



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 03 November 2023

CABINET

Monday 13 November 2023
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 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

Agenda

Part I (Public Meeting)

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence submitted by Cabinet Members.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cabinet Members will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect of items on this agenda.

3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 12)

To sign and confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2023.

4. Questions from the Public

To receive questions from the public in accordance with the Constitution.

Questions, of no longer than 50 words, can be submitted to the Democratic Support Unit, Plymouth City Council, Ballard House, Plymouth, PL1 3BJ, or email to democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk. Any questions must be received at least five clear working days before the date of the meeting.

5. Chair's Urgent Business

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

6. Leader's Announcements

7. Cabinet Member Updates

8. LGA Update

9. Finance and Capital Monitoring Report Month 6 (Pages 13 - 24)

10. Draft Budget 2024 - 25 (Pages 25 - 44)

11. Renewal of Armed Forces Covenant (Pages 45 - 58)

12. Violence Against Women and Girls Update

This page is intentionally left blank

Cabinet

Monday 16 October 2023

PRESENT:

Councillor Evans OBE, in the Chair.

Councillor Laing, Vice Chair.

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

Apologies for absence: Councillor Penberthy.

Also in attendance: Chris Avent (Green Estate Manager) (Virtual), Paul Barnard (Service Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure), Emma Crowther (Interim Head of Commissioning), Kat Deeney (Head of Environmental Planning), David Haley (Director of Children's Services) (Virtual), Ross Jago (Head of Governance, Performance and Risk, Laura Lawrence (Commissioning Assistant), Tracey Lee (Chief Executive) David Northey (Interim Section 151 Officer), Jamie Sheldon (Senior Governance Advisor), James Stannard (Care Home Business Improvement Partner) and Gary Walbridge (Interim Director for People).

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 3.35 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.

47. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

48. **Minutes**

The Cabinet agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2023 as a correct record.

49. **Questions from the Public**

There were three questions from members of the public:

The following question was received from Mr Stephen Dart and answered by The Leader:

Question: On 11 Sep 23 PCC confirmed that of the £2.75 million capital funding agreed by the Cabinet for the Brickfields redevelopment “only around 20% of the funding approved will be paid as grant funding to Plymouth Argyle ...” Please confirm what the

Answer: Thanks to Mr Dart for his follow-up question. The redevelopment of the Brickfields site really is a once in a generation opportunity to secure significant investment in sport, health and wellbeing services that will benefit not just the people of Devonport but residents all

<p>remaining 80% is being spent on?</p>	<p>across the city and indeed visitors from outside Plymouth as well.</p> <p>Mr Dart's question asks about the funding which the Council is providing. Before I explain how we're spending our funding it's worth highlighting that the Council's commitment to provide £2.75m has helped to secure over £18m of funding from our partners at Plymouth Argyle Football Club and Plymouth Argyle Community Trust. Together with Plymouth Albion and Devonport Community Leisure Ltd (who will be the voice of the local community) we will be creating a new home for elite and grassroots sport, and new health and wellbeing facilities that will be the envy of other towns and cities in the southwest.</p> <p>Apart from the funding which we are providing to Plymouth Argyle to support the work they will be doing at Brickfields, the Council funding will also be used for the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We'll be providing a brand new hockey pitch at Stoke Damerel Community College to replace the current pitch which is worn out and has been out of use for some time. • We'll also be providing the petanque club with a new home at Stonehouse Creek. This will give them a new playing facility with dedicated parking and access to changing facilities and toilets. • We'll also be carrying out improvements to the existing stand at the athletics track. • And we've made provision for ongoing maintenance of the athletics track. • We're also supporting Devonport Community Leisure Trust in their new role as chair of the Brickfields governing board and with their ongoing work with the local community.
<p>The following question was received from Mr Black:</p>	

Question: How does the Leader intend to improve connectivity to Plymouth, does this include the additional railway line through North Devon / Tavistock and extending the M5 to Plymouth?

Answer: The Council remains committed to improving connectivity to Plymouth as set out in Policy SPT8 of the South West Devon Joint Local Plan which includes supporting the ongoing investment that enhances the resilience of the rail network to extreme weather events and delivers improvements to capacity, frequency and journey times.

After nearly 10 years since storms washed away a section of track at Dawlish, there is still no firm commitment from Government to complete all 5 phases of work needed to make the coastal route resilient. Even the announcement by the Prime Minister that the promised investment that the south west would get from cancelling HS2, were only illustrative and not meant as pledges. Plymouth deserves firm concrete proposals not just illustrations with a commitment to funding of all five phases of the work and the Council will continue to campaign for this until this is achieved.

Similarly, the Council support any measures that would lead to the re-opening of the Northern Route between Plymouth and Exeter via Tavistock and Okehampton. The Council is therefore currently working in partnership with stakeholders to achieve the next stage of that ambition by securing the reopening of the rail line to allow journeys once again between Plymouth and Tavistock.

There are no proposals to extend the M5 west of Exeter, but The Council will continue to make the case, through its membership of the Peninsula Transport Sub-National Transport Body, for investment in the Strategic Road Network, ensuring that the A38 is modernised to improve safety and journey time reliability to meet the needs of users.

David Cameron said when the line went down (at Dawlish) that the Government would do whatever it took to make it

	resilient, which they had not done and we were still some way from resilience of the Penzance to Paddington.	
The following question was received from George Wheeler:		
Question: Would you provide the following information about all the public toilets owned and operated by the city council in Plymouth, the location, the capacity, and the charge to use the facility, please?	Answer: Please see a list below of each facility. The older toilets consist of blocks with cubicles in the female block and cubicles and urinals in the male blocks. We have estimated the capacity of the multi-use urinals for the purpose of this report.	
Public Toilets managed by Plymouth City Council		
Site	Facilities	Chargeable
Alexandra Road Public Conveniences	One gender neutral accessible toilet	50p
Hoe Promenade Public Conveniences	Eight gender neutral toilets, one accessible toilet and a changing places facility.	50p
Devils Point Public Conveniences	Two gender neutral and one accessible toilet with baby changing and one shower	50p
Elphinstone, Phoenix Wharf Public Conveniences	One accessible toilet with baby changing facilities and four gender neutral toilets with baby changing facilities.	50p
Mount Batten Public Conveniences	One accessible toilet, one male block with max capacity of 7, one female block with 5 cubicles and separate baby changing facility.	No
Quay Point, Barbican Public Conveniences	One accessible toilet with baby changing facilities and six gender neutral toilets with baby changing facilities	50p
Southway Drive Public Conveniences	One Accessible toilet, and two gender neutral toilets	No
West Hoe Public Conveniences	8 gender neutral toilets all with baby changing facilities. Two accessible toilets	50p
Armada Way Public Conveniences	Underground facility with Male and Female provision. Both have maximum capacity of 12 people.	50p
Armada Way, Accessible Toilet	Three accessible toilets (two include baby changing facilities)	50p
Central Park café Public Conveniences	Three gender neutral toilets located next to café	No

50. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

51. **Leader's Announcements**

The Leader made the following announcements:

- a) The £22 million round two bid for the National Marine Park had been submitted to the Heritage Fund and a date had been scheduled for mid-November for trustees of the National Lottery to visit the projects, with the proposal due to go before the National Lottery Board in December;
- b) Cruise Ships and visiting ships in the sound had increased, Destination Plymouth were promoting Plymouth as a destination for shipping, and the council were supporting Cattewater Harbour Commissioners in looking into feasibility to undertake further expansion as part of the shared prosperity funding along within the first ever port strategy;
- c) With regards to Celtic Array, there was an opportunity for Plymouth in relation to servicing of Floating Offshore Wind (FLOW) platforms planned for the Celtic Sea and since September Plymouth had hosted a number of potential visitors looking to use Plymouth's facilities; the first ever FLOW conference would be opening at The Box later in October to showcase the opportunities to businesses and also working with the Freeport and ABP nationally;
- d) The council had been supporting the fishing industry whilst EA and SHH undertook works on the Lock Gates and access to the harbour was restricted and the EA and SHH had been asked that compensation arrangements were clearly communicated to the industry as a matter of urgency;
- e) Business cases had been approved for industrial developments in the Freeport at Langage, a new hotel development on Embankment Road and the first EV charging station at Outland Road, with the Economic Development team working on £1 billion worth of development projects;
- f) He had visited the Barden Company in early October, a key company in Plymouth.

52. **Cabinet Member Updates**

Councillor Sue Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Sport, Leisure and HR & OD) provided the following updates:

- a) Social media posts had been shared on mental health support, community food access map (helping people to find their local food bank), debt advice (directing residents to face to face services and also online support), healthy starts, and promoting social broadband and phone tariffs for people on benefits;
- b) Newer leaflets which were more family focused which had been distributed via community midwives, libraries and DWP;
- c) There had also been promotion of things to do with welcoming warm spaces throughout the winter, advising what residents could do to reduce their energy costs and free activities during half term;
- d) Household Support Fund Awareness Week, given £4.5m to use across the city to help people and more than £1.7m of this had been used to provide food vouchers for

families who had children who were eligible for free school meals;

- e) Working with Citizen's Advice to distribute £750k of food and fuel vouchers and essential household goods to vulnerable people in need;
- f) There was a sport and Leisure conference at the life centre which hosted Active Devon and showed Sport England and Active Thrive how we have linked sport with active aging, promoting a thriving lifestyle;
- g) Rhys Jones from Plymouth Active Leisure went to London to Swim England conference and promoted how much Plymouth used swimming to improve mental health.
- h) She had written to Government to ask for a social tariff for energy to help struggling households;
- i) Shared information with Councillors and staff about cyber security;
- j) Planning permission had been granted for a Community Hub for Brickfields;
- k) Sports Development Unit co-ordinated 84 holiday clubs providing 23,950 free spaces for benefit related free school meals children aged between 5-16 years.

Councillor Tom Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change) provided the following update:

- l) Rolled out new Climate Impact Assessment tool to ensure that all key decisions consider their climate related impacts including biodiversity, Green House Gas emissions, renewable energy, ocean and waterway health, air quality, materials and waste, climate change adaptations and education, engagement and enabling conditions;
- m) Gordon Miller Award won for Plymouth Natural Grid Partnership project;
- n) 5 people involved in kick-starter programmes went to work in a green space management sector, one for PCC and two working for The National Trust.

Councillor Mary Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) provided the following update:

- o) A resuscitation unit had been agreed to be put in the Guildhall;
- p) She visited the Clinical Diagnostic Centre and had positive feedback around not having to wait for Derriford, [a video was played at this point to demonstrate this.](#)

Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) provided the following updates:

- q) Planning application had been completed and had been scheduled for submission before Christmas for the work to start in Spring for £25m development in Colin

Campbell Court;

- r) Old Town Street and New George Street development outside House of Fraser had been scheduled to be completed before Christmas and the contract for the next phase has been issued;
- s) Stonework restored in the bow-tie pattern in the Civic Square, the paving around the pond had been re-laid, new turf had been put down and new soil with nutrition in had been laid for the trees, the pond had been agreed to be refilled this week;
- t) Urban Splash have signed a service agreement to undertake structural work on the Civic Centre; it had been agreed that the cladding and roof replacement would start at the end of this year and would be forecast to be completed in Autumn 2024;
- u) Agreed undertaking works inside the building including 144 new apartments and 50,000 square feet of commercial space.

Councillor Mark Coker (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport) provided the following updates:

- v) Had been awarded £1.6m from Department for Transport's Bus Service Improvement Plan for a two year period;
- w) Seasonal bus to Bovisand return confirmed.

Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture, Events and Communications) gave the following updates:

- x) Confirmation of Bonfire night on Plymouth Hoe 5 November 2023 with sponsorship from Plymouth Waterfront Partnership;
- y) Autumn show opened in The Box including the Dutch Flower Exhibition and the End of Empire Exhibition;
- z) Attended the switch on of Love is the Highest Economy of Life installation at the Civic Centre;
- aa) Rosemarie Corlett had been announced as the new Plymouth Laureate 2023-25.

53. **Corporate Plan Performance Quarter One - Transitional Report**

In Councillor Chris Penberthy's absence, Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- a) The following priorities had been added to the corporate plan: working with police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour; fewer potholes, cleaner, greener streets and transport; building more homes; green investment and working with the NHS to provide better access to health, care and dentistry;

- b) The Corporate Plan for quarter one (April, May, June 2023) had covered two administrations;
- c) The Corporate Plan had been changed to include 51 indicators to measure the Council's performance and included an additional 10 indicators that were a consequence of the previous administration;
- d) Number of early antisocial behaviour interventions have increased by more than 50% from the previous quarter and there has also been a marginal decrease in the number of children with repeat child protections plans;
- e) Homelessness had risen significantly and the ability to deal with this had been shown in the performance report, this would be a key priority to provide people with a home.

Ross Jago (Head of Governance, Performance and Risk) added:

- a) New indicators had been added around safeguarding priorities, focused on vulnerable adults and young people but had been expanded to include health and safety of the public.

Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) then added:

- a) The dental task force had been set up, as 22,000 people were on the waiting list for dentistry and members of parliament would attend the meetings;

The Cabinet agreed to note the Corporate Plan Performance Quarter One – Transitional Report.

54. **SEND Report and SEND Action Plan**

Councillor Sally Cresswell (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Apprenticeships) introduced the item and highlighted:

- a) Plymouth had a local area SEND inspection lead by OFSTED and CQC in late June 2023, the outcome of the inspection was that there was serious weakness identified, with 5 priority areas that needed to be addressed through a local area action plan, the inspection endorsed the council's long term plans and directions of travel for the local area partnership and multi-agency work and areas of positive work were recognised in the report;
- b) Concerns were raised about the provisional outcome for children with SEND including those who need multi-agency report and those most vulnerable;
- c) A meeting between Plymouth City Council and NHS Senior Officers was held on 11 September 2023 and the progress made was noted, including putting forward that an externally chaired board was required;
- d) A draft notice had been received from Secretary of State;

- e) A stakeholder event, including colleagues from schools, children's services, the Education Psychology Service and the health services had been held on 20 September 2023;
- f) A crucial aspect in the plan was the involvement of school and college leaders including head teachers and CEOs to be involved with key governance and working groups;
- g) There had been some positive feedback on the plan from the DFE but the department were awaiting feedback from OFSTED before finalising the plan, and then an executive decision would have to be made;
- h) The plan consisted of the following: Quickly identifying young people who are vulnerable and risk negative outcomes; reducing likelihood of pupils with educational healthcare plans (EHCP) being excluded from school; addressing long waiting times for children and young people who need support from health services; ensuring that children and young people with SEND who also have social care needs receive the care and support that they need; improving the consistency of support offered to children and young people in schools and settings; providing all practitioners across social care, health, schools and settings with the training they need to provide consistent education, care and support;
- i) The priority was that children and young people in Plymouth would be supported to grow up well, to achieve and to thrive;
- j) She was committed to making improvements and rebuilding trust in services as swiftly as possible.

David Haley (Director of Children's Services) added:

- k) Awaiting OFSTED's approval for the report and after that would move forward to make the executive decision for approval and publish the action plan within the time scale that is set out.

The Cabinet agreed to:

1. Note the verbal report;
2. Receive an update at the next Cabinet meeting.

55. **Re-commissioning of Adult Care Homes**

Councillor Mary Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) introduced the following item and highlighted the following points:

- a) Existing contracts for the 89 care homes for adults in Plymouth were due to expire on 31 December 2023;
- b) Before contracts were put in place, it was important to make sure there was the right type of provision locally that would meet the future needs of citizens, taking into account the fair cost of care and the need for homes that could support adults

with dementia;

- c) The proposal was to extend the existing contracts for 12 months, which would allow commissioners to continue working closely with providers and those who live in care homes to engage, listen and use this information to build out plans for the future;
- d) The teams would work closely with health partners, including NHS Devon ICB, University Hospitals Plymouth and Livewell Southwest to make sure they were all working as a system around some of the most vulnerable citizens in Plymouth.

Emma Crowther (Interim Head of Commissioning) added:

- e) It was recognised that care home providers hadn't had to take part in any kind of procurement process before and the team would need to make sure they worked with them to guide them through the process;
- f) Significant changes needed to be made to the types and numbers of care homes beds that were commissioned for the local authority and health clients;

In response to questions, it was further explained:

- g) There were issues around sustainability of skills and it was important that staff felt confident to care for the elderly residents and young residents in all circumstances;
- h) Work force development, capacity building and working with skills providers would all be key elements of the plan.
- i) Councillor Mary Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) then added:
- j) It would ensure the council got the best from the market for everyone in care in Plymouth.

The Cabinet agreed to:

- I. Approve the business case to extend the current care home contract over a period of 1 year from the beginning of January 2024.

56. **Habitat Banking Vehicle Business Case**

Councillor Tom Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change) introduced the item and highlighted:

- a) State of Nature was the most comprehensive report on UK biodiversity published by leading conservation charities and it had painted a stark picture and had found that in the UK 151 documented animal species had already become extinct and nearly 1 in 6 of remaining species were threatened with extinction;
- b) Nature recovery needed to be at the centre of what council did and this would be assisted by the Climate Impact Assessment Tool which would assess and mitigate the

impact of decisions;

- c) The 2021 Environment Act (2021) required developers from January 2024, to show a biodiversity net gain of at least 10%, with a 30-year maintenance period;
- d) The Habitat Banking Vehicle concept was a way of ensuring that when on-site improvements weren't sufficient, the council could assist developers in funnelling investment into the enhancement of nature in Plymouth's green spaces;
- e) Ocean City Nature, the collect of companies that would run the vehicle, had already been set up and the business case asked for approval for £500,000 investment as a loan in the ambitious pilot;
- f) The pilot would enhance nature on three council green-sites in a measurable way with DEFRA metrics;
- g) The improvements would be theoretically split into 'biodiversity units' which would be tradable tokens that could be sold to developers who would need to show they had developed a certain level of biodiversity net gain;
- h) It is hoped that this UK-leading pilot would show the viability of the habitat banking vehicle model as an effective means of channelling millions of pounds of funding into local green spaces;
- i) The habitat banking vehicle had the potential to be the best opportunity for the council to give nature recovery in Plymouth the support it needed.

Kat Deeney (Head of Environmental Planning) added:

- j) The Habitat Banking Vehicle was a local solution for delivery against biodiversity net gain policy, maximising benefits for local nature and local people;
- k) Wanted to ensure, like with Section 106 monies, that the impacts of development were mitigated locally;
- l) Further explained the process of funding and biodiversity units as a circular system;
- m) The three pilot sites would be Cann Woods, Ham Woods and Chelson Meadow, all in different areas of the city and incorporating different habitat types;
- n) By having the habitat banking vehicle in place, there would be no delays in developments due to the new requirements;
- o) The financial modelling had taken inflation into account;
- p) Doing nothing would result in a loss in money for nature in the city because Section 106 would no longer exist, and the plans would benefit nature and keep people close to nature as well.

In response to questions, it was further explained;

- q) Benefits would vary from site to site and so types of planting would vary, but would encourage more animal life to thrive in the city;
- r) Increases in biodiversity would be measured against DEFRA's metrics;
- s) Despite recent changes in attitude towards net zero from national Government, the plans were still due to go ahead, it had been previously delayed, but this was in relation to not being ready for implementation;
- t) The team would be looking for involvement and engagement from local communities as the aim was to improve these areas for their benefit and welcomed the suggestion of involvement with schools;
- u) It built on important work already being undertaken in the city, and it was innovative, with other local authorities looking to Plymouth on this.

Chris Avent (Green Estate Manager) added:

- v) It was a new and innovative way of gaining funds to support wider work across the city.

The Cabinet agreed to:

1. Approve the business case and approve £0.5m loan to Ocean City Biodiversity for the delivery of the Habitat enhancement activities across the 3 pilot sites and operation of the company;
2. Confirmed that the appointed PCC Member Rep, David Northey, as Interim Strategic Director for Finance, would be responsible for implementing the loan agreement at a suitable point in time, and for reviewing and monitoring the repayments from OCB to PCC.

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) asked for information on both this project, and dentistry action group, to submit as entries to the LGA Labour Groups list of 100 Innovations of Labour Councils.

Cabinet



Date of meeting:	13 November 2023
Title of Report:	Finance Monitoring Report September 2023
Lead Member:	Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance)
Lead Strategic Director:	David Northey, (Interim Service Director for Finance)
Author:	Helen Slater, Lead Accountancy Manager Wendy Eldridge, Lead Accountancy Manager (Capital and Treasury Management)
Contact Email:	David.Northey@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

This report sets out the revenue and capital monitoring position of the Council forecast to the end of the financial year 2023/24 at Period 6.

Recommendations and Reasons

That Cabinet notes:

1. The forecast revenue monitoring position at Period 6 as set out in this report in the sum of £4.766m.
Reason: controlling the outturn within budget is essential to maintain financial control.
2. The Capital Budget 2023-2028 is revised to £629.924m as shown in Table I and agree to recommend these amendments to Full Council for approval.
Reason: controlling the outturn within budget is essential to maintain financial control with full transparency on the Capital Investments.

Alternative options considered and rejected.

There are no alternative options – our Financial Regulations require us to produce regular monitoring of our finance resources.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The 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 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.

Financial Risks:

Financial risks concerning period 6 reporting are discussed in the body of the report and relate to the attainment of a balanced budget 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

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

Background papers:

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 02.11.23 1719	Leg	LS LS/000 01312/ 2/AC/2 /11/23	Mon Off	tba	HR		Assets		Strat roc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Northey (Interim Service Director for Finance)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Date agreed: 20/10/2023											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) Date approved: 30/10/2023											

SECTION A: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**Table 1: End of year revenue forecast**

	Budget	Forecast	Variance
	£m	£m	£m
Total General Fund Budget	218.440	223.206	4.766

1. This report highlights the monitoring position at Month 6 (September 2023) of £4.766m over budget. This is an improvement of £1.195m since Month 5. A breakdown of this is set out in Table 2.
2. Considerable work will be required to reduce spend and increase income, including the use of one-off reserves.
3. The planned in-year savings targets amount to £23.435m. A review of the delivery of these savings has taken place and an update of this is included below. Officers will continue to pursue these savings to ensure delivery by the end of the financial year.

SECTION B: Directorate Review**Table 2: End of year revenue forecast by Directorate**

Directorate	Budget	Forecast	Forecast	Status
	£m	£m	Net	
			Variance	
			£m	
Executive Office	6.089	6.473	0.384	over
Customer and Corporate Services	49.978	49.887	(0.091)	under
Children's Directorate	62.320	68.458	6.138	over
People Directorate	95.611	99.332	3.721	over
Public Health	2.628	2.428	(0.200)	under
Place Directorate	27.654	27.654	0.000	nil variance
Corporate Account & Council wide items	(25.840)	(31.026)	(5.186)	under
Total	218.440	223.206	4.766	over

Executive Office

Executive Office	Variance £m
Pressures	
3 x By Elections	0.080
Additional special responsibility payments	0.028
Resource pressures within Legal Department Children's Team	0.067
Shortfall on Efficiency/Vacancy Targets	0.081
Shortfall on 2023/24 Savings	0.128
	0.384

Executive Office pressure is due to 3 by-elections which were not budgeted and the decision for planned subscriptions savings being reversed. The reported pressure at M6 has increased by £0.276m, which includes pressures relating to resourcing and shortfalls on delivery plans to reorganise responsibilities within Policy and Performance and Marketing and Design teams. Work is underway to find management savings to offset this pressure.

Customer and Corporate Services Directorate (CCS)

Customer and Corporate Services	Variance £m
Pressures	
Legacy savings from 2022/23 ICT £1.1m / Contact Centre £0.8m	1.882
Shortfall on 2023/24 Savings	1.124
Offset by savings:	
Revenue moved to Capital	(0.500)
One off Council Tax Surplus	(1.473)
One off in year management savings	(1.124)
	(0.091)

The Directorate is forecasting an overall pressure of £3.006m; This is due to legacy savings, budgets brought forward from 2022/23 relating to ICT, Business Support and in-year Directorate savings. The Directorate has identified £3.097m of savings to offset and will continue to seek ways to further offset the overall Council pressure.

Children's Directorate

Children's	Variance £m
Pressures	
Home to School Transport	1.453
High cost children's placements and pending SGO judicial review	3.060
Shortfall on 2023/24 Savings	1.625
	6.138

Within Children's Social Care, September has seen an increase of £0.249m to £4.685m due to one new residential and two new supported living placements offset by savings on delivery plans. Children's Social Care is reporting a £1.625m pressure from a shortfall on delivery plans.

The service is working with an Improvement Partner on outcomes for children plus a Children's Service Transition Board, chaired by the Chief Executive which meets regularly to review the finances of the department.

The Home to School Transport pressure has increased by £0.601m due to the late allocation of Independent Special School Places due to a lack of capacity within the SEND service. There is a significant amount of work ongoing with the service to review all routes to identify any potential savings.

People Directorate

People	Variance £m
Pressures	
Strategic Commissioning Care Packages	1.298
Community Connections – additional demand / cost pressures	2.248
Community Connections – Shortfall on 2023/24 Savings	0.175
	3.721

People Directorate is forecasting a net overspend at month 6 of £3.721m which is no change in movement on month 5. ASC care packages show a pressure of £3.499m, this is offset by an increased forecast for client income of an extra (£0.301m) plus grant funding offset (£1.900m) which brings a net pressure of £1.298m.

Community Connections are reporting no change to the pressure of £2.423m relating to BAU pressures within emergency accommodation for homelessness. This includes a £0.175m shortfall on Delivery Plans. This is a national issue, with rising demand and falling supply. For Plymouth, a full review is underway to fully understand the drivers of the financial pressures and to look at short, medium and long-term remediations.

Office of the Director of Public Health (ODPH)

ODPH	Variance £m
Forecast savings – additional income from non-PH departments	(0.200)
	(0.200)

Savings are forecast at £0.200m for the year end. The net budget now includes Registration Service (previously CCS) and Leisure Management (previously People).

Place Directorate

Place	Variance £m
Pressures	
Shortfall in Savings Delivery Plans including through route optimisation, shortfalls in expected adjudication sums and lack of clarity on funding support linked to the Environment Act	0.979
BAU pressures including annual legacy savings and increased costs in areas such as grass cutting	0.514
Offset by Savings Management actions are in place and being pursued which will monitor all spend profiles, to seek additional and new income, to minimise spend and to re-negotiate commercial contracts to seek higher income	(1.493)
	0.000

The September 2023 Place DMT monitoring projection, is a net nil variation to revenue budget.

In summary, £0.979m of savings delivery plans are considered at risk, alongside £0.514m of other BAU pressures.

Corporate Items & Council wide

Corporate Items	Variance £m
Savings	
Social Care contingency	(1.000)
Contingency Services held corporately	(0.300)
Budget savings identified corporately	(0.986)
Treasury Management	(0.500)
In year Business Rates Pool gain	(1.500)
Business Rates S31 grants	(0.900)
	(5.186)

A saving of £5.186m is being reported for this Month 6 report. The savings are itemised above and include additional Business Rates Pool gain £1.500m; additional treasury management savings of £0.500m; and the release of the £1.3m service contingencies.

Any uncertainties such as pay award are being monitored closely and potential mitigations are being identified to manage them within budget. In month 6 savings have been identified and reported.

Savings Budgets

The budget includes £23.435m of savings to be delivered in 2023/24. The table below sets out the position at month 6.

Table 3 Savings Status

Savings Proposals 2023/24	Budget 2023/24 £m	Achievable 23/24	Not Achievable 23/24	Mitigations against unachievable plans
Customer & Corporate Services	(3.898)	(2.774)	(1.124)	(1.124)
Chief Executives Office	(0.601)	(0.473)	(0.128)	0.000
Childrens	(4.575)	(2.950)	(1.625)	0.000
People	(5.780)	(5.605)	(0.175)	0.000
ODPH	(0.542)	(0.542)	0.000	0.000
Place	(7.289)	(6.310)	(0.979)	(0.979)
Corporate Items	(0.750)	(0.750)	0.000	0.000
Total Savings 23/24	(23.435)	(19.404)	(4.031)	(2.103)

- Customer & Corporate Services is reporting a shortfall on delivery plans of £1.124m, relating to Customer Services, HROD, accommodation and IT delivery plans. These pressures have been mitigated by additional savings within the Directorate.
- The Chief Executive's Office is reporting £0.128m of unachievable delivery plans, as part of an overall pressure of £0.384m. This relates to licenses and performance and communications delivery plans.
- The Childrens Directorate is reporting £1.625m of unachievable delivery plans which is contributing to the overall pressure for the Directorate of £6.138m. The £1.625m plan which has not been achieved related to reduction in new admissions to the care system.
- Community Connections is reporting £0.175m of unachievable delivery plans which is included in the £2.423m pressure, relating to homelessness.
- The Place Directorate has a £0.979m shortfall on delivery plans, but these are offset by savings within the service. Both the delivery plans and savings are detailed in the table above showing the Month 6 position.

Capital Finance Report Q2 2023/24

The approved Capital Budget (representing forecast resources) includes the Capital Programme made up of approved projects and future funding assumptions.

These assumptions include the estimates of capital funding requests the Council is likely to receive in the future or has received and is awaiting business case approval to add to the capital programme.

The forecast for the Five-Year Capital Budget 2023-2028 is £373.765m as at 30 September 2023, compared to the forecast of £338.052m as at 30 June 2023. This shows an increase to the Capital Programme of £35.713m. The future funding assumptions add a further £256.159m to the budget and the revised Capital Budget for approval for 2023 to 2028 is £629.924m. Annex I provides a further breakdown of new projects added to capital programme.

Capital Programme movement.

Table I The Capital Budget consists of the following elements:

Description	£m
Capital Programme as at 30 June 2023 for 5 year period 2023 - 2028	338.052
New Approvals – July to September see Annex I for breakdown	36.922
Variations – July to September 2023	-1.172
<i>Re-Profiling into future years outside 5 year programme</i>	-0.037
Capital Programme as at 30 September 2023	373.765
Future Funding Assumptions	256.159
Total Revised Capital Budget for Approval (2023/24 -2027/28)	629.924

A breakdown of the current approved capital budget by directorate and by funding is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 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	3.547	0.225	0.130	-	-	3.903
People	11.192	12.933	0.105	0.750	-	24.980
Place - Economic Development	29.921	60.524	24.532	14.734	10.407	140.118
Place - Strategic Planning & Infrastructure	63.677	62.805	2.126	0.066	0.608	129.282
Place - Street Services	29.273	17.666	1.712	0.103	0.042	48.795
Customer & Corporate Services	5.911	4.928	1.256	-	-	12.095
Office for Director of Public Health	10.822	3.772	-	-	-	14.594
Total	154.342	162.851	29.862	15.653	11.057	373.765
Finance by:	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Capital Receipts	5.470	2.428	0.811	0.776	0.571	10.057
Grant Funding	67.899	52.759	1.436	0.023	0.023	122.140
Corporate Funded borrowing	44.080	45.707	6.134	0.276	0.073	96.269
Service dept. supported borrowing	31.758	54.634	21.199	14.487	10.373	132.451
Developer contributions	4.023	7.190	0.196	0.046	0.018	11.474
Other Contributions	1.112	0.133	0.086	0.043	-	1.375
Total	154.342	162.851	29.862	15.653	11.057	373.765

Based on the £154.342m latest forecast, actual spend as at 30 September 2023 was £30.579m which equates to 19.81% of the forecast Capital Programme for 2023-24.

As at 30 June 2023 the forecast Capital Programme for 2023/24 was £189.657m. In September this has reduced to £154.342m and this includes £32.653m in month slippage agreed with project officers.

Analysing the outturn figures for 2018 – 2022 has identified that the average spend as at 30 September represents 33% of the final outturn position. Therefore, using the actual spend figure above would indicate a 2023/24 outturn forecast closer to £109m. The August assumption of £100m was based on average spend of 26.5% of the total budget, this method of trend analysis is easier to predict in year as we get closer to outturn (generally from October to Q3).

Finance officers continue to work with Project Officers reviewing forecasts to ensure any necessary reprofiling is reported.

Of the 5-year programme, £96.269m is forecast to be funded from corporate borrowing which equates to 26% of programme. The affordability of the capital programme and future funding assumptions is under review. Continuing high interest rates against the borrowing required to finance the current programme will create a revenue pressure in 2024/25 if action is not taken to limit borrowing now.

Annex I (I)

Governance	Funding Source	Forecast Year of Spend		
		23/24	24/25 - 27/28	5 Year Programme
		£m	£m	£m
Executive Decision	Grant / external funding	8.318	6.444	14.761
Executive Decision	Grant / CB	0.090	2.893	2.983
Executive Decision	Grant / SB	2.490	8.406	10.896
Executive Decision	Grant / S106	1.212	0.404	1.616
Executive Decision	SB	5.210	0.000	5.210
Executive Decision	CB	0.210	0.000	0.210
Executive Decision	Total	17.530	18.146	35.676
S151	CB	0.543	0.000	0.543
S151	SB	0.225	0.000	0.225
S151	Grant	0.147	0.073	0.220
S151	S106/ RCCO	0.096	0.013	0.110
S151	SB / RF Cont	0.148	0.000	0.148
S151	Total	1.160	0.086	1.246
Total Additions		18.690	18.231	36.922

Annex I (2)

Governance	Funding Source	New Approvals Q2	5 Year Programme Approvals
			£m
Executive Decision	RF Grant / RF S106	Civic Centre District Energy - Phase 2	0.600
Executive Decision	RF Grant	Social Housing Decarbonisation Wave 2.1	7.062
S151	RF Grant	St Levan Park Flood Defence	0.036
		Subtotal Strategic Planning & Infrastructure	7.698
Executive Decision	RF Grant / RF S106	Derriford Community Park - Phase 5	1.616
S151	RF Cont	Improving Outdoor Play Phase 3	0.007
S151	RF S106	Minor Traffic Schemes	0.035
S151	RF S106	Marine Academy Plymouth 3G Pitch	0.054
Executive Decision	SB	Car Parks - Capital Maintenance	0.400
S151	RF S106	Improvements of Allotments PL9	0.016
S151	RF Grant	Flytipping Intervention Scheme	0.050
		Subtotal Street Services	2.177
S151	SB / RF Cont	Mount Edgcumbe Orangery Toilets	0.120
Executive Decision	SB	Land at Embankment Road	4.810
Executive Decision	RF Grant	Plymouth and South Devon Freeport – Millbay Terminal Development	1.300
S151	RF Cont / RCCO	Mount Edgcumbe Play Park	0.021
Executive Decision	RF Grant / CB	National Marine Park - Tinside Pool	2.983
Executive Decision	RF Grant	Love Plymouth	0.060
Executive Decision	RF Grant / SB	Langage Tax Site - Freeport	8.646
		Subtotal Economic Development	17.940
Executive Decision	RF Grant	Disabled Facilities (incl Care & Repair works)	2.814
Executive Decision	CB	Young Devon Loan	0.210
Executive Decision	RF Grant	Efford Youth & Community Centre	0.509
Executive Decision	RF Grant	Honicknowle Youth & Community Centre	0.414
Executive Decision	RF Grant	Frederick Street Centre	0.934
S151	RF Grant	Family Hubs	0.134
Executive Decision	RF Grant / SB	Local Authority Housing Fund Phase 2	2.250
Executive Decision	RF Grant / External Contribution	Disabled Facilities (incl Care & Repair works)	0.646
		Subtotal People	7.910
Governance	Funding Source	New Approvals Q2	5 Year Programme Approvals
			£m

Executive Decision	RF Grant	Schools Emergency Condition Works	0.200
Executive Decision	RF Grant	Cann Bridge - Hydrotherapy Pool	0.047
Executive Decision	RF Grant	Laira Green - Foundation Classroom Floors	0.018
Executive Decision	RF Grant	Laira Green - Kitchen Floors	0.009
Executive Decision	RF Grant	Longcause - Lift	0.041
Executive Decision	RF Grant	Mary Deans - Roof	0.038
Executive Decision	RF Grant	Yealmpstone Farm - Boiler	0.054
Executive Decision	RF Grant	Yealmpstone Farm - Roof	0.016
S151	SB	Foster Home Adaptation - Child PER26650	0.083
		Subtotal Children's Services	0.506
S151	SB	Pebble Beach Work	0.142
S151	RCCO	Broadley Park Road	0.004
S151	CB	Mountbatten Sea Wall	0.172
S151	CB	Devil's Point Tidal Pool	0.150
S151	CB	Prince Rock Exhaust Extract	0.034
S151	CB	Mount Wise Pool Filters	0.126
S151	CB	Langdale Gardens Retaining Wall	0.011
S151	CB	Plymouth Life Centre Light Replacements	0.049
		Subtotal Customer & Corporate Services	0.690

Total Capital Approvals Q2	36.922
-----------------------------------	---------------

Glossary	
SB	Service Borrowing
CB	Corporate Borrowing
RF	Ring Fenced
URF	Un-ring fenced
Cont	Contribution
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
RCCO	Revenue Contribution Capital Outlay (internal borrowing)
Cap Rec	Capital Receipt
SI06	Section 106 monies / developer contributions

Cabinet



Date of meeting:	13 November 2023
Title of Report:	Budget 2024/25 – Draft Budget
Lead Member:	Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance)
Lead Strategic Director:	David Northey (Service Director for Finance and Section 151 Officer)
Author:	David Northey, Service Director for Finance and Section 151 Officer, and Lead Accountancy Managers Stephen Coker and Helen Slater
Contact Email:	David.northey@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	Fin/Bud/2024/25
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

Under the Council's Constitution, Cabinet is required to recommend the 2024/25 Budget to Council. This report sets out the latest information available to enable Cabinet to consider the first tranche of recommendations to Council in respect of the budget. This report will now be presented to the Budget Scrutiny Committee meeting 06 and 07 December 2023.

At the time of writing, we are ahead of the Government's Autumn Statement scheduled for 22 November, with the Provisional Local Government Settlement expected late December. Full details of both events will be included in subsequent reports.

The Draft Budget sets out the current position, building on the assumptions included in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). Key assumptions around business rates grants and inflation uplift to Revenue Support Grant will not be confirmed until December.

Recommendations and Reasons

That Cabinet:

1. Note this report, and that it is subject to change in line with any Government Autumn Statement, Provisional Settlement adjustments and changes required as proposals are developed.

Reason: To ensure Cabinet support for the Budget proposals prior to further development of the final Revenue and Capital Budget 2024/25.

Alternative options considered and rejected.

Not to bring forward proposals in respect of the 2024/25 Budget – rejected on the basis that the Council must agree a balanced budget, and seeking support for further developing the recommended proposals will allow this to happen.

To bring forward alternative proposals to those set out in this report: rejected on the basis that further options will be required in addition to those set out in this report to bridge the continuing forecast shortfall for 2024/25.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The development and approval of the annual budget and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 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:

The resource implications are set out in the body of the report.

Financial Risks

The Council is a complex service organisation with a gross revenue expenditure budget exceeding £500m, and faces significant financial risks given the continuing forecast shortfall, uncertainty about resourcing from central government, the wider economic environment and the Council's comparatively low levels of financial reserves. Each savings proposal carries its own risks, and mitigation for each will need to be explored. There is continuing demand pressures in both adult social care and children's social care. We are now facing increasing demand and cost pressures in both homelessness and bed and breakfast accommodation plus our statutory responsibility to provide home to school transport for our most vulnerable children.

The Council is under a legal obligation to set a balanced budget for each municipal year, and the Council's Section 151 Officer is required to produce a statement as part of the budget documentation giving his view as to the robustness of the proposed budget.

This budget is built on using available usable balances wherever possible to allow directorates to consolidate the savings plans already built into the base budget from previous years' plans. In some areas such as children's social care, the gross impact of rising demand and cost of placements is reflected with savings plans identified separately. This ensures the true additional costs are acknowledged and the senior management have clear targets set.

The Draft Budget 2024/25 assumes an increase in both the base Council Tax and the Adult Social Care precept in line with the policy set out in the Autumn Statement 2022 and the Local Government Settlement in December 2022. No decision has been made on any changes to the council tax charge for 2024/25; this is reserved for a decision of Full Council in February.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

No impacts directly arising from this report. As the recommendations of this report relate to the Council's revenue and capital budget in totality, the scope of the decision covers all its activities. There will be carbon footprint implications arising from the activities financed by the budget, negative or positive, but these can only be effectively assessed on a case-by-case basis. The Council's commitments to the net zero agenda, as for any other agenda, will always sit within the financial context it is working within, but by taking a three-year perspective, the Net Zero Action Plan enables the Council to take a medium-term view which will assist with financial planning.

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

The reducing revenue resources across the public sector has been identified as a key risk within our Strategic Risk register. As proposals are developed, officers will produce where relevant a risk register relating to the above areas specific to each proposal to inform decision making. The register will include

mitigations of identified risks where necessary, and this will be reported as part of the decision-making process. As proposals are further developed, officers will assess, and report equalities impacts and mitigations as part of the process.

Appendices

Ref.	Title of Appendix	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
1	Net additional cost pressures and adjustments							
2	Net additional Resources and adjustments							
3	1 st Draft Directorate Budgets 2024/25							

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

Sign off:

Fin	CH 27.1 0.23 1244	Leg	LS/00 0013 12/3/ AC/2/ 11/23	Mon Off		HR		Assets		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Northey (Service Director for Finance and Section 151 Officer)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes Date agreed: 02/11/2023											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet colleagues. Date approved 30/10/2023 meeting											

I Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides the latest position on the Council's budget for 2024/25.
- 1.2 The Council continues to manage a challenging financial environment where service demands continue to increase, the longer-term impact of COVID-19 continues and where uncertain and unpredictable funding and cost levels remain.
- 1.3 Together with all authorities the Council is facing another year of uncertainty and financial risk due to continuing additional national and international factors largely beyond its control, including higher energy costs, broader inflation related cost increases and demand pressures and costs in both adults' and children's social care. These areas are now joined by homelessness and home to school transport as major risk factors.
- 1.4 The Council's administration is ambitious in its vision and objectives for the city and is committed to ensuring that services to children, vulnerable adults and the provision of affordable housing and helping those affected by homelessness continue to be key priorities. It is keenly aware of the impact of the current cost of living crisis on the people of Plymouth. This budget does not have reductions to critical services and does not include the introduction of any new charges for services. It does ensure there is adequate funding to repair potholes and allocates additional funding to the grass cutting service, both ensuring a better living environment for the city.
- 1.5 This draft budget breaks the recent tradition of allocating growth to demand-led directorates and then setting large stretch savings targets to all directorates to compensate. There is growth included totalling £28.856m but this is offset by £15.954m of additional resources built into the budget plus a further £7.728m of corporate adjustments. Whilst there are savings allocated, being £1.316m in Children's plus £1.5m in the People Directorate (£1m in Homelessness and £0.5m in Adult Social Care) these have been carefully considered to reflect work currently in progress to mitigate the full-cost increased budget allocations included for these services.
- 1.6 The three key areas to concentrate on for 2024/25 are within the Children's Directorate (social care and SEND school transport) and the People Directorate (adult social care costs and homelessness provision). However, the 2023/24 budget incorporated an unprecedented in-year savings target of £23m. At the end of quarter two (September 2023) we are forecasting a shortfall against this target of £4.031m. Despite this shortfall, the full £23m needs to be delivered, either in the plans as set out or alternative savings.
- 1.7 The 2024/25 budget assumes new savings totalling a modest £2.8m but also assumes that the £23m reduction in the base budgets from 2023/24 are delivered as sustainable savings.
- 1.8 This draft budget consolidates our current areas of focus to close the current and forecasted future financial gaps, allowing Strategic Directors to introduce new ways of delivering their services.
- 1.9 This report will form part of the key budget papers to be made available to the Budget Scrutiny meeting when it considers the draft budget proposals. These will include:
 - The draft 2024/25 Budget by service.
 - A list of savings proposals.
 - Full cost analysis of the critical service areas; Adult Social care; Children's Social Care; Homelessness; and Home to School transport.

- The Treasury Management Strategy scheduled for the Audit and Governance Committee on 28 November 2023.
- The Capital Strategy also scheduled for the November 2023 Audit and Governance Committee.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council is scheduled to set a budget for the next financial year on 26 February 2024. At the meeting, the Council Tax charge for 2024/25 will need to be agreed.
- 2.2 Once again, this is a very challenging budget year as, like all local authorities, the Council is facing continuing growing pressures on resources as demand for services rises and costs increase whilst central government funding only sees marginal growth, partially offsetting the inflationary pressures being felt.
- 2.3 This report highlights that due to ever increasing demand for services and increasing costs, and after offset by additional local resources, the forecast budget shortfall is standing at £2.358m. Although this is a major improvement on the £11.215m budget gap highlighted in the latest MTFs it must be addressed to achieve a balanced budget position.
- 2.4 The Council delivers more than 300 services – as diverse as bin collections, protecting vulnerable children, providing libraries, making planning decisions, attracting investment and jobs in the city, providing leisure facilities, providing parking, maintaining roads and pavements, and looking after Plymouth's parks and green spaces.
- 2.5 Every part of the Council has been involved in the response to the budget situation and many employees and services may need to work in new ways. A significant amount of work continues to support the city's economy, which has been severely affected by the recent pandemic and cost of living crisis.
- 2.6 It should be noted that options are limited by the fact that the Council needs to deliver many services as a statutory requirement and has limited scope to influence how these services are delivered. Examples of this include supporting vulnerable children and adults in the city.
- 2.7 Despite these challenges, the City Council is determined to get the basics right, including fewer potholes, cleaner, greener streets, and greener transport; building more homes for both social rent and affordable ownership; green investment, jobs, skills, and better education; keeping children, adults, and communities safe. This budget builds on the MTFs to provide the financial framework to deliver these aims and our work to ease the cost-of-living crisis for the people of Plymouth.

3. Autumn Statement and Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement

- 3.1 At the time of writing this report the Government's Autumn Statement has not been announced, with the provisional local government finance settlement expected in late December 2023. As in previous years the late timing of the announcements has not been helpful in preparing the Council's budget. However, any differences between the assumptions made within this report and the Autumn Statement and Provisional Settlement will be updated in subsequent reports.
- 3.2 Unlike in previous years, we are aware for 2024/25, councils may increase core council tax by up to 3% without the need for a local referendum, and local authorities with social care responsibilities (such as Plymouth City Council) are able to increase the adult social care precept by up to 2% for the financial year. The Government assume this increase when allocating central funding allocations, and this Draft Budget 2024/25 has assumed this maximum will be implemented.

4 Budget Engagement

- 4.1 A public engagement to support the 2024/25 budget setting process will commence 3 November 2023 with the publication of this draft. A summary of the council's financial position will be presented, and people will be invited to provide their feedback on the proposals and suggest any ideas for saving money or increasing income.
- 4.2 The engagement will be promoted to the local media and through the Council's own channels, which will include a website banner, newsroom feature, social media, e-newsletter, promotion to local businesses and via press release. The questionnaire will also be shared internally in the Staff News bulletin.
- 4.3 The themes arising from the engagement may be considered as part of the final budget proposals in the New Year.

5. Budget Planning Assumptions – Core Funding

Council Tax

- 5.1 The Council Tax base for 2024/25 has been assumed at 75,895 properties, an increase of 493 on 2023/24. The Council Tax Base report for 2024/25 will be presented to Cabinet for consideration in January 2024 and will then be presented to Council for approval. Any changes from these base assumptions to the final report will be reflected in subsequent reports.
- 5.2 The modelled rise in the council tax base reflects changes including the number of new properties; a revised starting base reflecting the current number of properties; and changes in the number of council tax support claims. The collection rate has been maintained at 97.5% which is realistic and prudent due to the current economic climate and reflects the current year rate. The additional resources total £1.767m
- 5.3 The current working assumption includes the adoption of the 2% Adult Social Care precept, providing an additional £2.640m. This precept requires full council approval.
- 5.4 The current resource assumptions also include an increase in Council Tax of 2.99% yielding an additional £3.947m. It should be noted the Government assumes that councils will include these items when referencing increases to councils' core spending power.

Business Rates

- 5.5 The amount of income the Council can expect to receive in respect of the coming financial year through Business Rates is calculated at the end of January through the NDR1 statutory return to the government. The timing of this report sits outside of the draft budget setting timetable. The calculation reflects any deficit or surplus in actual income received to the fund compared to the previous year's budget, the total income expected through Section 31 grants compensating for rate reliefs awarded by the government, the top-up grant to ensure authorities reach the baseline funding level set by the government, and the total Rateable Value (RV, as set for each non-domestic property by the Valuation Office Agency) of the area.
- 5.6 The Business Rates income is forecast on nil growth in the gross rates receivable. This has been assumed due to the continuing economic uncertainty, a high number of appeals still to process and the impact of the recent revaluation. The business rates multiplier is assumed to be flat as per previous years and we will be compensated for the lost income by way of a government grant as per previous years. The current assumption is a 5.41% increase reflecting recent inflation figures; the final settlement will be known in late December 2023. We are forecasting an increase of £2.474m.

Business Rates Pool

- 5.7 Plymouth City Council continues to play the key role of administrator of the Devon Business Rates Pool. Working with the other business pool members and our external advisors, we are again forecasting growth in our business rates income and have included £2.5m of additional resources for 2024/25.

Income from Local Taxation – the Collection Fund

- 5.8 Income from Council Tax and Business Rates is held in a ringfenced collection fund account, from which authorities draw the budgeted level of income in each year irrespective of actual income collected. Any shortfall or increase on income collected compared to that budgeted level results in a collection fund deficit or surplus, which can be accounted for in the amount of income the Council can budget for in the following year.
- 5.9 Our accounts are showing a modest surplus on our council tax collection, allowing an additional £0.5m to be utilised and a further £2.5m on our business rates reflecting additional monies collected and the final reconciliation of Section 31 grants received covering the Covid-19 Pandemic period.

Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

- 5.10 Despite many previous announcements around reform of local government core funding, of which the RSG is a fundamental part, it has been confirmed that the existing funding model will continue for at least another year. For planning purposes at this stage, the 2023/24 allocation of £11.562m has been assumed to increase by RPI of 5.41% to £12.188m for 2024/25. The actual figure for RSG or an alternative resource will be advised in the Provisional Finance Settlement.
- 5.11 The table below Shows the total resources forecast for 2024/25, and the movement from the current 2023/24 resources.

Unringfenced Resources	Budget	Draft Budget	
	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	Movement £m
Council Tax	(130.625)	(139.479)	(8.854)
Business Rates	(75.253)	(82.727)	(7.474)
RSG	(11.562)	(12.188)	(0.626)
Reserves	(1.000)	0.000	1.000
Total Resources	(218.440)	(234.394)	(15.954)

- 5.12 A detailed schedule of the movements in resources are set out in Appendix 2.
- 5.13 In addition to the resources referred to above the Council receives a range of other specific grants. These include Better Care Fund grant, Social Care grant and others which form part of the awaited Settlement.

New Homes Bonus

- 5.14 No details of any replacement for New Homes Bonus have been advised, and the allocation will be confirmed as part of the subsequent Settlement. For planning purposes new homes bonus is assumed to be zero, following the 2023/24 allocation of £0.022m.

Public Health Grant

- 5.15 The Public Health grant supports the Council's public health responsibilities and grant conditions apply including responsibilities for 0-19 children services. Grant funds may only be spent on activities whose main purpose is to improve the health and wellbeing of our local population. This includes some specific requirements around health improvement, sexual health, drug and alcohol services, children and young people's public health services, NHS Health checks and health protection, as well as providing healthcare public health advice to support the commissioning of health and wellbeing services. The 2024/25 allocation will be confirmed as soon as the grant is announced, usually in late February. For 2023/24 the grant allocated was £16.460m.

6. Additional Budget Pressures

Right Sizing the Budget

- 6.1 As with every budget build, as part of the 2023/24 budget we were able to include some one-off resources to cover the on-going costs of service delivery. As these were one-off, the costs need to be brought into the 2024/25 budget base.
- 6.2 Included in the 2023/24 Budget is a reversal of a previous year's top-up of the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) in the sum of £1m. This was seen as a one-off re-balancing of the MRP reserve and the £1m needs to be reinstated to the base budget going forward. This budget proposal sees the reversal of a further £0.400m holiday, resulting in a net repayment this year of £0.600m, with the remaining £0.400m to be replenished in 2025/26.
- 6.3 Other items requiring additional resources include staff remuneration and the on-going commitment to honour the cost of the National Living Wage for our care providers. Another area is the increasing cost of servicing our borrowing requirements for the capital programme.
- 6.4 The Capital Programme (budget) has been formulated based on the assumptions set out in the Capital Strategy and the September 2023 (Quarter 2) monitoring report setting out the latest investment and spend profiles. An additional £1.171m is included in this Draft Budget to cover the cost of corporate borrowing recognising the slippage in delivery of approved projects; additional cost pressures from construction costs and the increased cost of borrowing. The Capital Programme is subject to a full project-by-project review with the resultant impact on the cost of financing the programme to be included in the final budget report in February 2024.

Additional Corporate and Directorate budget adjustments

- 6.5 The high levels of inflation and energy prices, increased interest rates and major demand pressures being felt across adults and children's social care plus the continuing homelessness demand remain key factors in the sustainability of local government finance. The pressures are set out below.
- 6.6 We have accounted for additional costs associated with the Schools' PFI (Private Finance Initiative) contract. The contract is structured in such a way as to leave the liability for any increased utility cost with the council. This increase is on top of the additional funding allocated in the 2023/24 budget.

- 6.7 This MTFs 2023/24 to 2027/28 works 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 4.0% of the Council's net revenue budget. By 2027/28 this would need to be £11.8m, an increase of £2.9m to equate to 5%, which is about the average for Unitary Councils. This budget makes the first contribution of £0.750m.
- 6.8 Utility costs are assumed to have peaked from the additional cost pressure of £4.765m to cover the whole council estate including the crematoria and the Life Centre allocated in the 2023/24 budget. This budget sees a reduction of £2m from this allocation.
- 6.9 The Labour Administration has made grass cutting and general wildlife habitat maintenance a key priority. The funding for the grass cutting team has been allocated an additional £0.300m to fund the required staff and running costs. This has been met from the rebadging of the £0.300m Street's contingency held as a corporate budget in 2023/24.
- 6.10 Within the People Directorate, the additional cost and volume of adult social care packages has been allocated an increase of £5.047m. This is offset in part by a release of £0.500m from the service's bad debt provision.
- 6.11 Also within the People Directorate, the homelessness budget is experiencing increasing demand and costs. We have record numbers of households in Bed and Breakfast, with an additional £3.287m allocated. The department is working hard on bringing forward cost mitigations, and as a result a stretch savings target of £1m has been put in place to offset some of this additional cost.
- 6.12 The 2023/24 Budget included an allocation of £1m social care contingency, held as a corporate budget. This has been reversed and used to help fund the additional cost and volume pressure of £7.072m within the Children's Directorate. Again, the department is working hard on bringing forward cost mitigations, and as a result a stretch savings target of £1.316m has been put in place to offset some of this additional cost.
- 6.13 Home to School Transport is another area where we are experiencing additional cost every year. Despite putting an additional £1m into the 2023/24 budget, we are still estimating more than £1m overspend in year due to increase in costs and volume. This budget makes an additional allocation of £1.3m. At this stage the department are still formulating cost mitigations, and no stretch savings have yet been put in place to offset some of this additional cost.
- 6.14 Further budget adjustments totalling £4.028m, reversing previous years' budget allocations have been made to help offset some of these additional cost pressures,
- 6.15 These additional adjustments require additional allocations of £28.856m offset by savings and adjustments totalling £10.544m, giving a net total allocation of £18.312m. Full details are set out in Appendix I.

7. Current Budget Shortfall

- 7.1 As a result of the additional resources set out in 5.11 above totalling £15.954m and the additional Corporate and Directorate budget adjustments as set out in 6.15 totalling £18.312m, the budget shortfall stands at £2.358m. A summary of this is shown below. This budget gap will change when the detail of both the Autumn Statement and the Provisional Settlement are known and analysed.

Budget	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	Change £m
Total Resources (see 5.11 above)	(218.440)	(234.394)	(15.954)
Total Base Expenditure 2023/24 Budget	218.440	218.440	-
Additional Corporate and Directorate budget costs (see 6.12 above and Appendix 1 below)	-	28.856	28.856
Corporate and Directorate savings and adjustments (see 6.12 above and Appendix 1 below)		(10.544)	(10.544)
Total Base Expenditure Budget	218.440	236.752	18.312
Net Budget Shortfall	0.000	2.358	2.358

8. Capital Budget and Programme

- 8.1 Planned capital expenditure and the associated financing will be detailed within the budget report to be presented to Full Council in February 2024. Amendments to the budget are approved by Council on a quarterly basis, and the programme is being reviewed and re-profiled considering the economic environment (increasing inflation and interest rates) and changing priorities.
- 8.2 At the end of quarter two (September 2023) the amended Capital Programme for the period 2023/24 to 2027/28 stands at £629.924m. This includes approved projects £373.765m plus future funding assumptions £256.159m.
- 8.3 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.
- 8.4 Projects requiring funding 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.
- 8.5 We remain committed to a significant capital investment programme. The Council will engage with partners in major regeneration of the city and 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. Consideration of the city airport remains a key element of the capital programme.

Flexible use of Capital Receipts

- 8.6 A Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy was submitted to Council as part of the 2023/24 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.
- 8.7 Within the 2023/24 Budget, Full Council approved the Council’s Strategy for the use of this flexibility, with investment in the Children’s Improvement programme, the Council’s Transformation programme and feasibility studies within Street Services featuring in the current capital programme.
- 8.8 This proposed Draft Budget reflects the addition of further capital receipts to this programme of activity. Some allocations of the funding agreed in the 2023/24 budget not spent by 31 March 2024 but will continue to support the Council’s transformation activities in 2024/25 under this Strategy.

This will see the continuation of support through this flexibility to deliver the Council's Improvement Programme. A full update will form part of the final budget proposals.

9. Directorate summaries

- 9.1 The draft budget highlights a funding shortfall of £2.358m in 2024/25. We know Local Government is changing rapidly as traditional sources of funding are reducing and the demand for our services is increasing. We know we cannot continue to deliver services in the same way we have done in the past and our transformation portfolio is taking a pioneering and ambitious approach to addressing these challenges while seeking to improve outcomes for the people of Plymouth.
- 9.2 This means providing services in new ways, joining up with partners wherever possible, investing in ways of doing things more efficiently, making the most of our assets, raising income by taking a more commercial approach and a focus and clarity on our organisational purpose.

Chief Executive's Office

- 9.3 The Chief Executive's office manages a net annual revenue budget of just over £5m, representing just over 2% of the Council's net revenue budget. Through a combination of increasing chargeable activity for other public bodies and the introduction of multi-disciplinary teams, the service has reduced its revenue requirement from the Council by over £0.700m since 2013-14.
- 9.4 The Chief Executive's service covers four main areas of work, including the communications team. The oversight and governance team provides support for the Council's democratic functions, including Members' support and all the Council's decision making, covering Cabinet, Scrutiny, and all other decision-making bodies. The team also provides and supports the Council's performance and risk framework, responsible for the provision, reporting and analysis of our delivery of services to the public and the management and reporting of strategic and operational risk.
- 9.5 The Legal service provides services to all the directorates, ranging from commercial, litigation, and property related support to child and adult protection and the Council's Monitoring Officer responsibilities. We have plans to further minimise the amount of legal support that the Council commissions externally through greater provision from our own expertise, and tighter scoping of legal requirements. The legal department now includes responsibility for the Procurement Department.
- 9.6 The elections and registration team manage the city's electoral register, and delivers local and national elections. With significant changes in voter identification being implemented through the recent Elections Act, the team will be ensuring that additional burdens funding from the government will meet the inevitable extra costs incurred in successful implementation of new responsibilities in this area.

Customer and Corporate Services Directorate

- 9.7 The Customer & Corporate Services Directorate has a net annual revenue budget of just over £50m of which £33m is allocated to two core objectives: supporting the organisation and delivering customer services, and £17m to finance the capital programme through the treasury management function.
- 9.8 For the Directorate to carry out its work there are three core functions,
1. Finance including Treasury & Capital Management also covers Financial Planning & Accountancy, and Financial Business Support.
 2. HR & Facilities Management (Hard & Soft FM, HR, Health & Safety, Wellbeing, Organisational Development & Strategic Projects)
 3. Customer & Digital (Business Support, Libraries, Delt IT, Information Governance, Transformation, and the Digital agenda.)

- 9.9 The Transformation Portfolio and Corporate Support Services, as well as playing a key role in supporting the demand-led services with financial, legal and HR expertise, will be reviewing their own operating models, whilst focusing on two prime projects. “New Ways of Working” is focused on the council’s accommodation rationalisation and delivery of the financial savings from the exit of both Windsor House and Midland House. It is important to complete this work in order not to create a bigger shortfall in our budget. “One Council” will focus on Intelligent Automation, the website upgrade, and Cyber Security.
- 9.10 Looking forward and to ensure the delivery of our savings rolled forward from 2023/24 our efforts will be focused on the Customer Service Strategy, ensuring the most vulnerable and digitally excluded have choice in how to access our services, consult on our front doors and libraries, improve our processes supported by automation where we can, refocus DELT, maximise our assets, deliver our people strategy and drive organisational change as well as considering how best to deliver our corporate services in the future.
- 9.11 The HR and OD Service has been working with the Corporate and Senior Leadership teams to prioritise the critical areas of work which will support the organization to work much more efficiently with the resources it has, including ensuring that our culture is developed to achieve a ‘one team approach’ to ensure we deliver vital services to our communities and residents whilst building the people management capability to manage performance ensuring that everyone is clear about what is expected of them and the priorities we must deliver over the next 3 years.

Children’s Directorate

- 9.12 The Children’s Directorate has a net annual revenue budget of £62.3m which increases to £69.4m as part of the proposed draft budget – this is 30% of the Council’s revenue budget. It is also responsible for the Designated Schools Grant (DSG) at £78.2m for 2023/24, The DSG supports several funding streams for Early Years and Education services across the city. Most of the work within the Children’s Directorate is configured around the direct delivery of statutory functions for children and young people in the city; this is focused upon Education and Social Care services and includes the vital area of the skills agenda.
- 9.13 The Directorate is currently organised around two departments, the Education, Participation and Skills (EPS) Service and the Children Young People and Families Service. The Education, Participation and Skills Department delivers key statutory functions for the city such as; School Admissions, School Transport arrangements, support to the Early Years sector, support to the remaining Local Authority Maintained Schools, services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) children and a small team focused on our most vulnerable learners e.g. children and young people absent from school and those educated at home. It is responsible for delivering the Local Area (SEND) Improvement Plan. It also delivers the Adult Learning and City Skills Strategies and the Securing Education, Employment and Training (SEET) Strategy.
- 9.14 The second and largest department is the Children, Young People and Families service. This service delivers the Council’s statutory duties for children’s social care, including the ‘front door’ assessment services, services for children assessed to need a social worker and for those in the care of the Local Authority and Care Leavers. This includes a fostering service to recruit and support our in-house foster carers. The service delivers the statutory functions of the Youth Justice Service and makes provision for adolescents at risk of child exploitation and those that are on the edge of care. Universal early intervention and prevention services for children and families are delivered by the Service, including through the implementation of the Family Hubs model and locality-based service delivery with partners. The Local Authority makes a significant leadership and operational contribution to the City’s Safeguarding Children’s Partnership.

- 9.15 To contain financial pressures whilst maintaining the right support for our vulnerable children in the city, the directorate will be meeting the needs of children and young people in our care in less expensive residential settings and with foster carers and family and friends where children can live safely in Plymouth and closer to their school and community. The Children's Placements Sufficiency Strategy and the Fostering Recruitment and Retention Strategy are currently being reviewed to provide the right homes for our children in care at less cost and to increase the number of Plymouth foster carers to provide more local placements for children in Plymouth. The foster carer offer is being reviewed to ensure that it provides the best opportunity to recruit and retain Plymouth foster carers and reduce our reliance on and the cost of Independent Fostering Agencies. The aim is to support more children, young people and families through locality based early help services that meet their needs without the need for statutory social work intervention and helping partners to provide help and support for families at the earliest point of need at the lowest point of intervention.
- 9.16 The 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 numbers of children eligible for home to school transport is increasing as the number of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP's) rise at the same time as travel and transport costs rise. 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. The Education Placement Sufficiency Strategy for children with SEND is being reviewed to increase places for children and young people in Plymouth and this will reduce home to school transport costs in the future.

People Directorate

- 9.17 The People Directorate will have an annual gross budget of £142m, made up of both revenue and income. Income is generated through contributions from individuals with care and support needs in Adult Social Care and through fees for some areas in Community Connections. The People Directorate has three departments that carry out its work; these are Strategic Commissioning; Retained Client Services and Community Connections. The Directorate over the years has worked hard to reduce revenue spend by remodelling service delivery and maximising grant income to manage increasing demand and complexity of need across a range of areas.
- 9.18 The Strategic Commissioning and Retained Client department is responsible for the planning, developing and procuring health and care services for adults, older people and children from a range of providers across the City. These services include Domiciliary Care, Residential and Nursing provision, Supported Living, Extra Care housing, Carers support, Day services, Domestic Abuse support and befriending support. In addition the retained client service delivers the statutory oversight for the safeguarding of vulnerable adults, a reablement home from hospital service to support hospital discharge, a community outreach service to assist some of our most vulnerable in the community, a day service and respite facility for individuals with extremely complex needs.
- 9.19 The Community Connections department delivers statutory responsibilities in relation to Housing, supporting people who become homeless or households who are at risk of losing their tenure to access a range of accommodation across the city. The department is responsible for managing the delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants, adapting properties to better meet the needs of vulnerable residents. The team deliver HMO licensing and oversee standards across the Private Rented sector in the city. They work in partnership across local communities delivering community safety with the Police, supporting asylum seekers, refugees and our gypsy and traveller communities. Through the small sports development team they work to improve access to sports in the city working closely with Plymouth Active Leisure and delivering schemes such as Fit and Fed and manage the open access youth programme along with delivering some targeted youth groups for vulnerable young people in Plymouth.

Public Health

- 9.20 The functions include Public Health, Public Protection Services, Community Empowerment, Plymouth Active Leisure, Coroners and Registrations, and Bereavement services. All these services have roles to support the reduction of health inequalities through impacting on health and on the social, economic, and environmental determinants of health. The ODPH directorate has several funding routes, including grants, and generates significant income; overall, this leads to a relatively small net budget.
- 9.21 The specific Public Health function receives a ring-fenced grant from the government which is spent on functions such as sexual health services, drug and alcohol treatment, health visitors, school nurses and a range of other services to support population health and wellbeing. The grant also covers the funding of the public health team who offer a range of support and advice to the city, as exemplified through the last few years of the pandemic.
- 9.22 Public protection services (environmental health, environmental protection, licensing, and trading standards (a commissioned service)) carry out a wide range of specialist technical services, from ensuring food outlets are operating safely, to ensuring the taxi trade is operating according to prescribed legislation.
- 9.23 Coroners and Registrations provides facilities and support for the registration of births and deaths as well as a variety of ceremonies.
- 9.24 Bereavement Services touches the lives of residents of the city and sub region with an economic role for the city (in terms of employment and income) and an environmental role (with 65 acres of green space). A key focus in 2024/25 will be the opening of the city's new crematorium.
- 9.25 Leisure services for Plymouth are delivered through a Local Authority Trading Company, Plymouth Active Leisure (PAL), which has been in place since April 2022. PAL receives a significant subsidy from PCC currently. 2024/25 will be its second year of operation, and PAL are developing new ways of maximising usage and income to support the services.

Place Directorate

- 9.26 The Place directorate has a net annual revenue budget of £29m (12% of the Council's net revenue budget). Its gross annual budget is £92m. It has an income of £64.8m annually which is made up predominantly of grant and commercial income. The directorate has over the years significantly increased its income and reduced its net revenue spend significantly from £45m in 2013/14 to the current annual cost.
- 9.27 The Place directorate has three departments that carry out its work. These are Strategic Planning and Infrastructure (Strategic and development planning, housing, strategic transport schemes, public transport, and climate change), Economic Development (Regeneration, Economy and Enterprise, Commercial property, Freeport, National Marine Park, Culture, Events and Tourism) and finally Street Services (waste collection and disposals, street scene, trade and commercial waste, Highways, Parking and marine services). The majority of these services are universal services that benefit and interface with the lives all of residents, businesses and visitors to the city
- 9.28 Strategic Planning and Infrastructure (SPI) plays a key role in creating the frameworks to drive growth and investment across the city, through its strategic and development planning functions. It delivers significant infrastructure investment through a £485m strategic transport programme, which is over 80% externally funded. The Transforming Cities Fund programme continues to be delivered at pace with significant investment in the city's walking, cycling, public transport provision and related public realm. It will continue to support new homes delivery across the city. SPI leads the Council's climate

change response working across all departments of the council and provides a leadership and co-ordination responsibility across city-wide partners. It will continue to deliver a pipeline of 18 existing Low Carbon Projects (largely grant funded) with a value of £25m and an emerging £35m pipeline.

- 9.29 The city council's economic development department generates £24.7m income. A large part of this income comes through the running and management of a PCC owned commercial estate with a value of over £200m and annual rent roll of £10m. The department leads several major initiatives that take place across the city, including regeneration schemes in the city centre and waterfront such as the West End, Bath Street housing delivery, facilitating hotel developments, support for the refurbishment of the Civic and Guildhall as well as schemes such as the new Derriford District Centre. The department provides support to help businesses grow and create well paid jobs proactively account managing major businesses, having landed over £500m of Foreign Direct Investment into the city over the past 5 years. Our current pipeline has 20 potential investment projects. Economic development supports businesses locally through the city's two BIDs and Destination Plymouth – marketing the city locally, regionally, nationally, and globally – as well as delivering an annual events programme. Over the course of the next year, it will support the delivery of the Community Renewal and Shared Prosperity Funds and support our two business parks which employ over 250 people in 110 SME/start-up businesses. More than 220,000 annual visitors will be welcomed to the Box and it will continue to develop as a major museum and visitor attraction. Major interventions that will be further developed will include the National Marine Park, drawing down £10m of Heritage Lottery Funding; as well as the mobilisation of the Plymouth and South Devon Freeport.
- 9.30 The Street Services department provides invaluable year-round services to residents across the city in areas of waste collection, cleansing and green spaces. It will continue to strive to provide those services and keep the city in as best a shape as possible. It will collect over 100,000 tonnes of recycling and residual waste from 120,000 households weekly, operate household waste recycling centres which receive 350,000 annual visits accepting 22,500 tonnes of materials and manage recycling banks across the city. Street Services will maximise and grow its commercial waste provision. It will clean over 21,000 acres and 1700kms of public roads and footpaths; as well as manage 500 hectares of green space, 30,000 trees, 22 formal parks and 127 playgrounds. Through its Highways and Parking team, it will continue to maintain the city's roads and pavements, its 47 car parks and manage the city's highway network.

10 Conclusion

- 10.1 This Draft Budget has been formulated based on the assumptions set out in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Capital Strategy. In addition, budgets have been proposed to deliver the aspirations of the Corporate Plan and preserve those services that are most important to residents.
- 10.2 The proposed revenue budget requirement of £236.752m (Appendix 2) exceeds the estimated available resources by £2.358m. If we cannot identify measures to address this deficit, it will need to be met from the Council's reserves.
- 10.3 The financial risks facing the Council in the medium term are assessed within the MTFs. This includes assessing the risks around Government funding and other income streams of the Council, the subsequent budget shortfalls that the Council would then face and overall local and national economic factors which can affect the financial stability of the Council.
- 10.4 The cost-of-living crisis, including energy costs, has increased the level of risk faced by the Council, both in the cost pressures faced and the economic impact on income streams. In setting the annual budget and the MTFs the Council will ensure potential risks are assessed and actively managed so that their impact is minimised or can be contained within Contingencies, Balances or Earmarked Reserves as is necessary. In year, the Council will monitor its revenue and capital budgets monthly and report to Cabinet on a quarterly basis.

11. Current Budget Shortfall – next steps

- 11.1 The forecast budget shortfall as set out in this report is £2.358m. This includes the following assumptions:
1. The Adult Social Care precept and proposed Council Tax is approved by Full Council
 2. The New Homes Bonus will be nil value.
 3. The Business Rates growth compensation grant from Government and Revenue Support Grant growth will be 5.41% minimum.
 4. The council tax collection rate will continue to hold at the current 97.5%
 5. The numbers will change following both the November Autumn Statement and the December Provisional Settlement.
 6. The Capital Programmen costs and the additional budget allocations noted in this report are all still indicative and subject to change following further reviews.
 7. Replenish Working Balance Reserve, as set out in the MTFS – 1st tranche £0.750m
- 11.2 The current gap needs to be reduced to a balanced position in time for the final budget report to Full Council 26 February 2024.
- 11.3 Officers and Cabinet will continue to work up further savings initiatives, working with all elected members and in particular the scrutiny committees. All new plans will be included in future budget reports as options to balance the budget for 2024/25.

12. Equality & Diversity

- 12.1 The Equality Act (2010) harmonised and replaced pre-existing equality legislation and extended statutory protection across nine protected characteristics. It recognised forms of discrimination that were previously beyond the scope of legislation and introduced the concept of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).
- 12.2 The protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The PSED placed specific responsibilities on public sector organisations to consider equality in their decision making. It consists of a general equality duty, supported by specific duties. In summary, those subject to the equality duty must have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not.
 - Promote good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.3 Plymouth City Council is committed to equality and diversity and to ensuring that the decisions we take promote equality. To help inform the development of the Council's budget and to ensure that we give 'due regard' to equality during this process, we are considering the equality implications of each of our budget decisions. A completed equality impact assessment will be presented with the final budget paper as appropriate.

Appendix I Net additional cost pressures and adjustments

Corporate Items	£m
2023/24 and 2024/25 staff remuneration costs consolidated into the budget	4.000
PFI contract – utility cost adjustment	0.181
Replenish Working Balance Reserve – 1 st tranche	0.750
Total Additional Costs	4.931
Offset by:	
Energy pressures – reduction to 2023/24 additional allocation	(2.000)
Street Services Contingency 2023/24 reversed	(0.300)
Base budget allocation for Treasury Management activities	(3.528)
Social Care Contingency 2023/24 reversed	(1.000)
Bad Debt provision	(0.500)
Total Budget Adjustments	(7.328)
Total Corporate Costs	(2.397)

Children's	£m
CYP&F – Additional cost and volume of placements	7.072
Home to school Transport	1.300
Total Additional Costs	8.372
Offset by:	
CYP&F – stretch savings	(1.316)
Total Children's Costs	7.056

People	£m
Adult Social Care – Care Packages	5.047
National Living Wage	3.448
Homelessness Cost and volume	3.287
Total Additional Costs	11.782
Offset by:	
Adult Social Care Bad Debt provision	(0.500)
Homelessness – stretch savings	(1.000)
Total Budget Adjustments	(1.500)
Total People Costs	10.282

ODPH (Office of the Director of Public Health)	£m
Reinstate 2023/24 one-off saving	0.250

Total ODPH costs **0.250**

Place	£m
Place one-off - Strategic Contract Optimisation	0.430
Replenish bad debt	0.343
Replenish one-off Foreshore saving	0.129
Park and Ride	0.100
Reinstate License Fees	0.048
Grounds maintenance staffing – Streets (grass cutting)	0.300
Total Place costs	1.350

Chief Executive Office plus Customer & Corporate Services	£m
Financing the existing Capital Programme (Finance Department)	1.171
Replenish Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) taken in 2023/24	1.000
Total Additional Costs	2.171
Offset by:	
Utilisation of Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) to be repaid 2025/26	(0.400)
Total Chief Executive Office plus Customer & Corporate Services costs	1.771

Total Directorate Costs 18.312

Appendix 2 Net Additional Resources and adjustments

Unringfenced Resources	Budget	Draft Budget	
	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	Movement £m
Council Tax 2023/24 Base	(130.625)	(130.625)	-
Council Tax Growth (number of properties)		(1.767)	(1.767)
Additional Council Tax		(3.947)	(3.947)
Additional Adult Social Care Precept		(2.640)	(2.640)
Council Tax Collection Fund		(0.500)	(0.500)
Revised Council Tax	(130.625)	(139.479)	(8.854)
Business Rates 2023/24 Base	(75.253)	(75.253)	-
Business Rates Growth (number of properties)		(2.474)	(2.474)
Business Rates Pool gain		(2.500)	(2.500)
Business Rates Collection Fund		(2.500)	(2.500)
Revised Business Rates	(75.253)	(82.727)	(7.474)
RSG with 5.41% CPI uplift	(11.562)	(12.188)	(0.626)
Reserves – no drawdown for 2024/25	(1.000)	0.000	1.000
Total Resources	(218.440)	(234.394)	(15.954)

Appendix 3 Indicative Directorate Budget

Directorate	Budget 2024/25 £m			Net Budget
	Net Budget	Cost Increases	Savings/ Income	
Corporate	(25.840)	4.931	(7.328)	(28.237)
Children	62.320	8.372	(1.316)	69.376
People	95.611	11.782	(1.500)	105.893
ODPH	2.628	0.250	-	2.878
Place	27.654	1.350	-	29.004
Chief Executive and Customer and Corporate Services	56.067	2.171	(0.400)	57.838
Total	218.440	28.856	(10.544)	236.752

Total Resources available (234.394)

Budget Shortfall

2.358

Cabinet



Date of meeting:	13 November 2023
Title of Report:	Renewal of Armed Forces Covenant
Lead Member:	Councillor Chris Penberthy
Lead Strategic Director:	Giles Perritt (Assistant Chief Executive)
Author:	Alan Knott – Policy and Intelligence Advisor.
Contact Email:	Alan.Knott@Plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	AFC/001
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to request Cabinet approval for the renewal of the Armed Forces Covenant by Plymouth City Council. The Armed Forces Community Covenant no longer exists in its original form. This is because it was an agreement signed by multiple organisations. The new Armed Forces Covenant is an individual organisation's commitment.

Whilst a new Covenant was signed by Cabinet in October 2022, a revised Covenant is proposed which this Administration believes better fits the Council's mission statement and the priorities of the wider partnership. This Administration has reflected on what was heard at the Armed Forces Covenant select committee scrutiny session in November 2022, has listened to organisations and partners in the Armed Forces Community and further, is aligning the new Covenant to the new Corporate Plan priorities. Together, this will strengthen Plymouth City Council's approach to the Armed Forces Covenant. It is therefore recommended that Cabinet approves the renewal proposal so that the Council can demonstrate its individual commitment, not only to serving members of the armed forces, but to veterans, reservists and their families.

Recommendations and Reasons

Cabinet approval for the renewal of the Armed Forces Covenant by Plymouth City Council.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Plymouth City Council originally signed the Armed Forces Community Covenant in 2012. It is not possible to continue registration of Community Covenants like Plymouth's 2012 commitment because they are signed by multiple organisations. Therefore, organisations like Plymouth City Council must now choose to refresh their commitment individually. Whilst this was done in October 2022 the new Administration have incorporated Community commitments the City Council wish to support.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

We provide strong community leadership and the role the Council plays in supporting the Armed Forces Covenant is fundamental to this element of the Corporate Plan.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

Approval of the Armed Forces Covenant does not constitute a specific resource commitment. Future decisions, particularly in the areas of Housing, Education and Health may have particular implications: these however, will be considered on a case by case basis.

Financial Risks

None

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

None specific to the recommendations of this 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.

The Armed Forces Act 2021 received Royal Assent in December 2021 and new guidance enacted this legislation in November 2022. The new Armed Forces Act 2021 creates a legal obligation on relevant bodies, when exercising relevant statutory functions and to have due regard to the three principles of the Armed Forces Covenant. This is the Armed Forces Covenant Duty. The signing of the Plymouth Armed Forces Covenant helps implement this legislation into Council policy.

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	Renewal of Armed Forces Covenant report							
B	Plymouth City Council Armed Forces Covenant agreement 2023							

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. 23.24. 134	Leg	LS/00 0013 12/1/ AC/2/ 11/23 .	Mon Off		HR		Assets		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Giles Perritt (Assistant Chief Executive)											

Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes

Date agreed: 31/10/2023

Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) - verbally

Date approved: 31/10/2023

This page is intentionally left blank

RENEWAL OF ARMED FORCES COVENANT

Cabinet – 13 Nov 2023



Background

The Armed Forces Covenant is a commitment from the nation to those who serve or have served in the British military, and to their families. It is a pledge that together we acknowledge and understand that those who serve or who have served in the armed forces, and their families, should be treated with fairness and respect in the communities, economy, and society they served with their lives. It recognises the unique and selfless sacrifice associated with service and encourages local communities to support the service community in their area.

Home to the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Army, Plymouth boasts an inspiring rich maritime heritage and is steeped in military history. With the citadel being built in the 1660s and the first Royal Dockyard opening in 1691, the armed forces has continued to grow and now in the 21st century, hosts the largest naval base in Western Europe and most importantly the city retains a special and reciprocal relationship with those who serve and have served.

Plymouth City Council originally signed the Armed Forces Community Covenant in 2012, along with representatives of the Armed Forces, Military Charities, public sector partners, and the business and voluntary sectors. Historically the Armed Forces Covenant Team at the Ministry of Defence (MOD) managed the process for the Community Covenant. This process and the responsibility for management of Covenant signings has been transferred to the Department of Defence Relationship Management (DRM). Within the new system, and to ensure transparency, there is a requirement for signed Covenants to be registered individually. It is not possible to 're-sign' Community Covenants like Plymouth's 2012 commitment because they are signed by multiple organisations. Therefore, Plymouth City Council must now choose to refresh their commitment individually.

Legal implications

The Armed Forces Bill 2021, which passed Royal Assent on 15 December 2021 places a new statutory duty on local authorities to have due regard to the Armed Forces Covenant. The legislation will not mandate specific public service delivery outcomes or advantageous treatment of the Armed Forces Community. It is designed to ensure that the relevant decision-makers consider the issues facing the Armed Forces Community in the key areas that impact upon their day-to-day lives. Under the new duty, those public bodies in scope will be required to have 'due regard' to the three principles of the Armed Forces Covenant when formulating policy and taking decisions in the specified areas of Housing, Education and Health.

The requirement will be like other duties to have 'due regard' already in operation, such as the Public Sector Equality Duty. As with those existing duties, the legislation will not be defining exactly how the requirement to have due regard can be met. Accompanying statutory guidance, which public bodies will be required to consider will provide advice and examples of best practice to indicate how bodies might comply with the duty. All relevant strategic governance agreements and documents should be updated in line with the 2021 Act as required.

Conclusion

The Armed Forces Covenant is a commitment from the nation to those who serve or have served in the British military, and to their families. By signing, Plymouth City Council commits that we

acknowledge and understand that those who serve or who have served in the armed forces, and their families, should be treated with fairness and respect in all the services the Council offers, and that we recognise the unique and selfless sacrifice associated with service and will do all we can do to support all those in the Armed Forces Community.



Plymouth City Council

We, the undersigned, agree to work and act together to honour the Armed Forces Covenant. We recognise the value Serving Personnel (Regular and reserve) Cadets, Veterans, and military families contribute to our business/school/charity and our country.

Date:

Name: Brigadier Mike Tanner OBE RM

Position Held: Plymouth Naval Base Commander – on behalf of Defence

Signature:

Date:

Name: Councillor Mark Shayer

Position Held: Plymouth Lord Mayor

Signature:

Date:

Name: Councillor Pauline Murphy

Position Held: Plymouth City Council Armed Forces Champion

Signature:

Date:

Name: Tracey Lee

Position Held: Chief Executive Plymouth City Council

Signature:



THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT

An Enduring Covenant Between

The People of the United Kingdom
Her Majesty's Government

– and –

All those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of
the Crown

And their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families.

They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most, such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

Section 1: Principles of the Armed Forces Covenant

1.1 We, Plymouth City Council, will endeavour in all our dealings to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, which are:

- No member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen.
- In some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate especially for the injured or bereaved.

Section 2: Demonstrating our Commitment

2.1 Plymouth City Council recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of the armed forces community. The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise made by Plymouth City Council to support in-service personnel, ex- service personnel, their families and children to receive fair and consistent service. We seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant by:

- Removing disadvantage from our Armed Forces Community with regards to accommodation, employment and school provision.
- Raising awareness through engagement, celebration and commemoration.
- Encourage business community engagement with the Armed Forces community.
- Expand Transitions, Employment and Skills opportunities
- Improve Healthcare provision to the Armed Forces Community.
- Building and supporting the Covenant in the city

Section 3: Plymouth City Council support to the Covenant

3.1 Supporting servicemen/women and ex-servicemen/women to secure suitable accommodation:

- The Council will offer suitable advice to Armed Forces applicants who present in Plymouth so they are able to apply to access affordable housing in the City
- The Council has a nominated housing lead and single point of contact for the Armed Forces
- Accepts the UK Armed Forces Veteran ID Cards as proof of status.
- The Council will offer preference for those requiring social housing who are currently in the Armed Forces or leaving the forces when allocated to the waiting list
- Develop appropriate housing schemes to meet Veterans' needs.
- Assisting with requests for adapted homes for wounded injured and sick service personnel and Veterans, the Council will offer relevant advice and support to injured service personnel and Veterans to help them access home adaptations

3.2 Support the employment of Veterans young and old:

- Welcoming applications from, and guaranteeing interviews with, Veterans who meet the criteria in the job specification.
- Recognising military skills and qualifications in our recruitment and selection process.

3.3 Striving to support the employment of Service spouses and partners:

- Welcoming applications and guaranteeing interviews from spouses/partners who meet the criteria in the job specification.
- Endeavoring to offer a degree of flexibility in granting leave for Service spouses and partners before, during and after a partner's deployment.

3.4 Seeking to support our employees who choose to be members of the Reserve forces, including accommodating their training and deployment where possible:

- Up to 2 weeks per year of special paid leave is available to attend annual training camps.
- Fully supporting and accommodating mobilised deployment of Reservist employees if required.

3.5 Offering support to our local cadet units, either in our local community or in local schools, where possible:

- Up to 2 weeks per year of special paid leave may be available to attend annual training camps and courses.
- Accommodation of Cadet training commitments where possible.
- Considering sponsorship bids to support worthwhile Cadet Projects.

3.6 Seek to maintain the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme - Gold Status

- Maintain our existing relationship with our National Account Manager/REED/appropriate defence representative
- Continue to proactively demonstrate our forces-friendly credentials as part of our recruiting and selection processes - engaging with Career Transition Partnership (CTP) in the recruitment of service leavers and have registered for the Forces Families Jobs (FFJ) portal
- Actively ensure that our workforce is aware of their positive policies towards defence people issues.
- Be an exemplar within their market sector, advocating support to defence people issues to partner organisations, suppliers and customers with tangible positive results
- Within the context of Reserves, we demonstrate support to mobilisations or have a framework in place. Provide at least 10 days' additional leave for training, fully paid, to the Reservist employee
- Not have been the subject of any negative public relations or media activity
- Actively encourage a positive environment for Reservists by ensuring that positive policies in support of Reservists within the workforce are communicated to line managers

3.7 Champion the needs of service and Veterans' children and their families in Plymouth

- Provide support and assistance to service families requiring appropriate school placements for their children.
- Support Children's Education across the Armed Forces Community.
- Ensure that children's EHCP's are respected and every effort will be made to meet the needs set out even if conducted in a different local authority
- Changing perceptions - Educating providers at local level to broaden understanding of the service context.
- Incorporate the 'families' strategy' core work streams, family life, service life, family home and children's education into Plymouth's education policies.
- Seek to support the importance of a trauma informed approach across all areas of the covenant in line with city policy, and specifically that due regard is given by the Council to the mental health of children and young people of service families
- Council champions the children of service families have their voices heard. For example via the youth participation team and via partner organisations like the

Military Kids Club (MKC) and inviting Children and Young People to attend the Leadership Group and City Partnership in person

3.8 Support the Armed Forces community in Health and Adult Social Care

- Following assessment provide support and assistance to meet Veterans' eligible needs; including those needs that relate to their service. Also, providing advice, information and signposting onto other services where eligibility criteria is not met.
- Promote the Armed Forces Community in commissioning arrangements with ONE Devon and the relevant Local Care Partnership (LCP).
- To ensure Veterans and their families with caring responsibilities are able to access timely carer support within the City.
- Public Health will promote the AFC when we are helping to shape new policies or services, both as a commissioner and a health and care system partner.
- Encourage organisations to recognise "Having Served" and support Veterans and service leavers in this process

3.9 Encourage business community engagement with the Armed Forces Covenant

- Promote the Armed Forces community in Council dealings with the business community.
- Promote the Armed Forces community in Council dealings with the Military to facilitate transitions into the business community
- Support businesses to actively recruit and promote local job/ career opportunities to the Armed Forces community through delivery of Skills Launchpad Plymouth activities
- Encourage businesses to sign the Armed Forces Covenant.

3.10 Create and sustain an Armed Forces Network for staff

- Create a staff network for anyone connected to the Armed Forces community
- Ensure staff are able to share ideas and connect with others in the armed forces community
- Offer the staff network the opportunity to feedback views and ideas to Council Members and Policy colleagues
- Give the network feedback mechanisms and routes into Partnership and Community groups if required

3.11 Offering a discount to members of the Armed Forces Community

- Explore how we can introduce a city wide Armed Forces Covenant Card which will offer more than a service personnel card or discount card
- Proactively work with the local business community to ensure the city wide Armed Forces Covenant Card can be successfully implemented

3.12 Promoting that we are an armed forces-friendly organisation

- Promoting our work, activities and events through our own digital and social media channels as well as working with the press.
- Publishing our Covenant pledge on a dedicated Covenant section/page on our web site
- By becoming the lead Armed Forces Day(AFD) partner: In advance; promoting AFD through the web, social media, membership and other networks.

- Encouraging the wearing of uniform to work, by Reservists and Cadet Force Adult Volunteer(CFAV) employees, to mark Reserves Day
- Publishing stories of the day on the web, social media, through our own membership and other networks as well as working with the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations(RFCA) Communications lead & the press.

4. City Partnership and the Armed Forces Community

The covenant is built around partnership and collaboration with veteran's organisations, wider public service providers, businesses and the armed services. Plymouth City Council is committed to working with and encouraging other organisations to understand the challenges of military life and encourage them to provide the services and support members of the armed forces, ex-service personnel, Veterans, cadets and their families receive.

4.1 Supporting the Covenant in the city by promoting, raising awareness and facilitating engagement across all sectors

- Raising awareness through engagement, celebration and commemoration.
- Identify and promote the Plymouth Armed Forces Covenant in the city and beyond
- Reinforce closer ties with Serving personnel in all Services
- Encourage business community engagement with the Armed Forces community
- Gain better understanding of local Armed Forces Community needs, including families and children

4.2 Continue to build and develop relationships with the Business Sector

- Proactively engage with the Business sector to achieve agreed outcomes
- Work with Business Sector to create and secure jobs for those in the Armed Forces Community
- Facilitate and support access to services each offers
- Promote signing the Armed Forces Covenant

4.3 Continue to build and develop relationships with the Voluntary, Charity and Community Sector

- Proactively engage with the Voluntary, Charity and Community sector to achieve agreed outcomes
- Facilitate and support access to services each offers

4.4 Continue to build and develop relationships with the Social Enterprise Sector

- Proactively engage with the Social Enterprise Sector to achieve agreed outcomes
- Facilitate and support access to services each offers

4.5 Improve Healthcare provision to the Armed Forces Community by working closely with those who can deliver the best outcomes

- Greater promotion of Op Courage to the Armed Forces community
- Support the Plymouth Armed Forces Partnership to increase the number of Veteran friendly GP practice accreditations in the City
- Support the Plymouth Armed Forces Covenant Group to lobby for better access to dental health care

- Help to ensure that family members maintain their relative position on any NHS waiting list, if moved around the UK due to the Service person being posted
- Ensure that local Veterans receive priority treatment (subject to the clinical needs of others) in respect of NHS hospital treatment relating to a condition resulting from their service in the Armed Forces
- Make sure that Veterans are able to access mental health professionals who have an understanding of Armed Forces culture
- Guarantee that members of the Armed Forces Community enjoy the same standard of, and access to, healthcare as that received by any other UK citizen in the area they live
- Greater promotion of Op Restore in the Armed Forces Community
- Encourage the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee to include Armed Forces Friendly GPs and Dental Surgeries to their work programme

4.6 Ensure that Service Leaver transitioning into employment, and civilian life, are fully championed

- Promotion of the Skills Launchpad Plymouth service connecting Veterans and serving members of HM Armed Forces and their families with opportunities for skills, training, education, careers and jobs
- Maintain and enhance the city partnership with Department for Work And Pensions(DWP), the Career Transitions Partnership(CTP) and Regular Forces Employment Association (RFEA)
- Fully support and engage with the Royal Navy leavers programme
- Maintain and enhance the engagement with city businesses

4.7 Facilitating opportunities for greater collaboration with all City organisations engaged with the Armed Forces

- Convene a partnership leadership team
- Appropriately support task and finish activity set up by the leadership or partnership
- Organise and lead regular Plymouth Armed Forces Covenant Partnership meetings each year
- Identify Armed Forces provision in the city
- Promote networking and information exchange between partners

This page is intentionally left blank