

# Cabinet

Monday 12 August 2024

## PRESENT:

Councillor Laing, Vice Chair in the Chair.  
Councillors Aspinall, Briars-Delve, Coker, Dann, Haydon, Lowry and Penberthy.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Evans OBE and Cresswell.

Also in attendance: Liz Bryant (Head of Legal/Monitoring Officer), David Draffan (Service Director for Economic Development), Nigel Godefroy (Chair of City Centre Company), Holly Golden (Head of Procurement), Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health), David Haley (Director of Children’s Services), Steve Hughes (Chief Executive of City Centre Company), Patrick Knight (Manager for Economy/Partnerships/Regeneration), Alan Knott (Policy and Intelligence Advisor), Tracey Lee (Chief Executive), Kezia Lock (Economic Development Officer), Tracey Naismith (Head of Community Safety), David Northey (Service Director for Finance), Anthony Payne (Strategic Director for Place), Jamie Sheldon (Senior Governance Advisor), and Gary Walbridge (Interim Strategic Director for Adults, Health and Communities).

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 3.29 pm.

*Note: The full discussion can be viewed on the webcast of the City Council meeting at [www.plymouth.gov.uk](http://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.*

### 17. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### 18. **Minutes**

Cabinet agreed the minutes from the meeting held 8 July 2024 as a true and accurate record subject to the amendment of the correction of Gary Walbridge’s title to Interim Strategic Director for Adults, Health and Communities.

### 19. **Questions from the Public**

Question was submitted by Mike Sheaff	
<b>Question:</b> A Council Key Performance Indicator showing improvement in “spending money wisely” is “council tax revenue per dwelling”. Last year’s £76 increase obviously exceeded the £26 rise the previous year when a council tax freeze was imposed. What persuades you that council tax increases	<b>Response:</b> The Council Tax Revenue per Dwelling is published nationally and is part of Government benchmarking and allows comparison of Local Authorities’ varying ability to raise Council Tax income to support service demands.

<p>provide assurance you are “spending money wisely”?</p>	<p>The level of Council Tax is determined each year at Full Council by democratically elected Members.</p> <p>It is a useful indicator but it must be remembered Council Tax makes up more than 50% of Plymouth City Council’s core revenue funding, to provide over 300 core services.</p> <p>A Council Tax increase is not something we do lightly given the pressures most households are already facing but the alternative would mean taking away services that people need and rely on. We can promise Plymouth residents that we will continue to be dogged about providing value for money and making every pound count</p>
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20. **Chair's Urgent Business**

Councillor Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children’s Social Care, Culture and Communications) highlighted the following points:

- a) 12 August 2024 marked the three year anniversary of the Keyham shooting and Plymouth City Council’s (PCC) were with the families, the survivors and the communities in Keyham, Ford and throughout the city who were affected.

Councillor Laing invited Councillor Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Events, Cemeteries and Crematoria) to provide an update on the protest which happened in Plymouth a week prior:

- b) The murders of three little girls in Southport had sparked large national protests, including one in Plymouth City Centre;
- c) Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) had written to the Leader of Southport to offer condolences and support;
- d) PCC had received a small amount of online criticism for speaking out against the protest, as the protest was not peaceful but embedded in lies, untruths, misinformation and deep-rooted hatred towards certain communities;
- e) Officers had been reaching out to partners and local organisations and groups to listen and hear their experiences and views;
- f) Thanks were given to the police for their bravery, resilience and patience at the protest and best wishes were given to the small number of police officers who were injured;

- g) Thanks were given to the Council Officers in the Civil Protection Team who oversaw the operation, the Street Service Team who rose before dawn to clean up the city, and those who were involved in the recovery process;
- h) Thanks were given to businesses in the city centre, most of which made the decision to close early. The Theatre Royal cancelled an evening performance and bus companies re-routed services to avoid the protest;
- i) PCC would continue to tackle racism and do more to understand it in Plymouth;
- j) Racism was a hate crime and would not be tolerated in Plymouth and it was incumbent on all citizens to call out and report hate crime, and support those who were victims;
- k) Plymouth would be a united city that embraces and celebrates diversity in all communities.

21. **Plymouth City Centre BID renewal programme**

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- a) Plymouth's first BID was back in 2005, and was only the second BID in the UK outside of London;
- b) Highstreets across the country had been struggling, and although Plymouth had been also, it had not to the extent of others due to the work of individuals and this Administration;
- c) The Council had supported and invested in various aspects of the city centre including:
  - i) The Box, where 850,000 people had visited;
  - ii) Bretonside Bus Station was an unwelcoming place as a bus terminal, but was now a successful cinema complex and leisure facility;
  - iii) The new Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) was a £25 million investment in the city centre and would kick start the regeneration of the West End, and would potentially bring in 100,00 visitors a year;
  - iv) The University of Plymouth had a new £4 million facility;
  - v) A grant of £8.5 million had been secured to repurpose the city centre;
  - vi) There was ongoing regeneration of the Guildhall into a new music and entertainment venue;
  - vii) The work undertaken in Old Town Street and New George Street was coming to a conclusion;

viii) Work on Armada Way would be started and would be a considerable investment in the city centre;

- d) After seeing the investment the Council had put into the city centre, businesses had been more willing to invest;
- e) Since Plymouth Market had had investment, it housed some of the top performing restaurants on Trip Advisor;
- f) The housing agenda in the city centre gave the opportunity to provide new housing.

Nigel Godfrey (Chair of the Plymouth City Centre Company) added:

- g) The partnership between Plymouth City Centre Company and PCC had formed 25 years ago, under Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council)'s leadership;
- h) The City Centre Company represented over 500 businesses and not only worked to provide a safe, secure and clean city centre, but ensured the ongoing viability of both individual businesses and the city centre as a whole;
- i) The city centre represented the life blood of Plymouth, as the members employed thousands, residents shopped, worked and spent their leisure time and would increasingly be a place where more people would live;
- j) A successful city centre was a sign of confidence and a sign of a successful city;
- k) The City Centre Company remained steadfast in their commitment to be the trusted partner, which glued all of the parties together during good and difficult times.

Steve Hughes (Chief Executive of the Plymouth City Centre Company) added:

- l) The draft business plan was being worked on, and was designed for the business audience who were the BID levy payers in the city centre;
- m) Businesses had noticed the investments that had been made by the Council into the city centre;
- n) Footfall was rising, and vacancy rates were falling due to new businesses opening in the last year. This also put the city centre in a strong position for a more diverse, mixed economy;
- o) Improved public spaces would be used to deliver events from busking to full scale theatrical productions at the new performance space at North Cross or in Old Town Square.

David Draffan (Service Director for Economic Development) added:

- p) Economic Development was always done in partnership;

- q) The plan was to introduce New Use Residential, health, leisure and culture into the city centre;
- r) £250 million worth of projects were happening with another £250 million in the pipeline.

Patrick Knight (Manager for Economy/Partnerships/Regeneration) added:

- s) This was the fifth time the city centre BID was renewed, and in that time £11 million had been raised in the private sector to add to what the Council had supplied;
- t) Kezia Lock (Economic Development Officer) was introduced.

Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) added:

- u) Businesses within the city centre provided services and employment to residents;
- v) The City Centre Company was a legitimate local voice, and was a way to engage easily when matters arose of differing opinion;
- w) 25 years ago, the residential quarter in the city centre was three small Plymouth Community Homes developments, and there were now substantially more residents in the city centre, not all of which were students;
- x) The role of the City Centre Company going forward would not only be to represent businesses but to help smooth relationships between residents and businesses so the city centre would work for everyone.

Cabinet agreed to:

1. Support the principles and overall approach of the Plymouth City Centre Company BID and its draft Business Plan for 2025 to 2030 (however the BID legislation did not require the Local Authority's endorsement);
2. Endorse the principles and overall approach of the Plymouth City Centre Company BID and its draft Business Plan for 2025 to 2030 (however the BID legislation did not require the Local Authority's endorsement);
3. Approve the City Council's financial and in-kind contributions as set out in this report (totalling £590,000) and to demonstrate its continued commitment to the City Centre Company BID at existing levels through the proposed BID Concordat and Contract for the provision of services within the Plymouth City Centre Business Improvement District area;
4. Authorise the Chief Executive as Ballot Holder to instruct a Ballot Holder to undertake a ballot of appropriate businesses within the City Centre Company Business Improvement District area;
5. Delegate to the Service Director (Economic Development) the right to vote on behalf of the City Council in the Plymouth City Centre Company Business Improvement District

ballot;

6. Delegate to the Service Director (Economic Development) approval of the Plymouth City Centre Company Business Improvement District Operating Agreement, provided it accords with the general principles set out in this report.

7. Make a recommendation to City Council regarding the exercising its power of veto.

## 22. **Modern Slavery Statement 2023/24**

Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- a) The report was the annual statement which had started in 2019 after a charter was signed in 2018;
- b) The report set out the steps the Council was taking to prevent and combat modern slavery;
- c) There were relatively low levels of modern day slavery in Plymouth, however the Council was proactively taking steps to minimise the likelihood of it happening;
- d) Modern day slavery was a largely hidden crime and therefore it was important that the Council were never complacent and would continue to uphold the principles set out in the Modern Slavery Charter;
- e) Since the launch of the Charter, its contents had become normal good practice across almost every part of the public sector and major employers;
- f) The modern slavery statement laid out the Council's commitment to combatting modern slavery and highlighted the work that had been undertaken to combat modern slavery in supply chains alongside highlighting the work that had been done in the city and regionally with partners around community safety;
- g) Raising awareness of the signs of modern slavery was a key focus for the work moving forward.

Councillor Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Events, Cemeteries and Crematoria) added:

- h) PCC continued to work closely with the police and other partners to ensure communities were aware of modern slavery and professionals were able to recognise the signs and could report concerns appropriately;
- i) PCC worked with colleagues over the past year to ensure those working in the city in the care sector through International Visa Schemes were offered appropriate signposting and support, ensuring they have good working conditions;
- j) The police had been supported in response to concerns of potential modern slavery in business premises to ensure all those involved were taken care of and appropriate

safeguarding was put in place;

- k) Over the coming months, Safer Plymouth would refresh the city's Modern Slavery Toolkit to include updates legislation. This would ensure that all partners would know how and when to report concerns.

Tracey Naismith (Head of Community Safety) added:

- l) The partnership toolkit reflected the changes in legislation and the changes to the National Referral Mechanism;
- m) PCC regularly attended the regional Anti-Slavery Partnership;
- n) There had been national, regional and local concerns raised by those working in the care sector around working conditions, terms of employment, accommodation and feelings they had been treated differently to their white British counterparts. Emma Crowther (Service Director for Integrated Commissioning) and Mark Mortimer (Project Manager) had created a comprehensive response to these concerns;
- o) Plymouth Hope had been commissioned to do specific work with those who worked in that sector to ensure they were accessing support and understanding their rights;
- p) There had not been any cases of modern slavery which had gone into the National Referral Mechanism but there was an understanding that as system there was more that needed to be done to help people to integrate;
- q) The response from Plymouth was being replicate across the region and was a great piece of partnership work.

Holly Golden (Head of Procurement) added:

- r) The Procurement Strategy for the organisation had been recently published and highlighted that modern slavery was one of the key strategic themes to focus on.

Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) concluded:

- s) Just because Plymouth didn't experience modern slavery on a large scale, it did not mean it was not important.

Cabinet agreed to:

1. Note the progress made on the delivery of the Modern Slavery Statement and the next steps required to further tackle modern slavery;
2. Agree the updated Modern Slavery Statement.

## 23. **Finance and Capital Monitoring report**

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- a) The report covered the first three months of the financial calendar, April, May and June 2024, and reflected on the budget set in February 2024;
- b) The budget was set at £241.6 million and the forecast was a £241.6 million expenditure at the end of the financial year;
- c) In the past there had been variance of anywhere between £8 million and £5 million, but the budget was currently at nil variance;
- d) The Children's directorate had a potential forecast variance of up to £5 million;
- e) There was an increase within the capital budget which was due to additional grant funding that had been received from Central Government;
- f) All prudential indicators were satisfactory for the first quarter.

David Northey (Service Director for Finance) added:

- g) It was the responsibility of any directorate that identified overspend or pressure to mitigate it;
- h) Credential indicators were present in the report due to changes in the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) regulations.

Cabinet agreed to:

1. Note the forecast revenue monitoring position at Period 3 as set out in this report was nil variance.
2. Recommend the Director for Children's Services reported back to the next Cabinet meeting with a detailed plan on the mitigations of £4.942m to achieve a balanced position;
3. The Capital Budget 2024-2029 was revised to £360.488m as shown in Table 1, noting the removal of projects totalling £6.171m from the capital programme and recommended these amendments to Full Council for approval;
4. Note Prudential Indicators Q1.

## 24. **The King's Speech**

Councillor Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications) introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- a) This was the first Cabinet meeting since the King's Speech which highlighted the Government's legislative programme for this Parliament, and the report covered the Bills that had relevance to Local Government;



- b) The recommendations set out in the report would keep Cabinet informed of the progression of the Bills through Parliament by the Policy and Intelligence team;
- c) The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Panels would be invited to track and evaluate the impacts of relevant legislation as part of their ongoing work programmes;
- d) Councillors Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Events, Cemeteries and Crematoria) and Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities), as Council representatives on the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Police and Crime Panel, would assess the forthcoming Police and Crime Plan against relevant new legislation, specifically the Crime and Policing Bill.

In response to questions, it was explained:

- e) The Policy team had a plan and were collaborating with other departments within the Council to ensure the plan was at the forefront of the work programme;
- f) The work the Policy team did with Council services was important in understanding implications and also contributed to the development of the policy nationally and how it could feed into Select Committees and other discussions;
- g) MPs played an important role in supporting Plymouth in terms of development of legislation and feeding into debates in Parliament;

Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) added:

- h) There were 13,074 houses with planning permission in the Joint Local Plan area which had not been built;
- i) There was a problem within Plymouth, South Hams and West Devon with homes being built in areas with viability;
- j) Developers needed to deliver what they had promised, and not sit on enhanced land value;
- k) The Renter's Rights Bill was welcomed;
- l) Section 21 Notices were an issue which lead the Council to deal with more homelessness presentations, which caused disruption, especially to families.

Councillor Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) added:

- m) The King's Speech mentioned the Tobacco and Vapes Bill;
- n) The Public Health Team had completed a lot of positive work on this subject with adults and schools;

- o) Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health) and her team had been working on the enforcement to ensure Plymouth was protecting young people against vapes and vapes containing illegal substances.

Cabinet agreed to note the report.

25. **Leader's Announcements**

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

- a) This was the final Cabinet meeting for Anthony Payne (Strategic Director of Place) after working for the Council for 15 years to take up new opportunities outside of Local Government. Thanks were given to Anthony and the following achievements were highlighted: overseeing the team that created The Box and The Barcode, delivering many new homes for the city, modernising the Frontline Street Services Team, regenerating the city centre, creating new communities and valuable housing across the city as well as taking the lead in a number of areas including Net Zero;
- b) Thanks were given to Giles Perritt (Assistant Chief Executive) for his 24 years of service to the Council after his decision to retire. His achievements included leading the Elections team, the Communications team, Civil Protection, Legal and Democratic Services;
- c) The National Marine Park (NMP) summer programme was launched and provided over 900 free sessions at Tinside Lido, and Mount Wise pools, including the Swim Safe Programme, trials in scuba diving and snorkelling, lifeguarding and aqua-fit;
- d) There was a four-day Marine Citizenship Activity Programme at the Mount Batten Water Sports Centre for learning all about local wildlife and the importance of our coastline;
- e) Plymouth's Laureate of Words, Rosemarie Corlett, was inviting people to The Box to join her in her Letters to the Ocean where members of the public could pen heartfelt messages to the sea;
- f) There were volunteer activities such as coastal clean-ups and citizen science events throughout the summer;
- g) The Council had appointed Esther Pearson as the new CEO of the Mount Batten Centre;
- h) Over the past five years, a new vision for the Mount Batten Centre had been developed, with £5 million of Lottery Funding being secured;
- i) The Mount Batten Centre would not only be a gateway for the NMP but also a major drive of inclusion and community engagement, and a centre for international events such as the Cadet World Championships;

- j) The Council had been working closely with the fishing industry since the closure of the fish market in May, and the industry, Plymouth Fishing and Seafood Association and market owners, Sutton Harbour, had been brought together to formally look at options to reopen the market;
- k) A feasibility study and business planning exercise would determine the type and extent of the market and the steps that would be needed to operate a market in the short term, medium term, and to consider longer term sustainability;
- l) The Box recently presented the annual review to Scrutiny and the highlights included:
  - i) 272,000 visitors in 23/25 which was up 10% from the previous year;
  - ii) 26,000 school visits and 27,000 free family workshop sessions since opening;
  - iii) A third of the visitors to The Box were visiting for the first time, and a quarter had not visited a museum before;
  - iv) The Box won the Best Devon Attraction in the Muddy Stiletto Awards and was now in the national finals;
  - v) The Box also won a Trip Advisor Travelers Choice Award;
  - vi) The current show The Time Is Always Now – Artists Reframe the Black Figure had received five star review from national art critics and included work by 22 of the UK and USA’s most important living artists including the woman who painted Michelle Obama’s portrait, and two Turner Prize winners;
- m) Congratulations were given to the Plymouth Olympians who competed in the 2024 Paris Olympics.

26. **Cabinet Member Updates**

Councillor Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children’s Social Care, Culture and Communications) gave the following updates in Councillor Cresswell (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Apprenticeships) absence:

- a) Building Plymouth had been crowned winner at the Constructing Excellent Southwest Awards 2024;
- b) Building Plymouth’s Aspiring Rising Talent Network won the People and Culture Award 2024 at the Constructing Excellence Southwest Awards, which were held on 18 July at Aerospace Bristol.

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

- c) Over 200 boats took part in the Youth Cadet World Championships, all of which were crewed by young people between the ages of 7-17;

- d) Visitors for the Youth Cadet World Championships had come from Argentina, Germany, Belgium, Australia, South Africa, India and more;
- e) It was the Council's responsibility to ensure the water was safe for the public to use and there was still time to sign up to the partnership between the RNLI, Swim Safe and Plymouth Active Leisure, which taught young people how to be seen and safe in the water;
- f) Plymouth Active Leisure's Active Lifestyle team had a responsibility to encourage young people to be healthy, active and fit;
- g) The first of the four Fit and Fed Programmes was held in Victoria Park with 1000 people attending and 750 lunches were served. Partners from across Plymouth were present at the Fit and Fed Programme including Family Hubs, promotion for the Library services, Peninsula Dental, Community Builders, C-Tech Plus, Plymouth Energy Community and Livewell Southwest;
- h) The Fit and Fed sessions in the parks were for anybody in the local community to attend.
- i) Thousands of school clubs were being run across Plymouth and were aimed at young people with special educational needs, young people who receive free school meals or have other requirements to ensure families can access activities for their young people during the school holidays;
- j) The new Petanque facility at Stonehouse Creek opened on 21 August 2024;
- k) A new hockey pitch had been provided for Brickfields in partnership with Stoke Damerel and was scheduled to finish by next Spring;
- l) A Public Health Officer from New Zealand visited Brickfields to get a better idea on how Active Health is run in Plymouth;
- m) PCC were a key partner to the building of the Brickfields Hub and it was the biggest investment in sport that the city had had since the Life Centre;

Councillor Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Events, Cemeteries and Crematoria) gave the following updates:

- n) The British Firework Championship was set to take place on 14 and 15 August 2024 and had been running for 27 years;
- o) The West End Carnival would take place in the streets around Plymouth Market on 24 August 2024;
- p) Seafest Plymouth would be taking place on 14 and 15 September at the Mount Batton Centre, Tinside Lido, the Royal William Yard and Mount Edgcumbe;
- q) In 2018 it was discussed that two of the aged crematoriums needed to be replaced with new facilities with better access for people with disabilities and to create a

better place to support bereaved families;

i) The new site would include three ceremony rooms designed to meet the varying needs of the public and would suit a number of mourners and desired style of the ceremony;

ii) The new site would also include high quality audio visual equipment for the ceremony to allow those who would not be present to take part;

iii) The waiting areas, alongside the flow of people throughout the building, had been designed to ensure that each funeral party received the highest quality experience when saying goodbye to their loved ones;

iv) New planting had been designed to be sympathetic of the environment and a café had been added to offer an additional wait facility;

v) The café was separate from the crematorium, and could be used by people visiting memorials of loved ones;

vi) The site was a peaceful setting which was now ready to welcome the bereaved and their families and friends;

vii) Thanks were given to all involved in the new crematorium project, including Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health) and Graham Smith (Head of Bereavement Services);

viii) An open day was being held for all to come and view the new facility;

ix) The walls at the new facility could change colour to meet the needs of the individual.

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

r) Plymouth Summer of Nature was an initiative launched by the Council to help people of all ages connect to the city's blue and green spaces through free events;

i) Plymouth's Laureate of Words, Rosemarie Corlett, had held a foraging event and letters to the ocean walks at Ernesettle Creek;

ii) Eco-therapy for young people with special educational needs and disabilities had taken place;

iii) Community composting workshops had been held at Poole Farm;

iv) A Bio-blitz had taken place at Devonport Park to aid with pollination;

v) A beach clean and shark egg case count had taken place at Tinside;

- s) 18 more events were planned before the start of September, all related to nature and blue and green spaces;
- t) £1 million from the Council's Climate Emergency Investment Fund was being used for improvements for two of Plymouth's Youth Centres both in Honicknowle and Efford, and would include installation of solar panels and roof and wall insulations to create lower emissions for those buildings.

Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) gave the following updates:

- u) Sterling House in Honicknowle was a release of surplus Council owned land, and was a long-vacant nursing home. It was demolished by the Council using a combination of land release funds from the Government and the Plan for Homes budget and came to more than £700,000;
  - i) The vacant health centre adjacent to Sterling House was purchased by the Council and demolished and the combined site was advertised to developers in February 2021;
  - ii) The site was sold to Live West for £1, who proposed to deliver 25 affordable, high quality homes, 12 of which would be made available to service veterans self-builders;
  - iii) The Council part-funded a veterans charity, Alabaré, to help support self-builders through the construction process right up into moving into the completed homes as tenants;
  - iv) Construction was completed last week and the quality of the buildings was clear for everybody to see;
  - v) Live West had organised an event to officially open the housing later in 2024;
- v) The surplus storage yard in St Peter's Close in Plympton was repurposed by the Council as a housing site under the Plan for Homes Programme;
  - i) The site was released to Westward Housing Group in 2022 for £25,000 following the submission of a proposal to build five bungalows, three of which had been made available at social rent, and two for shared ownership. One bungalow had been built specifically for a wheelchair user, and the other four were accessible;
  - ii) The three social rent bungalows allowed applicants to 'right size' their accommodation in order to release under occupied family homes;
  - iii) There had been positive feedback from tenants, one of which had fed back that she was in her dream home and was now reunited with her dog. This showed the importance of partnerships and turning unused land into used land;
  - iv) All of the bungalows had air source heat pumps, solar panels, bird and bat boxes, and electric car charging points;

- v) Thanks were given to Westward Housing Group, the builders, the Council team and Homes England who made financial contributions;
- w) The Council built open market housing which was high quality, design lead, environmentally friendly and viable in the city at Broadland Gardens;
  - i) Broadland Gardens had met all of the Section 106 obligations, it was financially viable and surplus made on the site would support more affordable housing in Plymouth;
  - ii) Alderwoman Pengelly's family had agreed to the Council planting a memorial tree for her in the green at Broadland Gardens.

27. **LGA Update**

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

- a) Councillor Shaun Davis had stepped down as Chair of the LGA after being elected as an MP;
- b) Councillor Louise Gittins had been unanimously nominated to be the new Chair of the LGA;
- c) The LGA had published a joint report with the County Council's network which concluded that the SEND system was failing to deliver, was not financially sustainable and needed urgent reform;
- d) The Council were making good progress following the SEND inspection in 2023 and had plans in place to help improve the Early Health and Targeted Support;
- e) The Department for Education had upgraded the threat to the overall financial stability of councils to critical;
- f) The LGA had been doing work around homelessness and although Plymouth had been tackling homelessness, the numbers remained high and the number of people in temporary accommodation was slowly increasing.