



Oversight and Governance

Chief Executive's Department
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PERFORMANCE, FINANCE AND CUSTOMER FOCUS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:

CALL-IN - CHANGES TO CONTACT CENTRE SERVICES

Friday 18 November 2022

9.30 am

Council House

Members:

Councillor Penberthy, Chair

Councillor Finn, Vice Chair

Councillors Churchill, Collins, Haydon, Hulme, Lowry, Partridge, Stevens, Tofan, Vincent and Wheeler.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf. 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

Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for non-attendance submitted by Councillors.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillors will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.

3. Chair's Urgent Business

To receive reports on business which in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

4. Call-in: Decision Reference - LI5 22/23 - Changes to Contact Centre Services (Pages 1 - 18)

The Committee will consider the decision called in by Councillors Haydon, Mrs Aspinall and Coker.

CALL-IN REQUEST FORM



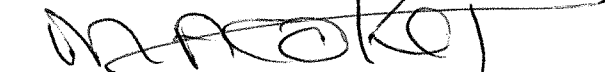


PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

Decision to be called in	L 15 22/23.
Decision made by:	Councillor Richard Bingley leader of the Council.
Date decision was made	27/10/22.
Are you calling the decision in because you believe it to be outside of the Budget or Policy Framework	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No (If Yes, state the reasons why you believe it to be outside the Budget or Policy Framework in the reasons section below)
Reasons for the Call-In 1. the process was deficient in some way (e.g. the decision maker did not consult people who should have been consulted) 2. the decision maker did not consider alternative courses of action 3. the decision taker did not take into account relevant factors 4. the decision was wrong in law or fact. The caller in must state why it was wrong in law or fact	① Lack of consultation with disabled groups and with vulnerable groups and their advocates. (Explain reasons) ② How telephone lines are prioritised could have been an alternative course of action. ③ No action Plan prepared and in place prior to changes being implemented. library opening hours - limited and staff availability.
To be valid THREE Councillors must support the request. All three Councillors should sign the form OR all three Councillors should e mail the Democratic Support Section (democratic.support@plymouth.gov.uk) expressing their support for the call-in. In this case, the form should be completed and attached to all of the e-mails.	

cont

Signatures of THREE Councillors:

Name	Signature
CLL. SALLY Haydon.	
CLL MARY ASPINALL	
CLL M. COKOR	

Contact Details:	
Name of councillor to be contacted if there are any difficulties or questions.	MARY ASPINALL 07471146619.

Notice of call-in for non-urgent decisions -

(i) must be received in the Democratic Support Unit by 4.30 p.m. on the fifth working day after Councillors have been notified that the decision has been made;

(ii) can be submitted to the Democratic Support Unit or by using the on-line form which should be e-mailed to democratic.support@plymouth.gov.uk

Scrutiny Call-In

Call In – Procedure to be Followed in the Meeting



1. Once the Chair has opened the meeting and any previous business on the agenda been dealt with, the Members who called in the decision will be asked to explain why they have done so and what they feel should be reviewed.

The Members making the call-in shall be allowed up to 15 minutes in total to present their case. It shall be up to them to determine how they wish to use their time, they may ask one speaker to speak or share the time among members who made the call in as they see fit.

2. **15 minutes shall be allowed to respond on behalf of the decision maker(s).** It shall be up to them to decide how to use this allocation. The relevant Cabinet Member, or a senior officer, may make the presentation or dividing the time as they see fit.
3. **After each presentation, Members of the Committee may ask questions to clarify any points made by the speakers** (although the speakers will not have an opportunity to cross-examine one another).
4. The Committee will then discuss the matter. **Members may ask further questions of the Members making the call in or the decision maker(s) during the debate. The Members making the call in and the decision maker will not normally speak during the debate, except to answer questions.**
5. When the Chair considers that the matter has been debated for a reasonable length of time, the decision maker will be offered the opportunity to make any final comments on the matter. **One of the Members making the call in will also be offered the opportunity to sum up. Each side will be allowed five minutes for this purpose.**

6. **The matter will then move to the vote –**

- 6.1 The first issue to consider is whether to confirm that the decision should be implemented (the decision can then be acted on immediately) –

If Members vote YES at this stage, the call in is ended (the matter will not be referred back).

- 6.2 The second issue to consider is whether the matter is within or outside of the policy framework and budget –

If the decision is not outside of the policy framework and budget, the Committee can decide to –

- support the decision which can then be acted on immediately, or
- send the decision back with its comments to the Cabinet or Cabinet member, who will take a final decision.

If the decision is outside of the policy framework and budget, it will go as a recommendation to the next ordinary meeting of the Council, along with any comments from the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee (if two Cabinet Members want earlier action, an extra ordinary meeting of the Council can be held, see Council Procedure Rule 6).

Council is able to –

- **ask the Cabinet to reconsider, or**
- **change the policy framework and budget so that the decision is within it – the decision can then be acted on immediately.**

6.3 If Members vote in favour of referring the matter for reconsideration, they must vote on where to refer the matter.

The Chair will ask Members to vote in favour of –

- **recommend that the decision maker should reconsider the decision in light of the comments expressed by the Committee**
- **refer the decision to Council to consider the call in (If the decision is outside of the policy framework and budget, it will go as a recommendation to the next ordinary meeting of the Council, along with any comments from the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee)**
- **(send comments to Council on any decision that recommends changing the policy framework and budget).**

If referred back to the decision maker(s), the Chair will confirm the Committee's comments for the referral back to Cabinet.

EXECUTIVE DECISION

made by a Cabinet Member




REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY BY AN INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER

Executive Decision Reference Number – L15 22/23

Decision				
1	Title of decision: Changes to Contact Centre Services			
2	Decision maker: Councillor Richard Bingley, Leader of the Council			
3	Report author and contact details: Anna Constantinou – Service Manager, Business Support - Anna.constantinou@plymouth.gov.uk			
4	Decision to be taken: To review the Contact Centre service offer and staffing resources to only meet the needs of priority/statutory Council services or customers who will be digitally excluded, support those wishing to make payments and promoting online services for all other services, as detailed below.			
5	Reasons for decision: To support the Council to deliver a planned and sustainable budget and enhance performance for priority lines whilst also supporting the City's most vulnerable and digitally excluded. The recommendation service offer will continue to support customers needing to access statutory services and customers that are digitally excluded or wishing to make a payment. Customers are also able to access some support through their local library.			
6	Alternative options considered and rejected: Option 1 – Cease all Contact Centre service offer. Not recommended due to impact on the access and provision of statutory services, supporting vulnerable/digitally excluded customers and income to the Council. Option 2 – Continue offering current service provision. Not recommended due as this will not offer any savings to support the Council's ability to deliver a planned and sustainable budget.			
7	Financial implications and risks: This decision will create £50k in savings in year through the reduction in staff resource from posts currently vacant. There are no financial risks.			
8	Is the decision a Key Decision? (please contact Democratic Support for further advice)	Yes	No	Per the Constitution, a key decision is one which: in the case of capital projects and contract awards, results in a new commitment to spend and/or save in excess of £3million in total
			x	

			x	in the case of revenue projects when the decision involves entering into new commitments and/or making new savings in excess of £1 million
		X		is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the local authority.
	If yes, date of publication of the notice in the Forward Plan of Key Decisions	21 September 2022		
9	Please specify how this decision is linked to the Council's corporate plan/Plymouth Plan and/or the policy framework and/or the revenue/capital budget:	This supports the Corporate Plan by offering Fair access to our services for those who cannot support themselves, focusing resources and prioritising the city's most vulnerable. It reflects our need to provide value for money and support the Council's desire to ensure that we are making the most of the benefits of digital and technology for our staff, residents and visitors.		
10	Please specify any direct environmental implications of the decision (carbon impact)	Promoting digital first will continue to reduce unnecessary journeys around Plymouth to gain access to services or information available via our website.		
Urgent decisions				
11	Is the decision urgent and to be implemented immediately in the interests of the Council or the public?	Yes		(If yes, please contact Democratic Support (democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk) for advice)
		No	x	(If no, go to section 13a)
12a	Reason for urgency:			
12b	Scrutiny Chair Signature:		Date	
	Scrutiny Committee name:			
	Print Name:			
Consultation				
13a	Are any other Cabinet members' portfolios affected by the decision?	Yes	x	
		No		(If no go to section 14)
13b	Which other Cabinet member's portfolio is affected by the decision?	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Culture, Leisure & Sport - Councillor Pat Patel		

I3c	Date Cabinet member consulted	02/09/2022		
I4	Has any Cabinet member declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, please discuss with the Monitoring Officer
		No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I5	Which Corporate Management Team member has been consulted?	Name	Andy Ralphs	
		Job title	Strategic Director of Customer and Corporate Services Customer and Corporate Services	
		Date consulted	25 August 2022	
Sign-off				
I6	Sign off codes from the relevant departments consulted:	Democratic Support (mandatory)	DS63 22/23	
		Finance (mandatory)	DJN22.23.229	
		Legal (mandatory)	MS/39367	
		Human Resources (if applicable)		
		Corporate property (if applicable)		
		Procurement (if applicable)		
Appendices				
I7	Ref.	Title of appendix		
	A	Equalities Impact Assessment		
Confidential/exempt information				
I8a	Do you need to include any confidential/exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, prepare a second, confidential ('Part II') briefing report and 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 in I8b below. (Keep as much information as possible in the briefing report that will be in the public domain)
		No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

		Exemption Paragraph Number						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18b	Confidential/exempt briefing report title:							
Background Papers								
19	<p>Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below.</p> <p>Background papers are <u>unpublished</u> 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. 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.</p>							
Title of background paper(s)		Exemption Paragraph Number						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cabinet Member Signature								
20	<p>I agree the decision and confirm that it is not contrary to the Council's policy and budget framework, Corporate Plan or Budget. In taking this decision I have given 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. For further details please see the EIA attached.</p>							
Signature		Date of decision	27/10/2022					
Print Name	Councillor Richard Bingley, Leader of Plymouth City Council							

Recommendation Detail:

The Contact Centre currently offers first point of contact telephone and email enquiries for:

Service	Priority status
Adult Social Care	Priority – statutory service
Building Control	Non-priority
Children’s Social Care	Priority - statutory service
Client Financial Services	Priority - income
Community Connections	Non-priority and priority – statutory service
Corporate Property	Non-priority
Electoral Services	Priority - statutory service
General main PCC enquiry line	Non-priority and priority
Highways	Non-priority
Parking & Public Transport	Non-priority
Public Protection	Non-priority
Registration	Priority - statutory service
Waste & Streets	Non-priority

Between 1st January and 31st July 2022 there were 114,712 calls to the Contact Centre of which 53,109 (46%) were for non-priority services and 61,603 (54%) priority line callers.

Proposal

To focus staff resources on supporting the following priority lines and create new lines to support customers who are digitally excluded or wish to make a payment.

Service	Priority status
Adult Social Care	Priority – statutory service
Children’s Social Care	Priority - statutory service
Community Connections	Priority – statutory homeless services
Electoral Services	Priority - statutory service
Registration	Priority - statutory service
Customer Digital Assistance (new)	Non-priority and priority
Payments (new)	Non-priority and priority for those customers not able to make payments though digital offers

Services to be removed and support via self-serve functions:

Service	
Building Control	Digital offer - payments through new line
Parking & Public Transport	Digital offer - payments through new line
Public Protection	Digital offer - payments through new line
Client Financial Services	Payments can be made through new line
Community Connections	Digital Offer - other than homelessness queries
Corporate Property	Digital Offer
Highways	Digital Offer
Waste & Streets	Digital offer - payments through new line

This recommendation will:

- ensure that staff are focusing on supporting customers needing to access statutory services and those that are digitally excluded
- protects the Council's income through providing a payment line for those not able to do so through digital offers
- customers are also able to access some support through their local library
- the Council's desire to ensure that we are making the most of the benefits of digital and technology for our staff, residents and visitors
- support the Council to deliver a planned and sustainable budget
- through closing non-priority lines and transferring more focus onto priority lines will improve priority line performance


Risks	
Description	Mitigation
Customers who are not digitally excluded using the new Customer Digital Assistance line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Messaging to be clear to callers the purpose of the offer and average waiting times and reminder of self-serve options • Monitor impact to contact centre with the digitally excluded support line, monitor volume of calls, and with strong support from contact centre to confirm their enquiry must be dealt with online to see demand to this phone queue reduce over time

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure agreed firm criteria for what customers will be entitled to obtain support via phone, and ensure team have a clear process to follow
Lack of awareness of digital offers for non-priority service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with services area to ensure that their digital offer is accessible • Ensure self-serve is promoted via our social media channels, web pages and email <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensuring customers can self-serve easily and have the information they need available to them online and that web page ownership takes place with frequent checks and updates to information available ○ Focus on customers who are not so active with digital means of communication but could use in the future with support such as letters or signing up with family and friend support.
Negative Digital Customer experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor complaints received, manage these customers with sensitivity and support to engage digitally, and monitor complaints reducing over a period
Meeting any increase in demand for informal IT support and general front door Council queries through libraries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently libraries can assist with the level of requests however this will need to be monitored as increase in traffic volumes will impact both abilities to meet customers expectation and impact the delivery on library functions. • There is also a risk that Libraries could be asked to respond to general council queries or complaints.
Impact on customers wishing to access non-priority services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor complaints received and provided feedback through service area interface meetings through lesson learned approach

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EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – CHANGES TO CONTACT CENTRE

SECTION ONE: INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPOSAL

Author(s): This is the person completing the EIA template.	Anna Constantinou, Service Manager,	Department and service:	Business Support Service, Customer and Digital Services	Date of assessment:	12/09/2022
Lead Officer: Please note that a Head of Service, Service Director, or Strategic Director must approve the EIA.	Anna Constantinou, Service Manager	Signature:		Approval date:	12/09/2022
Overview:	This Equality Impact Assessment considers the recommendation to focusing limited resources within the Contact Centre to support and prioritise the city’s most vulnerable to access Council Services who are digitally excluded				
Decision required:	To agree to the proposed changes to the Council’s Contact Centre through reducing the service offer and staffing resources to only meet the needs of priority/statutory services or customers who are vulnerable and digitally excluded, supporting those wishing to make payments and promoting online services for all other services. Directing customers who are not digitally excluded to self-service option. No adverse equality impacts are anticipated from the decision to approve and action the changes.				

SECTION TWO: EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING TOOL

Potential external impacts: Does the proposal have the potential to negatively impact service users, communities or residents with protected characteristics?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	
Potential internal impacts: Does the proposal have the potential to negatively impact Plymouth City Council employees?	Yes		No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Is a full Equality Impact Assessment required? (if you have answered yes to either of the questions above then a full impact assessment is required and you must complete section three)	Yes	X	No	
If you do not agree that a full equality impact assessment is required, please set out your justification for why not.				

SECTION THREE: FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Protected characteristics (Equality Act, 2010)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and consultation feedback)	Adverse impact	Mitigation activities	Timescale and responsible department
Age	<p>Plymouth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16.4 per cent of people in Plymouth are children aged under 15. 65.1 per cent are adults aged 15 to 64. 18.5 percent are adults aged 65 and over. 2.4 percent of the resident population are 85 and over. <p>South West</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15.9 per cent of people are aged 0 to 14, 61.8 per cent are aged 15 to 64. 22.3 per cent are aged 65 and over. <p>England</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17.4 per cent of people are aged 0 to 14. 	<p>Whilst we cannot consider a blanket view that ages groups would be impacted by decision to close non-priority service lines and direct to self-service options there is acknowledgement that the older population:</p> <p>1) may have limited access to computer but this does not make this group digitally excluded but required signpost to access online services</p>	<p>1) work with partner agencies, both private, public and third sector organisations to identify locations/support available</p> <p>2) The Council will be providing a specifically</p>	<p>Both the mitigation activities will form part of the Action Plan and will have been carried out or in in place prior to changes being implemented.</p> <p>Responsible:</p> <p>Business Support Service/Customer Hub Service team</p> <p>Anna Constantinou/Pete Spreadborough/Tracey Clarkson/Lydia Cook</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 64.2 per cent of people are aged 15 to 64. 18.4 per cent of people are aged 65 and over. <p>(Data sourced from the 2021 Census)</p>	2) may be digitally excluded through lack of ability/capacity to do so	Digitally Assisted telephone option to support customers who have lack of ability/capacity to request services or report	
Disability	10 per cent of our population have their day-to-day activities limited a lot by a long-term health problem or disability (2011 Census).	Closing non priority service lines and directing customers to self-serve offers may impact some customers who are digitally excluded	<p>1) work with partner agencies, both private, public and third sector organisations to identify locations/support available</p> <p>2) The Council will be providing a specifically Digitally Assisted telephone option to support customers who have lack of ability/capacity to request services or report</p>	<p>Both the mitigation activities will form part of the Action Plan and will have been carried out or in place prior to changes being implemented.</p> <p>Responsible:</p> <p>Business Support Service/Customer Hub Service team</p> <p>Anna Constantinou/Pete Spreadborough/Tracey Clarkson/Lydia Cook</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>There are no official estimates for gender reassignment at either national or local level (awaiting 2021 Census data).</p> <p>However, in a study funded by the Home Office, the Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIREs) estimate that between 300,000 and 500,000 people aged 16 or over in the UK are experiencing some degree of gender variance.</p>	No adverse impacts are anticipated.	Not applicable	Not applicable

<p>Marriage and civil partnership</p>	<p>There were 234,795 marriages in England and Wales in 2018.</p> <p>In 2020, there were 7,566 opposite-sex civil partnerships formed in England and Wales, of which 7,208 were registered in England and 358 were registered in Wales.</p> <p>There were 785 civil partnerships formed between same-sex couples in England and Wales in 2020, of which 745 were registered in England and 40 were registered in Wales.</p>	<p>No adverse impacts are anticipated.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Pregnancy and maternity</p>	<p>There were 640,370 live births in England and Wales in 2019, a decrease of 2.5 per cent since 2018. The mid-year 2019 population estimates show that there were 2,590 births in Plymouth.</p> <p>The total fertility rate (TFR) for England and Wales decreased from 1.70 children per woman in 2018 to 1.65 children per woman in 2019.</p>	<p>No adverse impacts are anticipated.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Race</p>	<p>92.9 per cent of Plymouth’s population identify themselves as White British. 7.1 per cent identify themselves as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic.</p> <p>Census data suggests at least 43 main languages are spoken in the city, showing Polish, Chinese and Kurdish as the top three (2011 Census).</p>	<p>No adverse impacts are anticipated.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Religion or belief</p>	<p>Christianity is the biggest faith in the city with more than 58 per cent of the population (148,917). 32.9 per cent (84,326) of the</p>	<p>No adverse impacts are anticipated.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>

	Plymouth population stated they had no religion (2011 Census). Those who identified as Muslim were just under 1 per cent while Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish or Sikh combined totalled less than 1 per cent (2011 Census).			
Sex	51 per cent of our population are women and 49 per cent are men (2021 Census).	No adverse impacts are anticipated.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Sexual orientation	There is no precise local data on sexual orientation in Plymouth (awaiting 2021 Census data).	No adverse impacts are anticipated.	Not applicable	Not applicable

SECTION FOUR: HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

Human Rights	Implications	Mitigation Actions	Timescale and responsible department
	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

SECTION FIVE: OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

Equality objectives	Implications	Mitigation Actions	Timescale and responsible department
Celebrate diversity and ensure that Plymouth is a welcoming city.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Pay equality for women, and staff with disabilities in our workforce.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Supporting our workforce through the implementation of Our People Strategy 2020 – 2024	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

Supporting victims of hate crime so they feel confident to report incidents, and working with, and through our partner organisations to achieve positive outcomes.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Plymouth is a city where people from different backgrounds get along well.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable