



Oversight and Governance

Chief Executive's Department
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CABINET

Monday 10 March 2025
9.00 am
Council House, Plymouth

Members:

Councillor Evans OBE, Chair

Councillor Laing, Vice Chair

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

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

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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 - 18)

To sign and confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2025.

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.

Items for discussion

6. Equality and Diversity Annual Report:

(Pages 19 - 34)

Items for decision

7. Economic Strategy Delivery Plan 2024-2034, including Delivery Plan:

(To Follow)

8. Plymouth Ports Strategy:

(To Follow)

9. Creative Industries Plan:

(To Follow)

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| 10. Plymouth Active Leisure - introduction of Agency Model: | (To Follow) |
| 11. Supported Accommodation for Young People Aged 16+ - Contract Variation: | (Pages 35 - 52) |

Items for noting

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|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 12. Leader's Announcements: | (Verbal Report) |
| 13. Cabinet Member Updates: | (Verbal Report) |

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Cabinet

Monday 10 February 2025

PRESENT:

Councillor Evans OBE, in the Chair.

Councillor Laing, Vice Chair.

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

Also in attendance: Councillor John Stephens (Chair of Scrutiny Management Board), Liz Bryant (Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal Services), Emma Crowther (Service Director for Integrated Commissioning), Tracey Lee (Chief Executive), Professor Steve Maddern (Director of Public Health), Jamie Sheldon (Senior Governance Advisor), Helen Slater (Lead Accountancy Manager) and, Oliver Woodhams (Head of Finance).

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 3.45 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.

94. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

95. **Minutes**

The minutes from the meeting held 13 January 2025 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

96. **Questions from the Public**

There was one question from a member of the public.

The following question was asked by Jillian Oxley	
<p>Question: Evidence of appropriate assessment, including local consultation with residents, should be made for each bus shelter location prior to installation.</p> <p>When will Plymouth's new bus shelters be fixed to align with DfT Inclusive Mobility guidance, ensuring they meet the needs of all residents at each shelter location?"</p>	<p>Response: The Plymouth Bus Shelter Replacement Programme, which is now substantially complete, has seen the introduction of brand-new modern shelters across the whole of Plymouth.</p> <p>The bus shelters are provided by our new bus shelter contractor, Clear Channel UK Limited, who own and maintain the assets at no cost to the council.</p>

	<p>The new shelters have better lighting, improved seating and relocated real-time information to make it easier for passengers to view, all in accordance with the guidance set out within the Department for Transport’s Inclusive Mobility guide^[1], with some shelters also installed with ‘living roofs’ to help make the area greener, healthier and more biodiverse. In addition, 220 of the bus shelters have solar panels.</p> <p>Across Plymouth there are a number of bus shelter configurations, with the type of shelter at each location determined by site specific factors such as the space available on the footway and the location of underground utilities and services.</p> <p>When installing the new shelters, the starting point for the specification was to replicate the old configurations as far as practicable. However, given changes in legislation since the previous contract was awarded in 1999, this has not been possible at every site. This is because space needs to be allowed, both within and around each shelter, for wheelchair access wherever possible (again aligning with the Department of Transport guidance). The new shelters need to be bigger to accommodate these accessibility requirements: hence changes have been required at some locations.</p> <p>With regard to the bus shelter locations, it was clear through the tendering process for the new contract that Plymouth historically had a large number of bus shelters for its size. At the time of tendering for the new contract, all companies expressing an interest advised the council that Plymouth had too many shelters and that any bid would be based on a reduction in the overall number of shelters, for a commercially viable contract to be delivered at no cost to</p>
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	<p>the council. There was however a commitment to not remove any bus stops. The decision on which shelters would not be replaced was not taken lightly. The process was data-led and based on the recommendations of the cross-party Bus Shelters Advisory Group who analysed every single site against set criteria, including service levels, usage of the shelters and the proximity of other shelters, in order to minimise the impact on as many bus passengers as possible.</p> <p>[1] Inclusive Mobility. A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure</p>
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97. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

98. **Budget Scrutiny Recommendations**

Councillor Stephens (Chair of Scrutiny Management Board) introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- a) On 21 and 22 January 2025 the Scrutiny Management Board undertook a detailed examination of the Council's budget proposals for 2025/26, focussing on both immediate pressures and long term sustainability;
- b) There were 19 recommendations which reflected several key priorities ensuring robust financial management, protecting essential services and maintaining support for Plymouth's most vulnerable residents;
- c) The Scrutiny Management Board had paid particular attention to areas which were experiencing significant cost pressure, including Adult Social Care and Children's Services where sustainable demand management approaches had been identified;
- d) The Scrutiny Management Board had focussed on risk management and financial resilience;
- e) The recommendations regarding working balances and Reserve Strategy aimed to ensure the Council maintained adequate financial buffers whilst reducing reliance on one-off resources;
- f) Cabinet had responded positively to the recommendations and had accepted the majority outright. Where recommendations had been partially agreed and the

Scrutiny Management Board welcomed the constructive dialogue regarding implementation, time-scales and practical considerations;

- g) The recommendations regarding service accessibility, including support for residents who weren't digitally abled, and the proposed council tax scheme for service personnel demonstrated the Council's commitment to ensuring Council Services remained accessible to all residents;
- h) The Scrutiny Management Board would continue to monitor progress of the recommendations through their work programmes and those of the four scrutiny panels, particularly in areas such as homelessness services, SEND support and the Capital Programme.

Cabinet agreed to note the recommendations from the Scrutiny Management Board.

99. **Cabinet Response to Budget Scrutiny Recommendations**

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

- a) Recommendation number one: the Section 151 Officer would undertake a comprehensive review of the Working Balances Threshold using Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) best practice guidance and comparisons to the Council's statistical neighbours to determine if the 5% remained appropriate given the current risks. The Cabinet response to this recommendation was 'agreed';
- b) Recommendation number two: subject to the advice of the Section 151 Office, Cabinet would prepare a detailed plan to rebuild the reserves within two years to provide an adequate buffer against financial risks whilst implementing a clear strategy to reduce the Council's reliance upon the use of one-off resources and reserves. This recommendation was partially agreed by Cabinet, subject to the findings from recommendation number one and that the required time scale might need to be extended to cover the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) rather than the two years set out in the recommendation;
- c) Recommendation number three: Cabinet would update the comprehensive Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) when the multi-year settlements were agreed and would submit to scrutiny for consideration before the Council would take a final decision. The Cabinet response to this recommendation was 'agreed';
- d) Recommendation number four: all significant Capital schemes would have a detailed risk assessment on the impact of further interest rate changes on scheme viability before proceeding. The Cabinet response to this recommendation was 'agreed';
- e) Recommendation number five: Cabinet would consider a council tax discount scheme for service personnel who were deployed for more than six months, similar to single person discount. The Cabinet response to this recommendation was 'agreed', however this would be subject to further consideration with information on the criteria from the Scrutiny Management Board. Any amendments would be an

additional financial burden and would be subject to a public consultation;

- f) Recommendation number six: six monthly updates would be provided to the relevant scrutiny panels on the delivery of planned savings within the homelessness service, where the £724,000 additional funding had been required. The Cabinet response to this recommendation was 'agreed';
- g) Recommendation number seven: planned works to bring together the Asset Management Plan would be considered at a future meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board and an asset register would be provided for this purpose. The Cabinet response to this recommendation was 'agreed';
- h) Recommendation number eight: the Council should develop a comprehensive communication strategy to inform residents who were not digitally able about the face-to-face services offered, including service locations, operating hours and this should be distributed through non-digital channels, with primary distribution through the annual council tax bill.

Councillor Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Sport, Leisure and HR & OD) added to recommendation eight:

- i) Recommendation eight had been partially agreed. There was already prioritised support for residents who were not digitally able including:
 - i. A digital assistance telephone line;
 - ii. Bookable appointments at the Central Library, Plymstock Library, Plympton Library and St Budeaux Library;
- j) Work was being carried out with the digital exclusion team to work with health and well-being hubs and Community Builders;
- k) This information would not be distributed through the council tax bill as it was not a universal service which the general public could access. This was targeted support and if this was more generalised there would not be the staff resources to support those who were genuinely digitally excluded.

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) continued:

- l) Recommendation number nine: Cabinet would consider what additional funding may be made available to commemorate Victory in Europe and Victory over Japan day. The Cabinet response to this recommendation was 'agreed' subject to any potential financial implications;
- m) Recommendation number 10: clear communication should be in place to ensure residents were aware that direct cremations were available at the park crematorium. The Cabinet response to this recommendation was 'agreed';
- n) Recommendation number 11: Cabinet would review the effectiveness and sustainability of demand management approaches within the adult social care given

the £12 million of additional cost that had been identified. The Cabinet response to this recommendation was 'agreed';

- o) Recommendation number 12: the relevant Cabinet Member would work with DELT Shared Services to ensure that internet connectivity was consistent across the Plymouth City Council (PCC) estate, particularly in libraries to enable residents to gain access to online services.

Councillor Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Sport, Leisure and HR & OD) added to recommendation 12:

- p) DELT Shared Services were working closely with the library service to modernise their equipment, including chip and pin being available in the library;
- q) There was a priority on offering remote services within libraries so residents could become more digital and have better access to Council services.

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) continued:

- r) Recommendation number 13: the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel would undertake a review of the works undertaken by the Dental Task Force. The Cabinet response to this recommendation was 'agreed';
- s) Recommendation number 14: the additional funding to process the Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) was welcomed and a regular update on progress against this backlog would be provided to the Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel. The Cabinet response to this recommendation was 'agreed';
- t) Recommendation number 15: Cabinet would review the funding model for SEND transport to determine a sustainable long-term solution, including consideration of independent travel training programmes where appropriate. The Cabinet response to this recommendation was 'agreed'.

Councillor Cresswell (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Apprenticeships) added to recommendation number 15:

- u) The recommendation was welcomed and there was already travel training in place. The work on this would continue to ensure the training was reaching as many parents and young people as possible to highlight not just the financial advantages but also the advantages of independence.

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) continued:

- v) Recommendation number 16: A letter would be written to Government requesting a review of the criteria in relation to home to school transport. Such a review would consider whether receipt of mobility vehicles or higher rate mobility component of disability living allowance or personal independent payments could be included in the local authority's assessment of transport. The Cabinet response to this recommendation was 'agreed';

- w) Recommendation number 17: Cabinet would review the effectiveness and sustainability of demand management approaches within Children's Services given the £19 million of additional costs identified and further accelerated the use of Council assets in the approach to reduce demand on high costs placements. The Cabinet response to this recommendation was 'agreed'. This recommendation would also be referred to in the budget;
- x) Recommendation number 18: The Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Apprenticeships would establish a robust monitoring framework to oversee the SEND capital programme, ensuring clear accountability for project milestones. Progress with this would form regular reports to the Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel. The Cabinet response to this recommendation was 'agreed';
- y) Recommendation number 19: The Leader of the Council would write to the Government to request that notification of the Public Health Grant was received before the 31 December 2025 to enable adequate planning in the new year's budget.

Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) added:

- z) There was an uplift in the Public Health Grant this year and thanks were given to the Minister responsible for this;
- aa) There were changes from Government whereby funding would be granted through needs basis;
- bb) There would be more information about how the Grant would be distributed once the comprehensive spending review was reported.

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) continued:

- cc) Thanks were given to the Scrutiny Management Board for their thorough review of the budget and the time and effort that went into producing detailed recommendations.

Cabinet agreed to the recommendations and responses.

100. **Proposed Capital and Revenue Budget 2025/26**

Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- a) This was the first time in 14 years where the Council had seen an uplift in financial support received from Government in terms of the Revenue Support Grant;
- b) Resources for Local Government had been reduced by the previous Government;
- c) The comprehensive review was a recognition of the pivotal role that Local Government played in the delivery of Public Services including, but not limited to:

- i) Working with the health service on prevention;
 - ii) The care of vulnerable children;
 - iii) The well-being of vulnerable adults;
 - iv) Collection of bins and filling in of potholes;
- d) There were clear signals from Government that the role was Local Government and the need for repair to local finances was understood;
- e) Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution were in the pipeline which may lead to new structures. This would place additional time demands on the Chief Executive and senior staff members;
- f) Plymouth City Council (PCC) had asked the Government for exceptional financial support but not for additional money;
- g) Although PCC were challenged financially, much like other local authorities, the budget placed the Council in a strong and balanced position;
- h) The budget reinforced Plymouth's pre-eminence in the region with regards to delivery of services and support given to partners in the private sector;
- i) Although economic development was not a statutory function, it was a function that PCC exercised to ensure growth happened. This work within the budget would support the creation of 8,000 jobs;
- j) Works from PCC included:
- i) The Freeport investment;
 - ii) The Innovation Bars at OceansGate;
 - iii) Investment into the National Marine Park (NMP);
 - iv) Investment into the remaking of the peninsula at Plymstock;
 - v) The Brickfields regeneration;
- k) PCC would continue to ask the Government for resources as there was ambition for the city and Plymouth was a significant deliverer of growth for the country.

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) added:

- l) Even through financial challenges, PCC was able to offer a balanced budget;

- m) The budget would be taken to City Council on 24 February 2025 to give every Councillor the opportunity to fully consider it;
- n) The budget was being predominantly spent on the provision of adult social care, children's social care, providing support to people in homelessness and children's special educational needs. In excess of 75% of the 2023/24 budget was spent on the provision of those services and subject to final sign off, this budget would have 83% spent on those provisions;
- o) The following additions had been made within the budget:
 - i) An additional £12 million had been allocated for adult social care;
 - ii) £724,000 had been additionally allocated for homelessness and emergency bed and breakfasts;
 - iii) Children's Social Care and home to school transport had been allocated an additional £19 million;
- p) There was an increased allocation of £13.3 million from the Government;
- q) The additional cost pressures and adjustments required totalled over £50 million. These were offset by Government grants;
- r) This was a positive budget and it was highlighted that PCC would not be closing libraries, there was an increase allocation of net zero budgets to reinforce that commitments and additional money had been allocated for demand lead services;
- s) Additional commitments to Plymouth Active Leisure were confirmed, with increased funding being allocated.

Councillor Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Sport, Leisure and HR & OD) added:

- t) There were continued investments in Brickfields and Foulston Park;
- u) Plymouth Active Leisure had increased the amount of people using the Life Centre;
- v) PCC had helped the Life Centre invest nearly £500,000 into their gym equipment which had driven up membership by 6%;
- w) There would be an open weekend on 14 March 2025 at Foulston Park to celebrate the opening of the new health and well-being hub.

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) continued:

- x) The budget papers did not reflect any financial provision for the cost of undertaking the referendum for a directly elected Mayor in Plymouth for which a petition had been received. The Risk Register stated that this would have significant risk and the financial implications arising from the call for a referendum of a directly elected

Mayor and any resulting election without the mitigation being contingency funded would have to be identified;

- y) The cost in 2025/26 of holding a referendum would be £410,000 and the only contingency funds available were through the working balances and although the petition had yet to be validated, it was likely that PCC would need to budget for this cost;
- z) PCC had been criticised by their external auditors for the level of reserves available and although work had been put in to increasing this amount over the past few years, the cost of the referendum would immediately impact those reserves;
- aa) Proposed the following recommendation: That Cabinet recommended a revenue budget for 2025/26 to the sum of £253,008 million to City Council subject to a further draw down of £410,000 from the working balances in 2025/26 to cover the cost of the referendum for a directly elected Mayor resulting from the receipt of a petition to that effect should the proper officer agree a valid petition has been received.

Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) added:

- bb) The money to run the referendum had to be found, and there was no choice but to take the money from the working balances as otherwise it would have to be drawn from other essential resources such as grass cutting or the Theatre Royal’;
- cc) Although it might be an interesting debate, there would be no money from Government to fund a directly elected Mayor, nor their office and therefore running this would be in addition to the existing cost of running the Council;
- dd) Having a directly elected Mayor would not reduce the number of Councillors, nor the need for a Cabinet.

Councillor Coker (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport) added:

- ee) A proposed amendment: Subject to Cabinet agreeing item nine on the agenda that the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry Joint Committee Revenue Budget and Capital Programme and 2025/26 Business Plan would be included within the final budget for Council’s approval.

Helen Slater (Lead Accountancy Manager) added:

- ff) It was a strong position to be able to bring a balanced budget to the new year without any financial support from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG);
- gg) Although there had been significant budget allocations to support pressures in children’s social care and home to school transport, this level of investment was not sustainable long term;
- hh) Any amendments agreed would be reflected in the final budget report.

Tracey Lee (Chief Executive) added:

- ii) The MTFP would accompany the final report to Full Council.

Cabinet agreed to the following recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Note that this proposed budget has been based on the Letter of Assurance received in February 2024 from MHCLG (DLUHC as was), in reference to the accounting treatment of the Council's pension arrears in 2019/20;
2. Note the Financial Risks as set out in Appendix 7;
3. Note the section from the Council's Section 151 Officer (Chief Finance Officer) on the robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of the level of reserves;
4. Note that the Fire and Police Council Tax precepts would not be confirmed until after the Cabinet meeting and delegated to the Section 151 Officer to make final amendments to Council Tax Resolution, to include Fire and Police precepts, prior to City Council;
5. Recommend the following to City Council, subject to amendments by the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Leader reflecting any final technical adjustments and changes upon receipt of the Final Local Government Finance Settlement;
 - a. The Revenue Budget 2025/26 £253.008m;
 - b. The drawdown of a maximum of £2.088m of flexible capital receipts, as set out in the report;
 - c. The Capital Budget 2025/26 £395.864m;
 - d. The Capital Financing Strategy 2025/26;
 - e. The Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26 (incorporating the Non-Treasury Management Strategy and the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement).

101. **Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry 2025-2026 Revenue Budget and Capital Programme**

Councillor Coker (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport) introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- a) The joint Chairs of the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry Joint Committee and relevant portfolio holders of both authorities were continuing to lobby Government, who had the ability to apply Retail Price Index (RPI) to bridge tolls. This was being progressed with the support of local MPs to seek a long-term package of financial

support for the Tamar Bridge;

- b) Tamar 2050 had been introduced in February 2024 to provide a more robust agenda for the future aspirations regarding the Tamar crossing and would provide more traction regarding Government support in the future.

Cabinet agreed:

1. That the 2025/26 revenue estimated and capital programme and the draft 2025-26 Business plan, as set out in the appendices to the JC Report, be approved;
2. Note the longer-term forecast to 2028/29.

102. **Finance and Capital Monitoring report**

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

- a) Whilst there was a forecast variance of £1.842 million against the budget for month nine, this was a reasonably acceptable figure to give assurance that at the end of the financial year, PCC would be able to balance the books;
- b) Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care, homelessness and the provision of SEND were areas in which the Council was experiencing a significant increase in demand, resulting in financial pressure;
- c) Transformational change would be critically important in the next financial year to deal with and address the long-term pressures that existed;
- d) The report included the Capital Programme where there was an increase of £24 million. This figure was incorporated into the budget documentation;

Cabinet agreed:

1. The forecast revenue monitoring position at Period 9 as set out in the report with an adverse variance of £1.842m;
2. Senior Officers would continue to work with Cabinet to reduce the forecast overspend;
3. The Capital Budget 2024-2029 was revised to £395.864.

103. **Children's Services update (To Follow)**

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

- a) The past year had been a challenging time for Council spend on placements for children in care;
- b) National pressures had had an impact, leading to a significant increase in the cost of care for children;
- c) As a result of a shortage of foster carers nationally, more children were having to be placed in high-cost residential children's homes and a small number of children, two in Plymouth, were experiencing high-cost unregulated placements;
- d) Many of Plymouth's children in care were experiencing stable family placements with foster carers in Plymouth at a lower cost, however to be able to reduce spend significantly, the number of children experiencing residential care needed to be reduced by recruiting more foster carers and supporting them to be able to meet the needs of the children;
- e) The Family Homes for Plymouth Children was a comprehensive programme of work to ensure children in care had access to a home that met their needs from the instance they came into PCC's care;
- f) Foster for Plymouth was recruiting more foster carers by being part of the Southwest Hub and was supporting carers better, including through the first 'Mockingbird' model this year;
- g) The Mockingbird Hub was created by foster carer Jo and her husband Duncan, embodying the mentality of 'it takes a village to raise a child'. There were 10 families within the 'constellation' in which 18 children were living. There had been no breakdowns in any placements and it was a nurturing and supportive environment;
- h) A second 'constellation' would be started later in 2025, which two more planned;
- i) The Foster Care Summit, which took place recently at Dartmoor Zoo, provided encouraging feedback in that, due to the Council changing and shaping their offer to reflect previous feedback, there had been no repetition in said feedback;
- j) There had been some progress on the programme of work to support PCC's children to move from residential care to family, however that ambition was impacted by the national shortage of fostering placements;
- k) There was also good progress in improving support to kinships and special guardianship carers to ensure children could remain within their own family networks;
- l) PCC's first children's home was on track to open later in 2025. This would mitigate children being placed in high cost care a long way from Plymouth and further homes would follow;
- m) A clear plan was in place to ensure that when it was safe for them to do so, children were supported in their return from care back to their families.

Cabinet agreed to note the report.

104. **LGR/ Devolution Update**

Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- a) The Devolution White Paper set out a vision for strategic authorities to be the norm across England with a view to aiding strategic purposes such as transport, economic development and environmental works;
- b) This required top-tier authorities in particular to come together in combined authorities;
- c) Combined authorities were not merged authorities. The authorities would stay as they were but would work collaboratively to ensure the dispersal of money and power to their constituent authorities;
- d) The Government required these strategic authorities to have directly elected Mayors, with the public in their area casting a vote;
- e) The Devolution White Paper also included the reorganisation of Local Government. Since 1974 there had been a system of Government with County Councils (top-tier authorities) who supported transport, children's social services and adult social services. Underneath that were District Councils who delivered the remaining services;
- f) There were also Unitary Authorities (such as PCC) who were responsible for all functions;
- g) The Government were requesting all Council's fall under Unitary Authorities which would mean boundary changes as Unitary Authorities had to be of a sufficient size to ensure they were financially stable, viable and sustainable;
- h) PCC had received a letter from Jim McMahon (Local Government Minister) inviting all authorities to propose new Unitary Authorities within Devon;
- i) Due to Plymouth's size (population of 267,000) there would potentially be a need to increase the city's size in order to get Government approval to continue as a Unitary Authority;
- j) The key principles were sustainable, high-quality services whilst preserving the local identity;
- k) PCC were committed to ensuring that any changes would enhance, not diminish, local service delivery, would maintain a strong connection with local communities and would create a structure which was both financially sustainable and operationally efficient;

- l) The initial proposal for Plymouth would need to be prepared by the 21 March 2025;
- m) Feedback from partners and residents was being collated to ensure PCC could incorporate this into their proposition;
- n) Previous Government had tried to implement a similar proposition under a 'Level-Two Deal' in which Plymouth would have joined forces with Devon County Council and Torbay Council. This did not happen;
- o) Cornwall Council had denied working with Plymouth, however it was agreed that a Southwest peninsular Strategic Authority would be the best way forward.

105. **Leader's Announcements**

Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) made the following announcements:

- a) Plymouth Argyle Football Club (PAFC) beat Liverpool Football Club and the Leader would write a letter to Simon Hallett (Chairman of PAFC) and Andrew Parkinson (Executive Director of PAFC) praising the decision to bring in a new manager as a clear transformation was underway at Home Park;
- b) PAFC was as bigger part of the city as any institution and what they achieved for the city was immeasurable;
- c) Thanks were given to all players.

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

- d) There was a major fire at The Barrow Centre at Mount Edgcumbe and although nobody was harmed, two staff members lost their homes and two holiday lets were destroyed;
- e) The fire started in a member of staff's residence and moved through the roof space of the adjacent properties and due to the efforts of the fire brigade, it was prevented from spreading to the rest of The Barrow Centre;
- f) The site had been made safe and in the coming weeks consolidation works and power restoration would be carried out with a hope for the café and businesses to be open in time for February half term;
- g) The wider park remained open as usual;
- h) Thanks were given to the fire fighters, Mount Edgcumbe staff and business staff who had pulled together in response to the fire;
- i) Counselling had been made available to all staff and the local community had responded with kindness and practical help.

Councillor Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change) added:

- j) The fire took 40 firefighters to control and extinguish and had had a devastating effect on residents and businesses;
- k) Councillor Kate Ewert (Co-Chair of the Mount Edgcumbe Joint Committee) had assisted in coordinating the community response;
- l) There had been Crowdfunding set up by the local community as well as clothes donated to those who had lost their possessions;
- m) PCC would be involved in the rebuilding process and weekly meetings had been set up to look at what would come next and how support could continue to everybody involved.

Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) added:

- a) Cornwall was taking the lead on the capital rebuild;
- b) Thanks were given again to the staff and the fire service for going the extra mile.

106. **Cabinet Member Updates**

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

- a) Thanks were given to The Box staff who ensured Smeaton's Tower was lit up green to celebrate the win against Liverpool Football Club;
- b) There were close to 2000 visitors to The Box for John Lyons exhibition 'Carnavalesque' official opening;
- c) There had been a poetry event at The Box which included a conversation between Osman Yousefzada and Ekow Eshun;
- d) Sir Joshua Reynolds 'Portrait of Omai' would be going on a National Gallery tour and The Box was one of only three place to exhibit this;
- e) In 2026, Steve McQueen's film 'Grenfell' would be shown at The Box;
- f) There were plans to launch two new locations to offer e-sports. E-sports allowed players or teams to compete in various games up to professional levels and had evolved from casual gaming to an industry with global tournaments, sponsorships and a wide variety of employment opportunities;
- g) Efford and Honicknowle Youth and Community Centres were undergoing significant redevelopment to reinvigorate and reimagine them and this would be where the e-sports facilities would be hosted;

- h) The plans included 20 new gaming stations and a number of FI approved raving simulations;
- i) PCC's ambition was to provide an inclusive, enjoyable, safe and enhanced service to young people in the community.

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

- j) The Armada Way project running to schedule, on programme and on budget.

107. **LGA Update**

Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) provided the following update:

- a) Himself, Councillor Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications) and Councillor Cresswell (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Apprenticeships) had attended the Local Government Association (LGA) Labour Conference;
- b) The LGA had been tracking the changes with Local Government Reform, Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution;
- c) Councillor Louise Gittings (Chair of the LGA) had welcomed the fast-track Devolution proposals and the Government's decision to postpone some local elections;
- d) The LGA were offering Councils support on Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation issues including a new Devolution Hub;
- e) Wes Streeting (Secretary of State for Health and Social Care) had launched the Government's 10 year NHS Plan which highlighted the local authorities role in health and prevention;
- f) A 'Building Fairer Towns, Cities and regions' report had been produced by the LGA.

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Cabinet



Date of meeting:	10 March 2025
Title of Report:	Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Lead Member:	Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development, and Communities)
Lead Strategic Director:	Tracey Lee (Chief Executive)
Author:	Sarah Gooding, Policy and Intelligence Advisor
Contact Email:	Sarah.gooding@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	SG100325
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

This paper sets out the progress that the Council has made towards meeting its Public Sector Equality Duty and promoting equality in 2024-2025. The paper highlights the progress made towards meeting the outcomes set out in the Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2024-25 and acknowledges that there will be continued efforts to embed equality, diversity and inclusion best practice across the Council.

This paper also sets out progress towards Plymouth City Council's equality objectives for 2024/25-2028/29. Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Council is required to set at least one new equality objective every four years. The Council agreed four new equality objectives in March 2024.

A new Action Plan is in development to define how the organisation will work towards achieving its objectives over the next three year. The Action Plan will also include some of the wider activity that the Council will undertake in order to support its ambitions.

Recommendations and Reasons

1. Note the progress set out in the Our Commitment to Equality and Diversity document.

Alternative options considered and rejected

1. Do nothing. Under the Equality Act 2010 Plymouth City Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty therefore the option to do nothing is not recommended.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The Council's Corporate Plan sets out our ambition to be 'one of Europe's most vibrant waterfront cities, where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone' and its mission is to make Plymouth a fairer, greener city, where everyone does their bit. To achieve this, we need to ensure any decision we take does not adversely impact communities sharing protected characteristics under the Equality Act (2010).

One of the key themes running through the Plymouth Plan is the ambition to be a Welcoming City where every citizen feels safe and every person who lives in or visits the city will be treated fairly and with respect. The new equality objectives outlined in the report will support Plymouth City Council to continue working with partners to foster community cohesion and support Plymouth’s ambition to be a welcoming city.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

Officer resources will be needed to carry out actions to deliver against the equality objectives 2024/25-2028/29. These resources will be met from within existing budgets.

Financial Risks

It is not anticipated that the proposed actions will cause negative financial impacts.

Legal Implications

(Provided by :Liz Bryant)

This report confirms how the Council will continue to meet its public sector equality duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

It is not anticipated that the proposed actions will cause negative environmental impacts.

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.*

This is not applicable because the subject of the report ensures that due regard has been given to equality.

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	Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion							
B	N/A							
C	N/A							

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
N/A							

Sign off:

Fin	DJN. 24.25. 168	Leg	LS/00 0033 90/27 /LB/2 8/02/ 2025	Mon Off		HR	CS.24.25. 035	Assets		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Tracey Lee, Chief Executive											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 18/02/2025											
Cabinet Member approval: Cllr Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Community)											
Date approved: 28/02/2025											

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OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Policy and Intelligence Team



Summary

This paper sets out the commitment that Plymouth City Council has made to promoting equality. It explores the legal duties that the Council must comply with and provides examples of how these have been fulfilled. Specifically, the paper outlines the progress that the Council has made in delivering against its equality objectives and its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2024/25. A refreshed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan will be developed for the next 3 years to support the delivery of the current equality objectives up to 2028 and this will be published separately.

In addition to delivering specific projects and interventions under the action plan, it is crucial to remember that it is incumbent on everyone in Plymouth City Council to play their part. As the Council faces unprecedented budgetary pressures, it is vital that due regard is paid to equality and diversity, and actions that support this agenda continue to be mainstreamed across the Council.

I. Context

I.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 extended statutory protection across nine 'protected characteristics'. It recognised new forms of discrimination and introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

As an Authority listed in Schedule 19 of the Act, we are subject to the PSED. The PSED consists of a general equality duty supported by specific duties which are imposed by secondary legislation.

As an organisation, we are expected to demonstrate 'due regard' to the Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the act.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

On 27 March 2023, the Council unanimously supported the motion to 'Treat care experience as if it were a Protected Characteristic'¹. Plymouth became one of 29 Local Authorities across the UK to take this position although this number has now reached over 80. We believe that it is vital to recognise the additional challenges and barriers that care experienced individuals face. Though their experiences will have varied, the challenges faced by these individuals can have profound and lasting impacts. Recognising care experience as a protected characteristic will provide us, and other public bodies, with greater authority to put in place policies and programmes which promote better outcomes for care experienced people.

The Equality Act says that we must exercise due regard to equality when we make decisions, in a way that is reasonable and proportionate to the decision being taken. To discharge this duty, we remain firmly committed to conducting Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) on all member decisions taken in

¹ A care-experienced individual is someone who has been looked after by the local authority at any point, for any length of time. Care experienced individuals include people with a wide range of experiences including those who have lived with Foster Carers, in Residential Children's Homes or who have been adopted.

the context of our Leader's scheme of delegation. We do this to ensure they do not adversely impact our different communities.

1.2 Specific Equality Duties

The aims of the PSED are supported by specific duties set out in separate regulations made by the Secretary of State. Listed authorities in England are required to:

- At least annually from 30 March 2018
 - publish information about their employees and other persons affected by their policies and practices to demonstrate compliance with the general duty.
 - publish gender pay gap information relating to the employees; the form and content of this publication is set out in a schedule to the regulations.
- At least every four years, prepare and publish one or more objectives that they think are needed to further any of the aims of the General Equality Duty.

1.3 Our equality information

Alongside this document, we have published our [Equality Profiles](#), which include data and intelligence about our residents and service users, covering all of the nine protected characteristics from the Equality Act. These are:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| ▪ Age | ▪ Gender Reassignment |
| ▪ Disability | ▪ Race |
| ▪ Religion or Belief | ▪ Sex |
| ▪ Marriage and Civil Partnerships | ▪ Sexual Orientation |
| ▪ Pregnancy and Maternity | |

As an organisation committed to inclusion, we recognise that other groups such as veterans, carers, and people with experience of the care system can also face additional barriers. Equality Profiles are also available on people with care experience and those who have previously served in the regular or reserve UK armed forces (veterans).

Our Equality Profiles are updated annually to keep them as current as possible. The [Plymouth Report](#) is another useful source of further data about our diverse communities.

1.4 Policy

The diversity of our city and workforce is one of our greatest strengths and assets. We put equality and diversity at the centre of all our work. Our approach and commitment to equality is also set out in our Equality and Diversity Policy. This is integral to our commitment to making Plymouth 'one of Europe's most vibrant waterfront cities where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone'.

In the spirit of that commitment, we have worked to ensure we deliver services to all our communities in a way that eliminates discrimination, advances equality of opportunity, and fosters good relations.

Our Equality and Diversity Policy was recently reviewed and republished in light of our new commitment to treat care experience as a protected characteristic and our refreshed equality objectives.

1.5 Plymouth City Council's Corporate Plan

Plymouth City Council and its partners are committed to the shared vision to become 'one of Europe's most vibrant waterfront cities where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone'. To achieve this vision, we have adopted a set of values that underpin our commitment to equality and diversity in the Council's [Corporate Plan](#).

We believe in:

- Democracy
- Responsibility
- Fairness
- Co-operation

1.6 Customer feedback

Plymouth City Council is committed to the highest standards of customer service. We are committed to treating all of our customers with fairness and respect and encourage feedback about our services. Our primary mechanism for collecting customer feedback is through our online system Firmstep. Whilst we monitor customer complaints, we do not do this against the protected characteristics. However, we have refreshed our demographic monitoring guidance as the first step towards this.

1.7 The Equality Framework for Local Government

The [Equality Framework for Local Government](#) (EFLG) is an equality and diversity tool for local government developed by the Local Government Association (LGA). The EFLG is also a way for the Council to deliver against the PSED. It consists of four elements assessed against three levels of achievement: 'developing', 'achieving' and 'excellence'.

The assessed elements are:

- Leadership and organisational commitment
- Understanding and working with communities
- Diverse and engaged workforce
- Responsive services and customer care

As a Council, we have committed to working towards the 'excellence level' of the EFLG. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan will set out how we as a Council plan to continue working towards this.

2. Our Equality Objectives

We are committed to treating everyone with respect and dignity and working towards creating a fairer city. Under our PSED, we must publish one or more equality objectives every four years. We last set our equality objectives in 2024.

Our equality objectives correspond to the three main strands of the general equality duty. This provides a strong link and solid evidence to demonstrate that we are discharging our duty and making progress towards the aims of the Equality Act 2010.

Furthermore, we have chosen our equality objectives to reflect the concerns of a broad spectrum of protected characteristics to avoid establishing a hierarchy of discrimination, whilst also reflecting the particular challenges faced by our local diverse communities.

1. Plymouth is a Welcoming City where we will work in partnership to:

- **promote equality, diversity and inclusion**
- **facilitate community cohesion**
- **support people with different backgrounds and lived experiences to get on well together**

As part of a programme of work, we undertook the following activities in 2024/25:

- We have continued to maintain our [Equality and Diversity Calendar](#) and use it to help us celebrate our city's diversity in a meaningful way.
- We have continued to mark equality and diversity dates during 2024-2025 on social media, our external Newsroom and via internal communications as appropriate. These have included Black History Month, Hate Crime Awareness Week, World Mental Health Day, 16 Days of Activism, Care Leaver's Week and Adult Safeguarding Week. In May 2024 we worked with the Electoral Commission on a pilot to ensure that people with learning disabilities and autism understand and feel part of the voting process. The Council also created a new webpage centred around D-Day and the history of the event in Plymouth. We also marked Volunteers' Week in June 2024, celebrating our volunteers at key locations such as The Box, Poole Farm and our Libraries.
- In 2023, we convened an informal group of trusted partners and equality, diversity and inclusion experts as a 'critical friends' group. Led by the Cabinet Member for Housing, Co-operative Development and Communities, this is an informal group with the shared aspiration to make Plymouth a welcoming city for everyone. The group have continued to meet during 2024 and support the delivery of the Welcoming City Programme.
- The Critical Friends group are actively engaging with Destination Plymouth in the refresh of the Visitor Strategy and city branding. The key aim of the refresh is to position the city as a place to 'live, work and visit and enable city businesses and communities to align their efforts and resources.
- We held an EDI leads roundtable on 8 October 2024 for EDI leads of larger organisations across the city. The roundtable discussed the valuable role of culture in achieving Plymouth's vision of being a Welcoming City with representatives of Plymouth's cultural sector and shared best practice and current challenges. The group also shared information on events marked by their organisation and discussed ideas around citywide collaboration. The roundtable was positively received by those who attended, and another event is planned for Spring 2025.
- We continue to strive to ensure that all of our events are accessible. Armed Forces Day achieved bronze award status from Attitude is Everything as part of their industry-recognised policy standard Live Events Access Charter. Both of the Council's signature events, the British Firework Championships and Armed Forces Day, are now accredited. We continue to work with the Events Access and Inclusion Group to organise mystery shops at our events, and will continue to do this for 2026, so that we can annually review our processes and make positive change where appropriate. Our Events Team aims to achieve silver award status with the charter for both The British Firework Championships and Armed Forces Day by the end of 2026.
- Our civic leaders continue to demonstrate a commitment to equality and diversity. The Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor have continued to engage with different communities living in Plymouth during this period. For example, attendance at Plymouth Hope Festival for the launch of Refugee Week, celebrating Eid with the Plymouth Bangladeshi Association and hosting the Romanian National Day flag raising and reception.
- The Community Builders team continue to focus on asset-based approaches and initiatives that promote community cohesion and connecting people within communities from specific communities of interest and diversity e.g. LGBTQ+, young people, older people, people with disabilities and men. The Community Builder for Ethnically Diverse Communities works in partnership to develop engagement opportunities and community-based support for communities. Examples include attending fresher's week to engage with international students and hosting refugee week events as well as working with services to ensure communities are involved in co-design. Other recent examples include working with the Adult Safeguarding Engagement Team to bring conversations closer to diverse communities and being a member of the Anti-racism Allyship who have recently been responding to community tensions.

- Plymouth City Council recently invited individuals and groups to apply for a grant to address the riots that happened in the summer. Successful applications have included initiatives to understand the causes of the disorder to enable the city to move forward together and increase community cohesion, ensuring everyone feels safe and welcomed in the city. The council was awarded £600,000 to support communities that were impacted. Over 100 applications were received, with the funding being awarded to 42 organisations, including over £80,000 to six projects that are working collaboratively to deliver a range of initiatives for children, young people, and schools. More information can be found [here](#).
- In response to the riots of Summer 2024, we also reviewed and updated our 2024/25 EDI Action Plan.
- Through the Local Authority Housing Fund, we have resettled 15 Afghan families into properties and expect to welcome a minimum of 11 additional Afghan families over the next 12-18 months. In partnership with the Home Office and Ministry of Defence, we have also matched 7 families with Service Family accommodation and private rented properties via the Afghan resettlement programme.

2. Plymouth City Council will give specific consideration to care experienced people in our decision-making to raise aspirations, increase opportunities and seek to improve their life outcomes, including access to training, employment and housing, and will encourage other organisations to do the same.

On 27 March 2023, the Council unanimously supported the motion to 'Treat care experience as if it were a Protected Characteristic'² in recognition of the additional challenges and barriers that care experienced individuals face. Though their experiences will have varied, the challenges faced by these individuals can have profound and lasting impacts.

The following activities were undertaken in 2024/25 to support the delivery of this objective:

- We are continuing to engage with the Care Experienced Council.
- Our application forms and related recruitment and selection policy were updated in May 2024 to reflect care experience under the Guaranteed Interview scheme.
- We are working with partners who are delivering a pilot programme and use the learning from this to inform the development of an Employment Pathway for Care Leavers.
- We are proactively trying to increase the number of public and private sector bodies who demonstrate strong corporate parenting responsibilities and who promote better outcomes for those with care experience in the city. We have written to local employer networks in the city to ask for their support in ensuring that our care leavers get the same opportunities in life as others.
- Our corporate parenting support offer for businesses hosting care experienced young people in apprenticeships and other employment opportunities was launched as part of Care Leavers' week in October 2024.
- As part of a campaign to support care experienced young people into employment, education and training, communications activity was undertaken to coincide with Care Leavers' week in October 2024. An event was also held with partners during for young people to come and find out about the support and opportunities available to access education, employment and training from employers in the city e.g. health and education providers.
- We have reviewed our commissioning processes including co-design to ensure care experience is identified as a protected characteristic. A co-production guide for

² A care-experienced individual is someone who has been looked after by the local authority at any point, for any length of time. Care experienced individuals include people with a wide range of experiences including those who have lived with Foster Carers, in Residential Children's Homes or who have been adopted.

commissioners has been developed in partnership with Changing Futures. This was launched in January 2025, together with training for commissioning staff.

- Care leavers are supported with housing options that enable them to sustain involvement in education, training and work. The Department for Work and Pensions will be delivering workshops shortly for Council staff and partners around discretionary housing benefit and how young people can be supported. We will continue to press for a change to the criteria so that care experienced young people living in supported accommodation are still entitled to enhanced Housing Benefit even if they are in employment.
- Through our Skills Launchpad we have appointed a Youth Outreach Coordinator with a specific caseload of 16 to 18-year-olds looked after by the Virtual School in a mentor-style relationship with a 'Critical Parent'. The Coordinator helps to educate carers whilst building trusted relationships with those in care from their home setting to engage the young people with the Youth Hub and take steps to progress into education, employment or training. We have already seen a very positive impact within eight months as all young people engaging with the coordinator progressed into a positive next step towards education, employment or training.
- In our recent budget engagement survey, respondents were invited to select if they were care experienced as part of our demographic monitoring. This has also been included in our City Survey taking place in 2025. Demographic monitoring allows us to better understand specific communities to guide decision-making and service delivery.
- We want children in care in Plymouth to experience similar health and wellbeing outcomes as children and young people in the wider community. Updates on this are reported quarterly to the Corporate Parenting Board alongside benchmarking data comparing us with our statistical neighbours and national data.
- Plymouth Active Leisure (PAL) now offer free gym and swim access to all Plymouth City Council Care Leavers from their 18th until their 25th birthday. This includes Plymouth Life Centre, Plympton Pool and Brickfields.

3. Plymouth City Council will continue to build and develop a diverse workforce that represents the community and citizens it serves. We will learn from our communities and other organisations so that we get this right and we will encourage other employers to do the same.

Plymouth City Council is committed to equal opportunities and the fair treatment of its workforce. We want to ensure that all employees have the opportunity to progress and meet their potential.

As an employer with over 250 employees, we have an obligation to [report on our gender pay gap](#). We monitor pay equality across different employee groups.

Under our specific equality duties, we publish annual equality monitoring data which covers the demographic breakdown of our workforce, as well as our recruitment processes and employees leaving the organisation. This information is found in our [Workforce Equality Profile](#).

As an organisation, we must ensure that all our employees feel welcomed, are treated with dignity and respect and are encouraged to meet their potential.

Progress against this Equality Objective includes:

- Continuing to support our 9 employee networks which aim to help foster a positive culture, offer networking opportunities to employees, and encourage an understanding and celebration of difference within the organisation. These networks are continuing to develop and include:
 - Disability Network
 - Carer's Network
 - Faith and Belief Network

- LGBTQ+ Network
 - Men's Network
 - Race, Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage (Reach) Network
 - Women's Network
 - Armed Forces Network
 - Neurodivergent Staff Network (new for 2024/25)
- Dates have been set for staff network leads meetings throughout 2025.
 - We also ran a number of engagement and listening sessions for staff following the public disorder incidents in August in the city and across the country.
 - We are hosting our very first Neurodiversity Conference in March 2025 during Neurodiversity Celebration Week. This event will aim to share best practice between employers, organisational and employee experiences, as well as showcase and share resources and general information to other employers, employees, and prospective employees/their families. We are inviting employers across the city to have a stall at this event to showcase their input with individuals across the city and how they support specific individuals who may be neurodiverse into employment and training as well as throughout their careers.
 - Recruitment data is being collated to enable analysis and identify underrepresented groups based on our community. We have also reviewed our recruitment materials to ensure inclusivity and accessibility to ensure diverse talent pool.
 - We are working towards achieving Disability Confident Leader Status by June 2025. A working group has been established and we are currently completing a self-assessment form.
 - We are now a 'signatory' on the Disability Employment Charter (as of October 2024).
 - We remain a White Ribbon Accredited organisation as part of our ongoing commitment to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). This builds upon the work of the VAWG Commission which was created in 2022 to review what is being done across the city to educate, prevent and deter VAWG.
 - A plan of research is underway to review our overall approach to learning and development to ensure it is appropriate and is inclusive and accessible. We are exploring best practice; other employer approaches and engaging with our networks. A revised offer will be available commencing roll out 2025. EDI training will be a core component of the new management and leadership development programme. We also have a range of eLearning in place on topics such as modern slavery and human trafficking, equality in the workplace and domestic abuse.

4. Plymouth will support diverse communities so they feel confident to seek support and advice, report crime and anti-social behaviour, including hate crime and hate incidents, and work with partners to ensure Plymouth is a city where everybody feels safe and welcome.

We have continued to work with our partners to ensure that victims of hate incidents and hate crimes receive appropriate support and that people feel confident and understand how to report incidents. We have also been working hard to raise awareness of the importance of reporting hate incidents and hate crimes via third party reporting centres.

We will continue to work with communities and partner agencies across the criminal justice system and voluntary and community colleagues to achieve a positive outcome for victims.

In 2023 we signed the Community Safety Charter showing our commitment to promoting a culture that does not tolerate anti-social behaviour, harassment, intimidation and hostility towards others. We proactively promote this charter to other organisations in the city.

A breakdown of hate crimes/incidents within Plymouth along with perceptions of safety amongst different groups can be found within our [Equality Profiles](#).

Progress against this Equality Objective includes raising awareness and engagement activity such as:

- Our Safer Communities team maintaining a close working relationship with the Police Diverse Communities Team (DCT). They liaise regularly to ensure relevant information is shared (e.g. community tensions, increasing reports of hate crime) and work in partnership to prevent and address any concerns impacting Plymouth's diverse communities.
- Our Safer Communities team continuing work in partnership with Community Builders to understand any concerns impacting the city's diverse communities, including community tensions, cohesiveness, or hate crime.
- The council being a standing member of the city's Community Reference Group. This meeting brings together representatives from Plymouth's diverse communities with statutory agencies as an opportunity to improve our relationship, understand any concerns, and work in partnership to address these.
- All operational frontline officers and the team manager and all of our Community Builders are trained to take third-party reports of hate crime.
- An online training session for staff and elected members around hate crime and third-party reporting is being delivered in March 2025.
- We have commissioned the delivery of anti-racism bystander training aimed at giving people the skills to challenge hate crime and support victims.
- Our Community Safety Team took part in a range of events and community engagement opportunities over Hate Crime Awareness Week in October 2024 including engagement with local businesses owned by global majority communities, attending the British Red Cross drop-in for the asylum-seeker and refugee community, and attending the LGBTQ+ Derriford Hospital staff network. The team also held a multi-agency event in the city centre with the safe bus.
- Plymouth held a second M.A.N Culture conference in September 2024. M.A.N Culture is a network that was set up in 2021 with funding secured by Plymouth City Council, to help change the conversation with men about violence against women and girls. The conference brought together individuals, organisations, and institutions from both the city and the broader Devon and Cornwall region to explore the role of masculinity.
- In partnership with Devon and Cornwall Police, we have introduced an Evening and Night-time Economy Predatory Behaviour Disruption Partnership aiming to prevent Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in the Evening and Nighttime Economy (ENTE) and women involved in street-based sex work, by using civil tools and powers (traditionally used for antisocial behaviour) as an early intervention to predatory behaviour. As a result of this partnership, 18 individuals behaving in a predatory manner causing women to feel harassed, alarmed and distressed in Plymouth's ENTE within the past 12 months have had a joint early intervention from the council and police. None of these individuals would have met the threshold for criminal investigation otherwise therefore their predatory behaviour would have remained unchallenged without these interventions.

We know that when communities are well connected, they are more likely to have better health outcomes and increased levels of cohesion. To measure cohesion in Plymouth, within our survey work, we ask whether residents feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. This question was included in the 2022 City Survey as a measure of community cohesion and more specifically to measure performance against our equality objective.

The question regarding residents who think that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together was asked in the 2022 City Survey, using the same methodology as previous Plymouth City Surveys. The results show that 42 per cent of respondents agreed that Plymouth is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, while 14 per cent disagreed. The proportion of residents agreeing with this statement has increased compared with 39 per cent who agreed in 2020 and 38 per cent in 2018. Plymouth's cohesion score is currently 77 per cent; this excludes the neutral options and is an improvement on 74 per cent in 2020. A further Plymouth City Survey will be delivered in 2025.

3. Demonstrating our commitment

3.1 Summary of recent activity

In addition to publishing our progress towards meeting our equality objectives, the Public Sector Equality Duty requires that we publish information to show that we are compliant with the Equality Act General Duty. This section describes some of the work we did to promote equality, tackle discrimination and to encourage good relations between different groups last year.

We have continued to work hard to promote equality within communities and to ensure that our services are accessible. As a Council, we value the contribution that people and communities can make and want to harness that potential to work together for a fairer, greener, and healthier city where everyone can enjoy an outstanding quality of life. Our [community engagement principles](#) set out our approach to community engagement.

We are proud that some of the steps that we have taken to promote equality include:

- Working with our partners within the Changing Futures Programme to understand the needs of people with lived experiences within the complex needs system.
- Promoting inclusive growth via the Plymouth Charter development programme. This work has been funded through the C-Care project, an EU Interreg funded project which aims to better understand how the Plymouth economy can promote inclusion and support flexible working to create an economy that works for everybody.
- Continuing to analyse findings from the 2021 Census to allow us to understand the demographics and changing needs of our communities. This insight is helping to inform our Equality Profiles and EIAs.
- Forming a city-wide digital inclusion network, led by Plymouth City Council and made up of groups and organisations across the city, to deliver joined-up interventions to overcome the main barriers to people getting online - access, skills, confidence and motivation.
 - The Changing Futures forum provides a space to explore ideas to promote IT and Digital Inclusion for people with experience of multiple disadvantage in Plymouth. This enables them to engage with services and information they would otherwise struggle to access because they do not have a suitable mobile phone, credit, device or knowledge. Funding is available through the forum to test and support new projects proposed by members of the forum.
 - Volunteers under the Community Digital Volunteer Scheme launched in July 2024 are being trained to offer informal advice, information and support to adults in their local community who either want to get online and learn how to use a computer for the first time or improve their confidence with the basics. The scheme takes referrals from Wellbeing and Family hubs and Adult Social Care in addition to facilitating a number of drop-in sessions around the city where an appointment with a digital volunteer can be booked via our Contact Centre or libraries to help those people who require digital assistance. Our libraries offer free access to computers and WiFi. They run regular courses and sessions helping people to learn and build on their digital skills.
- Updating our EIA template to allow space for consideration of the impacts that the council's decisions may have on care-experienced individuals.
- Working with council colleagues and partners in the community we are working on a number of pieces of enquiry, research and evaluation which contribute to the local and national knowledge base and helps us to understand better how we can reduce the impact of inequalities. Examples of specific projects include:
 - Using play to improve communication skills in young children in preparation for school.
 - Evaluating our response to violence against women and girls in the city.

- Using ecotherapy to support young people with additional needs.
- Supporting ways of increasing food security.

In addition to specific projects the HDRC has supported council colleagues and community partners to understand and use research and enquiry techniques to improve their knowledge and understanding, particularly around appreciative enquiry.

3.2 Our Members

Our members have an important role in ensuring that equality and diversity is at the centre of the organisation as set out in the Council Constitution which states:

"We the people of Plymouth, through our elected representatives to Plymouth City Council, ordain and establish this Constitution today 30 January 2012 in order that it will assist in the elimination of discrimination and inequality, promote social and economic well-being, environmental sustainability and opportunity for all and establish good and open governance of our city and its inhabitants."

Members are required to consider equality and diversity when they make decisions. To support members in their role we offer online Local Government Association (LGA) developed equality and diversity training to all councillors as part of their induction to their role. This training helps members to understand different equality and diversity issues and ensures that they are able to deliver their duties in accordance with the Councillor Code of Conduct. Members received online Councillor Equality and Diversity training in November 2023 and this was well attended and received. Members are also encouraged to undertake further LGA distance learning.

5. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2025 – 2028

A new Action Plan to cover the next three years will be developed to define how we will work towards the delivery of our current equality objectives. The Action Plan will also include some of the wider activity that the council will undertake to support its equality and diversity ambitions.

5.1 Key activities for 2025 / 2026

Over the next 12 months, the Council is committing to undertake the following activities:

- Continue to deliver the Welcoming City programme of work in partnership with the Critical Friends Group, including hosting an event to engage Equality, Diversity and Inclusion leads in partner organisations in best practice and collaborative approaches.
- Hold a second roundtable event for EDI leads in large organisations within the city, with a focus on care experience.
- Continue to mark a range of equality and diversity-related dates on our Equality and Diversity calendar each year internally and externally and work with partners across the city to mark, celebrate or commemorate where appropriate.
- Continue to gather and learn from feedback from the Community Builders working with communities and the Appreciative Enquiries that have been held.
- Continue to work with Changing Futures to ensure participation from people with complex lives and continue to build partnerships with refugee and asylum organisations in the city.
- Work with our partners to carry out in-depth research into health inequality within Plymouth as part of the Health Determinants Research Collaboration programme.
- Undertake a full review of our Equality Impact Assessment process (EIA) and refresh the related guidance.
- Continue to embed the treating of care experience as if it were a protected characteristic within our commissioning processes for health and social care contracts across children's and adult services and procurement.

- Continue to work with the Events Access and Inclusion Group to annually review our processes and make positive change where appropriate. The Events Team aims to achieve silver award status with the charter for both The British Firework Championships and Armed Forces Day by the end of 2026.
- Review our People Strategy in spring 2025 following engagement across the organisation through 'Culture Workshops' to help develop the strategy.
- Work towards achieving Disability Confident Leader Status by June 2025.

These are just a few examples to demonstrate the breadth of activity planned over the next 12 months and beyond. More detail will be outlined in our updated Action Plan.

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Cabinet



Date of meeting:	10 March 2025
Title of Report:	Supported accommodation for young people aged 16+ - Contract Variation
Lead Member:	Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications)
Lead Strategic Director:	David Haley (Director for Childrens Services)
Author:	Emma Crowther (Service Director, Integrated Commissioning)
Contact Email:	Emma.crowther@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	N/A
Key Decision:	Yes
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

To consider the proposal to extend for two years through variation, an existing contract (PEO/20039) for accommodation and support provision for young people in care aged 16 and 17 and those who are care experienced. This is part of our approach to ensuring we meet our statutory duty to have sufficient local placements for children and young people in care and helps young people to prepare for independent living, particularly those who have previously been in residential care.

Recommendations and Reasons

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

1. Extend through variation, an existing contract to the incumbent providers of supported accommodation for young people in care aged 16+, for a period of 2 years to an estimated value of £6.78m.

As part of this modification the contract framework will be reopened at a future date (to be determined) to allow new providers the opportunity to join the contract.

The specification for the contract will be updated to include specific notice periods for placements, reinforce the requirement for providers to be Ofsted registered and include a requirement for providers to be explicit about the furniture and furnishings they are able to take with them when they leave the placement.

Reason: The current contract has been in place since 12th April 2021 and is performing well in providing a range of local homes for young people in care and care experienced which support them in developing their skills to live independently. The providers have adapted well to new regulations requiring Ofsted regulation and are focused on preparing for their first inspections. The current contract includes the majority of local suppliers of this type of accommodation for children in care and as such there is little to be gained from reprocurring the service at this time. Modifying the contract will provide continuity of provider and placement for our young people and we will continue to work with the providers and Ofsted to monitor quality.

Alternative options considered and rejected**1. Allow the contract to lapse**

This option has been discounted as there is a statutory duty on the Council to ensure there are sufficient local placements to meet the needs of children and young people in care and care experienced. This includes placements which help young people in care to prepare for independent living as they become adults. This contract includes both block and framework arrangements with providers delivering services to a specification and Council terms and conditions, which help to ensure quality and safety for our young people.

2. Reprocure the contract

This option has been discounted as all the current providers are delivering well against the contract and have successfully been registered with Ofsted to carry on delivering services in line with new regulations. The recent Ofsted registration process has included a thorough check of all their policies, properties and senior personnel. A procurement at this stage would distract them from their preparations for their first Ofsted inspections. The majority of the local providers are already signatories to the contract, with the framework to be reopened during the lifetime of the new contract to allow additional providers the option to join.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

This decision aligns with the Corporate Plan: Keeping children, adults and communities safe, through the provision of suitable homes for children and young people in care and care experienced. It also aligns with HEA2 of the Plymouth Plan – Delivering the best outcomes for children, young people and families.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The current annual spend with the contracted providers is forecast to be £3.39m, an estimated £6.78m for the duration of the new contract. This is included in the revenue budget for Children, Young People and Families as part of planned placement spend.

Financial Risks

This spend is already built into revenue budgets. Our intention through the Homes for Cared for Children programme is to enable more children and young people in care to be able to be cared for in foster placements during their childhood, with less of a reliance on residential care. As such and if this is successful we would anticipate seeing a reduction in spend on 16+ placements during the lifetime of the new contract.

Legal Implications

(Provided by Richard Hargreaves)

Legal Services stand ready to assist with the contract variation.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

Our intention is for as many children and young people in care as possible to be able to remain in Plymouth (if it is safe and appropriate for them to do so), attending local schools and colleges and retaining important links. This in turn reduces the need for their families and social work staff to travel significant distances to visit them.

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.*

Care Experience has been treated as a protected characteristic since being adopted by the Council in March 2023. This ensures that the needs of children and young people who have ever been in care are considered as part of council decision making and the voice of those with lived experience of being in

care is routinely sought. This also includes ensuring that the needs of those with care experience are considered as part of recruitment processes for council roles.

Appendices

*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Briefing report: Supported accommodation for young people aged 16+ contract variation							
B	Equalities Impact Assessment							
C	Climate Impact Assessment							

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
16+ Supported Accommodation Framework and Block Contract (PEO/20039)							
Contract Variation Authorisation Form			X				

Sign off:

Fin	DJN. 24.25. 164	Leg	LS/29 60(46)JP/2 7022 5.	Mon Off	N/A	HR	N/A	Assets	N/A	Strat Proc	JS/SC/065/ CAB/CA/0 225
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Emma Crowther											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 27/02/2025											

Cabinet Member approval: *Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader of the Council, and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications)*

Date approved: 27/02/2025

SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 16+

Strategic Commissioning



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Plymouth City Council has a statutory duty under Section 22G of the Children Act 1989 to ensure there are sufficient placements in the local area to meet the needs of children and young people in care. These placements need to cover a broad range of provision, including children's homes, residential special schools and foster care. This also includes supported accommodation for young people aged 16 and 17, and some young people as they leave care and step into independent living.

In October 2020 permission was sought from Plymouth City Council Cabinet for a procurement of a contract for supported accommodation for young people in care aged 16 and 17 and care leavers, and for the contract award decision to be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Families. The contract was awarded in March 2021 for a period of 4 years.

The current contract expires on 31 March 2025 and it is proposed to modify the contract through variation for a period of 2 years to the incumbent providers.

2. BACKGROUND

Supported accommodation offers young people in care and care experienced the opportunity to live in a more 'independent' home, usually a shared house with their own bedroom and communal use of bathrooms, the kitchen and living rooms. Recognising the challenges our young people face, staff are usually available 24 hours a day to offer support. Houses are usually able to support 4-5 young people, but for those who need more support there can be flats which only accommodate one young person at a time with staff. Young people in care can live there from the age of 16, but the services can also support those who are 18+ while future plans for their living arrangements are made.

Since the current contract started in 2021 new regulations have been introduced which require providers of these type of placements to register with Ofsted and to meet a set of prescribed quality standards. The Supported Accommodation (England) Regulations 2023 relate to any provider of supported accommodation for looked after children and care leavers aged 16 and 17. All the incumbent providers have successfully progressed through the Ofsted registration process to date.

The current contract is split into three Lots, to focus on the provision of high-quality local homes for our children and young people:

Lot	Purpose	Provider(s)
Lot 1a - Block purchased provision in Plymouth from existing 16+ supported accommodation beds within the city boundary	This ensures that a number of local homes are always available for Plymouth young people, and supports a close working relationship with the provider	Parallel Independence
Lot 1b - Supported accommodation providers who are either already operating within the Plymouth city boundary or intend to open provision within the Plymouth city boundary during the lifetime of the	This ensures that the number of available local beds is able to grow if needed during the lifetime of the contract and gives the provider some security to be able to invest	Parallel Independence, Livewest, Keys and CSM Independence

contract. Lot 1b providers will be able to request consideration of beds to be added to the Lot 1a block contract within the lifetime of the contract	in new provision. The Council retains the right to decline if the proposal does not meet local needs.	
Lot 2 - spot purchase supported accommodation provision in Plymouth and within 20 miles of the city (no limit on the number of providers that will be allowed on the framework).	Ensures that local placements in and near to Plymouth are provided under the Council's specification and terms and conditions, to ensure quality	Caring for Communities, Key 2 Futures, Keys, Next Step Care Management, Parallel Independence and Young Devon.
Lot 3 - spot purchased supported accommodation provision outside 20 miles (no limit on the number of providers that will be allowed on the framework).	Ensures that placements which are further away are provided under the Council's specification and terms and conditions, to ensure quality	Acorn, Birchwood Independence, CSM Independence, Key 2 Futures, Keys, Livewest, Next Steps Care Management, the Halfway and Young Devon

The contract includes a weekly price for the placement, and these are monitored in line with the needs of the young people. All are realistic for the quality provided and include 24-hour staffing, which fits with our local requirements. There is currently an inconsistency in terms of the offer from the providers when young people move on – some providers allow young people to take all their furniture and furnishings with them to help them to settle into their adult accommodation, but others are more limited. We will address this as part of the contract variation so it is made clearer for young people - our expectation is that young people are supported as much as possible when they are preparing to move on.


The incumbent providers are performing well, adapting to the new regulations and preparing for their first Ofsted inspections. They are regularly engaging with us through a dedicated 16+ provider forum. The Council has also supported our local providers with preparation for registration through the distribution of small grants, using funding from central government to support the implementation of the regulations. Local providers have used grant funding to support recruitment, staff training and development, case management and quality systems and also improvements to their buildings, for example creating space for young people to be able to do homework.

3. PROPOSAL

The rationale for a modification of the current contract through variation is to ensure continuity of provision for our young people, and continue to work with our incumbent providers as they progress towards their first Ofsted inspections. Value for money will continue to be monitored, linked directly to the needs of individual children and young people. We will ensure that any new providers seeking to join the contract are not disadvantaged by reopening Lots 1b, 2 and 3 during the lifetime of the new contract.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – 16+ SUPPORTED LIVING

SECTION ONE: INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPOSAL

Author(s): The person completing the EIA template.	Chris Wilshire	Department and service:	Strategic Commissioning	Date of assessment:	11/02/25
Lead Officer: Head of Service, Service Director, or Strategic Director.	Emma Crowther: Service Director, Integrated Commissioning	Signature:		Approval date:	27 th February 2025
Overview:	This EIA relates to the extension of a contract for accommodation and support provision for young people in care, aged 16 and 17 and those who are care experienced. This is part of our approach to ensuring we meet our statutory duty to have sufficient local placements for children and young people in care and helps young people to prepare for independent living, particularly those who have previously been in residential care				
Decision required:	Extension of contract to the incumbent providers of supported accommodation for young people in care aged 16+ for a period of 2 years.				

SECTION TWO: EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING TOOL

Potential external impacts: Does the proposal have the potential to negatively impact service users, communities or residents with protected characteristics?	Yes		No	X
Potential internal impacts: Does the proposal have the potential to negatively impact Plymouth City Council employees?	Yes		No	X
Is a full Equality Impact Assessment required? (if you have answered yes to either of the questions above then a full impact assessment is required and you must complete section three)	Yes		No	X
If you do not agree that a full equality impact assessment is required, please set out your justification for why not.	The proposal aims to provide additional support and choice for young people who are in care or care			

	experienced. In March 2023 full Council agreed that care experience would be recognised as a 'Protected Characteristic'. This scheme provides bespoke support for our care experienced young people to help to give them the same advantages as their peers.
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SECTION THREE: FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Protected characteristics (Equality Act, 2010)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and consultation feedback)	Adverse impact	Mitigation activities	Timescale and responsible department
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Age	<p>Plymouth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 16.4 per cent of people in Plymouth are children aged under 15.• 65.1 per cent are adults aged 15 to 64.• 18.5 percent are adults aged 65 and over.• 2.4 percent of the resident population are 85 and over. <p>South West</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 15.9 per cent of people are aged 0 to 14, 61.8 per cent are aged 15 to 64.• 22.3 per cent are aged 65 and over. <p>England</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 17.4 per cent of people are aged 0 to 14.• 64.2 per cent of people are aged 15 to 64.• 18.4 per cent of people are aged 65 and over. <p>(2021 Census)</p>	None identified	N/A	N/A
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<p>Care experienced individuals</p> <p>(Note that as per the Independent Review of Children's Social Care recommendations, Plymouth City Council is treating care experience as though it is a protected characteristic).</p>	<p>It is estimated that 26 per cent of the homeless population in the UK have care experience. In Plymouth there are currently 7 per cent of care leavers open to the service (6 per cent aged 18-20 and 12 per cent of those aged 21+) who are in unsuitable accommodation.</p> <p>The Care Review reported that 41 per cent of 19-21 year old care leavers are not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared to 12 per cent of all other young people in the same age group.</p> <p>In Plymouth there are currently 50 per cent of care leavers aged 18-21 Not in Education Training or Employment (54 per cent of all those care leavers aged 18-24 who are open to the service).</p> <p>There are currently 195 care leavers aged 18 to 20 (statutory service) and 58 aged 21 to 24 (extended offer). There are more care leavers aged 21 to 24 who could return for support from services if they wished to.</p>	None identified	N/A	N/A
<p>Disability</p>	<p>9.4 per cent of residents in Plymouth have their activities limited 'a lot' because of a physical or mental health problem.</p> <p>12.2 per cent of residents in Plymouth have their activities limited 'a little' because of a physical or mental health problem (2021 Census)</p>	None identified	N/A	N/A

Gender reassignment	0.5 per cent of residents in Plymouth have a gender identity that is different from their sex registered at birth. 0.1 per cent of residents identify as a trans man, 0.1 per cent identify as non-binary and, 0.1 per cent identify as a trans women (2021 Census).	None identified	N/A	N/A
Marriage and civil partnership	40.1 per cent of residents have never married and never registered a civil partnership. 10 per cent are divorced, 6 percent are widowed, with 2.5 per cent are separated but still married. 0.49 per cent of residents are, or were, married or in a civil partnerships of the same sex. 0.06 per cent of residents are in a civil partnerships with the opposite sex (2021 Census).	None identified	N/A	N/A
Pregnancy and maternity	The total fertility rate (TFR) for England was 1.62 children per woman in 2021. The total fertility rate (TFR) for Plymouth in 2021 was 1.5.	None identified	N/A	N/A

Race	<p>In 2021, 94.9 per cent of Plymouth's population identified their ethnicity as White, 2.3 per cent as Asian and 1.1 per cent as Black (2021 Census)</p> <p>People with a mixed ethnic background comprised 1.8 per cent of the population. 1 per cent of the population use a different term to describe their ethnicity (2021 Census)</p> <p>92.7 per cent of residents speak English as their main language. 2021 Census data shows that after English, Polish, Romanian, Chinese, Portuguese, and Arabic are the most spoken languages in Plymouth (2021 Census).</p>	None identified	N/A	N/A
Religion or belief	<p>48.9 per cent of the Plymouth population stated they had no religion. 42.5 per cent of the population identified as Christian (2021 Census).</p> <p>Those who identified as Muslim account for 1.3 per cent of Plymouth's population while Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish or Sikh combined totalled less than 1 per cent (2021 Census).</p>	None identified	N/A	N/A
Sex	<p>51 per cent of our population are women and 49 per cent are men (2021 Census).</p>	None identified	N/A	N/A
Sexual orientation	<p>88.95 per cent of residents aged 16 years and over in Plymouth describe their sexual orientation as straight or heterosexual. 2.06 per cent describe their sexuality as bisexual, 1.97 per cent of people describe their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian. 0.42 per cent of residents describe their sexual orientation using a different term (2021 Census).</p>	None identified	N/A	N/A

SECTION FOUR: HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

Human Rights	Implications	Mitigation Actions	Timescale and responsible department
	N/A	N/A	N/A

SECTION FIVE: OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

Equality objectives	Implications	Mitigation Actions	Timescale and responsible department
Work together in partnership to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ promote equality, diversity and inclusion▪ facilitate community cohesion▪ support people with different backgrounds and lived experiences to get on well together	Our providers for 16+ Supported Living promote interaction between young people from diverse backgrounds and lived experiences. By providing high quality and supportive shared living spaces, they encourage our children to navigate differences and build understanding. Offering a safe environment for our children and young people to practice effective communication, negotiation and respect for varying perspectives. Access to direct support with trusted key adults as well as group discussions, and peer support networks further facilitate this process, allowing individuals to learn from each other's unique experiences.	None required	N/A
Give specific consideration to care experienced people to improve their life outcomes, including access to training, employment and housing.	Supported accommodation offers young people in care and care experienced the opportunity to live in a more 'independent' home, whilst recognising the complexity of their needs and/or challenges with	None required	N/A

	<p>bespoke packages of high-quality support available to them. The aim being to offer our children a positive foundation in their step towards independence, offering a safe environment to develop essential life skills while still receiving necessary support.</p> <p>Plymouth Virtual School have recently attended the dedicated 16+ provider forum, to reinforce their existing involvement with providers in supporting Plymouth’s children and young people to access education and/or training.</p>		
Build and develop a diverse workforce that represents the community and citizens it serves.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Support diverse communities to feel confident to report crime and anti-social behaviour, including hate crime and hate incidents, and work with partners to ensure Plymouth is a city where everybody feels safe and welcome.	N/A	N/A	N/A

16+ Supported Accommodation

Project details

Assessment author

Chris Wilshire

Project summary

The rationale for a direct award of a new contract is to ensure continuity of provision for our young people, and continue to work with our incumbent providers as they progress towards their first Ofsted inspections. Value for money will continue to be monitored, linked directly to the needs of individual children and young people. We will ensure that any new providers seeking to join the contract are not disadvantaged by reopening Lots 1b, 2 and 3 during the lifetime of the new contract.

Summary of assessment



- 1 Long term or significant negative impact
- 2 Short term or minor negative impact
- 3 No impact or neutral impact
- 4 Short term or minor positive impact
- 5 Long term or significant positive impact

This is a continuation of the current service, to ensure consistency and quality for the children and young people in Plymouth who access these services. Therefore there is no expected impact against the requested assessment criteria.

Assessment scores

Biodiversity

Score

(3) No impact or neutral impact

Score justification

Continuation of current service and service levels

GHG Emissions

Score

(3) No impact or neutral impact

Score justification

Continuation of current service and service levels

Renewable Energy

Score

(3) No impact or neutral impact

Score justification

Continuation of current service and service levels

Ocean and Waterways

Score

(3) No impact or neutral impact

Score justification

Continuation of current service and service levels

Air Quality

Score

(3) No impact or neutral impact

Score justification

Continuation of current service and service levels

Materials and Waste

Score

(3) No impact or neutral impact

Score justification

Continuation of current service and service levels

Climate Change Adaptation

Score

(3) No impact or neutral impact

Score justification

Continuation of current service and service levels

Education / Engagement / Enabling Conditions

Score

(3) No impact or neutral impact

Score justification

Continuation of current service and service levels. We will work with providers to ensure they are aware of the Net Zero requirements and opportunities in the city.

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