

City Council

Monday 2 June 2025

PRESENT:

Councillor Ms Watkin, in the Chair.

Councillor Tofan, Vice Chair.

Councillors Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Bannerman, Blight, Briars-Delve, Mrs Bridgeman, Coker, Cresswell, Cuddihee, Darcy, Dingle, Evans OBE, Freeman, Gilmour, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Holloway, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Loveridge, Lowry, Lugger, McCarty, McLay, McNamara, Moore, Morton, Murphy, Ney, P.Nicholson, S.Nicholson, Noble, Penberthy, Penrose, Poyser, Raynsford, Reilly, Ricketts, M.Smith, Sproston, Steel, Stephens, Stevens, Taylor, Tippetts, Tuohy and Wood.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Mrs Beer, Dann, Finn, Simpson and R.Smith.

The meeting started at 2pm and finished at 6.59pm.

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.

9. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2025, 20 April 2025, 28 April 2025 and 16 May 2025 were agreed as an accurate record.

10. **Declarations of Interest**

The following declarations of interest were made by councillors in accordance with the code of conduct in respect of items under consideration at the meeting -

| Name | Minute Number | Reason | Interest |
|--------------------|----------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Councillor Taylor | 20a | Employment | Personal |
| Councillor M Smith | 20a | Employment | Personal |

11. **Appointments to Committees, Outside Bodies etc**

There were no changes to membership for Committees or Outside Bodies.

12. **Questions by the Public**

There were two questions from members of the public:

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| The following question was asked by Klara Wilkins |
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Question:

What training have Councillors on the Housing and Community Scrutiny Panel received in relation to homelessness legislation? In particular, the Homelessness Code of Guidance.

Response: I have checked and I understand that Housing and Community Scrutiny Panel have not had training in relation to homelessness legislation including the Homelessness Code of Guidance.

Scrutiny panels work at a strategic level within the Council and are not expected to have detailed operational knowledge across every area of their responsibility. Briefings on detailed operational subjects are given as necessary or at the request of the Scrutiny Chair.

There is no legislation that mandates training for Councillors. Scrutiny panels are not decision-making bodies but rather provide scrutiny of officer's work.

All members of scrutiny panels are offered an induction before they sit on the panel to ensure they understand the function, their purpose and how to prepare and ask relevant questions.

Whilst Cabinet cannot require Scrutiny to do anything, I will write to the Chair of the Housing and Community Panel to ask whether there are any areas of training required.

The following question was asked by Mathew Surtees

Question:

Councillor Evans, do you agree that the Labour Government's cuts to welfare will significantly impact the people of Plymouth and are you prepared to publicly condemn the actions of government in relation to these cuts, in the same way that labour councillors have done in other parts of the country?

Response: The government has published a green paper; this is not a decision but the commencement of a consultation that runs until the end of June.

In fact, the government held a public consultation event on the green paper in Plymouth on 13th May.

I would encourage anyone with an opinion to respond to the current consultation.

The government is currently demonstrating that it is carefully considering feedback, including that from Labour Party members and Councillors. The government is being responsible in asking people to engage with them in making submissions to inform decision-making and I am sure that all representations will be carefully considered.

I would suggest that you should also act responsibly by correctly reporting the facts rather than sharing misinformation.

13. **Announcements**

Councillor Ms Watkin (Lord Mayor) made the following announcements:

- a) It was with great sadness that the Council noted the death of former judge William Taylor, who had been an Honorary Recorder of the City of Plymouth since 2004:
 - I. Judge Taylor had earned the recognition, which followed immediately behind the role of Lord Mayor in order of civic importance;
 - II. The Lord Mayor thanked him for a lifetime of service to the city and conveyed her condolences to his family.
- b) The Finance Department was celebrating two exceptional apprentices that made their mark at a prestigious local government Apprentice of The Year 2025 competition.
 - I. Anya Stevens had been named runner up in the national competition whilst Lucy Gregory had reached the final stages, demonstrating the outstanding calibre of talent that was being developed within the Plymouth City Council apprenticeship program.

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

- a) Councillor Evans OBE had the privilege of travelling to Leeds to lead the delegation to the UK Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum (REIIF).
 - I. He referenced Plymouth's bold ambition, future, potential and readiness for growth;
 - II. Met investors, developers, government officials and partners from across the UK;
 - III. Highlighted Plymouth's strengths, such as marine defence, digital and clean energy;
 - IV. Mentioned the importance of networking to build relationships and benefits for the city;
 - V. Mentioned the importance of jobs, homes, innovation and opportunity.
- b) Councillor Evans OBE met with Homes England to discuss a plan to deliver up to 10,000 new homes;
- c) A letter from MHCLG was received at the end of May 2025 about the growth area proposals for local government reorganisation (LGR).
 - I. Plymouth received constructive feedback from the government in May for the interim plan;
 - II. The letter confirmed that flexibility existed around the rule of unitary authorities requiring a population of 500,000 and that they supported the Council's approach;

- III. The letter confirmed that boundary changes to existing district boundaries were possible if there was strong justification;
- IV. This aligned with the proposal for the Council to be a continuing authority.
- d) The community conversation event, was a public engagement initiative involving a series of events, hosted by Cabinet members and officers.
 - I. The sessions provided an opportunity for communities to share what made their area great, as well as, identifying challenges and to discuss future opportunities;
 - II. For those unable to attend the events, there was an online survey available on the Council website until 09 July 2025.
- e) Councillor Evans OBE would be announcing engagement sessions for residents living within the current city boundary as he valued their voices from these communities.
 - I. The proposal needed to truly reflect locals' needs and aspirations;
 - II. Those updates would be provided to the Councillors and the LGR team.
- f) The Associated British Ports (ABP) at Millbay held a formal opening at the end of May 2025 to showcase the £23 million upgrade to port facilities in Millbay. The investment was made possible by the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed two years ago.
 - I. The upgrades included new passenger facilities, future proofing the port at Millbay for Brittany Ferries and a new set of rowing ramps;
 - II. The new quayside was capable of handling containers, and provided an excellent use for exports through the Freeport.
- g) The latest developments of the Freeport at Beaumont Way, Langage included:
 - I. Industrial units for the marine and defence sectors;
 - II. Devon Contractors were progressing on the construction of those units, which ranged in size from 750 square meters to over 2,000 square meters;
 - III. £4 million of seed capital funding was matched by the Council and would create 138 new jobs;
- h) The National Marine Park was featured on Countryfile which highlighted the project with the rays which was seen by 6 million people and was a great advert for the city;
- i) The Mountbatten Centre refurbishment work began on the 24 March 2025. The works included; opening up the reception area, a ground floor café, outdoor seating area with spectacular waterfront views and new changing facilities;

- j) Work would be done to improve the visitor facilities for the Artillery Tower on top of Mount Batten;
- k) Tinside improvements were on track, and would open soon. The improvements consisted of a new terrace café, event space and youth hubs;
- l) Mr Daniel Zeichner MP (Minister of State for Food Security and Rural Affairs) laid wreaths on Plymouth Hoe at the fisherman's memorial as a part of National Memorial Day for fishers;
 - I. Issues with Plymouth's fishing ports and the need for investment in the area were discussed with the minister;
 - II. As a result of this connection, support would be provided to the fishers who have had their work disrupted by an invasion of octopuses;
 - III. A major research project surrounding the emergence of octopuses in Plymouth's waters was being pursued;

Councillor Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) made the following announcements.

- a) Councillor Aspinall thanked the Lord Mayor and her consort for attending the Excellence in Care Awards held on Saturday the 31 May 2025.
 - I. More than 400 nominations were received for the awards;
 - II. Councillor Aspinall remarked on the talent across the sector;
 - III. The 31 awards included; Innovation in Using Technology, Care Worker of the Year and the People's Choice;
 - IV. Councillor Aspinall congratulated the 48 people and teams, who won their awards, as well as those highly commended.
- b) Councillor Aspinall thanked the Director of Adult Social Care and his team for helping celebrate the Adult Social Care workforce;
- c) Carer's week would commence on 09 June 2025, an annual campaign that raised awareness of caring and the challenges of unpaid carers and the contribution that they make were highlighted.
 - I. Councillor Aspinall noted that the theme for Carer's week was caring about equality;
 - II. She calls for an equal society where carers were truly valued, recognised and supported;
 - III. There would be information displayed on the Council's website.

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

- a) Councillor Penberthy mentioned the revision of the annual council tax support scheme. The maintenance of the scheme for the next year meant that recipients of legacy benefits currently migrating to universal credit would not face additional uncertainty during the process;
- b) Councillor Penberthy mentioned the following events;
 - I. June Pride Month: Until the start of Armed Forces Week, the Council would be flying pride identity flags outside the Guildhall;
 - II. Over the summer season, a progress pride flag would be flown alongside the other flags, on the Hoe Promenade;
 - III. On Saturday the 14 June 2025, the Trans community organised Plymouth Trans Pride. The Council would fly the Trans flag outside the Guildhall, over the weekend;
 - IV. On Saturday the 12 July 2025, there would be Pride event activities ongoing. The Progress Pride Flag would be flown outside the Guildhall, over the weekend.
- c) Councillor Penberthy thanked the LGBTQ+ community groups who were organising events and activities over the coming weeks, as part of International Pride and Plymouth Trans Pride;
- d) Refugees Week would take place from the 14 – 20 June 2025 with the theme, Community as Superpower. The week would launch with the Plymouth Hope Festival, which would include sports, music, open days, arts & crafts events, films, food, showcases & more activities;
- e) Councillor Penberthy thanked the Hope, Devon and Cornwall Refugee Service, Open Doors, International Language School, The Give Back Project, The Red Cross, Start and Community Builders for organising all the events;
- f) Councillor Penberthy noted that 02 June 2025 marked the start of the 41st National Volunteers Week. The week celebrated an opportunity to recognise, and thank all volunteers within the city for all their contributions to local communities, the voluntary sector and society.
 - I. Recent data evidenced that 38% of the city's residents volunteered regularly and 19% of those helped their neighbours on a regular basis. The Council supported volunteering within the city and did this by facilitating the Plymouth Volunteer Coordinators Network, a group of 67 volunteer involving organisations, in order to promote partnership working, good practice and mutual support.

- g) Councillor Penberthy thanked The Box, Plymouth Sound National Marine Park, and the National Trust for their support to volunteers across the city, by offering free events during the week, for volunteers and their families;
- h) Plymouth City Council's volunteering programme worked with a range of organisations to develop best practice for volunteering opportunities in the city, and to ensure that they were the best quality, they could be.
 - I. This included providing training and induction sessions to new volunteers;
 - II. In 2024 114 people participated in the programme, and workshops were run for organisations such as, how best to support asylum seekers and refugees to volunteer, effective safeguarding, and safer recruitment processes.
- i) Councillor Penberthy thanked the 700 local residents who volunteered with Plymouth City Council in projects such as our good neighbour support volunteers, communal digital volunteers, changing futures volunteers, the Ocean City Event volunteers, Library Service volunteers, Poole Farm volunteers, the Plymouth Natural Grid volunteers, the Youth Justice Service Restorative Panel volunteers, the Plymouth Information Advice and support for SEND, the Elizabethan House, and the Plymouth Bus User Panels;

Councillor Stephens (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport) made the following announcements.

- a) The A38 Manadon Interchange Scheme was planned to provide junction capacity improvements, walking and cycling improvements, bus-service improvements, as well as, a nature hub and outdoor recreation space;
- b) The Council was in the middle of a six-week period of extensive consultation, working with ECF, an external agent engagement company who was experienced with local knowledge, and were applying the gunning principles to ensure the consultation was robust, had real scope for influence, and would help understand and incorporate community feedback into the final project;
- c) Briefings had been provided at ward level to members of the adjacent wards. Briefings had also been provided to organisations such as: The Police, the NHS and Babcock;
- d) Letters were delivered on Tuesday the 29 April 2025 to local residents whose properties were potentially impacted and the letters invited the residents to arrange a confidential meeting at a convenient time and place convenient to them. A follow-up letter would be sent to those who did not respond. Approximately 450 letters were sent to residents and business to arrive by 02 May 2025 and would include a fact sheet with an invitation to take part in the upcoming engagement. A further 12,000 letters were being delivered to residents in the wider area inviting them to get involved in the engagement exercise;

- e) Councillor Stephens expresses his gratitude to officers and staff for their sensitive conduct towards the public engagement stages of this consultation, particularly with residents living within the vicinity of Manadon roundabout;
- f) The Council had success in the use of velocity spray injection patching to deal with potholes/road surface defects and the method used less resources and produced less carbon. The Carriageway Resurfacing Programme for 2025 had an estimated value of £604,000 with eight sites on the following roads:
 - I. Drunken Hill Bridge and Underwood Road in Plympton Earl and Plympton St Marys. Ham Drive in Ham. Fort Austin Avenue in Eggbuckland. Foliot Road in Southway. New Passage Hill in Devonport. Budshead Road in Budshead. Kinterbury Street and Buckwell Street in St Peters and the Waterfront;
- g) Following representations made by the elected members in Plymstock Dunstone and Plymstock Radford, a bus shelter will be reinstated opposite Plymstock Library on Horn Cross. This was as a result of a 250% increase in passenger patronage at the stop since 2019;
- h) Bus stop shelters were being reinstated at the bottom of Southway Drive and on Clittaford Road adjacent to Langley Crescent. There had been changes to the bus network since the original decision was made to permanently remove the shelters, meaning that they had the patronage to warrant a shelter being replaced;
- i) Following a site visit with Councillor Coker, Councillor Stephens and Councillor Poyser, end panels had been added to the Chaddlewood district shelter on Glenn Road to improve weather protection at the location;
- j) The park crematorium bus shelters were underway;
- k) The cycle and road pedestrian crossing would be progressing in Stoke and St Peter at Millbridge. The Woolwell to the George cycle path was also progressing also.

14. **Provisional Capital and Revenue Outturn Report 2024 -25**

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) introduced the report which Councillor Evans OBE seconded.

Following a contribution by Councillor Lugger (Leader of the Opposition) Council agreed to:

- I. Note the report.

15. **Scrutiny Annual Report 2024 -25**

Councillor Stephens (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure and outgoing chair of Scrutiny Management Board) introduced the report which Councillor Murphy seconded.

Following contributions from Councillor P. Nicholson and Councillor Evans OBE, council agreed to:

I. Note the report.

16. **Audit and Governance Chair's Update Report 2024 - 25**

Councillor Allen (Chair of Audit and Governance Committee) introduced the report and Councillor Raynsford seconded.

Following contributions from Councillors P. Nicholson and Councillor Lowry, Council agreed to:

I. Note the Audit and Governance Chair's Update Report 2024-25.

17. **Decision to be reported**

Councillor Ms Watkin (Lord Mayor) introduced the report which Councillor Tofan (Deputy Lord Mayor) seconded.

Following contributions from Councillor Penberthy and Councillor Ney, Council agreed to note the following decision taken in line with due process:

I. HCDC05 24/25 - Household Support Fund Round 7

To approve the distribution of the latest round of Household Support Fund monies (£4,044,511.26) through the proposed Framework for April 2025 – March 2026.

18. **Armada Way Independent Learning Review Report**

Councillor Ms Watkin (Lord Mayor) moved a procedural motion to suspend standing orders to allow the Chair of the Armada Way Independent Learning Review, Mr David Williams (AWILR Independent Chair) to introduce the Panel's report and Tracey Lee (Chief Executive) to introduce the action plan. The motion to suspend standing orders would allow Mr Williams, Tracey Lee and the Monitoring Officer to take any questions for item 11.

This motion was seconded by Councillor Tofan (Deputy Lord Mayor) and Council agreed to pass the motion.

For: Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Bannerman, Blight, Briars-Delve, Mrs Bridgeman, Coker, Cresswell, Cuddihee, Darcy, Dingle, Evans OBE, Freeman, Gilmour, Goslin, Hendy, Holloway, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Luggier, Mrs Loveridge, Lowry, McLay, McCarty, McNamara, Moore, Morton, M Smith, Murphy, P Nicholson, S Nicholson, Noble, Reilly, Ricketts, Raynsford, Sproston, Stephens, Stevens, Steel, Taylor, Tuohy, Tippetts, Poyser, Wood, Penberthy and Penrose (48).

Against: (0)

Abstain: Councillor Ney (1)

Absent/did not vote: Councillors Mrs Beer, Dann, Haydon, Finn, Tofan, Simpson, R Smith (CON), and Ms Watkin (8)

Mr David Williams (AWILR Independent Chair) and Tracey Lee (Chief Executive) introduced the report to Council and Questions were put to the panel from Councillors Luggar, McLay, Holloway, Tuohy and Lowry.

Councillor Poyser proposed an amendment which was seconded by Councillor McLay (Leader of the Green Party).

(The meeting was adjourned for 15 minutes to consider the amendment)

Council agreed to the amendment.

For: Councillors Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Bannerman, Blight, Briars-Delve, Bridgeman, Coker, Cresswell, Cuddihee, Darcy, Dingle, Evans OBE, Freeman, Gilmour, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Holloway, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Lowry, Loveridge, Luggar, McCarty, McLay, McNamara, Moore, Morton, M Smith, Murphy, Ney, Nicholson P, Nicholson S, Noble, Penberthy, Penrose, Poyser, Raynsford, Reilly, Ricketts, Sproston, Steel, Stephens, Stevens, Taylor, Tippetts, Wood (49)

Against: (0)

Abstain: (0)

Absent/Did not vote: Councillors Mrs Beer, Dann, Haydon, Finn, Tofan, Simpson, R Smith (CON), and Ms Watkin (8)

Following contributions from Councillor Mrs Bridgeman, Ricketts, Lowry, P. Nicholson, Stevens and Holloway, Council agreed to:

1. Note the content of the AWILR report including the recommendations for the Council
2. Note the Council's response to the recommendations of the ILR and the proposed Action Plan for the implementation of the recommendations.
3. Request that the Audit and Governance Committee establish a cross-party sub committee to oversee the implementation of the action plan, to support public confidence in this process reporting back to Full Council on progress as required.
4. Thank the Panel for the hard work and commitment in undertaking the review and completing the report.

For: Councillors Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Bannerman, Blight, Briars-Delve, Bridgeman, Coker, Cresswell, Cuddihee, Darcy, Dingle, Evans OBE, Freeman, Gilmour, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Holloway, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Lowry, Loveridge, Luggar, McCarty, McLay, McNamara, Moore, Morton, M Smith, Murphy, Ney, Nicholson P, Nicholson S, Noble, Penberthy, Penrose, Poyser, Raynsford, Reilly, Ricketts, Sproston, Steel, Stephens, Stevens, Taylor, Tippetts, Tuohy, Wood. (50)

Against: (0)

Abstain: (0)

Absent/Did not vote: Mrs Beer, Dann, Finn, Tofan, Simpson, R Smith and Ms Watkin (7)

(Following the conclusion of the item, council adjourned until 16:50)

19. **Motions on notice**

20. **Oppose Cuts to Personal Independence Payment (PIP)**

Councillor McLay introduced the motion which was seconded by Councillor Poyser.

Following a contribution from Councillor Penberthy, Council voted on the motion.

The Motion was not carried.

For: Councillors Mrs Bridgeman, Loveridge, McLay, Ney, P Nicholson, S Nicholson, Poyser, Reilly, Ricketts, Tippetts (10)

Against: Councillors Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Blight, Briars-Delve, Coker, Cresswell, Cuddihee, Dingle, Evans OBE, Freeman, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Holloway, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Lowry, McCarty, Moore, Morton, M. Smith, Murphy, Noble, Penberthy, Penrose, Raynsford, Steel, Stephens, Stevens, Sproston, Taylor, Tuohy (34)

Abstain: Councillors Wood, Lugger and Darcy (3)

Absent/Did not vote: Councillors Bannerman, Mrs Beer, Dann, Finn, Gilmour, McNamara, R Smith, Simpson, Tofan, Ms Watkin (10)

The motion was not carried.

21. **Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan - Housing Policy**

Councillor P Nicholson introduced the motion which was seconded by Councillor Ricketts.

Following contributions from Councillor Stephens and Councillor Penberthy, the Council moved to the vote.

The motion was not carried.

For: Councillors Mrs Bridgeman, Loveridge, Ney, P Nicholson, S Nicholson and Ricketts (6)

Against: Councillors Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Bannerman, Blight, Briars-Delve, Coker, Cresswell, Cuddihee, Dingle, Evans OBE, Freeman, Gilmour, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Holloway, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Lowry, McCarty, McNamara, Moore, Morton, M. Smith, Murphy, Noble, Penberthy, Penrose, Steel, Stephens, Stevens, Sproston, Taylor and Tuohy (36)

Abstain: Councillors Darcy, Lugger, McLay, Poyser, Reilly, Tippetts and Wood (7)

Absent/Did not vote: Councillors Mrs Beer, Dann, Finn, Raynsford, Simpson, R Smith, Tofan and Ms Watkin (8)

22. **Trans+ and Intersex Human Rights Matter**

Councillor Tippetts introduced the motion which was seconded by Councillor McLay.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor Penberthy and seconded by Councillor Penrose.

(Council adjourned for 15 minutes to consider the amendment)

Following a contribution from Councillors Tippetts the amendment was carried.

For: Councillors Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Bannerman, Blight, Briars-Delve, Coker, Cresswell, Cuddihee, Dingle, Evans OBE, Freeman, Gilmour, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Holloway, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Lowry, Lugg, McCarty, McNamara, Moore, Morton, M Smith, Murphy, Noble, Penberthy, Penrose, Raynsford, Sproston, Stephens, Stevens, Steel, Taylor and Tuohy (38)

Against: Councillors Mrs Bridgeman, Mrs Loveridge, McLay, Ney, P Nicholson, Reilly, Poyser and Tippetts (8)

Abstain: Councillors Darcy, Ricketts, S Nicholson and Wood (4)

Absent/Did not vote: Councillors Mrs Beer, Dann, Finn, Ms Watkin, R Smith, Simpson and Tofan (7)

Council agreed to:

Request that the Cabinet Member for Corporate Estates ensures that the current published list of all-council managed gender neutral public toilets in the city is maintained and kept up to date.

Request that the Leader of the council writes to the Minister for Women and Equalities:

- a. Expressing the Council's concern about the safety of women, trans, non-binary and intersex people accessing public toilets after the supreme court ruling.
- b. Highlighting that trans, non-binary and intersex people have freely used public toilets that align with their gender for decades without any issue or cause for concern.

Request that the Cabinet Member for Equalities and Diversity:

- a. Ensures that the Council responds to the Equality and Human Rights Commission's consultation on the changes required to their Code of Practice;
- b. Actively promotes the EHRC's consultation to encourage widespread participation;

- c. As a matter of priority, once the EHRC's revised guidance is published, review the implications for Council wide services and ensure that appropriate steps are taken to implement appropriate facilities in accordance with the guidance.

For: Councillors Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Bannerman, Blight, Briars-Delve, Bridgeman, Coker, Cresswell, Cuddihee, Dingle, Evans OBE, Freeman, Gilmour, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Holloway, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Lowry, McCarty, McLay, McNamara, Moore, Morton, M. Smith, Murphy, Noble, Penberthy, Penrose, Poyser, Raynsford, Reilly, Sproston, Stephens, Stevens, Steel, Taylor, Tippetts and Tuohy (42)

Against: (0)

Abstain: Councillors Darcy, Loveridge, Lugger, Ney, P Nicholson, S Nicholson, Ricketts and Wood (8)

Absent/Did Not Vote: Councillors Mrs Beer, Dann, Finn, Simpson, R Smith, Tofan and Ms Watkin (7)

23. Questions By Councillors

| | From (Councillor) | To (Councillor) | Subject |
|---|--|--------------------|--|
| I | Councillor Steel | Councillor Laing | I understand the new family's first children services team is going live today. Can you explain what this will mean in terms of how children's social care teams will work with children and families? |
| | <p>Response: The team did launch today and it's gone really well so far, it's a really brilliant development. It's the new multidisciplinary team which includes the multi-agency safeguarding hub which we call the MASH. The team who previously provided our out of hours response. It's been developed to respond to concerns and referrals where children and families need more help or protection. The hours have been widened so it will now be running from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm Monday – Friday and 9:00 am to 5:00 pm on Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays. Outside of these hours, an emergency duty service will be on call, reviewing any overnight inquiries, to ensure children at immediate risk of significant harm, urgent adult safeguarding risks and immediate risk of homelessness get an urgent response.</p> <p>If a member of the public or a professional thinks a family needs more help or has a safeguarding concern about a child or a young person, they can contact the family's first team on 0175266800. The number is available 24/7. The service will be using a conversation based approach to support information sharing and decision making.</p> <p>The newly extended hours will mean that professionals including teachers, police officers and health staff are able to get advice and support at a time that suits them. It will also mean that children, families and vulnerable adults will get supported with the right help at the right time.</p> | | |

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| 2 | Councillor Penrose | Councillor Evans OBE | With the University of Plymouth proposing significant redundancies in academic staff, and including closures in the public facing arts provision, ie. The gallery and the cinema. Do you feel that this would be a good opportunity to bring together the heads of these institutions and possibly with the inclusion of Marjons, to have a conversation about what the city needs. This matter affects our culture plan, so it's time for a collaborative move thinking about how we safeguard these amenities, so that we can achieve the civic provision that we desire. |
| | <p>Response: The three universities play such an important and active part in civic life within the City and it's difficult to imagine what life would be like without them. They play a large part in culture as stated by Councillor Penrose, they play a large part in our growth board, for growth alliance Plymouth, for destination Plymouth and also, our ambitious plans for economic development. We must remember that the volunteering the university students do is invaluable. I think the suggestion that we convene with them, is a very good idea. Whether individual universities would want to discuss their individual problems with us, and with each other, remains to be seen. A discussion about how we move forward is incredibly important and I thank you for raising it today.</p> | | |
| 3 | Councillor Freeman | Councillor Evans OBE | Would you like to join me in paying respect to Mr Steve Hornton who tragically passed away on the 11 th of April this year at the young age of 63. Mr Hornton was a Devonport resident who was a part of the Devonport 5. He helped create dreams for the people of Devonport. Such as, the New Deal for communities funding and DRC partnership. This is thanked to the Labour government at the time. The funding program went on for 10 years, to regenerate Devonport and had substantial wide-reaching benefits for the whole of Plymouth. The impact that the Devonport 5 have made can still be seen in the area today |

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| | | | and across Plymouth. |
| | <p>Response: I remember those names very well, I have paid tribute to John Prescott in the past who invented the New Deal for communities, and to people like Chris Watts who notably worked on Pembroke Street. It goes back to where you live, Councillor Freeman and those days. They worked very hard at a time when Devonport was not the best place in the city to live for a number of reasons. They believed in the power of community and they knew that given the chance, they could do something special, which they have. Speaking to Linda Gilroy, who did so much behind the scenes, to help achieve funding. Not only has there been a physical rebuilding of Devonport, but also the emotional, spiritual and community building, has taken place there. I'm sad to hear the news that Steve has passed, he was an incredible individual and the best of Devonport.</p> | | |
| 4 | Councillor McNamara | Councillor Laing | Some people think of Youth centers as an old-fashioned concept, but I know that exciting things are happening in my ward of Efford. Can you tell me what we can expect when the refit work is completed? |
| | <p>Response: I am very excited about what is happening in Efford. Thanked to £1.2 million in funding from sources including the Youth Investment Fund, Climate Emergency Impact Fund, and essential maintenance budgets, we've not only saved a valued community asset, but we are future-proofing it. Worn out, old equipment is being replaced by modern resources, computers, incredible sports gear, music and cooking facilities. Young people in Efford will have access to a broader range of activities than they've ever had before. This is a smart, sustainable, future-facing investment, helping young people in Efford and beyond, to thrive. I'm very excited about this and I can't wait for myself, Councillor McNamara, Councillor Murphy and Councillor Hendy to go and pay our first visit when it opens.</p> | | |
| 5 | Councillor Tippetts | Councillor Laing | We are both passionate about the children and how they are looked after within the City, and the fantastic contribution that they make to life here. We are both passionate about finding them their forever homes. I was disappointed when back in April, the government announced a 40% cut to the amount available for each child from the annual £50 million pound adoption and special guardianship support fund. I was wondering if she could update us on any conversations that she's had with any government ministers expressing Plymouth's disappointment in this and for any updates on movement regarding this topic? |
| | <p>Response: I have asked this question myself and when I get a response, I will be happy to share with you Councillor Tippetts.</p> | | |

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| 6 | Councillor Ricketts | Councillor Evans OBE | There is a large Palestinian flag hanging over Jewish graves in Central Park. Why is the Labour government doing nothing about it? |
| | <p>Response from Councillor Evans OBE: I was not aware of this, how long has the flag been there and why have you not written a letter to me before this making me aware of this?</p> <p>Response from Councillor Ricketts: I'm surprised your Peverell Councillors have not made you aware of this sooner. It's been all over social media, and it's a big issue. I've been liaising with the planning and enforcement department via email and phone, who have said that there are two options. One of them is to pursue planning enforcement which they have the power to do, and the other is to do nothing. I urge you to do something, this is disrespectful for a myriad of reason. Will you take action?</p> <p>Response from Councillor Evans: I can provided you a response from Councillor Penberthy if this is acceptable?</p> <p>Response from Councillor Penberthy: I raised the issue of the flag being there just after the Hamas incursion into Israel and I have been talking to members of both communities, at that time, and since. I think personally, that the family has chosen to raise the flag there has shown total insensitivity, and I understand the disrespect and anger caused as a result of this. However, there are questions around legality and enforcement and what can and can't be enforced. We have received advice from a Jewish legal firm where we are being briefed this week on this, if we can get the flag down, we will do so. I will not commit vandalism, I don't think it should be there, you are misrepresenting the situation as you are reacting to the posts via Social Media and not the ongoing discussions that we have been very sensitively been having with both the Jewish and Palestinian communities in the City.</p> | | |
| 7 | Councillor Noble | Councillor Briars-Delve | Lots of people in my ward were enjoying some of the conservation activities and the animal hour that happened in half term and the urban tree festival we had a couple weeks ago. I am seeing adverts for the Big Green Trail, can you tell me how my residents can get involved in this? |
| | <p>Response: The Big Green Trail is an annual event, it's led by the Council's net zero team and thanked to the help of some incredible officers in the behaviour change department. The event is going ahead in a couple of week's time, on a Saturday and it's being held at six sites across the City with both indoor and outdoor venues. There is over 40 local organisations and businesses involved and it's all about family friendly activities to engage people with climate rated discussions. We will be celebrating the winners of the climate legends competition which is a great grassroots example. I'll make sure that an invitation is circulated to everyone here today.</p> | | |
| 8 | Councillor Wood | Councillor Evans OBE | Were the Council's proposals for local government reform enacted as you noted earlier? Also, were Plymouth to vote in favour of the referendum to have a directly elected mayor/leader, have we had guidance |

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| | | | from Government as to whether that elected position would remain in place or not, in the new Council's government arrangements? |
| | <p>Response: We've raised this issue as there will be a number of people in a slightly modestly expanded Plymouth, about 30,000 people, will have had no say in the referendum at all, where some people have been left out. We have had no guidance but we will continue to raise this as we understand that this is an issue. If I say to people outside of Plymouth that, they will be given a vote in this due to timing of the LGR, it will be out of kilter with the referendum. The people outside will be ruled by somebody, that they have no say in electing.</p> <p>Response from Councillor Wood: Are the Council's proposals for local government reform only being developed for the initial preferred option, or is the Council continuing to investigate and assess multiple options, so we can generate additional evidence such as service provision, amendment of contracts, change of employment and finances, in order to create a fuller picture of what the public would prefer, through the consultation currently advertised and anything in the future?</p> <p>Response from Councillor Evans: It's really important when we are building a case for the October/November submission of our case; that we can demonstrate firstly by ability. We are not considering alternatives, we are pressing ahead with what was agreed in the chamber a few weeks ago, there are things changing outside of Plymouth with a new administration in Devon and Cornwall. These things are affecting our related but separate discussions around metro mayors and combined authority mayors which was raised by yourself at the last meeting we had. Our case remains sound, we had successful meetings with Parish Councils, both chairs and town clerks there which has given us insight into the needs of those communities but we need to do more. I've met with a number of district council leaders in South Hams to talk about these issues. Every conversation gives us new insight into the desires of the communities, which I outlined earlier on. We're a viable local authority that provides excellent services.</p> | | |
| 9 | Councillor Raynsford | Councillor Briars-Delve | <p>I've had multiple emails with concerns raised from residents about disposable barbecues, and the damage that they do to the Hoe and Devil's Point. There are wider issues in that, they could start a grass fire for short dry grass. We lost a couple bins last year due to the barbecues being thrown in there. What can we do to highlight, prevent and discourage the use of these barbecues?</p> |
| | <p>Response: First of all, I agree with your concerns raised by yourself and the Hoe neighbourhood forum. I visited there recently with Cabinet and stood next to Smeaton's Tower. The Hoe is the jewel of Plymouth and it's a shame to see the damage that these barbecues can have on our environment. I'll share my most recent correspondence with officers around this issue, there are two sides of this, as it is an</p> | | |

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| | Environment issues as well as a Parks issue, and a legal aspect. If we were to go down the PSPO route to show that there is a sufficient level of harm for us to do that, we can do through this process. The primary concern isn't for aesthetic, even though it is important for areas like the Hoe. The reality is that it can create fires, such as the one last year with Mt Edgecumbe, and this is really alarming. I'll update you privately with the correspondence I've had directly with officers. | | |
| 10 | Councillor M Smith | Councillor Briars-Delve | Residents in Higher Compton had access to a really lovely green space named Bedford Park, years ago now, it was closed off by the on-site care home. There was an agreement to keep access for the public but over time, the gates have been closed and access has been restricted. I wonder if there is an update on what progress has been made? |
| | Response: I commend your tenacity on this topic, this is a case that has been going on for years, if not decades now. It has been complicated over the last year by a change of ownership, of Green Acres care home. The previous owner had correspondence with the Council regarding this, so we had to start fresh with the new owner. The new owner does not live in Plymouth and Green Acres are maintaining that the owner needs to have an in-person conversation with the Council around these issues, which has made diarising essentially impossible. It has been reiterated to the Service Director that this is made a priority. I share your passion for the right to roam and the views of the residents, there are complexities about seeking a resolution but hopefully both of the arguments can be addressed. | | |
| 11 | Councillor Ricketts | Councillor Stephens | On Central Park Avenue, there is a mess in the walkway, where the drainage has been going on for four/five years. We had meetings but progress has been slow. Could you please pick this up with other Cabinet members as this is a point of frustration for multiple Councillors? |
| | Response: Thank you for bringing this up, I will pick this up with Councillor Holloway. I believe the issue has been passed to the Chief Executive's Office because it's a corporate property issue. But I'll assure you, I will follow this up to gain a greater understanding of the situation. | | |
| 12 | Councillor Poyser | Councillor Stephens | I am getting concerns raised regarding traffic in the east of the City, from residents. I understand that we have the expansion of Sherford as well. Can we organise a briefing sessions with officers, to go over sustainable transport in these areas? I understand that there are cycle bridges coming in, |

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| | | | how can we alleviate or improve transport in the area? |
| | <p>Response: There is a commitment within the Sherford plan for the consortium to provided a Park and Ride. This is to avoid residents travelling through built-up areas such as Derriford or the Dockyard. I will be happy to arrange a meeting with you, to get a clearer understanding of progress to be made now and in the future.</p> <p>Response from Councillor Poyser: There is also on the other side of the A38, lots of traffic coming in and out of Langage, Glenn Road, Steer Park Road. Can we focus in these areas too? Thank you.</p> | | |
| 13 | Councillor Cuddihee | Councillor Aspinall | I'm impressed at the speed of the construction work on the diagnostic center at Colin Campbell Court. Can we have an update of when it will be operational? |
| | <p>Response: I was there about a month ago and the foundations are still ongoing. As far as we are aware, it should be up and running by roughly next September. There is always the possibility of delays occurring but I'm very fortunate as the team keep me updated and I visit regularly. It will be a brilliant development, taking pressure of Derriford and will be essential for the people within the City. It was reassuring to know that the ICB, had made sure that there were the funds available to carry on the work and of course, there will be jobs available as a result of the build which is a positive.</p> | | |
| 14 | Councillor Ricketts | Councillor Evans OBE | Why are Labour councillors from the Plymouth Knows Better campaign consistently posting that Labour will be scrapping City Mayors? |
| | <p>Response: I am not running the no to a Mayor campaign, it's a cross party campaign. There are 13 city mayors in the country, this is an important statistic. Most of them, are based in the Southeast of England near London. The white paper came out a while ago, it stated within the letter that the devolution model featuring single authority mayors are going" Do you have different legislation that you can quote?</p> <p>Response from Councillor Ricketts: Things can happen before that gets enacted. To say that city mayors may be scrapped is factually incorrect.</p> | | |

Please note that questions, answers, supplementary questions and supplementary answers have been summarised.