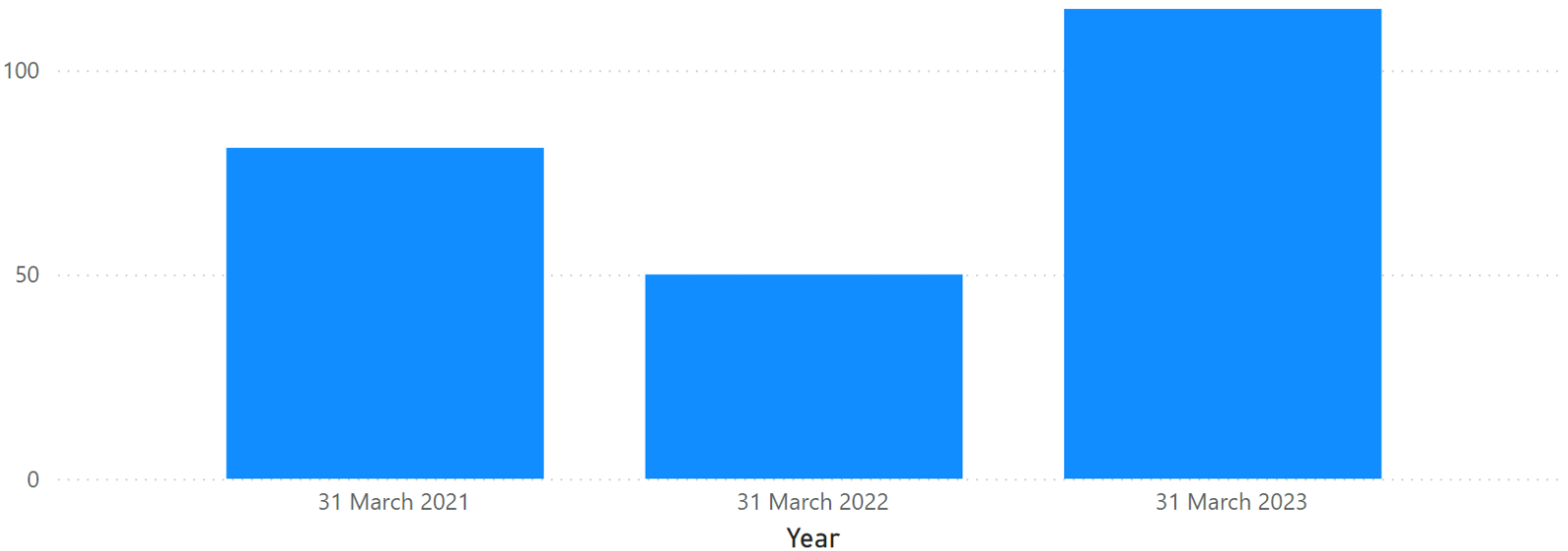
Net Additional Homes (Cumulative)



The annual net additional homes in the Plymouth Local Planning Authority Area, for example through new house building completions and conversions (e.g. of a house into flats), but after the removal of dwellings lost by change of use or demolition. This is aligned with the Plymouth Joint Local Plan.

The Council continues to maintain performance exceeding target year on year.

Affordable Homes Delivered (Actual)



This annual measure shows annual number of gross homes delivered that are affordable.

This is a new measure, with 2022/23 as the baseline. Aligned with the Plymouth Joint Local Plan.

Lead Cabinet Members

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE, Councillor Mark Lowry, Councillor Tom Briars Delve, Councillor Sally Cresswell

Lead Officer

Anthony Payne, Strategic Director for Place / David Haley, Strategic Director for Children's Services

Enabling Plans

Net Zero Action Plan, Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Plymouth's Plan for Economic growth, Plymouth SEND Strategy, Child Poverty Action Plan.

Relevant Scrutiny Panel

Natural Infrastructure and Growth / Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel

Progress Update

Climate Emergency Fund

Since January 2024, the Council has reinstated the annual uplift of its Climate Emergency Investment Fund, reviewed its Net Zero Action Plan and rolled it forward to cover the period 2024-27, secured over £2.4m from the government for EV charge point delivery, continued with the delivery of retrofit of the corporate estate, and submitted a number of bids for net zero infrastructure funding.

Jobs

The new Economic Strategy is under development has 4 pillars, one of which is sustainable growth. This reflects the importance going forward. Below are the practical measure to shift to net zero economy are listed below

- Plymouth City council has added net zero to all its technical appraisals for grant applications
- We have secured funding for green port infrastructure £5.5 million and invested £1.3 million in ABP/Millbay.
- We have invested 400K in feasibility work for Cattewater and a further 800K is in the pipeline
- We are working with City College on a green blue skills centre and recycling the Civic Centre.
- We have a work programme to attract investment to attract FLOW.
- We have commissioned environmental business support for Plymouth businesses
- We support the Freeport company to deliver hydrogen energy at Language.
- All Business Review Visits now have questions about net Zero.

Lead Cabinet Members

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE, Councillor Mark Lowry, Councillor Tom Briars Delve, Councillor Sally Cresswell

Lead Officer

Anthony Payne, Strategic Director for Place / David Haley, Strategic Director for Children's Services

Enabling Plans

Net Zero Action Plan, Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Plymouth's Plan for Economic growth, Plymouth SEND Strategy, Child Poverty Action Plan.

Relevant Scrutiny Panel

Natural Infrastructure and Growth / Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel

Progress Update

Education

Plymouth has a diverse range of early years and childcare settings, and high percentages of children take up their free entitlements. Plymouth currently has 98 schools, consisting of 15 local authority maintained schools, two non-maintained nursery schools and 81 academies.

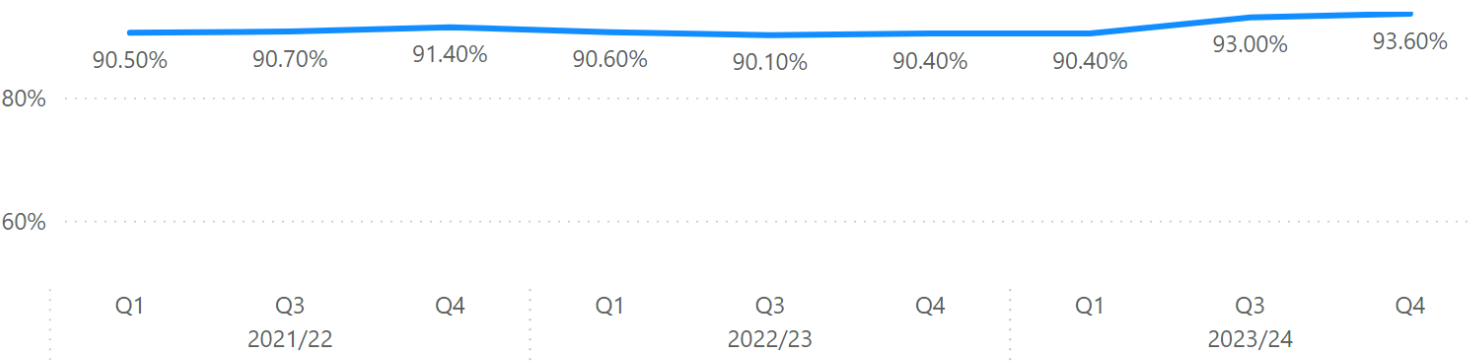
At the end of April 2024, 88.2 per cent of Plymouth’s pupils attended a school which was judged as ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ by Ofsted.

The progress made by pupils from KS1 to KS2 in Plymouth is above that made by similar pupils regionally and within our statistical neighbours for reading, writing, and maths. The progress made by disadvantaged pupils (eligible for Free School Meals) is below that of non-disadvantaged pupils (those not eligible for Free School Meals) at the end of KS2.

By the end of KS4, the progress made by Plymouth pupils is below that made by similar pupils within the statistical neighbour group. The progress made by disadvantaged pupils is below that of non-disadvantaged pupils at the end of KS4.

The percentage of pupils achieving a strong pass in the ‘the basics’ 2023 in Plymouth is 45.9 per cent which is below the national average of 46.6 per cent, the regional average 49.2 per cent and the statistical neighbour average of 47.7 per cent.

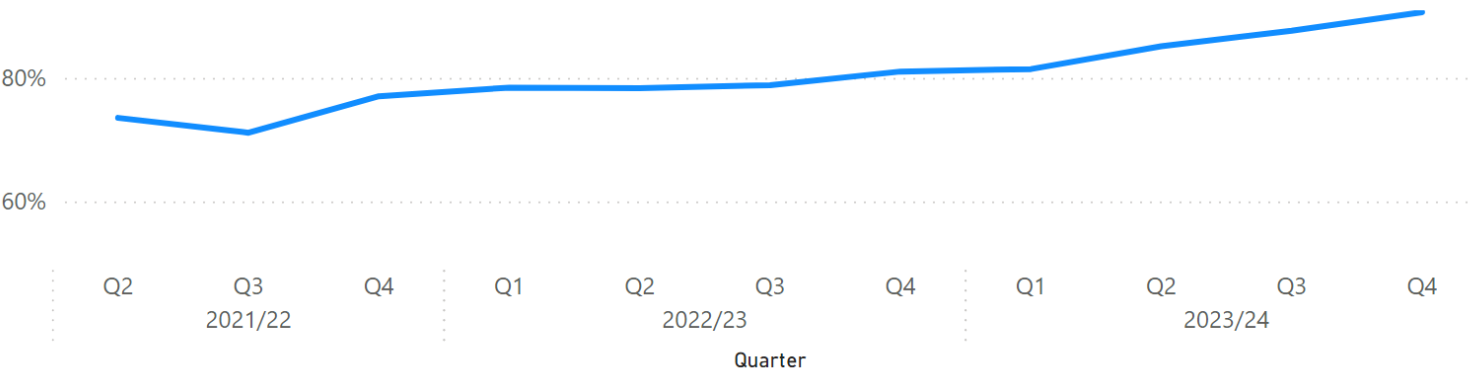
Young people aged 16-17 in education, employment or training



This is a quarterly measure which shows the percentage of young people aged 16 to 18 in academic years 12 to 14 who are going to, or remaining in, education, employment or training (EET).

Between Q1 and Q4 2023/23 there has been a 3.6% increase to the numbers of young people going to / remaining in EET.

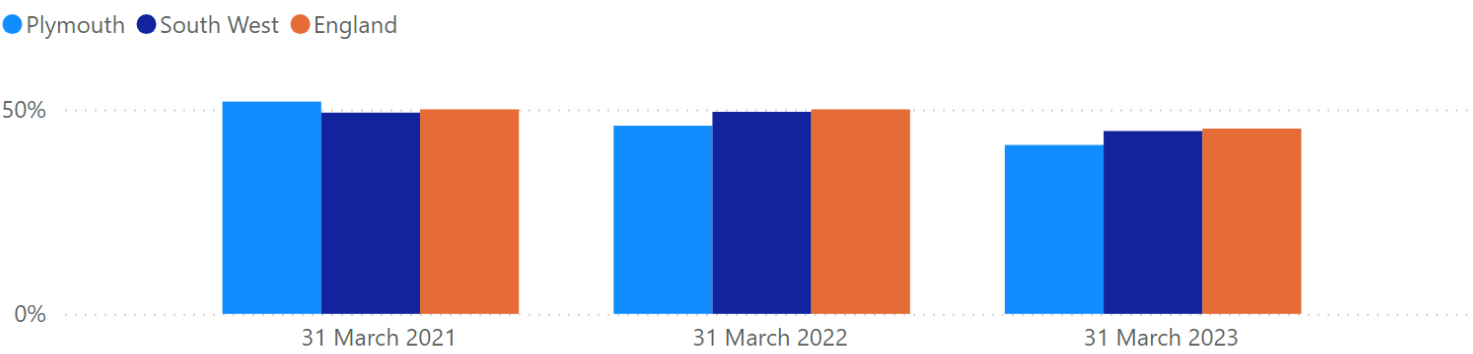
Pupils attending Plymouth schools judged as good or better by Ofsted



The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspect services providing education and skills for learners of all ages. Ofsted’s role is to make sure that organisations providing education, training and care services in England do so to a high standard for children and students. There are four overall judgements: ‘outstanding’, ‘good’, ‘requires improvement’ and ‘inadequate’. The aspiration in Plymouth is that all pupils attend a school that receives a minimum judgement of ‘good’ in their overall effectiveness.

Since Q1 2023/24 this measure has been on an upward trend with the number of Children attending a good school increasing by almost 10%.

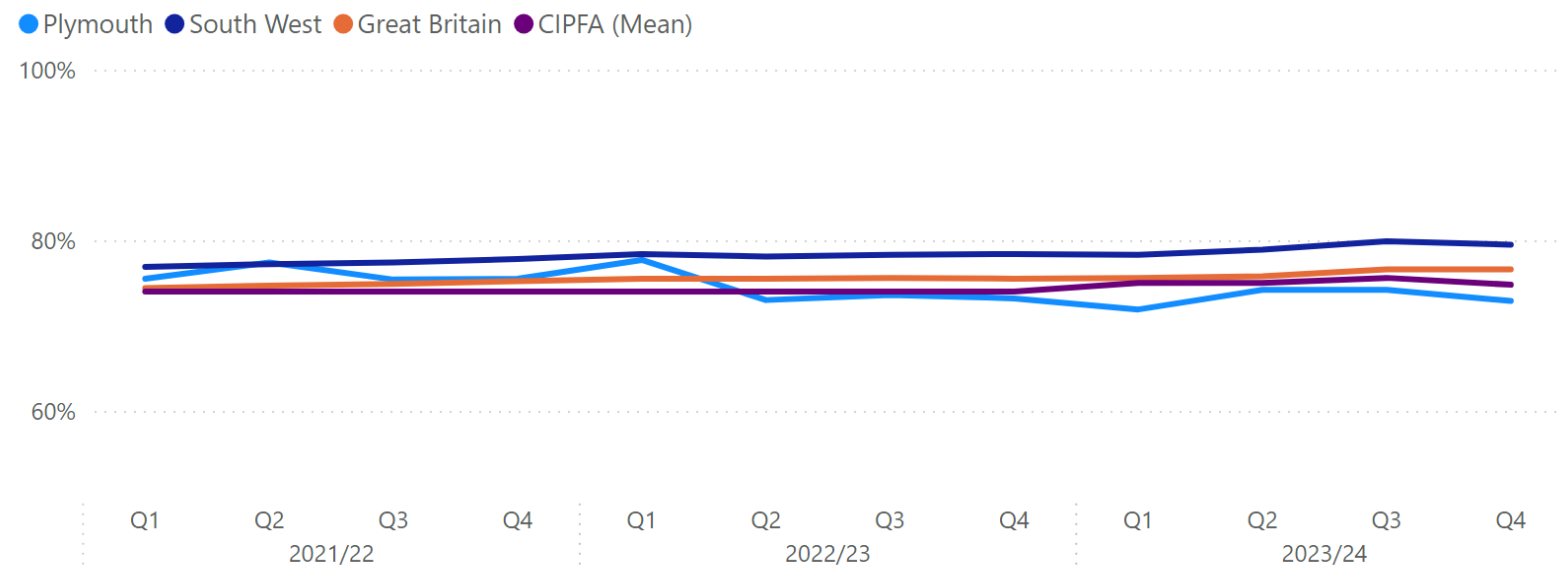
KS4 pupils achieving 5+ in English and Maths



Key Stage 4 is the phase of education attended by 14 to 16 year olds and leads to GCSE examinations. GCSEs are awarded a grade level between 1 and 9, with a strong pass (C+) being graded at a 5+ and the previous ‘A’ grade being graded at a level 7.

At year end of 2021 Plymouth was slightly outperforming the south west and national average. Since then performance has dropped back below those comparators and shows a decline of c. 10%. The data release for 2024 is not yet available.

Employment Rate

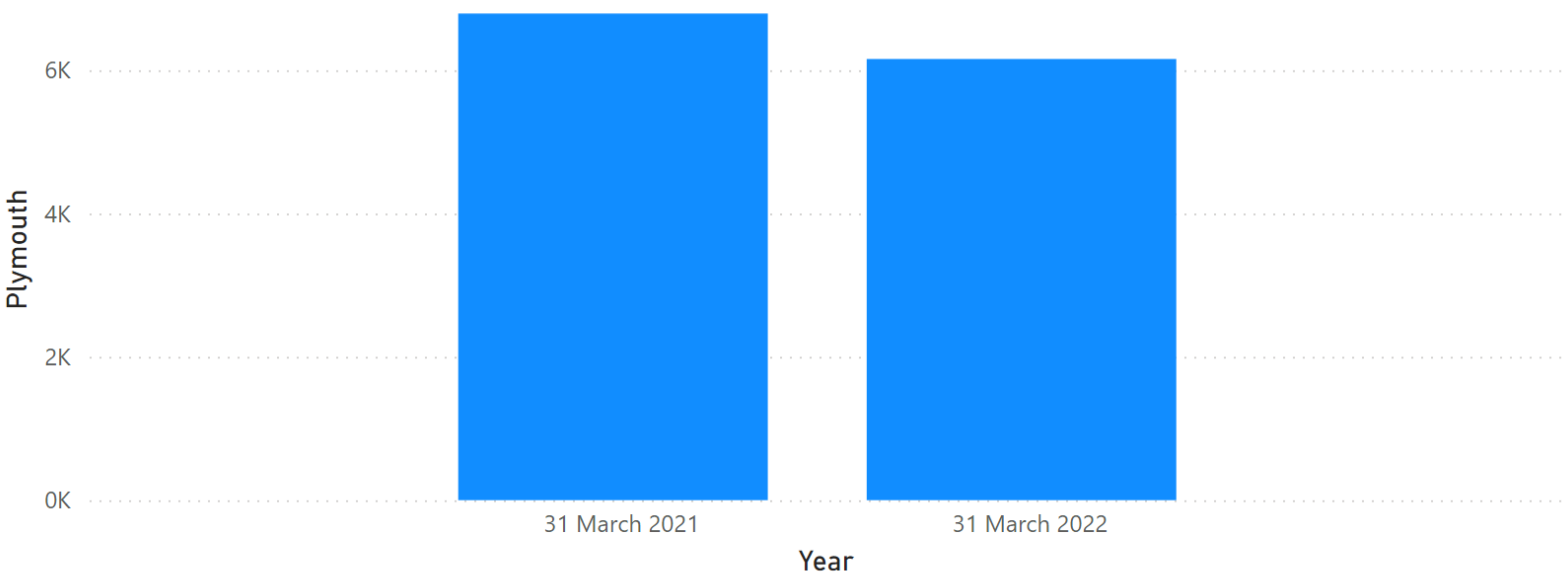


This measure is record anyone aged 16-64 years who did some paid work in the reference period, whether as an employee or self-employed; had a job that they were temporarily away from; on government-supported training and employment programmes; or were doing some unpaid family work.

The employment rate reduced significantly reduced in the early part of 2022/23. Despite a slight rise the rate dropped again from September 2022.

There has been a recovery in the rate of employment from the second quarter bringing it into line with the Council's CIPFA family group.

Corporate scope 1 and scope 2 CO2e emissions (tonnes CO2e)



This annual measure records the combined amount of scope 1 and scope 2 CO2 emissions produced by Plymouth City Council. Scope 1 includes all direct emissions from the activities of an organisation or under their control, including fuel combustion on site such as gas boilers, fleet vehicles and air-conditioning leaks. Scope 2 includes indirect emissions from any electricity, heat and steam purchased and used by the organisation. Emissions are created during the production of the energy and eventually used by the organisation.

Between 2021 and 2022 the Council reduced its overall carbon emissions by c. 600 tonnes.

Lead Cabinet Members

Councillor Mary Aspinall, Councillor Jemima Laing, Councillor Mark Lowry

Lead Officer

Gary Walbridge, Interim Strategic Director for People / Ruth Harrell, Director of Public Health

Enabling Plans

Plymouth Local Care Partnership System Plan, Thrive Plymouth, Community Mental Health Framework, One Devon Partnership Interim Integrated Care Strategy and Child Poverty Action Plan

Relevant Scrutiny Panel

Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel

Progress Update

Dental Services

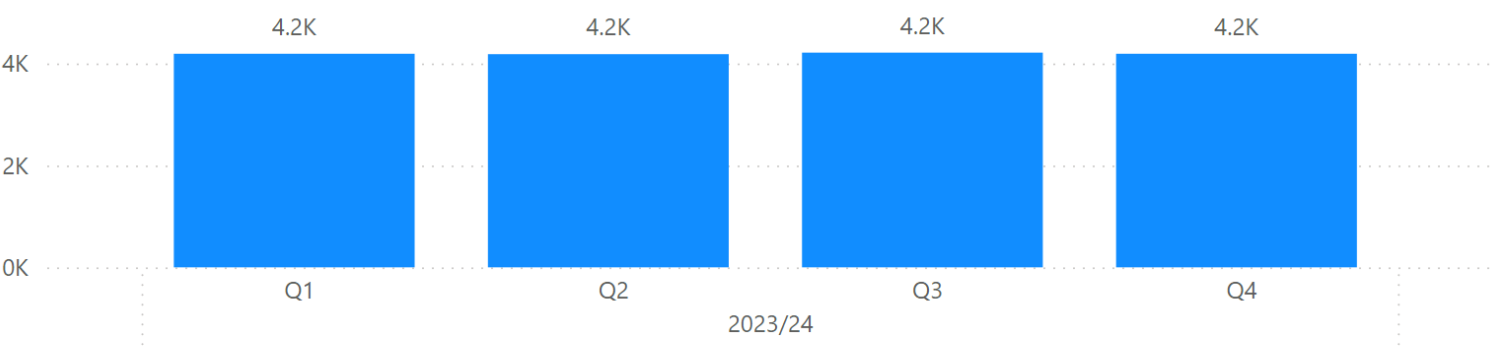
Unfortunately, it has not been possible for the ICB to commit to the use of the dental underspend for 23/24 due to financial pressures across the wider NHS system. It is recognised that the national contract for dental care does significantly limit flexibility due to the way in which financial envelopes have to be allocated based on contracts rather than recent activity, meaning that money which we know is unlikely to be spent, remains allocated until close to year end. In more positive news, the ICB have asked for Expressions of Interest to deliver a service for looked after children.

No Criteria to Reside

No Criteria to Reside (NCTR) is the measure used nationally to understand the numbers of individuals who are fit for discharge, but delayed and occupying hospital beds. In Plymouth the intense pressure facing the hospital system and impact this has on Plymouth residents has made this an area of focus to ensure as many people are supported to leave hospital as soon as they are well enough. In addition we are committed to ensuring more people are supported to return back to their own homes on discharge and reduce the numbers placed into long and short term care home beds.

Plymouth City Council (PCC) and Devon Integrated Care Board (ICB) commissioning teams, along with University Hospitals Plymouth (UHP) and Livewell colleagues have undertaken a number of key actions to reduce our NCTR levels, significantly enhancing the available home based support for individuals on discharge through our ‘peripatetic care offer’. We have commissioned a bank of workers who are operating alongside the existing PCC Independence at Home and UHP Hospital 2 Home services to increase their capacity and resilience. This has doubled the capacity for people to be supported at home on discharge Implementing an agency contract for additional therapists to increase the capacity and reduce length of stay for people on reablement pathways (improving individual outcomes and consequently freeing up further capacity to support more individuals) Additional staffing into St Lukes End of Life Urgent Care service to offer an in reach model to help people at end of life leave hospital quicker and return back home and providing additional care through the St Lukes team to be able to offer wraparound care and support those individuals targeted support for individuals with complex dementia needs to support homes in meeting residents needs, particularly on initial admission to a home following a hospital stay. This includes both funded additional staffing and wraparound oversight from a specialist admiral nurse.

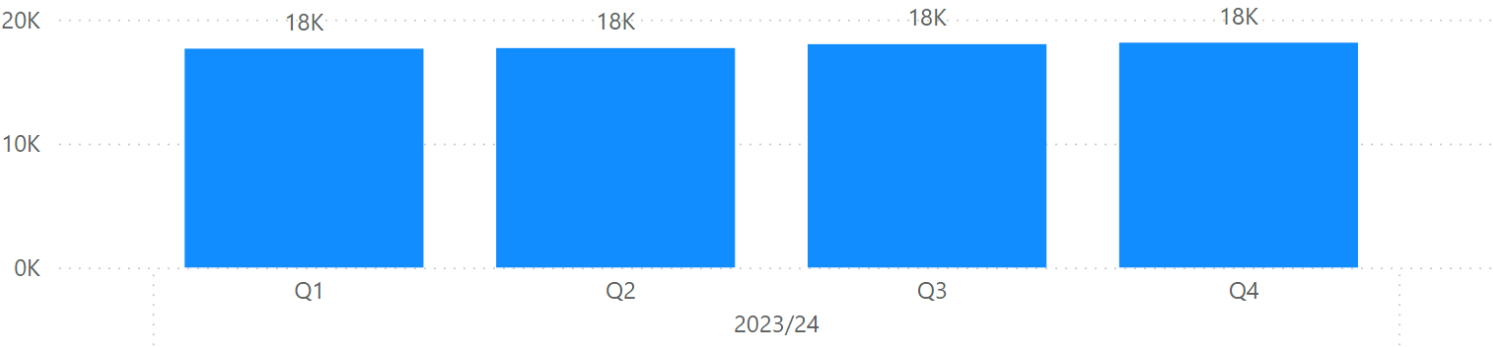
Number of children (< 16 years) on the NHS dental waiting list



This measure records the number of young people in Plymouth on Dental waiting lists. The Data provided on a quarterly basis by the South West Collaborative Commissioning Hub Dental Team.

In the last quarter the waiting list has reduced by 22.

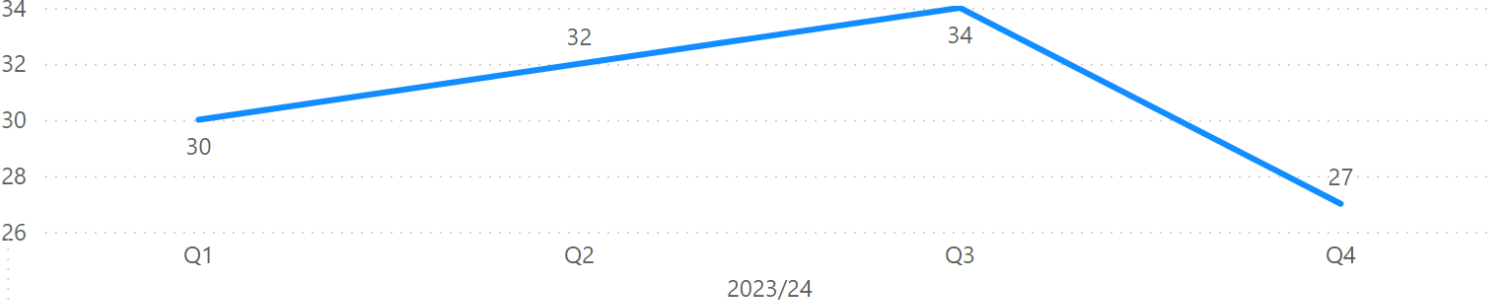
Number of adults (> 16 years) on the NHS dental waiting list



This measure records the number of adults in Plymouth on Dental waiting lists. The Data provided on a quarterly basis by the South West Collaborative Commissioning Hub Dental Team.

There was an increase of 47 to the waiting list between Q1 and Q2 and the trend continues into Q4 with a further 123 added to the waiting list.

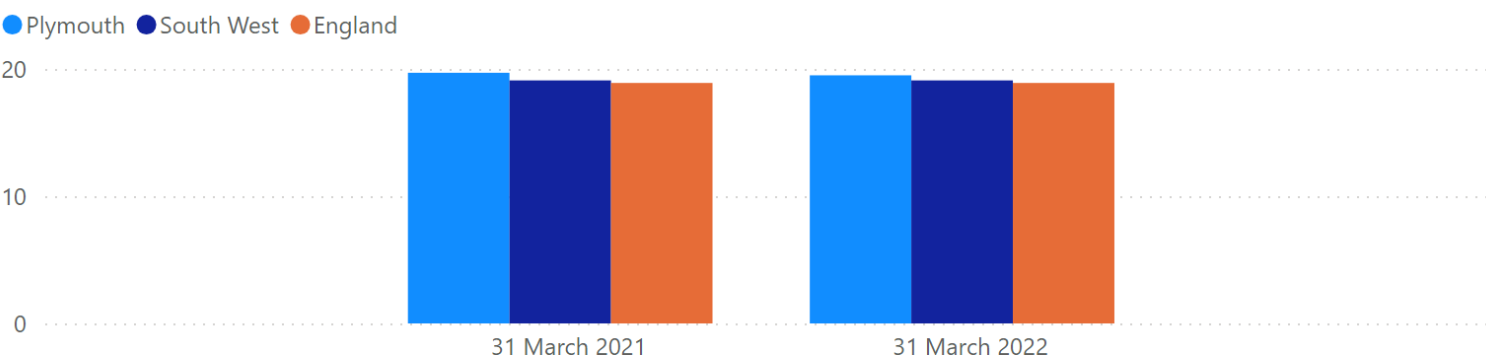
Number of No Criteria to Reside patients at an acute setting (daily average during the quarter)



This data is taken from the Integrated Commissioning operational pressures data book, published internally daily by NHS Devon. It counts the number of people within an acute health setting (UHP) where the person has a delayed discharge that meets the no criteria to reside definition

Performance around delays at UHP are much improved. During December 2023 the daily average number of delays of more than 24 hours was 24, compared to 38 in November.

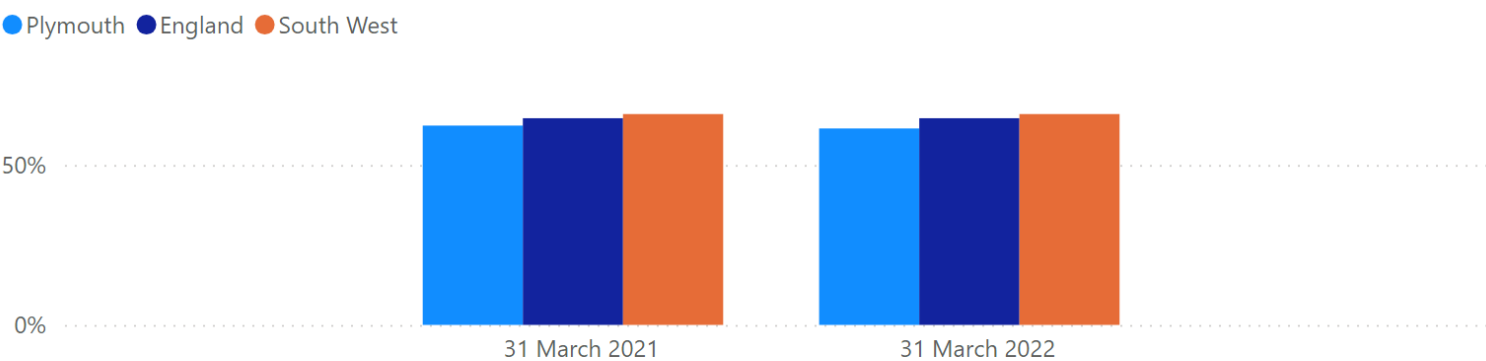
Social care-related quality of life impact of Adult Social Care services



Overall quality of life score for people in receipt of Adult Social Care services, measure is a score calculated using responses to a group of questions within the statutory annual user survey.

Plymouth consistently out performs both the South West and England average, based on 2022 data. This measure will be updated in the next reporting period.

Proportion of people who use services who find it easy to find information about services



Measure from the statutory annual survey of Adult Social Care users that measures how easy it is for users to find and access information about Adult Social Care services.

Plymouth is currently slightly behind both the South West and England average, based on 2022 data. This measure will be updated in the next reporting period.

GP access - patient satisfaction with appointments offered



Data is from the annual national GP Patient Survey, based on responses to the question: Were you satisfied with the appointment (or appointments) you were offered? The percentage is based on an average of scores by Primary Care Networks covering the Plymouth City Council area. National benchmarking available via the GP Patient Survey.

Between 2022 and 2023 this indicator has reduced by one percentage point. Results of the 2024 survey have not yet been published.

Lead Cabinet Members

Councillor Jemima Laing, Councillor Mary Aspinall

Lead Officer

Gary Walbridge, Interim Strategic Director for People / Ruth Harrell, Director of Public Health / David Haley, Strategic Director for Children's Services

Enabling Plans

Safer Plymouth Plan, Plymouth Safeguarding Adults Partnership Plan, Plymouth Safeguarding Children’s Partnership Plan and PSCP Plan on a Page 2022 - 2023 and Child Poverty Action Plan

Relevant Scrutiny Panel

Health and Wellbeing / Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel

Progress Update

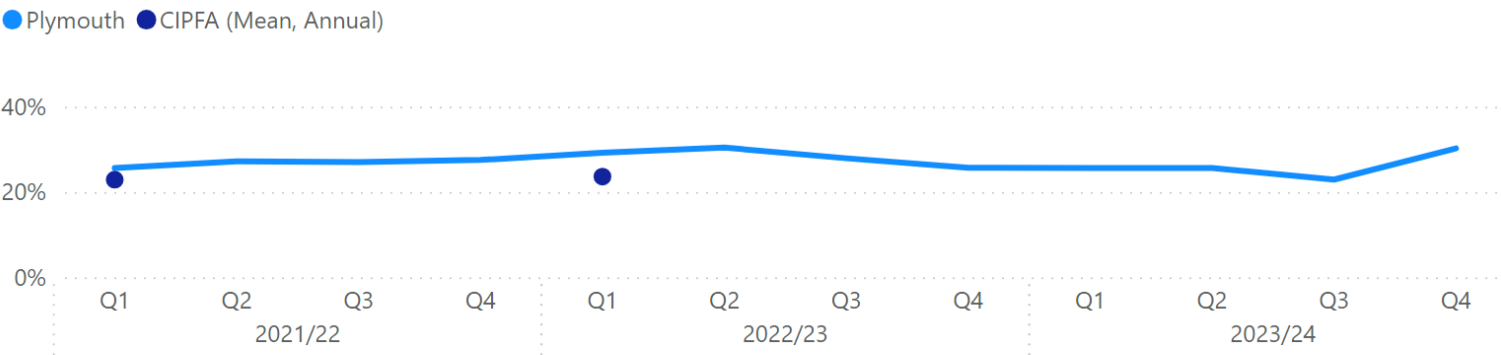
Prevention: Local work to improve the provision for young people transitioning into adult services continues, including links between Corporate Parenting, Commissioning activity and Homelessness Prevention. Operational cross-service 16+ meetings and transitional safeguarding work continues. Strong links between work under the Complex Lives agenda and that for Changing Futures have been established, along with a robust working relationship with the Plymouth Alliance and practitioner support and bespoke interventions from the Creative Solutions Forum.

Engagement: Links have been made with the Community Empowerment Plans and Health and Wellbeing Hubs across the City. We supported National Safeguarding Adults Week in November with the production of awareness raising videos and a well-received ‘road show’ to various venues across the City. Feedback gained will be fed into future workstreams of the PSAP Engagement sub group.

Learning: The embedding of learning from published Safeguarding Adult Reviews continues to be organised by dedicated action plans, practitioner learning events and the development of a revisiting calendar to check for the maintenance of progress. A review of the Learning and Development Strategy is underway with plans to expand the delivery of adult safeguarding training with the support of partners.

Assurance: Quality assurance mechanisms include a revised PSAP Partners’ Assurance Assessment, to be analysed and reported and annual independent audits of a theme identified in the data or highlighted by a partner agency. The recent audit into the quality of adult safeguarding referrals has resulted in an active plan, including the establishment of a dedicated live advice line to inform referral decision making, and the development of a more informative and prescriptive referral form. In the adult safeguarding service, the implementation of the live advice line along with the launch of the revised referral form has resulted in a gradual but significant improvement in the quality and appropriateness of referrals. Work continues to revise our process and arrangements, with a view to a more streamlined service, avoidance of duplication or delays and improved outcomes for individuals.

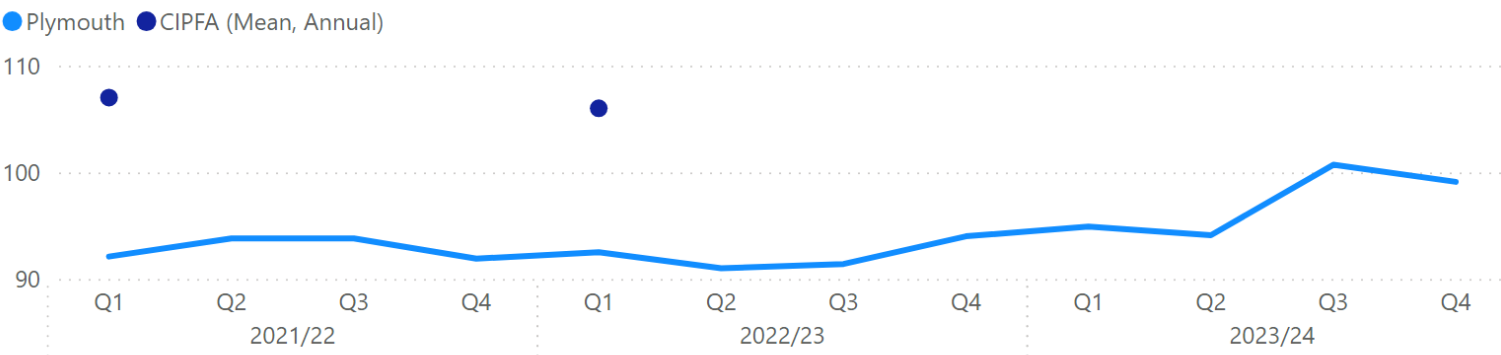
Repeat child protection plans within a child’s lifetime (rolling 12 months)



The percentage of children starting a Child Protection Plan who have previously been on a Child Protection Plan. The current Plan may be for the same or different reasons and there might be a significant time lapse between Child Protection Plans.

The number of repeat plans has increased by 8% over the last quarter.

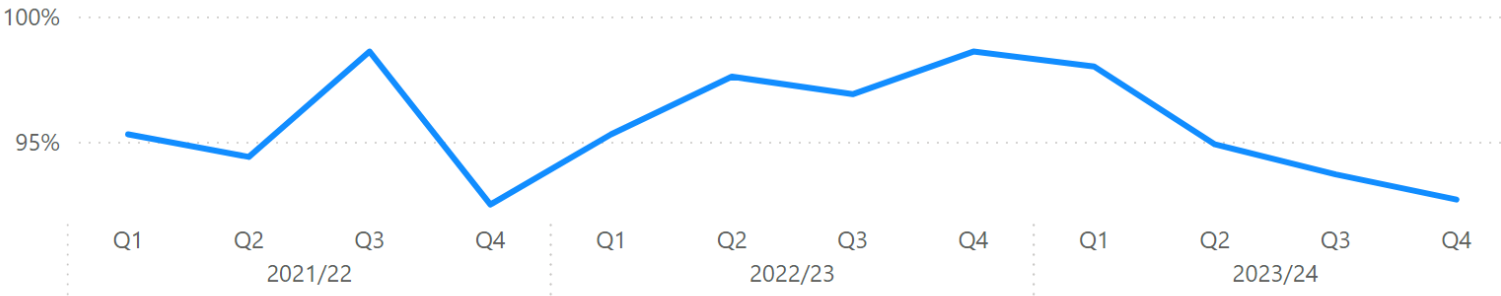
Children in care (rate per 10,000)



If a child/young person is made the subject of a care order, we have legal responsibility for them. We count a child as a ‘child in care’ if they get accommodation for a period of more than 24 hours, are subject to a care order, are accommodated under section 20 of the 1989 Children’s Act or are subject to a placement order (adoption). To enable comparison against other authorities, we report the number as a rate per 10,000 children within our authority’s population.

Whilst the number of Children in Care has increased in the last quarter it remains below the CIPFA comparator (mean, annual) measure in 2022.

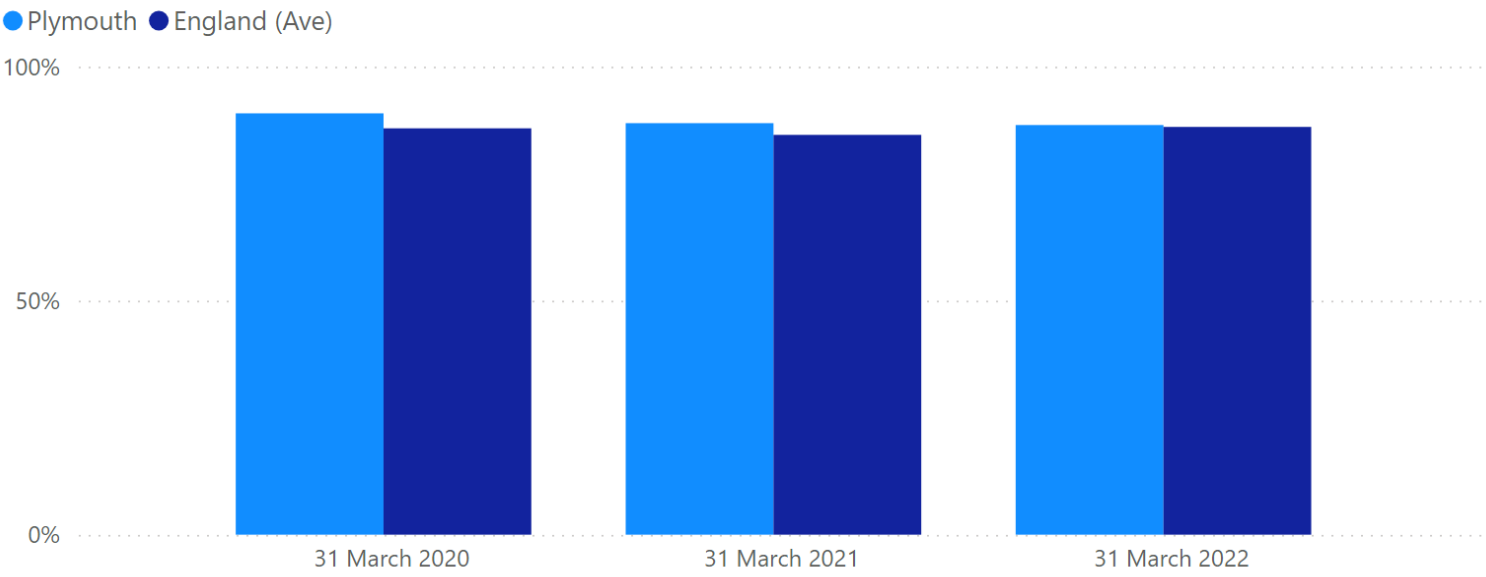
Percentage of closed adult safeguarding enquiries where the desired outcomes have been fully or partially achieved



The percentage of safeguarding enquiries in which, at the point of completion, the individual affected or individual’s representative’s desired outcomes have been fully or partially achieved.

This position has reduce over the last quarter by 1.2%.

Adult Social Care service users who feel safe and secure

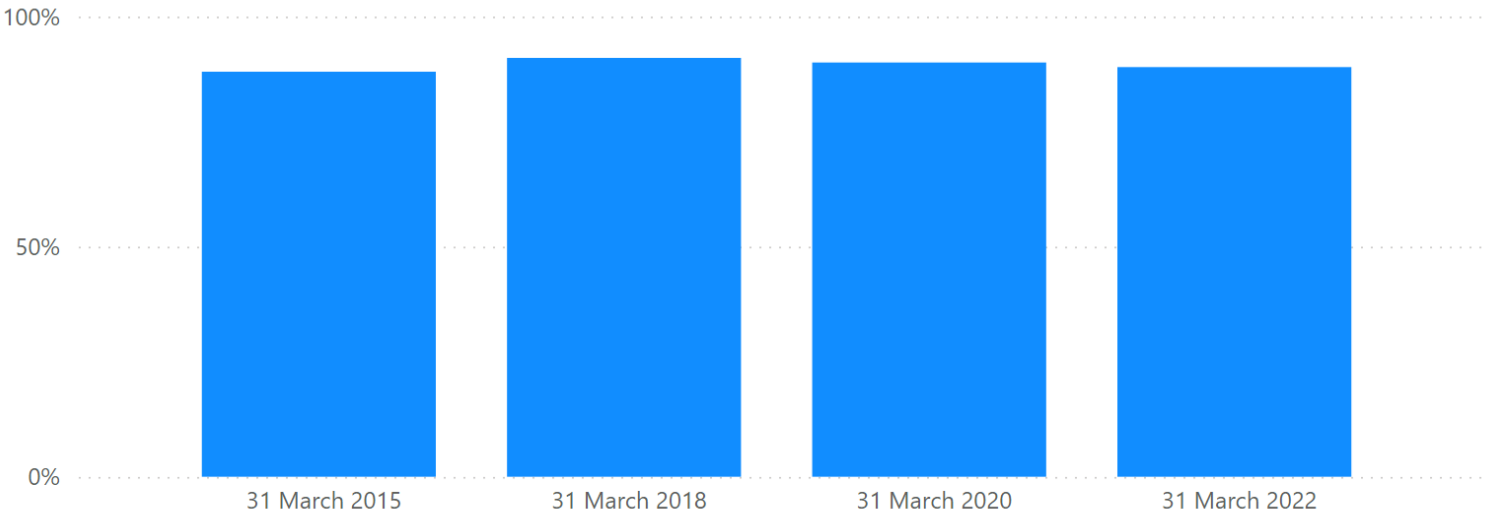


The proportion of people who use Adult Social Care (ASC) services who say that those services make them feel safe and secure, as measured using the annual Statutory ASC Survey.

Since 2020, the measure has seen a drop of around 2%.

This measure will be updated in the next reporting period following completion of the adult social care survey.

Residents who feel safe (during the day)



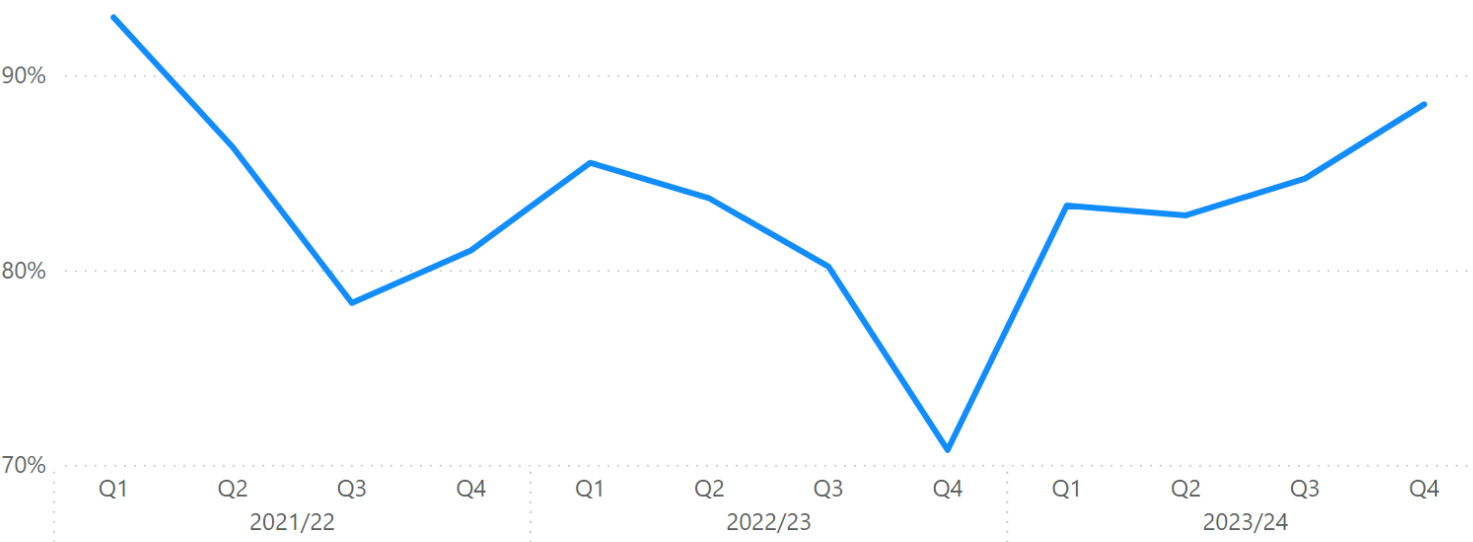
The percentage of Plymouth City Survey respondents who feel fairly safe or very safe when outside in their local area during the day.

These results of from the City Survey, the portfolio holder is currently reviewing the approach to the next survey.



Doing this by

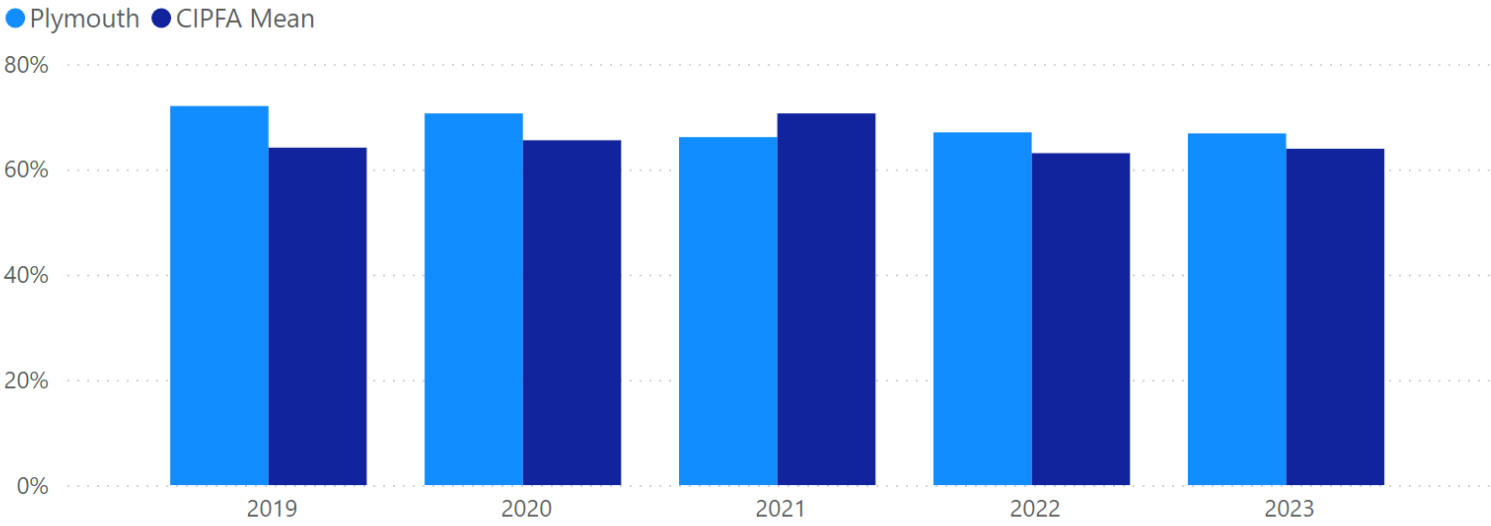
Stage one complaints resolved within timeframe



This measure records the percentage of stage one customer complaints resolved within the period that are resolved within the timeframe of 10 working days.

Despite a downward trend at the end of 2022/23, performance has now improved with a further 4% increase in resolution within time frame in the last quarter.

Percentage of people who receive social care who are satisfied

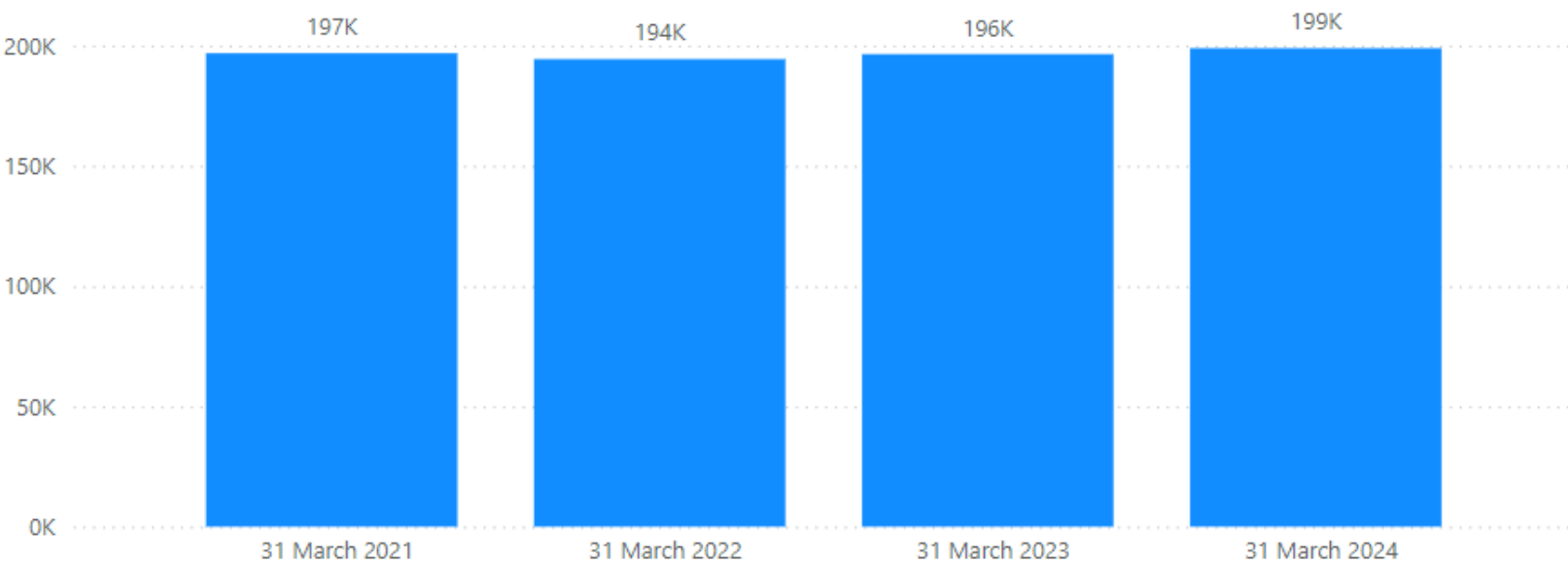


This is a measure from the statutory annual survey of Adult Social Care users that measures how satisfied users are with the services they receive.

Data from the 2023/24 survey is expected in June.

Plymouth outperformed its CIPFA comparator group in 2022/23 by 2.0%.

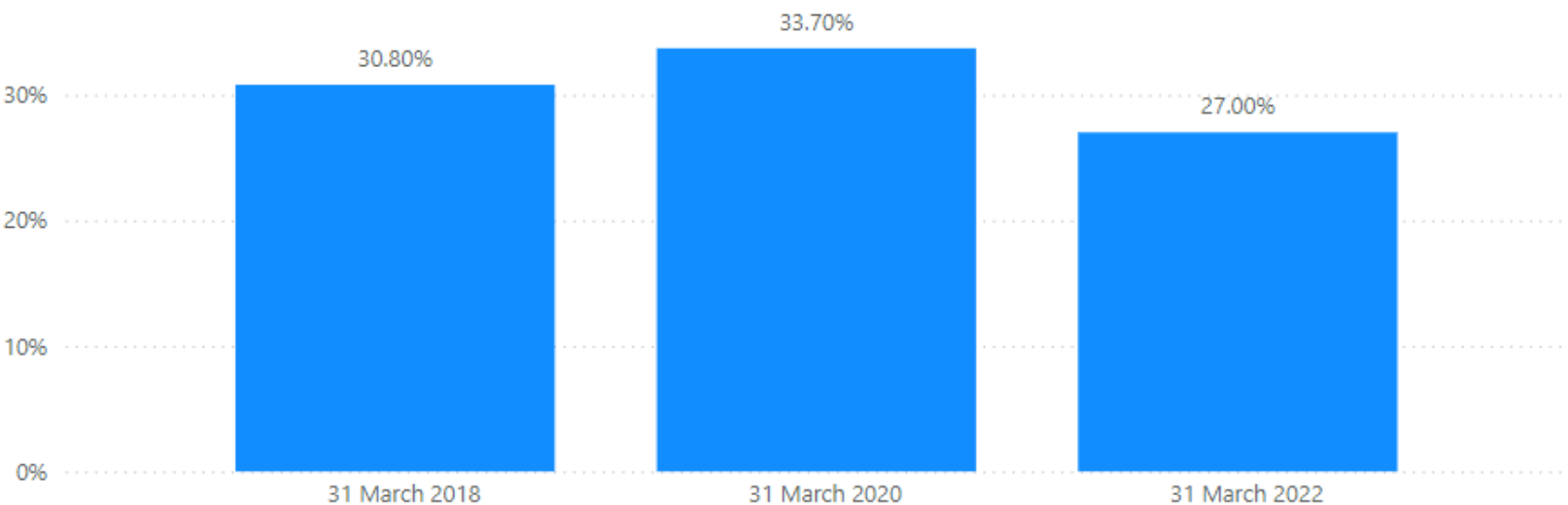
Number of adults registered to vote in local elections



This measure records the number of adults (aged 18+ years) who are eligible to vote who are registered to vote in the local elections.

In the region of 2,000 voters were added to the register between 2023/24.

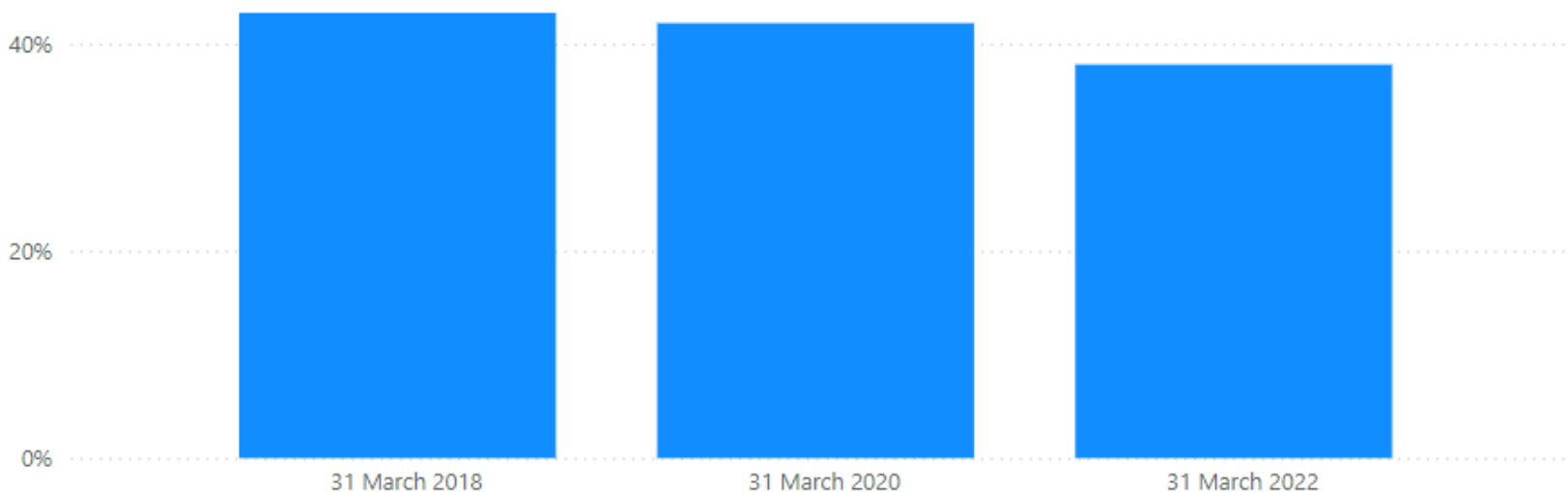
Residents who know how to get involved in local decisions



The percentage of Plymouth City Survey respondents who volunteer or help out in the city, which includes formal volunteering (e.g. for a charity or community group) or informal helping out (e.g. a neighbour).

This measure, along with others from the City Survey, are under review by the portfolio holder.

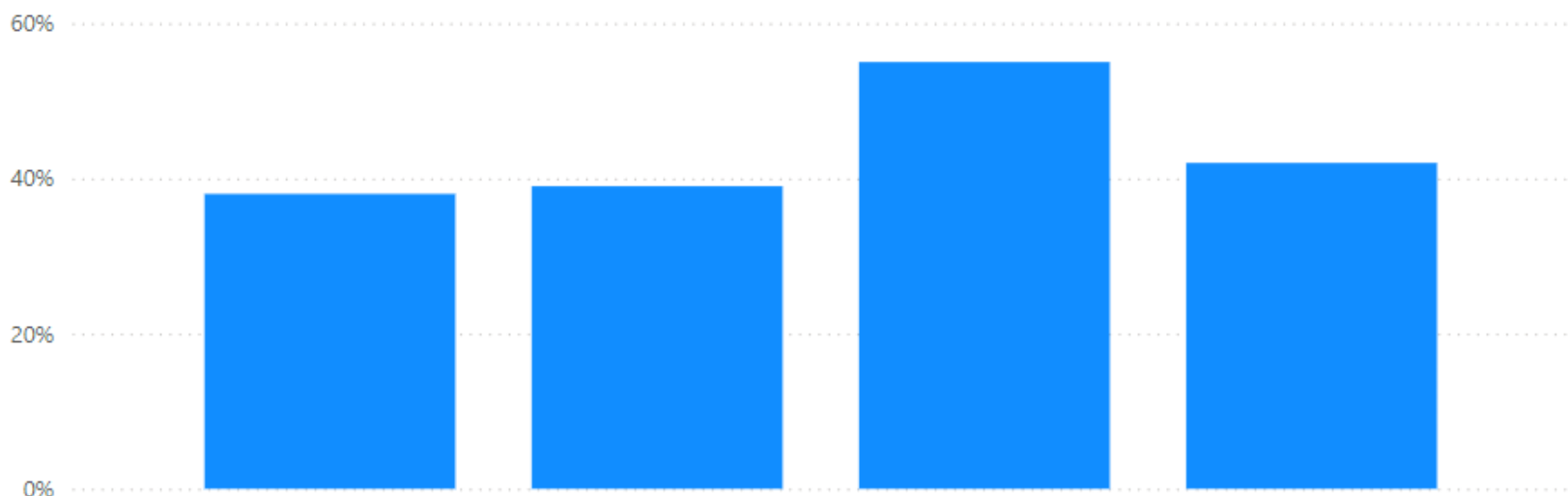
Percentage of Plymouth City Survey respondents who volunteer or help out



The percentage of Plymouth City Survey respondents who volunteer or help out in the city, which includes formal volunteering (e.g. for a charity or community group) or informal helping out (e.g. a neighbour).

This measure, along with others from the City Survey, is under review by the portfolio holder.

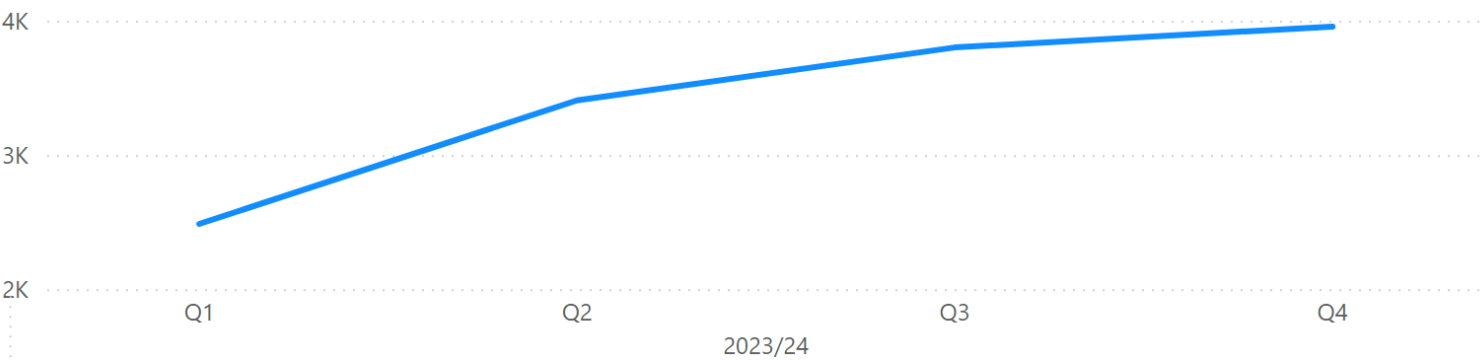
Residents who think people from different backgrounds get on well



The percentage of Plymouth City Survey respondents who agreed with the statement 'my local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together'. This is a measure of community cohesion.

This measure, along with others from the City Survey, is under review by the portfolio holder.

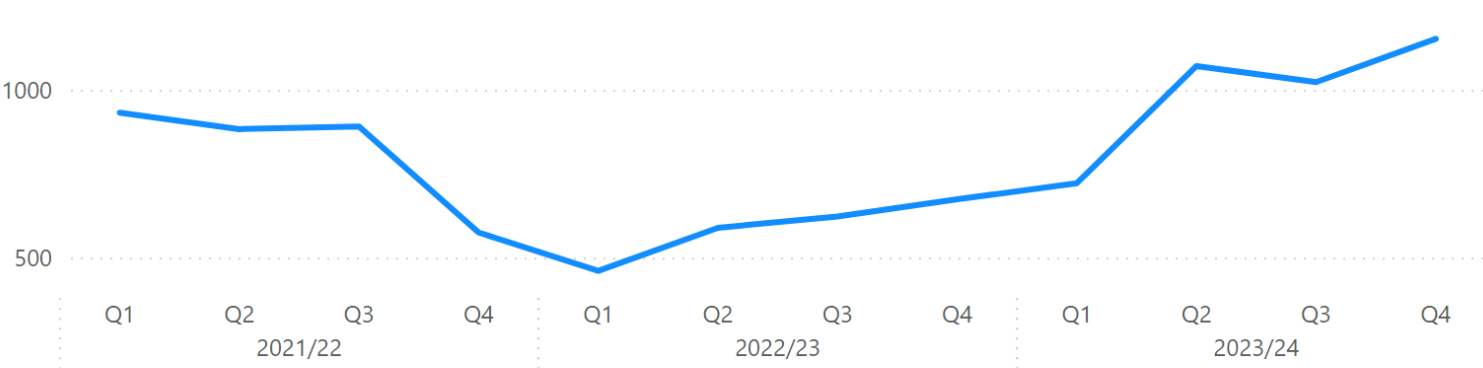
Number of Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) contacts received



Where there are concerns about a child, our partner agencies and the public (e.g. family members) can contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub. These initial concerns are recorded as a contact on our case management system. This measure gives the number of contacts that have been received in the quarter.

There has been a further increase of 200 contacts in the last reporting period, 50% less than experienced in Q3

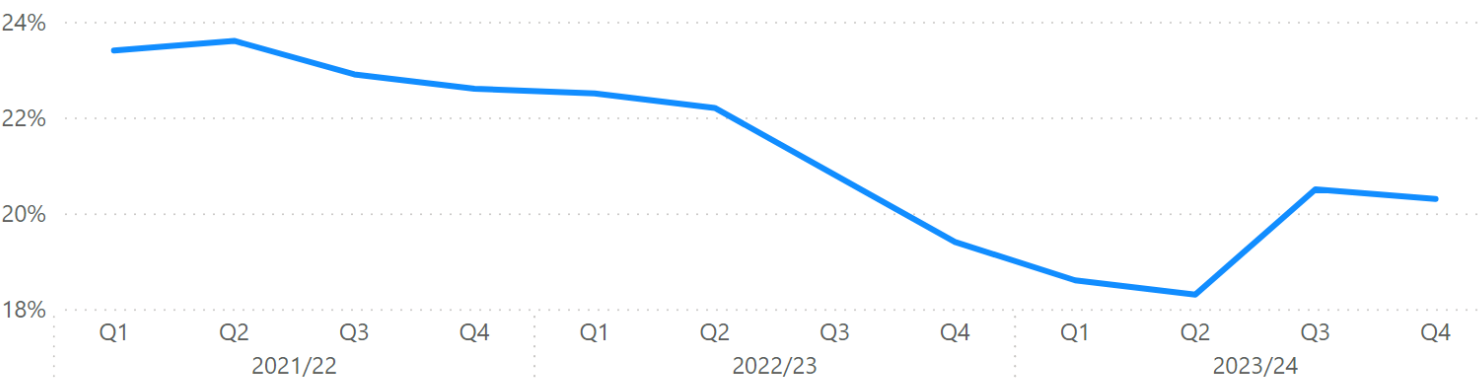
Number of MASH referrals received



Where concerns about a child have been raised to the Children, Young People and Families Service, once the initial contact has been screened by our multi agency hub, if appropriate, referrals will be accepted.

In the last reporting quarter referrals have increased by 129.

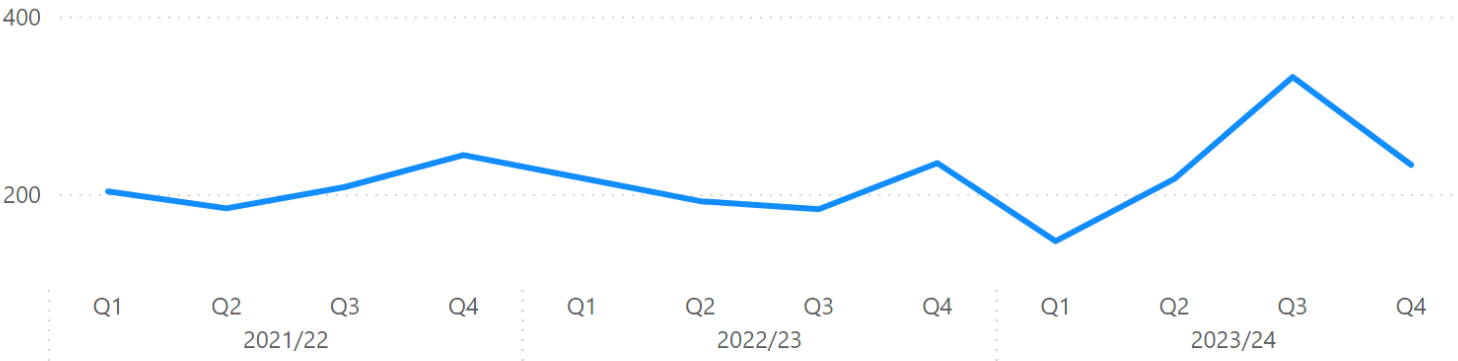
Repeat MASH referrals to Children’s Social Care (rolling 12 months)



The percentage of referrals to Children's Social Care within the financial year where there has been a referral within the previous 12 months for the same child.

Following an increase in the last reporting repeat referrals have plateaued and slightly decreased.

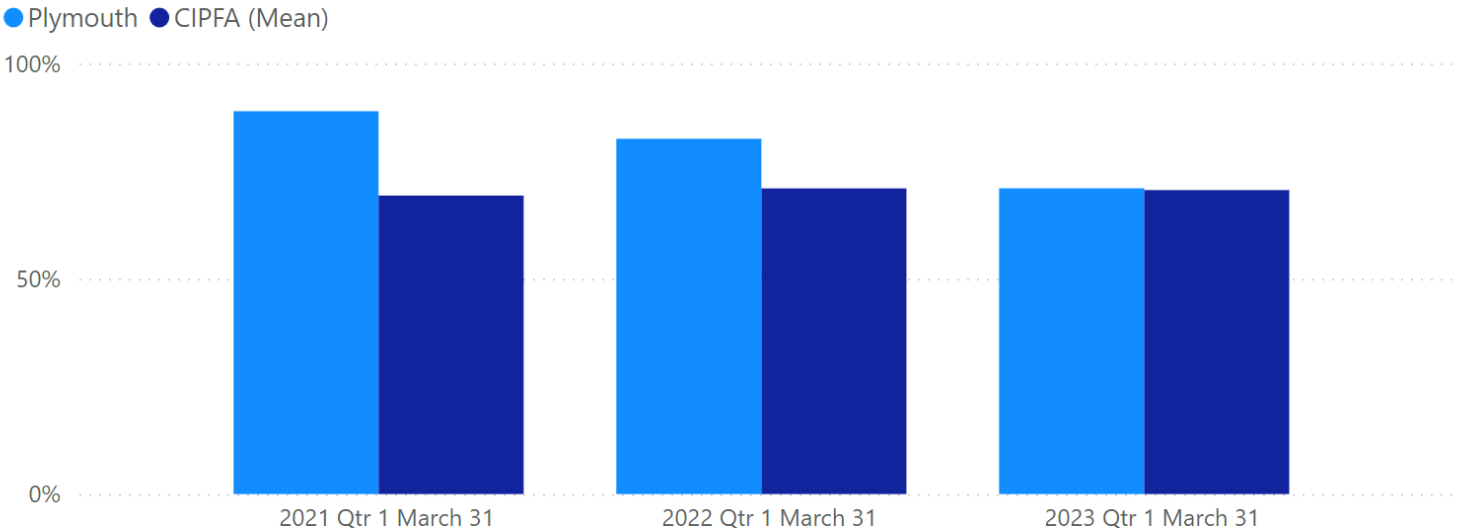
Number of households prevented from becoming homeless or relieved of homelessness



This measure records the number of households prevented from becoming homeless or relieved of homelessness by the Council.

233 households were prevented from becoming homeless in the last reporting period reflecting the performance achieved in 21/22 and 22/23.

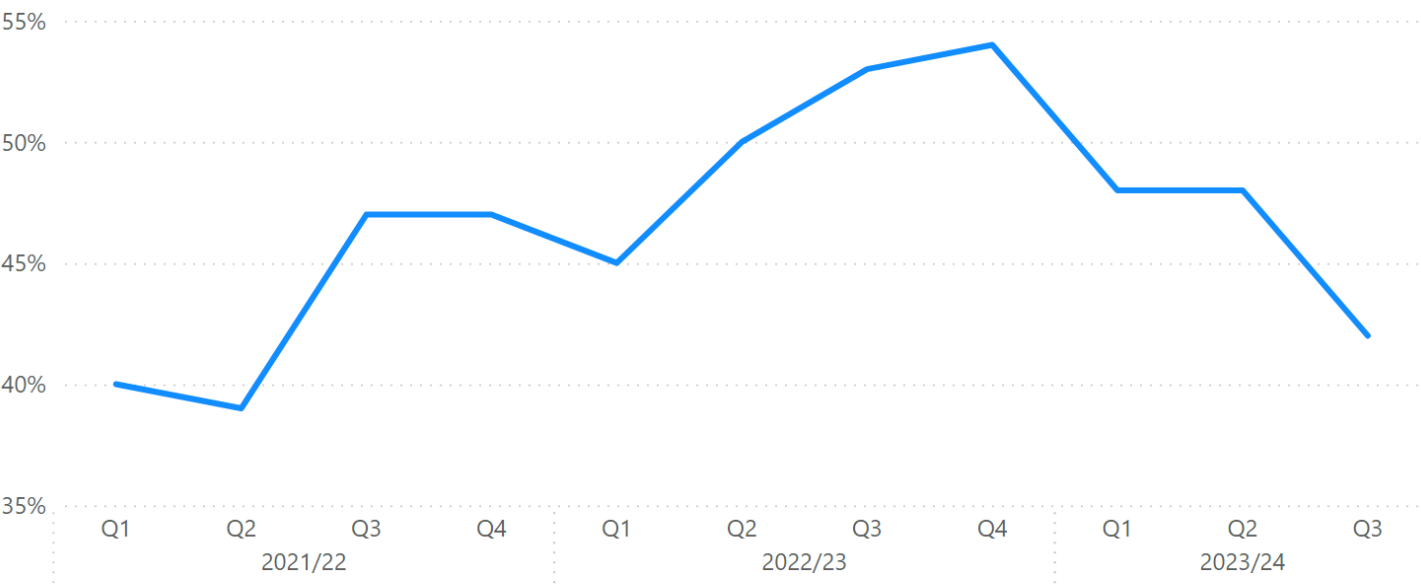
Proportion of people who received short term service, where sequel was either no ongoing support or support of a lower level



The Council provides short term services aim to re-able people and promote their independence. This measure which is calculated using statutory returns provides evidence of a good outcome of maximising independence and delaying/preventing further care needs.

The last reported data is from the end of the 2022/23 year and shows that Plymouth is in line with its CIPFA comparator group.

Percentage of people accessing the Stop Smoking Service who have quit



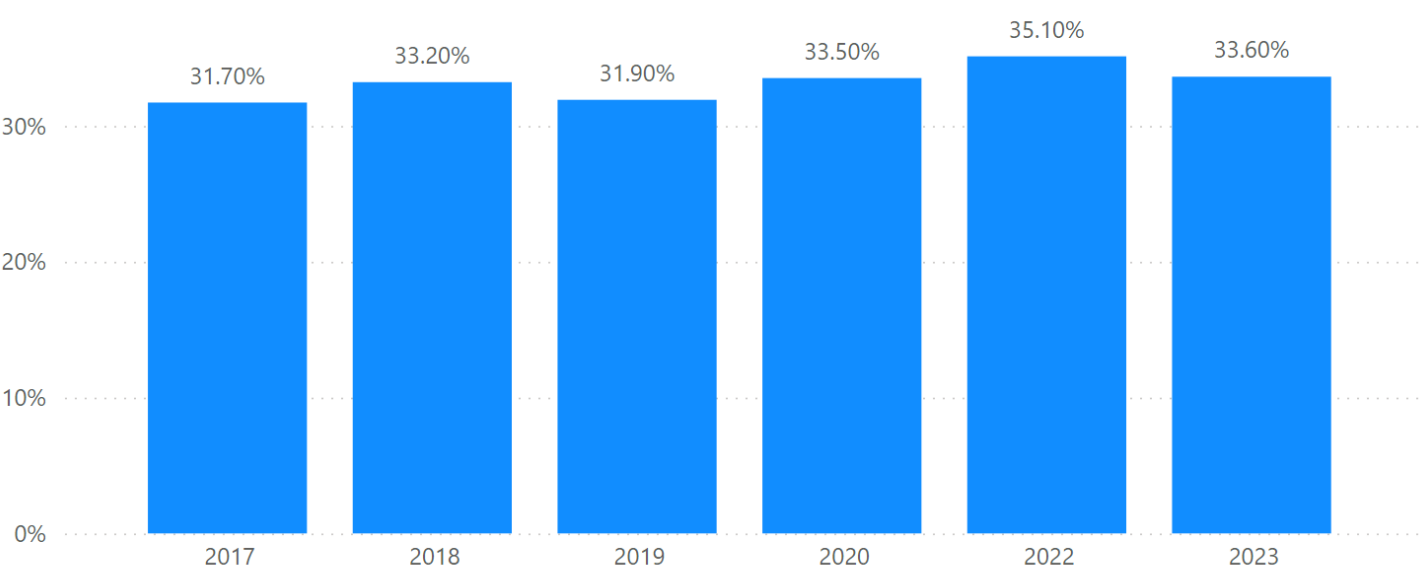
This measure records the number of people who engage with the Stop Smoking Service and set a quit date, with successful quit attempts measured at four weeks.

Data is reported one quarter in arrears. Between Q1 and Q2 23/24 the number of successful quit attempts has plateaued at 48%.

Our Public Health Team recently established a referral pathway from the Mobile Lung Health Check programme, currently located in Plymouth and including all people registered with GP as smoking tobacco and expect this to increase numbers of referrals into our specialist service.

We’ve recently received notification that we are to receive additional funding from central government to increase and improve access to evidence based support for people who smoke and are developing partnership plans related to this, Smoke Free Generation Grant.

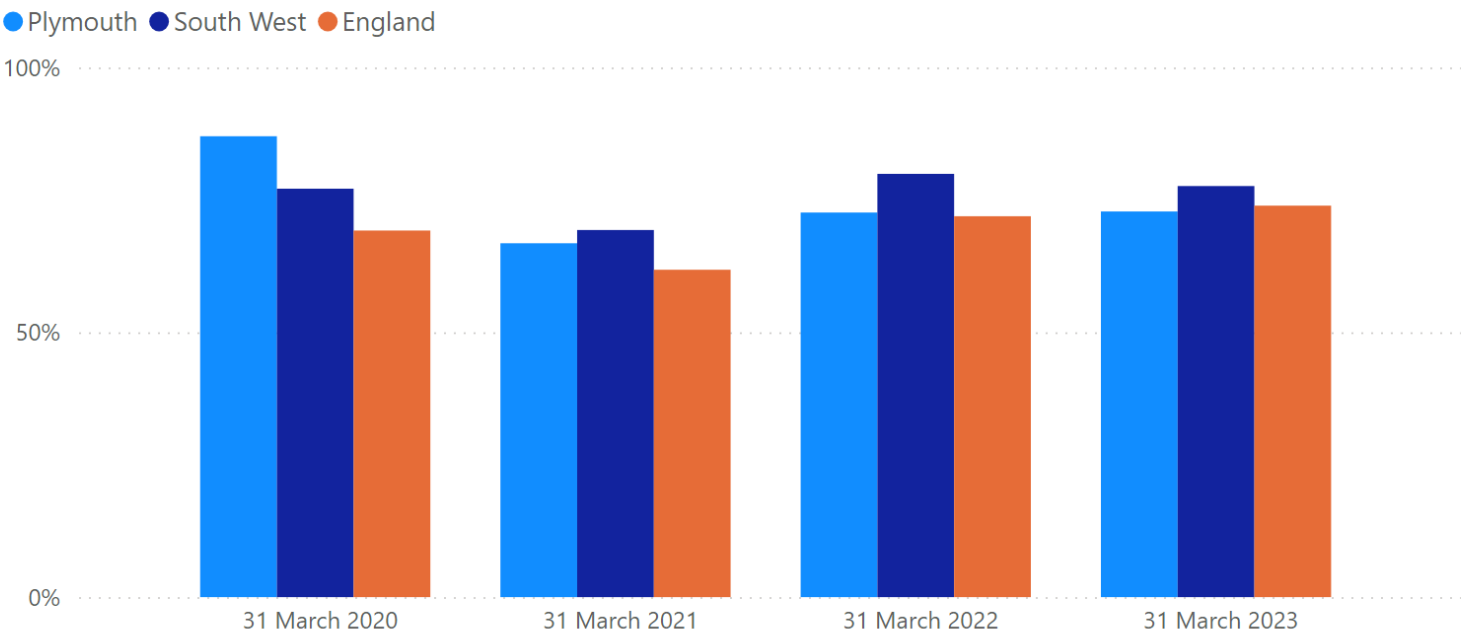
Excess weight in 10-11 year olds



This measure records the prevalence of excess weight (including obesity) among children in Year 6 (aged 10 to 11 years old), collected as part of the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) in schools.

Between 2022 and 2023 the prevalence reduced by 2.5%.

Percentage of two year olds benefiting from Funded Early Education

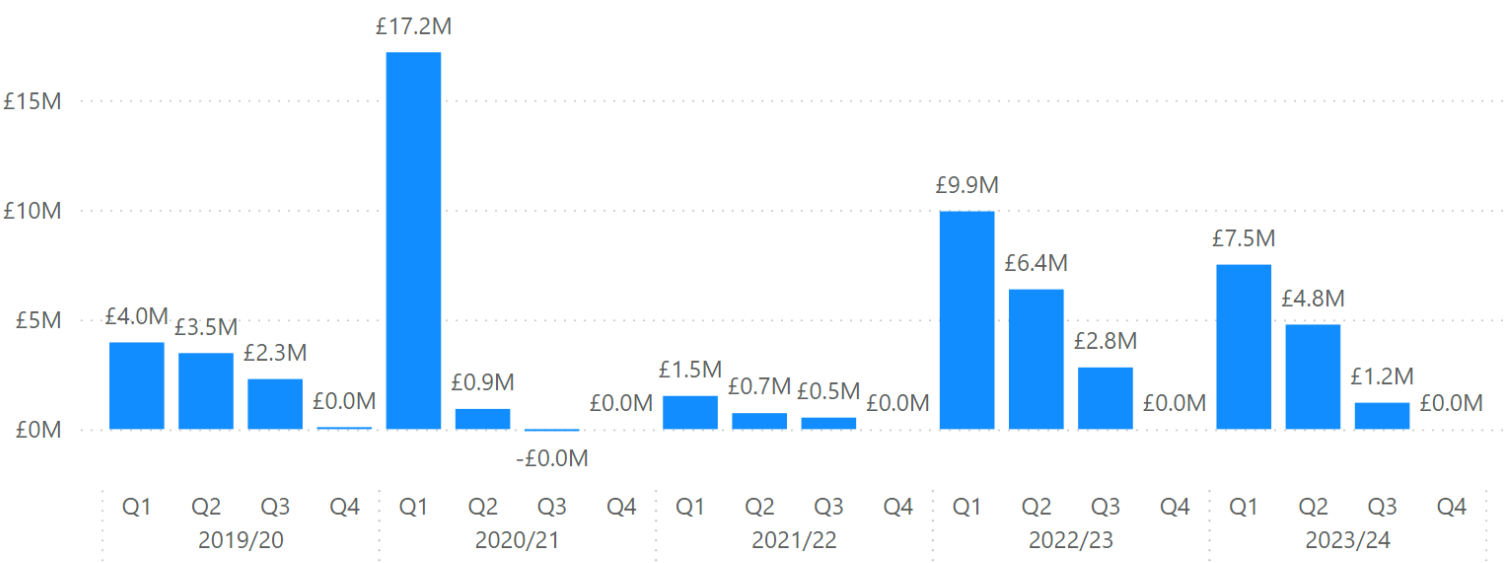


This measure records the proportion of 2 year olds benefiting from funded early education.

From September 2013, the entitlement to 15 hours of funded early education per week for 38 weeks of the year was extended to specified two year olds in vulnerable families or who are looked after by the local authority.

The measure has been at 72% since the end of 2021/22, below both the South West and England average.

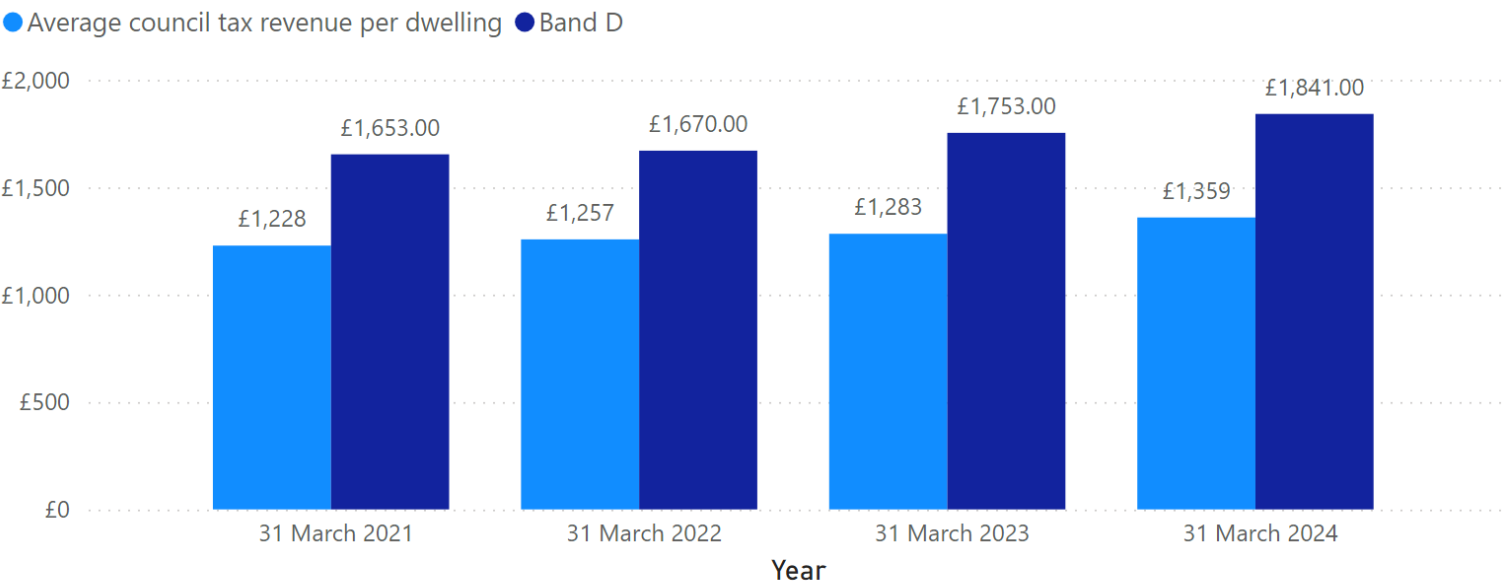
Forecast spend against budget (£million)



This measure records the projected balance remaining against the Council's overall budget at the end of the financial year, updated monthly.

In the last reported quarter forecast overspend reduced by £2.7million.

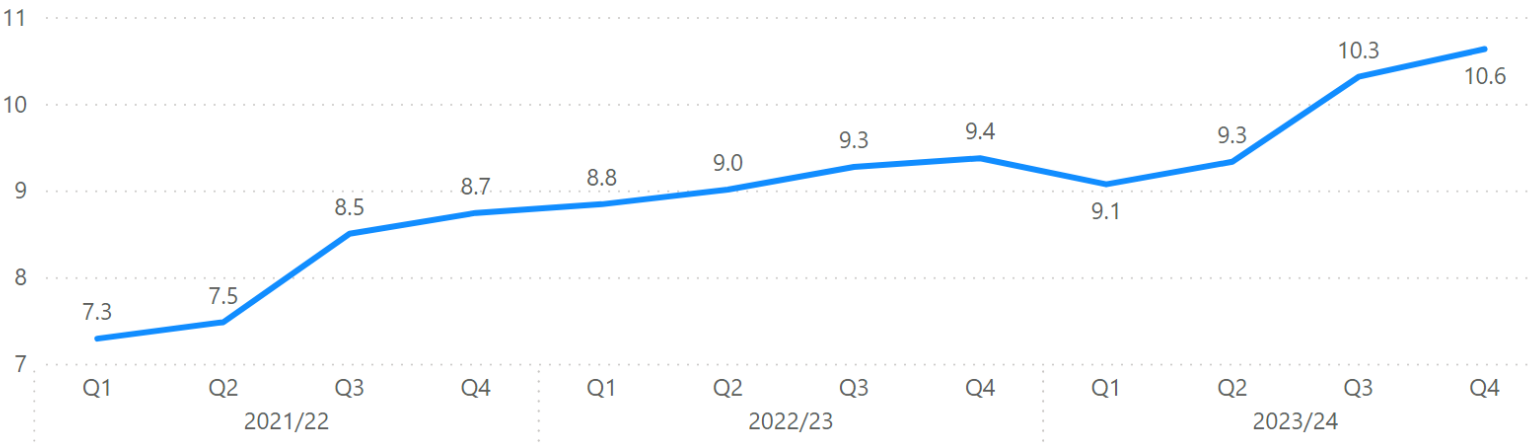
Average council tax revenue per dwelling (all dwellings) and Band D



This measure records the average Council Tax charge per dwelling in the City.

Council tax dwelling is calculated as the total council tax payable in an area divided by the total number of chargeable dwellings in the area.

Days lost due to sickness (average per rolling 12 months)



This measure records the average number of working days lost due to sickness per full-time equivalent (FTE) employee at Plymouth City Council, calculated as a rolling 12 month average, excluding schools.

Sickness data includes days lost due to physical and mental ill health, as well as injuries.

Over the last reporting quarter the figure has increased by one working day.

Plymouth City Council provides a transparent and fair approach to rewarding our employees through our pay, terms and conditions and benefits. Over the course of quarter four the Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25 was agreed by Cabinet and Council.

The HR team is working very closely with directors, managers and individual members of staff on **sickness absence**. This includes a focus on the 'Top 100' and those with frequent periods of absence and is done in an open and supportive way. Processes are supported by Occupational Health, our Employee Assistance Programme, trade union representatives and new line manager training.

Increased absence levels in Plymouth City Councils are due to musculo-skeletal and stress & anxiety. We are seeing positive results from interventions in areas such as Independence at Home and Street Services.

It should be noted that increasing levels of sickness absence are being seen across the UK, notably due to stress & anxiety.

Plymouth City Council continues to adopt the principles of the Real (previously Foundation) Living Wage, with the lowest paid worker (excluding apprentices) earning £23,151 per FTE (£12.00 per hour) from 1 April 2024, an increase of 41 pence per hour from the current lowest pay scale of £11.59 per hour.

The ratio between the lowest paid (£23,151) and highest paid (£173,828) employee will be 1:7.5 from 1 April 2024, which is a reduction on last year (1:7.99) and a continued reduction from 2012 when the ratio was 1:14.

Doing this by - Being a strong voice for Plymouth

Our public affairs activity remains focused on the priority areas for the Council and city, and we continue to engage with ministers and senior civil servants on a range of issues that are important to Plymouth. In particular, there has been a focus on levelling up and developing relationships with government departments and agencies such as the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Homes England to drive forward the next stage of Plymouth's regeneration.

January - Councillor Penberthy, Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities co-signed a letter from Brighton and Hove City Council to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Local Government) alongside a number of other councils calling for the urgent continuation of the Household Support Fund. The Chancellor announced in the spring budget that this would be extended for another six months. The Council expects to receive a further £2.2m from the fund to help residents struggling with the cost of living crisis.

February – Following a Motion on Notice agreed at Council on the 29th January 2024, the Leader wrote to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing) to express concerns about the excess profits being made by some private companies providing children's social care placements. The Leader called on the government to urgently investigate the largest providers of children's social care services to ensure greater scrutiny of the fees they charge and how any profits are distributed.

The Leader also wrote to the Chair of NHS Devon regarding the long-standing issue of fair funding for health care in Plymouth from the NHS Devon system.

Councillor Laing, Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Chair of the Council's Corporate Parenting Group wrote to Plymouth MPs urging them to support a change in the law to give young people who have been in care the same protection against discrimination that the Equalities Act 2010 already gives on characteristics such as age, sex and race as well as calling for their support to broaden corporate parenting responsibilities across a wider set of public bodies and organisations, as recommended by the Independent Review of Children's Social Care.

The Plymouth Sound National Marine Park received £11.6m funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to help deliver the UK's first National Marine Park, a £22m transformation programme that will help empower and engage the city in the marine environment.

March – Homelessness and rough sleeping services across Plymouth welcomed £8m investment in the form of four separate grants from Homes England's Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme to benefit adults experiencing multiple disadvantage who may have a history of rough sleeping and require high levels of support, and young people at risk of or experiencing homelessness or rough sleeping. These awards, the largest outside of greater London, are spread over four different schemes:

- £2.4 million plus three years of funding for the Council to provide 10 self-contained, accessible and adapted supported housing for individuals with mobility needs/ physical disabilities
- £1.8 million plus three years of funding for Young Devon, in partnership with the YMCA, to provide 47 flats with 24 hour supported accommodation
- £700,000 plus three years of funding for local charity PATH to purchase two HMO properties with a high-needs support service
- £296,000 plus three years of funding for Young Devon to provide four bed spaces with high-needs support service

Plymouth was awarded more than £1.2m from the Department for Education to provide new opportunities to 360 young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) throughout the next year.

The Council has also been awarded £9.5m from the Department for Transport's Zero Emission Bus Fund for 50 new zero-emission buses to enable cleaner, more reliable and more comfortable journeys.

Cabinet



Date of meeting:	08 July 2024
Title of Report:	Final Report: Care Experience as a Protected Characteristic in Plymouth
Lead Member:	Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications)
Lead Strategic Director:	David Haley, Director for Children's Services
Author:	Karen Blake, Head of Service, Children, Young People and Families
Contact Email:	karen.blake@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

At a Full Council meeting held on 27 March 2023, a 'Motion on Notice' was presented which asked that the Council treat care experience as if it were a protected characteristic as defined within Equalities legislation. Although there are no legislative requirements, the Council unanimously supported this Motion. In agreeing this Motion, the Council made six resolutions. This report details how each resolution within the Motion has been progressed to date and sets out how this work has been incorporated into service delivery across the Council.

Recommendations and Reasons

1. That Cabinet note the progress made to embed care experience as a protected characteristic across the Council.
2. That Cabinet continue to support this by ensuring care experienced individuals are considered in decision-making to help raise aspirations and increase opportunities.
3. That Cabinet encourage other organisations to treat care experience as if it were a protected characteristic to increase access to opportunities across the city for those individuals.

Reason: The Council has committed to treating care experience as if it were a protected characteristic. It is therefore important that Plymouth City Council as well as other organisations, including the wider business community are aware of this and understand the positive impact this can have on care experienced people across the city.

Alternative options considered and rejected

No alternatives considered.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

This recommendation aligns to the Council's mission and values of Democracy, Responsibility, Fairness and Cooperation as set out in the Corporate Plan.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

No are no implications identified as part of this progress report.

Financial Risks

No financial risks identified as part of this progress report.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

No environmental implications identified as part of this progress report.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

There are no further implications identified as part of this progress report.

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Final report: Care experience as a protected characteristic in Plymouth							

Background papers:

**Add rows as required to box below*

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	DJN. 24.25. 033	Leg	LS/000 03197/ 3/LB/0 1/07/24	Mon Off		HR	CS.24 .25.01 0	Asset s		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Haley (Director for Children's Services)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 01/07/2024											

Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Children’s Social Care, Culture and Communications)

Date approved: 01/07/2024

This page is intentionally left blank

FINAL REPORT: CARE EXPERIENCE AS A PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC IN PLYMOUTH



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It has been 15 months since Plymouth City Council unanimously supported the motion to treat care experience as if it were a protected characteristic on 27 March 2023. There are now over 80 Local Authorities across the UK who have adopted this position.

Over the past 15 months the six resolutions set out in the motion have been progressed and completed or incorporated into the relevant area of business within Plymouth City Council.

This report details how each resolution within the motion has been progressed and sets out how this has been incorporated into service delivery across the council.

REVIEW OF RESOLUTIONS

In passing the motion to treat care experience as a protected characteristic, Plymouth City Council committed to the following six resolutions. These resolutions have been progressed and reviewed through the Corporate Management Team alongside the considerations, impact and the corporate support required to ensure that we are compliant with the motion passed by Council.

Resolution 1: That the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer ensure that all council making decision documentation has in it appropriate sections to allow for the impact upon 'care experienced people' to be considered in decision making, where relevant and that:

- a. Officers consider how information might be captured and reported upon in a similar way to that of the Public Sector Equality Duty Annual report.**
- b. Any publication of information relating to people who share a Protected Characteristic also includes 'care experienced people'.**

Completed Actions:

- The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) template has been updated to include care experience.
- EIA guidance has been updated to include care experience.
- Equality objective agreed for 2024: *"Objective 2: Plymouth City Council will give specific consideration to care experienced people in its decision-making to raise aspirations, increase opportunities and seek to improve their life outcomes, including access to training, employment and housing, and will encourage other organisations to do the same"*.
- A presentation has been delivered to the Senior Leadership Team (Team Plymouth) to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities as Corporate Parents and their need to comply with the motion to treat care experience as a protected characteristic. Senior leaders have been provided with the presentation to cascade their learning throughout their service areas.
- The Policy and Intelligence Team has developed an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan for delivering against the care experience equality objective in conjunction with the Service Lead and Councillors Penberthy, Laing and Penrose (Welcoming City Champion).
- Senior leaders continue to cascade their learning from Team Plymouth throughout their service areas.

- The Policy and Intelligence Team has reviewed publications and demographic monitoring forms where equality and diversity data is recorded to include care experience. A definition has been added to the demographic monitoring form as a result of the learning from the Council's budget engagement where individuals may not have understood the correct meaning of the question being asked.

Resolution 2: To proactively seek out and listen to the voices of care experienced people of all ages when developing new Council policies and plans and, where possible, those where the Council produces them in partnership with others.

Completed Actions:

- The Policy and Intelligence Team is the central point of contact for staff completing EIAs and who may need further support to understand whether or not they need to specifically consult or co-design with care experienced people when developing policies, plans and services. The Service Lead will be the subject matter expert and will work closely with the Practice Manager (Participation) to advise as required. Senior leaders were informed of this at the Team Plymouth presentation on 14 March 2024.
- There is a commitment that EIAs will not be agreed if the matter of care experience is not adequately addressed.
- The members of the PAUSE community of women with care experience have agreed to support the Council through consultation and co-design where it is identified as necessary through an EIA. This has been included in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.

Actions In Progress:

- The Participation Service are working with young people to develop a post 25 participation group. This will grow from the existing Care Experienced Council as set out in the 2024/2025 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.

Resolution 3: To request that the Chief Executive, as Head of Paid Service, explore with the Director of HR how the Council could seek to guarantee all care experienced persons an interview where they meet the essential criteria of the post applied for.

Completed Actions:

- The wording of guaranteed interviews to those with care experienced rather than those who have been in Plymouth City Council Care has been changed.
- The Youth Work Apprentice (with care experience) post within the Care Leavers Team has been created and appointed to.
- The 2024 Work Experience program has been updated to ensure that children in care and care experienced young people are eligible and prioritised.
- Following the presentation at Team Plymouth on 14 March 2024, 37 people have made pledges in respect of what they will do differently, or in addition, to support people with care experience.
- The pledges made through Team Plymouth have been collated into a central tracker and progress will be reported quarterly to the Children's Services Quality Assurance Performance Improvement Board (QAPPIB).
- Team Plymouth pledge holders will progress their individual pledges with support from the relevant subject experts.
- The Council's job application process has been amended, along with the supporting guidance, to allow individuals to identify care experience alongside the nine protected characteristics defined in

law. This will allow for care experience to be included in future equality and diversity data monitoring.

Resolution 4: That the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills, Children and Young People writes to all public bodies represented in the City, the Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses in Plymouth to make them aware of this motion and, where possible and within available resources, offer training on corporate parenting and issues facing care experienced people and to work with our partners and our care experienced population to understand what corporate parenting means for them.

Completed Actions:

- The letter has been drafted and an inbox established for responses. This letter will be sent out to business leaders across the city.
- Post 16 & Skills Team has developed a free pastoral leadership programme for managers and employers that employ care experienced young people. The flexible programme includes short courses on safeguarding, trauma informed practice and mental health awareness. These programmes can be personalised for the team or business with flexible delivery options.
- The 'Your Future Employability' program has now been established and there are dates for future delivery in place. Care experienced individuals are able to attend whether or not they have identified Special Educational Needs.
- Livewell has worked with the Care Leavers Team, Post 16 & Skills and the Department for Work and Pensions to establish an Employment Pathway for care leavers. Young people were consulted and involved in co-designing the pilot for this employment pathway. This launched in May 2024.

Resolution 5: That the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Homes and Communities writes to Plymouth's MPs making them aware of this motion and asking them to press government to amend the law to include Care Experienced persons as a Protected Characteristic and for the extension of Corporate Parenting to all public bodies, following the recommendations of the MacAlister Report.

Completed Actions:

- This letter has been completed and sent.
- The agreement that intentionality can only be agreed with joint agreement at a director level has been updated in the Local Offer for care leavers.
- Devon Home Choice have now agreed a six-month pilot of automatic B & B for care leavers who are assessed as tenancy ready. A briefing is being produced for the Corporate Parenting Operational Managers Group to build this into the Local Offer.
- Elected Members who sit on the Corporate Parenting Group have engaged with local Housing Associations to invite them to consider ring fencing an allocation of housing stock for care experienced young people.

Resolution 6: That the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer attend the first Corporate Parenting Committee meeting in the next municipal year to report on the actions taken as a result of this motion on notice.

Completed Actions:

- The Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer attended the Corporate Parenting Group on 14 July 2023.

NEXT STEPS

The ongoing work to ensure that these changes are embedded in practice will sit within each service area, led by the respective senior leadership teams.

37 members of Team Plymouth have so far made pledges to do things differently or increase opportunities for care experienced individuals in Plymouth. These pledges have been collated into a tracker and will be progressed within the relevant service area. Where these pledges relate to work experience, training or employment opportunities, the pledge owner will be provided with the same centralised mailbox as our local business leaders to ensure that opportunities reach care experienced young people in a timely manner and they can be supported to access them.