

Cabinet

Monday 11 August 2025

PRESENT:

Councillor Evans OBE, in the Chair.

Councillor Laing, Vice Chair.

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

Also in attendance: Paul Barnard (Service Director for Strategic Planning and Transport), Helen Bone (Homes England), Glenn Caplin-Grey (Strategic Director for Growth), Hannah Chandler-Whiting (Democratic Advisor), Alison Critchfield (Assistant Head of Legal Services), David Draffan (Service Director for Economic Development), David Haley (Director of Children's Services), Alan Hocking (Commissioning Officer), Tracey Lee (Chief Executive), Colette McMullen (Babcock), Cliff Morgan (Strategic Lead for Provision and Delivery), Gill Nicholson (Head of Innovation and Delivery), Amanda Ratsey (Head of Economy and Investment), Jamie Sheldon (Senior Governance Advisor), Ian Trisk-Grove (Service Director for Finance), Gary Walbridge (Strategic Director for Adults, Health and Communities) and Joe Wharton (Homes England).

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 4.38 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.

14. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

15. **Minutes**

The minutes from the meeting held on 07 July 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

16. **Questions from the Public**

There were no questions from members of the public.

17. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of chair's urgent business.

18. **Defence Partnership and City Centre Regeneration Programme Update**

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

- a) As part of the economic plan, there would be a £4.4 billion investment in defence for the City which would generate 7,000 new jobs for the Dockyard alone. There would be 25,000 more job opportunities in the size of Plymouth's workforce by 2035;
- b) A new industrial strategy which featured Plymouth as a case study;
- c) 2,000 Babcock employees would relocate to the City Centre;
- d) Plymouth was announced as the National Centre for marine autonomy;
- e) New businesses were arriving in the City such as Helsing;
- f) There had been Memorandum of Understanding with Homes England for 10,000 new homes to be built in the City Centre;
- g) The Council received £519 million of investment in strategic transport infrastructure as well as over £300 million of investment in public transport altogether;
- h) There was a £40 million public investment in the Civic Centre, creating a brand-new City College campus focusing on blue and green skills;
- i) There was significant interest in Plymouth's housing at UKREIIF;
- j) The celebration of the opening of the first phase of the Armada Way scheme;
- k) The development of Plymouth's health hub with the start of the CDC;
- l) Major upgrades by the Freeport, with £73 million investment;
- m) A £3 billion investment in Plymouth's NHS, going towards Derriford Hospital;
- n) The Growth Alliance was established to make sure Plymouth maximised the opportunity given by government. It would support all Plymouth businesses to benefit, grow and attract new levels of inward investment. It would become a world-class centre for marine autonomy ensuring Plymouth children got the best jobs with first class education. It would ensure Plymouth was able to attract the very best talent and make sure Plymouth drove social value and good growth. Plymouth would have the very best transport and accessibility as well as promoting the city not only nationally but globally.
- o) The new defence investment was an opportunity to reimagine the city centre and create an amazing destination. Plymouth would create new homes for its new workforce and use this as the catalyst to regenerate the city centre;
- p) There was new investment into shopping and leisure at the Barcode and Drake Circus;
- q) There had been major investment from the university at Inter City Place;
- r) There had been a new City Centre Arts University;

- s) There had been significant investment into high quality public realm which was on-going;
- t) The celebration of The Box museum received one million visitors;
- u) Housing in the city centre would be underpinned by the growing workforce based there over the next 50 years;
- v) Work would begin on detail planning and place making. Technical studies would be done dealing with transport, accessibility, utilities, net zero, repurposing buildings and getting the housing mix right. Plymouth would need public engagement to drive buy-in and civic pride;
- w) The council would work to formalise its partnerships and securing additional resources into the future;
- x) The council was engaging the government's new towns taskforce to ensure future success.

Collette McMullen (Skills Director at Babcock International Group) highlighted the following points:

- y) The commitment of decades of partnership with Babcock and Plymouth City Council;
- z) There was a long term surety of work in the dockyard for decades into the future;
- aa) As a leading UK sovereign company, Babcock delivered with employment and growth, with the investment in skills development and regeneration of local communities;
- bb) Dockyard operations would be optimised to help deliver better for customers and for the nation as well as Plymouth;
- cc) For engineering and nuclear skills development, Babcock were at the forefront of the nationally funded skills plan. Babcock worked across the region with higher and further education including independent training providers, to ensure that they were training the right skills. Leading on nuclear skills had led Babcock to being at the forefront and able to take on pilot schemes that were on offer, develop courses and to support colleges;
- dd) Off-site facilities would be developed such as:
 - I. An advanced manufacturing facility;
 - II. An integrated logistics hub.
 - III. Assisting Plymouth in removing poverty.

- ee) Babcock was looking to relocate 2,000 employees from the dockyard into the city centre which was part of their commitment to the regeneration of the city;
- ff) Babcock would develop the projects in the spirit of partnership and in the partnership commitments that had been made;
- gg) Babcock referenced the additional workforce they required for defence and there was a need to attract and retain.

Joe Wharton (Assistant Director, Homes England), supported by Helen Bone (Regional Head MPP, Homes England) discussed the following points:

- hh) Tangible steps were being made from internal investment and external investment, facilitating key projects in the City Centre;
- ii) Thanks were given to local businesses and authorities for their funding and partnership towards the plan;
- jj) Work was underway with the Economic Development team to develop the city living framework scope that would rewire the city;
- kk) Homes England would continue to endorse and promote Plymouth beyond the city whilst bringing future funding into the city;
- ll) Homes England were hosting the Inaugural Southwest Housing Construction Conference in September 2025 which would tell the story of the Southwest's contribution to the UK growth mission.

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

- mm) At the time of when Councillor Lowry worked at the dockyard at the age of 16, there were around 20,000 employees. Within 10 years, the number reduced to 5,000 employees. There was an opportunity for Babcock to grow when there was an expansion of the submarine facilities, but the net benefit for Plymouth did not happen;
- nn) As part of the plan, Babcock would again grow their facilities and it was exciting to hear that Plymouth would benefit from the building work, training and long term opportunities for young people;
- oo) Plymouth had invested heavily in its high street which was showing dividend with the number of empty properties being bought;
- pp) Plymouth had approximately 800 people living in the city centre but this needed to expand to 8,000 people for a city centre of Plymouth's size.

Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing Cooperative Development and Communities and Chair of Child Poverty Working Group) highlighted the following points:

- qq) The city of Plymouth and the dockyard were inextricably linked and the success of one was dependent on the success of the other;
- rr) Quality of life and housing were essential to living within the City;
- ss) Plymouth's City Centre was densely populated pre-war and what was created was a central business district but one that did not continue to develop over the years;
- tt) There will be focus on housing towards Brownfield sites in the St Peter and the Waterfront ward;
- uu) Housing in walkable areas was paramount;
- vv) Working with Plymouth Community Homes would be key;
- ww) The City regeneration is key for future generations, similarly to the post-war development;
- xx) The redevelopment of the civic centre was important as Plymouth would be creating a new marketplace with a whole new set of people living in a different way in the centre of Plymouth.

Tracey Lee (Chief Executive) highlighted the following points:

- yy) It had been identified after liaising with government officials and ministers for many years, that the gap to restructuring and reinventing the City Centre is with a housing offer;
- zz) The Growth alliance not only needed to make sure there was sufficient housing for defence jobs but also needed to move forward with business innovation and the support for business;
- aaa) The work around Defence with Babcock and the Ministry of Defence was essential but also linked closely with businesses in the city who were expanding the work they did on marine autonomy, marine engineering, thinking about the future and future technologies, future industries and businesses that Plymouth needed;
- bbb) Tracey Lee (Chief Executive) and Councillor Evans OBE (The Leader of the Council) attended a Devonport open day recently, where children learned about the docks and the initiatives undertaken now would provide jobs for the children in the city into the future;
- ccc) The need for a world-class education system to ensure access to high-quality and well-paid jobs in the City;
- ddd) The transport system would need to be reliable for 2050 and beyond;
- eee) The partnership would bring this all together ensuring the upskilling of people who were in work and supporting those not in work to find work;

- fff) The collaboration with colleagues in Cornwall, Devon and Torbay was important as the endeavour was a regional one and Plymouth's reach went beyond city boundaries.

The Cabinet agreed to:

1. Endorse the partnership working with the MoD, MHCLG and Babcock as set out in the report;
2. To note the MOU to progress our ambition to deliver a new town within the City, supporting 10,000 new homes;
3. To note the engagement by the City Council with the new town's task force, call for evidence and to endorse further discussions with the government;
4. To accept up to £1 million pounds of external funding for the procurement of technical studies and master planning work, as set out in the report and delegate the award of contracts to the Strategic Director of growth.

19. **Modern Slavery Statement 2024/25**

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

- a) In 2018 Plymouth signed the collective party's modern slavery charter. Each year since 2018, a report had been taken to Cabinet to talk about the work done and work to be done;
- b) Modern slavery was a largely hidden crime and Plymouth had relatively low levels of this occurring in the city;
- c) The council would continue to look at its own working practices, procurement and supply chains to continue to combat modern day slavery;
- d) Vigilance within communities was essential to ending modern day slavery and if anyone had any concerns they needed to report to the Police in order for it to be tackled.

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) added:

- e) The Safeguarding Assurance Board heard of two harrowing reports of modern slavery and how it manifested itself and how it kept itself hidden.

The Cabinet agreed to:

1. Note the progress made on the delivery of the modern slavery statement and the next steps required to further tackle modern slavery;
2. The updated modern slavery statement.

20. **Finance Monitoring Report Q1**

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) introduced the item supported by Ian Trisk-Grove (Service Director for Finance) and highlighted the following points:

- a) From April, May and June, there was a predicted overspend of £2.6 million against an overall approved revenue budget of £253 million. Work would be undertaken by the council to reduce the variance to nil;
- b) Children's directorate had a pressure of £418,000 due to an increase in the number of placements in the independent sector;
- c) The number of unregistered placements had risen to nine, which was two above the planed figure and had given the council a variance of £697,000, associated with the provision of short breaks;
- d) Customer services and corporate directories are forecasting a variance of £1.557 million. This was largely due to undertaking a number of surveys within the Facilities Management department and additional work needing to be carried out;
- e) The savings for 2025/26 were in the region of approximately £10 million;
- f) The savings for the first three months totalled £4.7 million;
- g) Children, Adults, SEND and homelessness consumed 83% of the Council's budgets;
- h) The capital programme had seen a net increase of £38.2 million during quarter one due to funds going towards the Civic Centre re-development, with the addition of grant funding from government and Homes England. There has been a £45 million allocation in the capital programme from grants to undertake those works;
- i) £5.5 million from Plymouth and South Devon Freeport was given to the Council as a grant, to undertake the Millbay terminal re-development.

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) added:

- j) The cabinet would continue to keep downward pressure on the council spending no matter how challenging it was;
- k) Children's services was a demand led service that sometimes couldn't be controlled but the department was working hard to keep the pressure on their budget to a minimum;
- l) The quality of the work done on the ferry terminal in Millbay was to a good standard and was much more welcoming as a departure and arrival zone for Plymouth.

Councillor Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change) provided a net-zero update and highlighted the following points:

- m) Some of the capital programme funds had gone towards freight turnaround, a green way of doing export;
- n) A partnership had been made with Brittany Ferries and Associated British Ports, so that boats were not being reliant on fossil fuels, they could do so on electric energy instead.

The Cabinet agreed to:

- I. Note the forecast revenue monitoring position;
- 2. Note the overall capital budget;
- 3. Note the performance against credential indicators for quarter one.

21. **Contract award for the provision of Community Equipment services**

Councillor Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care), supported by Gill Nicholson (Head of Innovation & Delivery) and Alan Hockings (Commissioning Officer, Integrated Commissioning) introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- a) That Cabinet recommends awarding a 3.25 year contract to Milbrook Healthcare limited for the delivery of Plymouth community equipment service following the liquidation of the previous provider NRS Healthcare Limited;
- b) NRS Healthcare Limited (NRS) was awarded the contract in 2022 through a competitive tendering process with the agreement intended to run until January 2029 subject to all available contract extensions;
- c) In June 2025, Plymouth City Council was notified along with 40 other contracting authorities, of NRS healthcare's unstable financial position and the risk of insolvency by the 31st July 2025;
- d) Although NRS proposed a recovery plan, it required unanimous support from all the contracting authorities, and was not considered viable for a long-term solution;
- e) The NRS contract provided and maintained equipment and minor adaptations that were critical in helping people maintain independence and supporting carers in their valued role;
- f) Council officers began exploring alternative arrangements for the service, including:
 - I. Compliant procurement options;
 - II. The possibility of an emergency response;
 - III. To ensure continuity of care;
 - IV. To reduce disruption to local services and individuals.

- g) A short term emergency contract was put in place with Millbrook Healthcare, which provided the supply of essential equipment during a two month period;
- h) The proposed long-term contract with Millbrook Healthcare would restore the service to its intended standards and procure a new contract for February 2029;
- i) The service provided equipment relating to prescribed clinical need to support people within their own homes, and this included equipment such as:
 - I. Beds
 - II. Mattresses
 - III. Mobility Aids
- j) Referrals to the service were made from prescribing organisations such as:
 - I. Livewell Southwest
 - II. University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust
 - III. St. Luke's Hospice
 - IV. Practice Plus Group Hospitals
- k) The contract for Plymouth included the delivery and maintenance of equipment, and returned equipment and supported 17,000 people across Plymouth each year;
- l) The key service objectives for CES were:
 - I. To provide services that were safe, sustainable, cost efficient and effective for the benefit of all service users;
 - II. To contribute to the prevention of inappropriate hospital emissions;
 - III. To reduce the use of domiciliary care, care home placements, residential children's placements through the provision of timely and safe community equipment and minor adaptations;
 - IV. To support safe and timely hospital discharge;
 - V. To reduce the number of separate visits to individual service users within their homes;
 - VI. Offering coordinated holistic services delivered by multi-skilled workforces;
 - VII. To support carers and prevent carer breakdown;
 - VIII. To support end of life with the individuals, in their chosen environment;
 - IX. To provide a service in a manner that meets the principles of best value, including and not limited to the value of money;
 - X. The equipment being issued following assessment by the needs of a clinician would be loaned to the service user for the duration of their clinical need;

- XI. Providing adults and children a vital gateway to growth, development, independence, dignity and well-being within the community;
 - XII. It was proposed that the Plymouth Community Equipment Service contract would be passed to Millbrook Healthcare under section 41 of the Procurement Act 2023 and schedule 5 direct award justification for urgency;
 - XIII. The proposed contract would run for 3.25 years, allowing time to restore the service standards and prepare the full procurement process by February 2029;
 - XIV. The estimated annual spend was around £2.8 million pounds with a total contract value of £9.1 million;
 - XV. The next steps were to publish the required transparency notices under the Procurement Act 2023.
- m) Residents were urged to return any unused or old equipment so it could be re-used and re-purposed.

The Cabinet agreed to:

- I. Direct award a new contract for the provision of community equipment services to Millbrook Healthcare from 01 October 2025 until 31 January 2029.

22. **Meadow View Update**

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

- a) Meadow View was the Council's new day and respite care service for adults with learning difficulties and complex needs. Once complete, the service would provide a day service for more than 60 adults, as well as overnight respite care in seven bedrooms and seven self-contained apartments;
- b) Construction had now begun on site, which was located at the edge of Central Park, close to main bus services and offering easy access to the park;
- c) The site would offer access to disability bikes, as well as specially designed changing spaces and toilet facilities;
- d) PCC had worked closely with users, families, staff and the public to ensure the design reflected people's needs, providing a space to build independent skills and connect with others;
- e) The new building would feature a broad range of appropriately designed facilities, including:
 - i. Art and craft spaces;
 - ii. Sensory gardens;

- iii. Purpose-built sensory rooms;
 - iv. Accessible cycle hub.
- f) The new building has been designed to support the Council's ambition to reduce carbon emissions and would incorporate efficiency measures including:
- i. Solar wind systems;
 - ii. Air source heating;
 - iii. Triple glazing;
 - iv. Biodiversity of the site.

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

- g) It was challenging to minimise carbon impacts of such buildings due to the complex needs of the residents using the services. To mitigate this, the building would be comprised of a timber frame, which was fundamental for carbon cutting;
- h) The building would be heated throughout by air source heat pumps, covered with solar PV, and utilise efficient technology throughout, including LED lights and low water sanitary systems;
- i) Due to its central location, the site would make sustainable travel easier for residents, staff and families, enabling electric buses to pass directly outside. The site would also feature new EV charging facilities and a cycle hub, offering accessible bikes;
- j) New planting in the area would include:
- i. Native hedgerows
 - ii. Wild flowers
 - iii. Ornamental shrubs
 - iv. Raised beds
 - v. 55 new trees, ranging from Silver Birch to Holm Oak.

Cliff Morgan (Strategic Lead for Provision & Delivery, Adult Social Care) added:

- k) The project was the culmination of six years of design and planning work;
- l) Following engagement with clients, staff and families, it was recognised that existing complex needs facilities required greater accessibility. The new purpose built facility was located in the heart of a community in the city centre, and was specifically designed to maximise accessibility;
- m) Following a £13 million investment, the modern, purpose built facility would provide daytime services and activities for more than 60 people with learning disabilities and complex needs;
- n) Funding had been secured from the Climate Emergency Investment Fund to future proof the building with energy efficient and carbon mitigating materials and technologies;

- o) The building would feature seven self-contained apartments providing planned short breaks and emergency accommodation. The service would focus on person-centred care, education, and increased opportunities to support independent living skills, becoming a centre of excellence for care and support;
- p) The building would include a pottery room and a kiln, allowing service users to produce and sell high standard pottery crafts at local markets. This helped integrate service users into the wider community;
- q) While it was recognised nationally that there was a lack of appropriate changing spaces for people with physical disabilities, the Meadow View project would create seven new changing facilities, with one made accessible to members of the public;
- r) It was estimated that the service would be operational in the new facility by summer 2026. A time-lapse camera had been established to enable patients, families and the public to follow the build, and updates were available on the Council's website.

(A video was played at this point)

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

23. **Ofsted Focused Visit – Review of Arrangements for Care Leavers**

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

- a) As part of the Ofsted inspection framework, a visit was made on the 01 and 02 July 2025, to Plymouth's Children's Services;
- b) The visit reviewed the Council's arrangements for care leavers and the progress that had been made since the previous inspection which took place in January 2024;
- c) The Care Leavers team were supporting 286 young people, aged 18 to 24. Each young person had an allocated personal advisor (PA);
- d) The team jointly worked with social workers a further 131 children in care, aged 16 or 17;
- e) The team of personal advisors and social workers supported the young people with all aspects of their lives as they navigated their pathway from childhood to adulthood;
- f) Ofsted reported that Plymouth City Council was an ambitious corporate parent;
- g) Ofsted concluded that Plymouth City Council knew their service well and noted that many improvements had been made for our care experienced young people since the previous inspection;

- h) As part of Ofsted's visit inspectors spoke to a number of care experienced young people who all told them how much they valued their personal advisors and described them as committed individuals who stayed alongside them no matter what, who were kind, who were responsive and who were tenacious;
- i) The personal advisors were strong advocates for their young people;
- j) Ofsted inspectors highlighted two areas where improvement was needed, they are:
 - I. Accommodation pathways: Some young people were living in bed and breakfast accommodation for too long and;
 - II. Quality of supervision and management.
- k) The next full inspection will be in the Spring/Summer of 2027.

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

- l) The commitment of elected members and the whole council to our care experienced young people which was a credit to the outcomes achieved;
- m) Ofsted recognised that despite Plymouth's geography and some care leavers being in other parts of the country including asylum seeking children, the level of service was equally as good from Plymouth City Council;
- n) Other local authorities were approaching Plymouth in relation to treating care experience as a protected characteristic;

The Cabinet agreed to:

- 1. To note the published Ofsted report;
- 2. To endorse that all areas for improvement and further development are being incorporated into the Care Leavers Service Plan and monitored through Corporate Parenting Operational Managers Group (monthly) and Corporate Parenting Board (Quarterly).

24. **Leader's Announcements**

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

- a) Plymouth had featured in an article in the Financial Times, citing a 'booming university and revised defence industry puts Plymouth on the map', 'a city for the 21st Century' and referencing ongoing cultural place-making work, including The Box;
- b) Councillors had recently attended a celebratory opening event at Tinside Lido following the improvement works. The scheme had delivered an amazing new event space with some of the best views in Plymouth, alongside a new kitchen and bar facility, a new public sun terrace and coffee pod, a revamped youth hub and learning space with changing facilities, and improved public accessibility;

- c) Guest attendances at the opening event had included representatives from the National Lottery, the Levelling Up Fund (MHCLG) and Youth Investment Fund, as well as Lewis Pugh (UN Ambassador of the Oceans). Councillor Evans OBE had been given the privilege of unveiling two plaques;
- d) The refurbished spaces were previously derelict or unused, and had now been unlocked to celebrate heritage, with generated income supporting the National Marine Park;
- e) All businesses in Plymouth were encouraged to consider the space for their business meetings and events;
- f) Thanks were given to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for their investment, and to all participants in the project for their hard work;
- g) Similar heritage works were ongoing at the Mountbatten Centre and the Mount Edgumbe Garden Battery.
- h) The National Marine Park annual report had been published, highlighting the following statistics from the first year of the project:
 - i. 970 students had visited the Plymouth Sound National Marine Park in its first year;
 - ii. 100% of teachers would 'Our Sea' in their school programme;
 - iii. The equivalent of £116,000 had been contributed through voluntary hours;
 - iv. 328 volunteer hours had been dedicated to beach cleans alone;
 - v. 8,700 people were engaged through the 'Meet the Marine Park' events;
 - vi. 25,000 visitors had attended Sea Fest;
 - vii. 340,000 people were reached on social media;
 - viii. 6 million people viewed Country File's TV episode, showcasing the National Marine Park;
 - ix. £5 million of match funding had recently been secured.

25. **Cabinet Member Updates**

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

- a) The 12 August 2025 would mark the first anniversary of the opening of the Plymouth Park Crematorium;

- b) The Park were now supporting bereaved families across Plymouth, Cornwall and the South Hams. The Park had now delivered just over 2,400 cremations, the function rooms had delivered 380 wakes, and the public cafe had seen steady increase in business;
- c) The British Firework championship would be returning to Plymouth on the 13-14 August 2025. The event would feature entertainment, live music and fireworks displays. Thanks were given to the Association of British Ports who were sponsoring the event for the second consecutive year. Plymouth Citybus would be sponsoring the Young Person's Choice Award;
- d) Friday the 15 August 2025 was the 80th anniversary of VJ Day, and would be marked by a parade from St. Andrews Church to the Crowne Plaza. The parade was organised by the Far East Prisoners of War Group;
- e) The West End Carnival would be held on 23 August 2025 offering a full programme of events and free entertainment;
- f) From the 20 August 2025, Santander would be offering a banking service at Plympton Library every Wednesday. This formed part of ongoing partnership work to transform libraries into community hubs;
- g) Libraries continued to work closely with families and wellbeing hubs across the city. At Plymstock Library, a Satellite Family Hub had been launched with support from Bernado's charity, and progress was ongoing with Estover and North Prospect libraries.

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

- h) Plymouth City Council, in partnership with Plymouth and South Devon Community Forrest, Transforming Plymouth Together, and Food Plymouth, had developed a DEFRA Grant funded, multi-faith project, to plant trees in city churchyards. The concept had originated from a city resident, who had identified that city churchyards were well suited for new trees, situated in the heart of communities, with ample green space;
- i) Local churches, mosques, synagogues and other places of worship were all encouraged to submit suggestions for the planting pipeline for Winter 2025. Thanks were given to all partners involved for their collaboration, with similar projects resulting in over 50,000 new trees planted in recent years across Plymouth;
- j) Poole Farm had recently hosted the 'Wild and Well' event, promoting how nature connection could boost children's wellbeing. Over 300 people attended the event, as well as 24 stalls hosted by local groups including Devon Wildlife Trust, Food Plymouth, the National Marine Park and the Local Devon Moth Group;
- k) Thanks were given to the staff and volunteers who helped organise and run the event. The project encapsulated the work being developed under the Plymouth Plan

for Nature and People, demonstrating empowered volunteers, connected communities, and young people learning green skills and boosting their wellbeing;

Councillor Cresswell (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Apprenticeships) provided the following updates:

- l) The national campaign for 'attendance' would be launched in September 2025. As a pilot location, Plymouth were working in partnership with the Department for Education (DfE) to help shape the national attendance campaign, which sought to improve attendance and inclusion across the city's schools;
- m) The DfE was working closely with families to ensure appropriate messaging, and focussed on parents and children who were at risk of becoming permanently absent from school;
- n) A city-wide attendance survey had been completed by 1,500 children and young people and 2,200 parents. The DfE was using these early research findings to inform the campaign, and would share the research with the national and international research space once the campaign had concluded;
- o) Supported internships for SEND young people continued to grow, and had reached 67. For the second consecutive year, 100% of the students undertaking supported internships at Discovery College had received an offer of paid employment;
- p) Plymouth had been shortlisted for further nasen Awards, recognising individuals, teams and organisations who celebrate and champion SEND. Plymouth had been shortlisted for awards in two categories, and the award ceremony would take place in Birmingham on 03 October 2025;
- q) The Plymouth GATI (Plymouth Graduated Approach to Inclusion website) had been nominated for the 'resources for SEND' category, having been recognised by teachers, SENCO's, parents, carers, head teachers, and others as a practical resource for guidance, advice and support;
- r) The supported internships offer through Discovery College YMCA had been nominated in the 'co-production initiative of the year' category, delivering supported internships in the fields of:
 - I. Sport;
 - II. Leisure;
 - III. Hospitality;
 - IV. Green spaces.
- s) The initiative demonstrated genuine commitment to co-production work which was becoming engrained between partner organisations, resulting in the delivery of successful results.

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

- t) Congratulations were given to four Care Experienced young people had recently graduated from Plymouth University with degrees in nursing, graphic design, economics and fine art;
- u) Foster for Plymouth now had two established Mockingbird constellations, supporting 31 children across 17 fostering and kinship households;
- v) The third Mockingbird constellation would be launched in early September 2025, with plans ongoing for the development of a fourth constellation before the end of 2025, supporting Plymouth's Foster Carers;
- w) The Mockingbird families enjoyed a range of activities together including:
 - I. A trip to Butlins;
 - II. Swimming;
 - III. Cinema trips;
 - IV. Litter picking;
 - V. Park trips;
 - VI. Arts and crafts;
 - VII. Breakfast mornings;
 - VIII. Picnics;
 - IX. Movie evenings;
 - X. Fit and Fed activities.
- x) Councillor Laing had met with Baroness Longfield, a former children's commissioner, having been invited to the House of Lords to discuss the Council's work in the care sector, including classifying care experience as a protected characteristic;
- y) Councillors had recently toured three youth centres in Plymouth that were being transformed through the Youth Investment Fund (Frederick Street, Efford and Honicknowle). Through coproduction, the needs of young people had been placed at the heart of the project's design;
- z) There were a vast array of activities and workshops available for children and young people at The Box all throughout the summer holidays. The Surrealism Show would end on the 7th September 2025, and plans were ongoing for a public event to commemorate The Box's fifth birthday in September 2025;
- aa) The Beryl Cook inflatable figure had been the centrepiece of the national celebration at Trafalgar Square;
- bb) Councillor Laing had attended Summer in the Scene Dot on the 8 August 2025 at the Theatre Royal, featuring a poetry performance and a set from DJ Snake. The musical theatre quiz would take place next Thursday, and a range of other events had been planned.

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

- cc) In June, over 10,000 people had attended swims at Mount Wise pools, which remained free entry;
- dd) Nearly 100,000 people had attended Plymouth Active Leisure centres including the Life Centre, Mount Wise, Plympton Pool and Tinside Lido during June 2025;
- ee) After investment from the Council, gym memberships at The Life Centre had increased by 17% in 2025;
- ff) Over 200 young people attended free youth events held at Tinside Lido;
- gg) £1 pound family swims were offered at the Life Centre and Plympton Pool;
- hh) Investment in the Fit and Fed programme had increased this year, with extra spaces allocated due to high demand;
- ii) The initiatives were key to broadening access to health and wellbeing facilities, and demonstrated Council and partner investment for Plymouth's residents;
- jj) In the wake of the Lionesses victory, football in Plymouth was growing in popularity. Councillor Dann had recently met the newly formed Plymouth School Girls Under 13's Football Team. Over 220 young girls from schools across Plymouth had applied, with 25 finally selected;
- kk) A new ladies football team, True Blue Ladies, had formed in St. Peters;
- ll) The Council were working with the Devon Football Association, the Football Foundation, and Argyle to promote the sporting aspirations of the city, including the Foulston Park project which would become a base for Women's football in Plymouth;
- mm) An aquatics and diving lead had been appointed at the Life Centre.

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

- nn) In July 2025, the Leader had received a letter from the Department of Transport outlining the announcements for the major road networks and large local projects in England. The government had a list of 72 projects, designed to relieve congestion, unlock housing and stimulate growth;
- oo) Out of the 72 projects, only 28 were approved. Plymouth had received approval for two projects, making Plymouth the only town/city to receive multiple successes;
- pp) The first accepted proposal was the Manadon Interchange Scheme, which would bring additional off-road slip lanes and improved bus and cycling lanes to reduce congestion, improve journey times and reduce carbon emissions;

- qq) The second approved project was the Plymouth Major Network Phase I from Marsh Mills to Camels Head, which would deliver improved flood defence works, localised road winding and improved traffic flow;
- rr) The footpath on Central Park Avenue would be opening in the next few weeks;
- ss) The Velocity pothole-repair machine had been operating in Moor View, Budshead, Honicknowle and Ham wards, and would next move to Eggbuckland;
- tt) 23 sites of road defects have been fixed, and various schemes had been completed to repair street lights in the city;
- uu) The Royal Parade Bus Improvement Scheme was progressing on time and on budget. Excavation of area one was underway, with contractors having completed excavations, located underground utilities, installed pre-cast concrete blocks and started the form work. Works would soon move on to the kerb-line and paving;
- vv) Pedestrian management had been managed well, and signage and seating had been installed at Derry's Cross where the temporary bus-stop was located;
- ww) Work to install two bus-stops outside the Park Crematorium had begun, alongside a Puffin crossing. Once installed, the number 19 bus service would serve the Park, and the completed works would allow the Public to safely cross Merrifield Road. This would provide access to the Cafe, Drake Memorial Park and Gables Cats and Dogs Home. The bus stops and the roadside of the Park would be completed by the end of September 2025, with the entire scheme expected for completion in October 2025;
- xx) Thanks to the Department for Transport's Active Travel fund, the Council had secured the expansion of secure lockers for bikes. Additional lockers had been installed due to high demand, and were located in Vauxhall Street and at the Life Centre. The lockers were manufactured in Plympton by BikeAway, thus supporting local businesses;
- yy) The additional hubs for the lockers would be located at Cremyll Street, Admiral's Hard, Vauxhall Street, Barbican Approach, Theatre Royal, Grand Parade, Regent Street Car Park, St. John's Road in Turnchapel and Napier Terrace Car Park;
- zz) Plymouth had received confirmation that it was in the top five cities for participation of children in the Bikeability scheme. This marked the third consecutive year, with 96.8% of eligible children undertaking the Bikeability course, delivering skills, confidence and experience to maintain safety as well as developing healthy and active travel habits.

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

- aaa) In partnership with organisations across NHS, the Council had developed a 'Vaccinate Plymouth Campaign' to support with messaging across the city and

encourage the uptake of vaccines. Messages had been tailored to different age cohorts and vaccine types;

- bbb) The Council recently had utilised social media posts to encourage uptake of the MMR vaccine prior to the summer holidays, in response to rising cases of Measles in Europe;
- ccc) The Council had also coordinated with the Family Hubs to distribute leaflets detailing immunisation requirements for children starting school in September;
- ddd) Devonport naval base open days had commenced this year, and had been well attended by thousands of residents. Members of the Public Health team had collaborated with stalls from Livewell Southwest and the Wellbeing Hubs, providing information and engagement on topics including health and wellbeing, body-composition scales and blood pressure machine checks;
- eee) 'Know your Numbers Week' would run during 8-14 September, encouraging people to check their blood pressure at a local hub, pharmacy or GP.

26. **LGA Update**

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (The Leader of the Council) delivered the Local Government Reorganisation (LGA) update and discussed:

- a) The Leader was looking forward to the arrival of Councillor Louise Gittins (LGA Chair) to Plymouth shortly, and the opportunity to discuss the LGA's response to the new Local Government English Devolution Community Empowerment Bill;
- b) The LGA was currently required to balance unitary, county and district councils, whilst simultaneously managing the transition towards unitary authorities, which presented a challenge;
- c) The LGA had made a statement that: "It is critical that the full breadth, diversity and capability of local government is recognised and all councils are enabled to play a meaningful role as partners and, where appropriate, as part of strategic authorities in driving growth, improving services, and improving the lives of our residents". This was particularly important for Plymouth who were undergoing a journey towards Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and a Strategic Mayoral Authority;
- d) The government had launched an Election Strategy Paper, which aimed to remove barriers to participation, including expanding the franchise to include 16 year olds. The Bill was designed to encourage participation in politics and elections, and redress a climate of hostility which had developed in recent years. This was evidenced by significant abuse directed toward candidates and councillors during the recent Mayoral Campaign;
- e) The rise of hostilities had discouraged many candidates from entering public service and representing their communities. This was concerning, and required action;

- f) The LGA had formed a coalition on grassroots sports funding, designed to ensure that the £400 million announced by the Government for grassroots sports was delivered to vital community facilities provided by local Councils and partners, such as:
 - I. Leisure centres;
 - II. Swimming pools;
 - III. Local gyms.
- g) The LGA were campaigning for recognition of the role of grassroots sports facilities for preventative health, with closures likely to have long-term impacts for the Health Service;
- h) The LGA had published new research on the growing need and funding pressures for home-school transport. The research explored opportunities for future policy change in the context of potential wider reforms to the SEND system. It was important that progress was monitored, and that Plymouth City Council (PCC) fed back evidence of 'lived experience';
- i) 10 new Reform Councils were considering scrapping home-school transport. Cutting off parent's and children's access to school as not the answer, and pressures were instead attributed to market failure and excess costs;
- j) The Mayoral Referendum had now concluded. Councillor Evans OBE thanked Council staff for their work organising and conducting the referendum, despite low public support and challenging legislation;
- k) The legislation applying to local referendums varied significantly to that of local council and national elections. This had resulted in significant intimidation and toxicity, with campaigns not required to formally register, nor file financial accounts. Campaigning had occurred outside of polling stations, and councillors had received unacceptable abuse. It was hoped that councillors would never have to endure a similar event, and the Audit and Governance Committee would look to recommend appropriate legislative changes to Government;
- l) The Council would clearly set out the rules and expectations of candidates, agents and campaigns ahead of the next local elections.

27. **Exempt Business**

(There were no items of exempt business)

28. **Contract award for the provision of Community Equipment services**

(This item was discussed under minute 21 and Cabinet did not enter part 2 to have further discussions)

