

Cabinet

Monday 13 October 2025

PRESENT:

Councillor Laing, Chair.

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

Apologies for absence: Councillor Evans OBE.

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 4.26 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.

38. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

39. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 08 September 2025 were agreed as an accurate record.

40. **Questions from the Public**

Two questions were received from the public:

The following question was asked by Mr Gregg Black

Question: My mother, with undiagnosed dementia, was left to neglect themselves. Adult Social Services' 'least restrictive' approach led to them being found half naked and confused on Embankment Road, then detained by police. I feel let down. How will the Council ensure this doesn't happen to others?

Answer: Least restrictive approaches are a key principle in adult social care and is embedded in a number of areas of legislation including:

The Care Act 2014 which requires local authorities and professionals to act in a way that minimises restrictions on an individual's rights and freedoms.

The mental capacity act 2005 also sets out that a least restrictive principles for individuals who may lack capacity to make specific decisions.

The Human Rights Act 1998 also protects fundamental rights and describes how any restrictions must be lawful, necessary and proportionate

Balancing what's in a person's best interest, the need for least restrictive approaches and risk to individuals is a significant challenge for professional decision makers including social workers, nurses, therapists and care providers. Making decisions on when to intervene and challenge a person's ability to make decisions is always difficult and we have a legal responsibility to respect how people choose to live and balance this with what we know of that person.

Whilst risk is an inherent part of life it is also important that, in the event of an unwanted event like that described, services again seek review decision making with those impacted to reduce or eliminate potential harm.

The following question was asked by Klara Wilkins

Question: Housing First initiatives prioritizes access to permanent housing with tailored wraparound support and no preconditions. Housing First costs £7,700 per person yearly but saves around £15,880 per person per year. Tenancy sustainment stands at 84%. Why is housing first not an option in Plymouth?

Answer: Plymouth City Council is not a stock holding authority and therefore is not able to directly deliver a Housing First model. All social housing stock is allocated through Devon Home Choice.

PATH working with Plymouth Community Homes deliver a version of Housing First. Plymouth Community Homes offers up to 5 properties per year with additional tenancy support for people transitioning from rough sleeping, experiencing homelessness and multiple disadvantage.

41. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

42. **City Brand Strategy**

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

- a) The cross-city, cross-party and cross-sector collaboration involved in developing the new city brand strategy;
- b) Plymouth's significant upcoming changes, including a £4.4 billion investment in the dockyard, Homes England's support for 10,000 homes, and new towns funding for city centre regeneration;
- c) The need to attract 25,000 people over the next decade to fill new jobs;
- d) The importance of positioning Plymouth as an attractive place to live, work, study, visit, and invest;
- e) Research by Bloom Consulting showed that perception impacted 86% of decisions to live, work, invest, or visit a destination, and that improving perception by one decimal point can increase tourism receipts by 15%, talent attraction by 21%, and foreign direct investment by 17.5%;
- f) Research commissioned by Destination Plymouth had found that most people didn't know very much about Plymouth, but that any firm perceptions were rooted from 20 years previous, not of the city it was in the present day;

- g) The report suggested ten opportunities the city could move forward with to reposition the city's brand and grow its reputation nationally, and internationally;
- h) Importance of developing a new narrative for Plymouth that was reflective of the contemporary city in the present day;
- i) The extensive engagement process, including 2,000 hours of meetings with local communities, partners and organisations, 250 public responses, 100 UK-wide surveys, and 100 street conversations and workshops, resulting in overwhelmingly positive feedback;
- j) The launch of the promotional film, which received over 119,000 Facebook views and 3,200 LinkedIn views in its first week;
- k) Thanks to all those involved.

Paul Fieldsend-Danks (Arts University Plymouth) added the following:

- l) He had served as the Chair of the branding group and thanked everyone at Plymouth City Council (PCC) and Destination Plymouth for facilitating UK shared prosperity funding for the process, and thanked funding partners: Princess Yachts, Babcock, The University of Plymouth, and The Box;
- m) An explanation of the brand development process, emphasising authenticity and community engagement;
- n) Three core values had been identified to underpin the actions and capture the unique personality that made Plymouth the truly outstanding place it was: Go Boldly, Go Together, and Go Far;
- o) Six key narratives were presented, including Plymouth's 500-year history of innovation, marine autonomy leadership, employment opportunities, unique natural environment, creative sector strength, and investment pipeline;
- p) The new visual identity was designed to reflect Plymouth's geography and energy, supported by a media hub and image library accessible to all stakeholders.

Adrian Bratt (Princess Yachts) added more on:

- q) Recruitment challenges and how the new brand toolkit would help attract talent by showcasing Plymouth's lifestyle and opportunities to encourage candidates to relocate encouraging people to live and work in the city, not just to visit.

Amanda Lumley (Chief Executive of Destination Plymouth) emphasised:

- r) The need for widespread advocacy and embedding the narratives across networks, schools, and community projects.

David Draffan (Service Director for Economic Development) added:

- s) Thanks to Amanda for her leadership;
- t) The engagement had been exceptional and the brand was of Plymouth, from Plymouth and for Plymouth;
- u) The consultants that had worked on the branding had worked on some of the best branded destinations in the world;
- v) The brand could only be for Plymouth and was authentic to the city.

During discussion, the following was added:

- w) Plans to showcase the new brand on Civic Centre hoardings within two weeks were confirmed;
- x) The brand had been designed to not have ownership, so it could be used across the city by business and communities alike;
- y) Data on usage of the media from the toolkit would be measured;
- z) The importance of authenticity, stakeholder engagement, advocates, and using the toolkit to amplify positive messaging citywide.

Cabinet agreed to:

1. Support the citywide brand strategy and new narratives to position Plymouth as a place to live, work, study, and visit;
2. Adopt key components of the city branding work, including narratives and visuals, and integrate them into delivery programs such as Team Plymouth, Homes England housing development, recruitment initiatives, and the Plymouth Plan where consistent, positive city wide messaging is required;
3. Mandate Destination Plymouth to broaden its remit as a citywide place marketing organisation with strategic responsibility for leading the brand strategy and implementation, positioning the city's 'place' brand going forwards as well as continuing to drive the Visitor Plan;
4. Recognise the support of key city partners in funding and driving this work forwards.

43. **Connect to Work & Get Devon Plymouth and Torbay Working Plan**

Councillor Cresswell (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Apprenticeships) presented the item to Cabinet, supported by David Haley (Director of Children's Services), Tina Brinkworth (Head of Skills and Post-16), and Toby Hall (Funding and Partnership Manager) and highlighted:

- a) The initiative followed the Department for Work and Pensions' (DWP) publication of the Get Britain Working White Paper, which aimed to build an inclusive and thriving

labour market. Local areas were asked to develop plans addressing labour market participation, progression, earnings, and job quality;

- b) The Get Devon, Plymouth and Torbay Working Plan was co-designed by Devon County Council, Plymouth City Council, and Torbay Council, in collaboration with partners from the voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors, education and skills providers, employers, business representatives, the local Integrated Care Board, and Jobcentre Plus. Co-production of the approach was a golden thread running through the city's work;
- c) The plan aimed to tackle long-standing challenges such as economic inactivity and youth unemployment, while also leveraging opportunities arising from defence investment and the work of Team Plymouth;
- d) Connect to Work was a new supported employment programme designed to assist disabled people, those with health conditions, and individuals facing complex barriers to employment. It would also support those at risk of falling out of the labour market to retain employment;
- e) Plymouth City Council would deliver Connect to Work in-house, with a recruitment strategy focused on individuals with lived experience of the barriers being addressed, including disability, long-term health conditions, and care experience. A key part of the approach was to embed lived experience which would ensure the delivery model was empathetic, informed, and responsive;
- f) The Get Devon, Plymouth and Torbay Working Plan had created strong foundations for future investment and partnership working. Connect to Work would be the first delivery element under the plan and would be overseen by a wide range of partners;
- g) A diverse team had been recruited, including individuals with lived experience of disabilities, mental health challenges, and neurodiversity. Approximately 10% of roles would be apprenticeships, with support provided throughout the apprenticeship and into employment;
- h) Delivery would be co-located at Cobourg House, bringing together Skills Launchpad Plymouth, Careers Plymouth, On Course Southwest, and the new Connect to Work team. This co-location would enable effective cross-referrals and improve participant experience;
- i) There had been extensive engagement with internal council teams (including Public Health, SEND, Housing, and Community Connections) and external organisations such as Livewell Southwest and Shekinah. Although Connect to Work would serve different cohorts, regular engagement would ensure strong cross-referral pathways.

In response to questions, it was reported that:

- j) Plymouth had already laid strong foundations through Skills Launchpad, having supported 3,000 residents into employment and 60,000 online. Caseworkers would be embedded in community settings to reach both young people and families,

recognising that barriers to employment often included financial, housing, and health issues;

- k) Cabinet Members expressed strong support for the initiative, noting Plymouth's proactive approach and existing infrastructure.

Cabinet agreed to:

1. Approve and accept the Get Devon Plymouth and Torbay Working plan: 2025 – 2027;
2. Delegate the authority to sign future pilot contracts and agreements associated with the Get Devon Plymouth and Torbay Working plan, such as the Youth Guarantee, to the Director for Children's Services, where they do not already have the authority to do so;
3. Approve the proposal for the Council to deliver the new DWP Connect to Work programme to support approximately 2,100 Plymouth residents (total value of approximately £6.8m over 5 years);
4. Delegate the authority to sign Connect to Work contracts and agreements to the Director for Children's Services, where they do not already have the authority to do so.

44. **Plymouth SEND Improvement update**

Councillor Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications) paid tribute to Hannah McGuigan (Plymouth City Council employee) who had passed away:

- a) Hannah was a bright, determined and talented team player who left a lasting impression on everybody fortunate to work alongside her. Her unwavering commitment to children and families and her dedication to Plymouth City Council was truly inspiring. Hannah's kindness, compassion, and selflessness touched so many lives and the thoughts of Cabinet and the council as a whole remained with her husband, children and extended family. Hannah brought warmth and positivity to everything she did, always putting others first and her legacy would continue to inspire.

Councillor Cresswell (Cabinet Member for Education, Apprenticeships and Skills presented the report, supported by Amanda Davis (Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills) and Lisa McDonald (Head of SEND) and made the following key points:

- b) There was strengthened governance arrangements which had been established, including an independently chaired SEND Improvement Board and supporting strategic and operational groups, ensuring robust oversight and accountability across the partnership;

- c) Inspection readiness had been supported through fortnightly workshops, updated self-evaluation frameworks (SEF), and the development of a comprehensive evidence bank to demonstrate impact and progress;
- d) Co-production and the voice of young people had been embedded in service design, with engagement through Plymouth Parent Carer Voice (PPCV), Youth Ascends, and Young Safeguarders. This had led to the creation of inclusive resources such as the Equal Kind and SELF film. Young people had contributed meaningfully to meetings, asking pertinent questions that had influenced the Council's practice;
- e) Plymouth's work in co-production and inclusive education had received national recognition, including nominations for the NASEN SEND Awards and increased visibility through the Department for Education and sector partnerships;
- f) The graduated approach had been strengthened, with targeted support and outreach from special schools improving outcomes for over 300 pupils without Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). The vulnerable pupils panel had also enhanced early intervention;
- g) EHCP timeliness and quality had improved significantly, with reduced backlogs and increased compliance with statutory timelines. Quality assurance processes were embedded and supported by digital tools and standard operating procedures;
- h) Family engagement and communications had been transformed, with the SEND duty system achieving 98% call responsiveness and receiving positive feedback. Themed partnership sessions had further enhanced transparency and collaboration;
- i) A multi-agency waiting well offer had been developed to provide interim support across health, education, and social care. Co-designed resources and helplines were available;
- j) Preparation for adulthood had been supported through collaboration with adult services. Over 100 supported internships had been delivered, with 100% of participants progressing into employment or training. A new transitions protocol and digital resource hub had also been launched;
- k) The graduated approach platform had clarified universal, targeted, and specialist support. An Ordinarily Available Provision had been developed in collaboration with school leaders, the DfE, and families. Extended special school outreach had been introduced, focusing on individual pupils, small groups, and whole-school inclusion strategies;
- l) Targeted funding pathways had been launched in 30 schools, with a further 28 schools offering small group interventions. A higher EHCP banding had been introduced to support pupils with higher needs in mainstream settings;

In response to questions raised it was reported that:

- m) There had been positive improvements in relation to cultural transformation within the SEND team, including improved staff morale and confidence in engagement with

families. Testimonials from families and staff had highlighted the positive impact of the changes;

- n) Family feedback had been central to service development. Over 50 families had been consulted, leading to the redesign of the 0–25 SEND duty team. Six-weekly family forums and fortnightly Lunch and Learn sessions had been established. Parent carer surveys had shown marked improvement in responsiveness and service quality;
- o) There was a national shortage of educational psychologists and was impacting Plymouth. Creative solutions had been implemented, including the recruitment of assistant educational psychologists from local universities, with progression into doctoral training and qualified roles. Collaborative work with schools and families had supported children while awaiting assessments;
- p) The SEND Delivery Board had ensured full partnership and collaboration across the local area. Schools had led workstreams and contributed to improved outcomes, including reduced exclusions and improved attendance. The partnership had demonstrated strong accountability and commitment to Plymouth;
- q) The Cabinet reaffirmed its commitment to SEND as a shared responsibility across elected members and officers, recognising the importance of co-creation, partnership working, and listening to children and families.

Cabinet agreed to:

- I. Note the report.

45. **Digital Apprentices**

Councillor Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Experience, Sport, Leisure and HR and OD) introduced the report and was supported by Chris Squire (Service Director for HROD) and highlighted the following key points:

- a) The programme was designed to enhance staff skills in data and artificial intelligence (AI), with a focus on improving service delivery, increasing efficiency, and empowering employees. It was noted that the initiative was not about replacing staff with technology but about equipping them to lead change and improve outcomes using digital tools;
- b) The Council had drawn down £1.2 million in additional apprenticeship levy funding, including a £750,000 levy transfer from a large technology company, enabling the creation of a Digital Academy. This supported 49 digital apprentices across all directorates, with a focus on customer experience, financial forecasting, and demand management;
- c) The Council's overall apprenticeship programme included 188 apprentices, comprising new starters and existing staff, with an additional 65 staff in schools and £150,000 passported to 41 social care providers in the city;

d) The Council partnered with Multiverse, a specialist provider in data and AI, to deliver the programme. The curriculum included:

- i. Level 3: Data and Insights for Business Decisions;
- ii. Level 4: Data Fellowship and AI for Business Value;
- iii. AI-Powered Productivity modules;
- iv. Leadership sessions covering AI fundamentals, ethics, and governance;

e) Early feedback from the programme showed:

- i. 91% of managers reported a positive impact;
- ii. 83% of learners felt well supported;
- iii. 66% of managers observed improvements in business outcomes;

f) Examples of early learner projects included:

- i. Reduction in garden waste complaints through improved data categorisation;
- ii. Streamlining Windows 11 upgrade validation, reducing daily processing time from 2–3 hours to 30 minutes;
- iii. Development of a Microsoft Co-Pilot agent to automate finance queries and improve self-service;

g) The programme was supported by a comprehensive communications strategy, including learner spotlights, lunch and learn sessions, virtual coffee mornings, and hackathons. A graduation ceremony was also planned;

h) Planning for Cohort 2 was underway, targeting Adults, Health and Communities, Children's Services, and Public Health. A digital skills audit was also planned to assess staff capabilities and inform future training needs.

In response to questions raised it was reported that:

- i) The importance of engaging elected members in the programme to build understanding and advocacy. It was agreed that scrutiny and member groups would be used to share real examples and outcomes. A digital champion was to be appointed to support this engagement;
- j) The Cabinet welcomed the initiative as a positive and pragmatic approach to digital transformation, noting its alignment with strategic priorities and its potential to build resilience and capacity across services.

Cabinet agreed to:

I. Note the verbal report.

46. **Leader's Announcements**

Councillor Laing (Deputy Leader) delivered leader's announcements on behalf of Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) and discussed:

- a) Plymouth's designation as one of five key national defence growth areas under the UK Defence Industrial Strategy, backed by a £250 million UK-wide investment. This marked a pivotal moment for the city, unlocking long-term prosperity and economic opportunities;
- b) The launch of Team Plymouth, a strategic partnership aimed at strengthening collaboration between key organisations, fostering innovation, and creating high-quality jobs. The partnership positioned Plymouth to lead in defence, marine autonomy, and advanced manufacturing;
- c) Recent major developments including:
 - i. Plymouth's designation as the National Centre for Marine Autonomy;
 - ii. A £350 million investment by defence tech firm Helsing;
 - iii. Babcock's expansion into Sherford with a new integrated logistics hub and advanced manufacturing base;
 - iv. Confirmation of Plymouth and South Devon Freeport as a Defence Strategic Investment Zone;
- d) Plymouth's selection by the New Towns Commission as one of 12 places to be taken forward as part of the government's next generation of new towns. This recognition followed a year of close collaboration and site visits, and was seen as a powerful endorsement of Plymouth's vision and readiness to deliver. Final government decisions were expected early the next year;
- e) A multi-million pound investment to transform the Mount Batten pontoon into a safer, more accessible marine gateway. Following the removal of the old pontoon and link bridge earlier in the summer, the next phase would see construction of a state-of-the-art replacement. The £4.22 million scheme would:
 - i. Repair critical infrastructure including the bridgehead and seawall;
 - ii. Introduce new commercial berths to generate income for long-term upkeep;
 - iii. Enhance access to water-based activities through the Plymouth Sound National Marine Park and Mount Batten Water Sports and Activity Centre;
- f) Funding for the pontoon project was provided by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, UK Government, and Plymouth City Council. The scheme aimed to improve

accessibility to Plymouth Sound National Marine Park and connect more people with the water and its heritage.

47. **Cabinet Member Updates**

Councillor Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Experience, Sport, Leisure and HR and OD) introduced her announcements and discussed:

- a) Plymouth's selection as one of Sport England's priority places, following five years of collaboration through the Pathfinder project. The initiative focused on supporting children and young people facing challenges by promoting physical activity to improve emotional and physical health, school attendance, behaviour, and concentration. A £1.8 million award had been secured, with a delivery plan and public relations campaign forthcoming;
- b) The Summer Fit and Fed programme, which delivered 17,851 free spaces across 93 holiday clubs with 58 delivery partners. Over 2,500 free packed lunches were distributed at four community park events. Councillor Dann shared two testimonials highlighting the programme's impact on children with specific needs and the broader benefits to families and communities;
- c) National recognition for Plymouth Diving, with Oliver, Amelia, and Harry selected for the Swim England Junior Development Squad. Oliver was also selected for the Aquatics GP World Class Programme for 2025–26;
- d) Plymouth Active Leisure's shortlisting for the National Swim England Awards in the Pioneering Operator category, recognising innovative approaches to aquatics including open water swimming and inclusive programming for young people and carers;
- e) Increased usage of Plymouth's outdoor pools, with 41,000 visits to Tinside Lido (up 64% from the previous year) and 37,500 visits to Mount Wise (up 44%). The Swim Safe programme reached 2,750 young people;
- f) A new pilot partnership between the Council's Active Wellbeing Team and Derriford Hospital's physiotherapy department, relocating weekly treatment clinics to the Life Centre to improve access and demonstrate the link between physical activity and health outcomes;
- g) Recognition of coach Jackie Floyd, shortlisted in the Fitness Heroes category of the UK Active Awards for work with individuals with special needs;
- h) Continuation of youth swim evenings through the winter using indoor spaces, following the seasonal closure of outdoor pools.

Councillor Cresswell (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Apprenticeships) discussed:

- i) Plymouth's success at the National SEND Awards 2025, winning the Co-Production Award for supported internships. Six internships had been delivered, with further growth anticipated;

- j) Runner-up recognition for SEND Resource of the Year, celebrating the development of the graduated approach and resource directory led by Lisa McDonald (Head of Service). The awards highlighted Plymouth's leadership in inclusive education and the city's growing reputation for best practice nationally;
- k) Plans to present the awards at Discovery College and at the next Full Council meeting.

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

- l) The premiere of "The Run", a national fostering awareness film launched on 9 October. The film, produced in partnership with over 90 local authority fostering services and CAN Digital, aimed to highlight the urgent need for foster carers in Plymouth. The emotional narrative followed an 11-year-old boy navigating adversity and finding hope through sport. Councillor Laing encouraged viewers to consider fostering and praised the film's impact;

(A video was played at this time): <https://youtu.be/uvJfnWReclw?si=HkSaj3tphsXEQ69I>)

- m) The fifth anniversary of The Box, Plymouth's museum and cultural centre. Key achievements included:
 - i. 50% of visitors being Plymouth residents;
 - ii. 72,000 international visitors;
 - iii. Over 40,000 schoolchildren welcomed;
 - iv. £28 million economic contribution to the Plymouth economy;
 - v. 100,000 volunteer hours, valued at £1.1 million;
 - vi. £43 million in estimated health benefits for adults over 50;
 - vii. £49 million in estimated health benefits for adults aged 30–49;
 - viii. 250,000 visits by under-25s;
- n) The launch of the new exhibition season, including Grayson Perry's "Vanity of Small Differences" tapestries and works from the British Council and the Centre for Contemporary Art in Gdańsk;
- o) The Box's selection for the DCMS Museum Renewal Fund and its role as Museum in Residence at 10 Downing Street, with works by Stanley Spencer, Jack Pickup, and Alfred Wallis displayed in the Prime Minister's residence.

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

- p) Hate Crime Awareness Week 2025, emphasising Plymouth's commitment to dignity, respect, and justice. The campaign encouraged collective action to challenge hate crime across all settings;
- q) Bonfire Night on the Hoe, scheduled for 05 November 2025. The free event included a fairground (from 4pm), catering (from 5pm), bonfire lighting (7pm), and fireworks (7:30pm) provided by Sonic Fireworks. The event would be sponsored by Plymouth Waterfront Partnership;
- r) Remembrance Sunday on 09 November 2025 and the city centre Christmas lights switch-on on 13 November;
- s) The Remembrance poppy display at the Park crematorium, with thanks given to Councillor Pauline Murphy and local knitting groups for their work.

Councillor Stephens (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport) discussed:

- t) Interim results from the Transport Focus "Your Bus Journey" survey undertaken in Plymouth had been released. Plymouth was one of over 50 local authorities who undertook the survey to support the Plymouth Enhanced Bus Partnership and monitor the Bus Service Improvement plan.
- u) The data suggested that the work of the partnership and investment in public transport and infrastructure in Plymouth was having a positive impact. Plymouth scored:
 - i. 89% overall satisfaction (2% above urban average, 5% above national average);
 - ii. 81% satisfaction with wait times;
 - iii. 84% satisfaction with punctuality;
 - iv. 88% satisfaction with journey length;
 - v. 89% satisfaction with bus drivers;
- v) Acknowledgement of a temporary service issue in September 2025, which had now been resolved;
- w) Final survey results were expected in spring 2026.

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) discussed:

- x) Improvements in city centre retail, with the number of empty premises reduced from 100 to 64 over the past year. This brought Plymouth below the national average vacancy rate;

- y) New businesses included ProCook, Victoria Beauty, Alpha supermarket and café, and The Green Room coffee shop. Refits at Waterstones, H&M, and Holland & Barrett signalled retailer confidence. Drakes Circus and The Barcode were almost fully let;
- z) Increased events and footfall in the city centre, with three times more events than the previous year;
- aa) Progress on the next phase of the Armada Way regeneration project, with works on schedule and budget.

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

- bb) A new housing partnership project between Plymouth City Council and Plymouth Community Homes, supported by Homes England funding. The £33.5 million scheme would deliver 135 affordable homes (including 80 for social rent) in the Millbay regeneration area, with communal gardens and commercial units;
- cc) A new partnership with Bournemouth Churches Housing Association (BCHA), aiming to deliver 63 affordable homes over five years. BCHA would invest an initial £7 million, with the Council contributing £1 million and seeking £10 million in Homes England grants. The homes would include general needs, specialist, and supported accommodation;
- dd) The partnership built on BCHA's existing work supporting 240 households in Plymouth, including those with additional needs and refugee families.

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

- ee) The launch of the "Plymouth Protects" vaccination campaign, supported by posters in wellbeing hubs, libraries, and newsletters targeting carers, older adults, and those with long-term health conditions;
- ff) A myth-busting Q&A by the Director of Public Health would be published in the Chronicle next month, expected to reach over 90,000 homes;
- gg) A social media campaign was live, with over 72,000 views since September 2025;
- hh) Outreach clinics were available throughout the city for residents to attain their vaccinations;
- ii) Access had been expanded to flu vaccines for 2–3 year olds via pharmacies;
- jj) The "Aging Well" event at Tinside Lido, marking the International Day of Older Persons and the Lido's 90th anniversary. Over 50 organisations attended, with reflections from Professor Steve Madden and performances by the Southway Glee Club. The event celebrated social connection and pledged continued work toward an age-friendly city.

Councillor Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications) introduced the LGA Update and discussed:

- a) The LGA's welcome of the Government's Pride in Place programme, which provided councils with new funding and powers to revitalise high streets, regulate betting and vaping shops, and bring empty premises back into use;
- b) The alignment of the programme with the LGA's call for place-based investment, noting that older industrial towns and cities such as Plymouth could unlock up to £13 billion in untapped economic potential with targeted government support;
- c) The LGA's recognition that local authorities were best placed to lead economic renewal, restore pride in communities, and deliver locally tailored solutions;
- d) Serious concerns raised by the LGA regarding access to NHS dental care, with many areas described as "dental deserts" and no local authority area having more than one NHS dentist per thousand residents. Deprived communities were most affected, with the poorest health outcomes and highest rates of child dental decay often coinciding with the fewest NHS dental practices;
- e) The LGA's call for a review of the NHS dental contract and investment in community dental services to ensure fair access to care;
- f) Additional LGA updates included:
 - i. Warnings about rising demand for temporary accommodation and care, combined with the loss of affordable homes, which were driving up costs and stretching council budgets;
 - ii. Support for a new licensing system to give councils stronger powers to regulate vape sales and protect young people;
 - iii. Endorsement of a report calling for better access to physical activity for care-experienced children to support well-being and inclusion;
 - iv. Calls for long-term investment to reduce pressure on health and care services and prevent vulnerable people from being stuck in hospital or unstable housing;
 - v. Advocacy for more support for young carers to ensure they could access services and enjoy their childhood.