



Oversight and Governance

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NATURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH SCRUTINY PANEL

Thursday 29 January 2026

2.00 pm

Council House, Plymouth

Members:

Councillor Ricketts, Chair

Councillor Holloway, Vice Chair

Councillors Allen, Bannerman, Darcy, Goslin, McCarty, McLay, Raynsford, M.Smith and Sproston.

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

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Tracey Lee
Chief Executive

Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for non-attendance submitted by Councillors.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillors will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.

3. Minutes

(Pages 1 - 16)

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting held on 03 December 2025.

4. Chair's Urgent Business

To receive reports on business which in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

5. Plymouth Ports Strategy Update:

(Pages 17 - 34)

6. Waterfront Business Improvement District (BID) Renewal:

(Pages 35 - 48)

7. Work Programme:

(Pages 49 - 54)

8. Action Log:

(Pages 55 - 58)

Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel**Wednesday 3 December 2025****PRESENT:**

Councillor Ricketts, in the Chair.

Councillor Holloway, Vice Chair.

Councillors Bannerman, Goslin, McCarty, McLay, Raynsford and M.Smith.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Allen, Darcy and Sproston.

Also in attendance: Chris Avent (Green Estate Manager), Paul Barnard (Service Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure), Jonathan Bell (Head of Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development), Glenn Caplin-Grey (Strategic Director for Growth), Hannah Chandler-Whiting (Democratic Advisor), Kat Deeney (Head of Environmental Planning), David Draffan (Service Director for Economic Development), Sarah Gooding (Policy and Intelligence Advisor), Rebecca Miller (City Planning Manager), Mike Page (Growth Board and Funding Manager), Lauren Paton (Economic Development Officer), Amanda Ratsey (Head of Economy and Investment), Andy Sharp (Interim Service Director for Street Scene and Waste) and Richard Stevens (CityBus).

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 5.20 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the Panel 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.

25. Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were made:

Name	Minute Number	Reason	Interest
Councillor McCarty	28	Employment at Ocean OS	Personal

26. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2025 were agreed as an accurate record.

27. Chair's Urgent Business

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

28. **Sustainable Growth (Economic Strategy Pillar 3)**

Councillor Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change), supported by Amanda Ratsey (Head of Economy & Investment) and Richard Stevens (Managing Director, Plymouth Citybus), introduced the item and highlighted:

- a) Sustainable growth was generally considered as growth that did not negatively impact the environment, but promoted social inclusion and wellbeing and helped to drive a green industrial economic revolution;
- b) When considering economic growth, it was important to increase the green and blue skills within the city and consider decarbonisation, waste reduction, boosting nature recovery;
- c) To deliver economic growth, six elements had been identified through which resources would flow:
 - i. Attracting new investment into the city in green jobs, specifically around new and emerging energy production and storage;
 - ii. Business support, helping businesses adapt to climate change and move to net zero emission;
 - iii. Decarbonise the current economy, including retrofitting the existing commercial building stock and opportunities;
 - iv. Restorative actions which improved sustainability;
 - v. Commitment to supporting sustainable travel and living, including public transport provision;
 - vi. Skills and Workforce Development needs for a more sustainable economy;
- d) Plymouth had secured funding from central government for electric buses, receiving the largest award nationally and committing to a £20 million investment;
 - i. Electric buses were operational, quieter and cleaner but still faced traffic and capacity challenges;
 - ii. The Citybus depot in Milehouse was a Net Zero facility;
 - iii. If the funding was available, the depot was in a position to be able to run an entirely decarbonised fleet of buses;
 - iv. Plymouth was at the leading edge of the decarbonisation of public transport;

- e) Floating offshore wind development through the Celtic Array Crown Estate project included the potential for 7000 new jobs in the South West;
- f) Focus areas included marine autonomy, cybersecurity, surveying and training for high value roles;
- g) Port infrastructure investment included installation of shore power with £5 million investment supported by freeport funding, enhancing connectivity through Brittany Ferries to France and Spain;
- h) Plymouth was announced as the National Centre for Marine Autonomy, attracting businesses working on clean propulsion technologies such as hydrogen, hybrid battery systems and sail drive;
- i) Links to Freeport hydrogen power development was highlighted as important for inward investment;
- j) Sustainability priorities included investment in green jobs aligned with the corporate plan, supporting businesses to adapt to climate change, restoring the natural environment through initiatives like the National Marine Park and Community Forest, promoting clean transport and sustainable living, and developing skills for young people and career movers transitioning to clean technologies;
- k) Next steps included quarterly pillar meetings to strengthen the evidence base, commissioning further research on emerging opportunities such as battery technology, continuing monitoring of economic strategy progress using Power BI with a 75% response rate in the first round, and reviewing workstreams to reflect rapid innovation in sectors like marine autonomy and alternative propulsion.

In response to questions, supported by David Draffan (Service Director for Economic Development), Mike Page (Growth Board and Funding Manager), Lauren Paton (Economic Development Officer), the following was discussed:

- I) The cost of an electric bus was approximately double that of a diesel bus for the initial purchase, with a Euro 6 diesel bus costing around £286,000 and an electric bus just under £500,000;
 - i. Lifetime costs for electric buses were higher due to battery replacements every three to five years, typically closer to three years, at about £30,000 each, adding around £150,000 over the vehicle's life;
 - ii. Running costs were lower for electric buses because they have fewer parts, less wear and tear, reduced maintenance cycles, and no oil usage;
 - iii. Fuel costs had improved for electric buses as energy prices have fallen, giving a slight cost advantage per mile, though it was still too early to

confirm if overall lifetime costs would be lower;

- iv. The Council did not invest over £30 million in the buses; its contribution was £750,000 from the Community Infrastructure Levy funds, which helped unlock over £30 million of external investment from the bus company and national government;
- v. The project was considered essential for improving air quality, introducing modern buses, and supporting sustainability goals;
- vi. The monitoring of air quality had been ongoing. Monitoring occurred at locations along busy transport routes such as Royal Parade, Mutley Plain and Devonport Road, which previously had high pollutant levels due to heavy traffic and diesel buses;
- vii. Over multiple years, the city had shown sustained improvement, and in 2025 the Air Quality Management Area designation was revoked as levels consistently fell below thresholds. While this improvement was not solely due to the electric fleet, it reflected overall progress;
- viii. An air quality strategy was in place, and published data was available through Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Environment Agency;
- ix. All 50 electric buses were currently in service, and an additional nine buses would be introduced by April through extra funding from the Department for Transport, bringing the total to 59;
- x. No buses had had to stop due to charging issues. Battery management ensured a lower limit of 10%, providing around 21 miles of range based on an average of 210 miles per charge. Buses were successfully operating across the Torpoint Ferry, marking the first electric vehicles to do so;
- xi. Electric buses did not carry petrol or diesel as backup power. They ran entirely on battery technology, taking about seven hours for a full charge and 40 minutes to reach 80%, making incidental charging part of scheduling;
- xii. Additional benefits included improved acceleration and deceleration, positive driver feedback, and the inclusion of two wheelchair spaces per double-decker bus for the first time in the city, enabled by better layout and space utilisation;
- xiii. Plans were being explored to offer charging facilities to other organisations when not in use;

m) A large conference had been held in Summer 2025 with around 120 businesses to showcase opportunities;

- i. Floating offshore wind was still in its early stages, with an estimated lead time of eight to 10 years before full implementation, which was why defence projects were the subject of more communication at the time, however, there was definite interest and opportunity in offshore wind;
- ii. Applying autonomy in hydrography surveying could speed up consenting periods by up to two years, as autonomous systems could operate continuously and reduce risks to personnel;
- iii. There were still regulatory and consenting challenges, but the Ministry of Defence (MOD) was keen to collaborate with private sector investment to accelerate innovation. Both sectors shared the same level of energy and ambition, but offshore wind operated on a longer timeframe compared to defence;

n) The economic strategy had 55 live projects, of which 22 fell under Team Plymouth. Team Plymouth accelerated areas of the economy, particularly those linked to defence, but other projects such as the heat network represented significant green investment opportunities outside of Team Plymouth;

- i. The heat network was a £400 million project that would create hundreds of green jobs and support small businesses. Team Plymouth was important, but it was not the only focus for economic growth;
- ii. Defining green jobs could be challenging, but the UK Office for National Statistics provided a standardised definition using industry codes. In 2023, 46% of UK full-time jobs were classified as green jobs, and Plymouth performs well with 45 percent of full-time employees in low-emitting industries;

o) Monitoring currently focused on progress rather than impact, and data analysis would become more central as the pillar developed. The economic strategy included 12 long-term aspirations and would undergo annual reviews, with a full review every three years;

p) The change of pace meant some opportunities, such as electric buses, were not included initially and would need to be considered in future updates;

q) Sustainable growth was not only about specific job roles but also about how businesses and residents operated sustainably. A job may not be classed as sustainable, but if it existed within a sustainable business model, it contributed. For example, electric buses represented sustainable transport, only if the wider environment and infrastructure supported them;

r) The focus was on creating systems and practices that enabled sustainability rather than isolated actions;

- s) There were several ways to link sustainability to the proposed city centre growth of 10,000 homes. The city had significant housing targets to meet, and concentrating housing growth in the city centre provided sustainability benefits. For example, it reduced pressure on suburban green spaces by delivering homes on existing brownfield sites;
 - i. From a decarbonisation perspective, more people living in the city centre would have access to bus routes, bike stands, and businesses within walking distance, reducing the need for car ownership;
 - ii. Another key aspect was heat network connectivity, which was already planned for developments such as Millbay and the new version of Millbay Way. These properties would be ready to connect to the most affordable low carbon heating solution in the city, the heat network;
 - iii. As businesses changed in the city centre, there would be continued efforts to encourage sustainable practices, and this would remain central to planning for city centre growth;
- t) It was not possible to fully contextualise the spillover from defence spending into the commercial space. However, there were clear signs of investment growth;
- u) Some businesses were focused on marine autonomy and defence, while others were working in hydrography and surveying, but also exploring defence opportunities;
- v) The mix of businesses demonstrated rapid development and innovation;
- w) The global value of marine autonomy was projected to be £103 billion, and Plymouth was one of three places in the world operating at this cutting edge;
- x) Attracting high-value jobs and businesses to Plymouth would help escalate behaviour change towards green and blue values. The city's brand strategy emphasised sustainability, not only through its natural assets such the National Marine Park and Dartmoor but also by promoting Plymouth as a network passionate about the environment. This approach would attract people with the values and education needed for sustainable growth and create opportunities for new networks and wider behaviour change;
- y) The business community was eager to adapt and provide services and products to defence companies and organisations. The challenge was aligning language and expectations between sectors to create solutions quickly. The emerging frontier required agility, and the business community believes there would be significant spillover into sustainable areas;
- z) Historical examples showed how defence technology had transitioned into civilian applications, such as ball bearings and hydraulic pipes originally developed for nuclear engineering now used in Formula One and aerospace;

- i. Defence procurement was also changing, moving from long-term projects to rapid innovation cycles, creating opportunities for small, agile businesses. These innovations were expected to flow into civilian sectors like transport and energy storage over time;
- aa) Plymouth was preparing to support innovation and growth by integrating artificial intelligence into data analysis and monitoring to respond quickly to opportunities;
- bb) Local government provided the platform for academia and business to collaborate;
- cc) The city aimed to act as a petri dish for innovation, enabling private sector growth and ensuring Plymouth remained at the forefront of technological and sustainable development;
- dd) Retrofitting offered many opportunities economically, for health, and for reducing energy bills. The Net Zero team were involved in a range of programmes including retrofitting the Council's corporate and commercial estate, introducing fabric-first heat retention approaches, and installing heat pumps to transition away from gas boilers;
 - i. Several million pounds of improvements had been delivered through social housing decarbonisation funds in partnership with Plymouth Community Homes and Livewell;
 - ii. Additional investment had been announced for the Warm Homes Local Grant;
 - iii. The Council worked closely with Plymouth Energy Community to provide energy advice and support, including door-to-door engagement to increase uptake of grants such as the Homes Upgrade Grant, which offered up to £20,000 per home for retrofitting. These efforts were essential to the programme and would continue to be prioritised;
- ee) The single red rating noted in the report reflected progress rather than performance. It likely indicated that the project had not started yet, which the monitoring system captured in its assessment, more information would be provided **ACTION**;
- ff) Officers would share an updated project list and findings following initial monitoring **ACTION**;
- gg) Officers would share updated statistics on air quality monitoring **ACTION**.

The Panel agreed to;

1. Note the report and the continued focus on Sustainable Growth as a key element of the Plymouth Economic Strategy.

29. **Plymouth Plan Update and Review**

Councillor Stephens (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport) introduced the item and highlighted:

- a) The Plymouth Plan had been in place since 2015 as a single holistic plan replacing over 140 strategies and had been recognised regionally, nationally and internationally;
- b) The plan set a clear strategic direction for the city, covering social, economic and environmental wellbeing and was owned by the City Council and city stakeholders;
- c) The plan had been refreshed three times and integrated with the Plymouth and Southwest Devon Joint Local Plan adopted in March 2019, giving it a clear spatial expression;
- d) The Plymouth Plan and Local Plan were separate but connected, with the Local Plan acting as the spatial strategy for the Plymouth Plan;
- e) Research by the Plymouth Health Determinants Research Collaboration found strong support for continuing the Plymouth Plan, even among those with low awareness of it;
- f) Feedback highlighted the need to simplify the plan, focusing on key outcomes rather than detailed policy revisions which should sit within delivery plans;
- g) A comprehensive review was needed as much of the content remained as it was in 2015 despite major changes including Brexit, the COVID19 pandemic, cost of living crisis, climate emergency declaration and economic impacts of the war in Ukraine;
- h) The city faced significant opportunities including city centre transformation, designation as a National Defence Growth Area, National Centre for Marine Autonomy and £4.4 billion government investment into HM Naval Base Devonport and Babcock's Dockyard;
- i) The review process was at stage one, aiming to raise awareness and scope key issues. Councillors were asked to contribute perspectives on whether the plan addressed the most important strategic issues and identify areas for inclusion;
- j) The review provided an opportunity to integrate areas such as play into the plan and ensure the strategy includes the right hooks for delivery plans.

In response to questions, supported by Kat Deeney (Head of Environmental Planning), Jonathan Bell (Head of Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development) and

Paul Barnard (Service Director, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure), the following was discussed:

- k) There had been ongoing discussions about how the Plymouth Plan worked and its value, which could not be achieved without partnership work. The programme set out in the draft paper looked ahead to the autumn of 2026 and was expected to move more swiftly than a local plan;
 - i. From late spring to early summer, work was planned to pull together a draft plan for consultation, providing opportunities for input before final endorsement by City Council and partnership boards;
 - ii. Partners had consulted within their own communities to ensure the information feeding into the plan was as thorough as possible and there would be opportunities to reconnect with scrutiny at key stages to keep members informed and involved throughout the process;
- l) The existing Plymouth Plan was a large document, but the intention had been to reduce it down because it was a high-level strategic plan. Beneath were plans such as the Plan for Nature and the Local Plan, which contained the detail and the month-on-month delivery processes. The Plymouth Plan would act as the overarching framework, setting out the strategic direction while individual plans provided detailed actions;
- m) The review had aimed to look at the entire delivery framework to ensure the Plymouth Plan remained the guiding document. It was noted that partners valued the clarity and structure the Plymouth Plan provided, making it easier to tell the story of the city and align priorities;
- n) The Plymouth Plan was adopted for the city with a defined lifespan and went to City Council for approval;
- o) The Plymouth Plan provided continuity and clarity for investors and partners, ensuring priorities remained clear regardless of administration. This approach had supported successful funding bids and created a broad consensus on the city's direction. The review would refresh the vision and strategic objectives to reflect current challenges and opportunities while maintaining that collective approach;
- p) There had been ongoing efforts to identify best practice elsewhere, but no other city had created a single integrated plan in quite the same way. When the Plymouth Plan was introduced, it had been inspired by the Portland Plan in the United States of America (USA);
- q) As part of the review, benchmarking and learning from other authorities would be explored to ensure great ideas were adopted where possible;
- r) The next annual report would update data and maintain the evidence-driven approach. The review would refresh indicators and test whether current metrics were still appropriate, as many dated back to 2015;

- s) Tools such as Power BI and AI were used to create real-time monitoring and an online dashboard, making data live, rather than static, which would be explored to monitor the plan;
- t) The vision was for the Plymouth Plan to remain a digital document that allowed users to access relevant information easily.

The Panel agreed:

- 1. To note the update on and proposed review of the Plymouth Plan.

30. **Plymouth Local Plan: Next Steps and Timetable**

Councillor Stephens (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport), supported by Rebecca Miller (City Planning Manager), Jonathan Bell (Head of Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development), introduced the item and highlighted:

- a) Since 2019 there had been an adopted joint local plan with South Hams and West Devon which had been effective but key elements were now out of date due to changes to the national planning policy framework and the new standard method for housing need;
- b) The previous government and the current government had continued reform to the national planning system, but not all parts were yet in place to formally start a new local plan process;
- c) Work had begun to identify what should be in scope of the new plan and what the key issues were that needed to be addressed;
- d) A Local Development Scheme (LDS) was approved setting out a provisional timetable for a 30-month plan production period plus a four-month scoping period subject to local plan regulations being published;
- e) The aim was to start the four-month scoping stage in January 2026;
- f) Plymouth had significant opportunities with over £4.4 billion of planned investment in the defence industry, Team Plymouth work streams, investment in the Freeport, being shortlisted as a potential new town and partnership working with Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Homes England;
- g) Major challenges included meeting the governments standard method for housing which had doubled the annual requirement, the challenge would be balancing growth with preserving the unique environment and meeting needs of the population;
- h) Early involvement from the scrutiny panel and ward members was important for launching the new local plan process;

- i) The current joint local plan would be replaced by separate plans for Plymouth and for South Hams and West Devon, but the existing joint plan would remain in place until the new plans were adopted;
- j) National planning reforms including the new local plan regulations and spatial development strategies were still awaited and were needed before Plymouth could formally start the new plan;
- k) The duty to cooperate had been cancelled but the requirement remained to work with neighbouring authorities for proper strategic planning;
- l) The plan would have to address the standard method for housing as housing delivery had only met the required level twice in recent years;
- m) The plan must support the economic strategy including land for marine employment and strategic connectivity;
- n) Plymouth was a regional city, and the plan must support the city centre and major facilities and ensure good connectivity with the surrounding areas and natural environment;
- o) Transformational change in the city centre was expected to be a major topic for the next plan;
- p) The plan had to consider how Plymouth became more accessible and well connected and how local communities had what they needed close to their homes, including access to nature;
- q) Climate resilience and reducing carbon emissions in line with the climate emergency declaration would be a major challenge;
- r) Planning for infrastructure to support sustainable growth would require updating the infrastructure needs assessment and the infrastructure delivery plan.

In response to questions, supported by Paul Barnard (Service Director, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure), the following was discussed:

- s) Recent housing delivery had fallen sharply, the new requirement of 1280 dwellings per year was a major challenge, and meeting it would require intensification, use of more sites, and a clear growth strategy supported by infrastructure;
- t) In response to concerns about reliance on Homes England, it was confirmed that Homes England was an important partner but development would have to use existing allocated sites and be managed carefully to avoid harming the city centre;

- u) In response to concerns about public resistance to city centre change, it was noted that new homes would offer choice, could benefit the economy, and had to be delivered in a way that reflected Plymouth's character;
 - i. Examples of successful regeneration were noted in other cities, and that Plymouth could learn from them but had to retain an approach that was specific to its own identity;
 - ii. The average number of homes in city centres across the country was 8,000, but in Plymouth this was just 800;
 - iii. City centre development would include homes of all kinds to suit various demographics;
- v) In reference to the impact of local government reorganisation (LGR), officers stated government expected planning work to continue and that early evidence gathering could proceed while awaiting clarity on boundaries and responsibilities;
- w) There would be structured engagement at ward and strategic levels, and neighbourhood network style approaches could support meaningful community input;
- x) Many UK cities had sought public realm improvements and improved cultural offers to attract more people into city centres;
- y) Ideas and evidence from existing neighbourhood plans would be reviewed and used where relevant;
- z) The Panel discussed concerns about affordability for under 35s and the availability of HMOs. Existing policies would be reviewed and that wider housing needs would inform future policy;
 - aa) In relation to the concern about protection of Central Park, it was confirmed that existing policy protections remained active, and the new plan offered an opportunity to strengthen them further;
 - bb) The Panel discussed the nighttime economy and city centre living, noting the need for sustainable transport and improved connectivity to support future growth;
 - cc) Design codes would play a major role in ensuring good quality development, helping to shape architecture, materials and place making, including through clearer visual guidance.

The Panel agreed:

- I. To note the update on the potential scope and timetable for the next Plymouth Local Plan.

31. **Tree Management Principles Document**

Councillor Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change), supported by Andy Sharp (Interim Service Director for Street Scene & Waste), Kat Deeney (Head of Environmental Planning) and Chris Avent (Green Estate Manager) introduced the item and highlighted:

- a) It was noted that Plymouth was an incredibly green city with hundreds of thousands of trees and that trees brought wide benefits including flood resilience, biodiversity, carbon sequestration, urban cooling, air quality and improved wellbeing;
- b) It was noted that there were real challenges in ensuring environmental values were embedded across all teams and that the tree management principles document would help improve transparency, safety, engagement and sustainability;
- c) The document continued to be rooted in expert feedback from tree officers, environmental groups and the plan for trees steering group, which included passionate community representatives;
- d) It was noted that the background to the document had been influenced by contributions from opposition councillors through planning, which had shaped thinking on how to continue improving practice;
- e) The Council was responsible for approximately 70,000 trees and had duties relating to tree protection orders (TPOs) and planning which all interrelated;
- f) It was confirmed that the document recognised the importance of trees to the identity of Plymouth and updated the original 2019 version to reflect new legislation, new context and new standards;
- g) The scope had been expanded to include management of Council trees, TPOs, trees in the planning process and plans for planting more trees across the city;
- h) Engagement and consultation were embedded throughout the document and that safety considerations were clearly set out for the public and stakeholders;
- i) It was reported that the new Environment Act had introduced duties to consult on removing street trees and that learning from the Armada Way review had strengthened the focus on communication and public engagement;
- j) Internal and external working groups, including trusted external partners, had reviewed the document and comments from the meeting would be considered in the final version;
- k) It was confirmed that the document would be reviewed every five years to respond to changes in legislation, context and the needs of the city;

- l) Key changes included expanded definitions of how Council trees were managed, clearer explanations for the public and new sections on tree planting and the relationship with planning;
- m) The document set out a clear process for consultation on trees, drawing on learning from other authorities, and included an appendix covering consultation steps;
- n) It was noted that the revised document provided a framework for working with partners and the public to make sensible decisions on tree management across planning, Council owned trees and future tree planting.

In response to questions, the Panel discussed:

- o) The legislation did not set out how assessments had to be carried out and there were no prerequisites about what information had to be included;
- p) The duty was to consult for removal of trees, display notices, inform the public, publish information on the website and communicate with local residents;
- q) Appendix one included an options assessment report to help identify what the public would need to know and understand, and officers would use this to inform communications;
- r) The flow chart made the decision-making process incredibly clear, showing reasons why tree removal might be necessary, such as public safety risks or road safety requirements, and who would be involved;
- s) It explained how transparency with communities would be achieved and represented a big step forward compared to previous processes;
- t) It was recognised that trees were a sensitive subject and it was important that policies ensured transparency in any decision making around any particular tree;
- u) The Tree Equity UK map provided clear neighbourhood boundaries and could apply mapping on health inequalities and socioeconomic data. Two major Council commissioned reports also explored this canopy data in more depth, details of which would be shared with Panel members **ACTION**;
- v) Feedback had been broadly positive with some technical points raised, particularly around where trees were planted. The document had principles, not detailed definition, and final comments were still being collected;
- w) Kings Road had been used as a pilot to test the process. The scheme responded to multiple fatalities and included crossings and traffic calming, and tree felling had been identified as essential. Zero tree loss was an option, but it would mean not installing sustainable transport infrastructure and choosing

the life of four trees over the life of potential road users and pedestrians. Twenty trees would be planted nearby and three of the four trees planned for removal were category C;

- i. The Council had to balance different priorities and in this case there were compelling factors for tree felling;
- x) Planting in deprived communities was already ongoing;
- y) There were 45 schemes for the 2025/26 winter season and Community Forest funding would likely to continue for another four years, allowing quicker progress;
- z) Nature was being integrated into place-making and biodiversity considerations;
- aa) The planning team used nature as part of solutions such as flooding. The new local plan provided an opportunity to tie this together and support more trees in new developments;
- bb) A TPO did not block all tree felling but gave extra protection for trees of amenity value at risk;
- cc) Wilmot Gardens had been considered when developing the document;
- dd) Plymouth City Council could not TPO all 60,000 trees but would prioritise the highest value. National methodology would ensure consistency.

The Panel agreed:

- I. To endorse the updated Tree Management Principles 2025 document.

32. **Work Programme**

Glenn Caplin-Grey (Strategic Director for Growth) and Hannah Chandler-Whiting (Democratic Advisor) explained:

- a) With a number of items remaining on the work programme it had been determined that an additional meeting would be scheduled for 29 January 2026;
- b) This would also allow the Chelson Meadow Solar farm to be discussed following the outcome of a funding bid, but before it would need to go to Cabinet for decision;
- c) There were also time pressures relating to the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership item and it was therefore also proposed for the 29 January 2026 meeting.

The Panel noted its work programme.

33. **Action Log**

Hannah Chandler-Whiting (Democratic Advisor) noted:

- a) Outstanding actions were being chased.

The Panel noted its action log.

Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel



Date of meeting:	29 January 2026
Title of Report:	Plymouth Ports Strategy Update
Lead Member:	Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (Leader)
Lead Strategic Director:	Glenn Caplin-Grey (Strategic Director for Growth)
Author:	Amanda Ratsey, Head of Economy & Investment
Contact Email:	amanda.ratsey@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

The purpose of the following report is to provide an update to the scrutiny committee on the activity that has been delivered in the city aligning to the 'Opportunity' areas identified within the Plymouth Ports Strategy document launched in March 2025.

Recommendations and Reasons

- I. It is recommended that the Panel note the report and the continued focus on the importance of our Port based economy locally.

Alternative options considered and rejected

This is a report to update the Panel therefore no alternative options are required.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

This report supports:

- Strategic Objective 2 '**Delivering a growing city**' where the transformation of the city should be delivered through sustainable growth.
- Policy GRO1 '**Creating the conditions for economic growth**' by contributing to 'driving productivity and prosperity for all' in our green / blue economy;

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

None.

Financial Risks

The PCC cost associated with supporting these growth projects are funded within existing approved revenue budgets

Legal Implications

None as a result of this report.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

None arising as a direct impact of this update report.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

None arising as a direct impact of this update report

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Plymouth Ports Strategy							
B	Presentation							

Background papers:

**Add rows as required to box below*

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)							
	<p><i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="738 386 1325 435"> <tr> <td data-bbox="738 386 819 435">1</td><td data-bbox="819 386 900 435">2</td><td data-bbox="900 386 981 435">3</td><td data-bbox="981 386 1062 435">4</td><td data-bbox="1062 386 1143 435">5</td><td data-bbox="1143 386 1224 435">6</td><td data-bbox="1224 386 1325 435">7</td></tr> </table>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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Sign off:

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Purpose of report

The purpose of the following report is to provide an update to the scrutiny committee on the 'Opportunity' areas identified within the Plymouth Ports Strategy document launched in March 2025.

A link to the report is provided here for reference.

PPS-MMD-XX-XX-T-X-003 Plymouth Ports Strategy P06.pdf

The activity described below has been delivered by a host of individuals, organisations and groups from across the city.

Introduction

The Plymouth Port Strategy was commissioned by Plymouth City Council to understand the ecosystem of the ports and identify opportunities to maximise the future economic contributions of Plymouth's harbours to the city, support the transition to net zero and create green jobs.

This Strategy is positioned under the Plymouth Economic Strategy (PES). The importance of Ports was highlighted in both the PES and its associated delivery plan; primarily culminating in the designation of the Maritime and Waterfront investable theme which was created to ensure continued focus on the city's strength in the marine and ports sector. Building on this PES work, Mott McDonald was commissioned to build a more detailed evidence base and plan to ensure the full potential of port is capitalised on most effectively.

Mott McDonald adopted a five step methodology for conducting the study and producing the strategy as outlined below;

1. Stakeholder engagement – undertook structured conversations with public and private stakeholders
2. Ports Baseline – created a socio-economic baseline of information for Plymouth and the Ports
3. Information analysis – conducted a SWOT analysis of the baseline info
4. Vision – developed a strategic vision
5. Opportunity mapping – identify a series of opportunities to implement the vision

The report found that the combined Ports of Plymouth present a complex and diverse ecosystem comprising multiple public, and privately operated ports, wharves and harbours each with a host of users and uses including leisure, national defence, commercial cargo movements, international ferries and innovative marine businesses sites. As such the 'Opportunities' identified by the consultants in Step 5 of their methodology focused not entirely on direct delivery but more so on identifying ways in which the council can act as a convener, coordinator and facilitator.

The strategy identifies the primary strength of Plymouth's port as the diverse inputs of the maritime sector in the city. The Ports underpin a marine and defence sector which employs roughly 20,000 FTEs, representing 18% of the Plymouth workforce

and 18% of the GVA of the City. Whilst HMS Devonport underpins the economic contribution of the ports and the marine sector to the city there is also a significant and diverse leisure sector, vessel manufacturing and servicing and freight operations. Plymouth is also leading on development of marine technology, manufacturing and engineering. Continued enhancement and growth in these sectors greatly enhance Plymouth's competitive edge in sectors with high growth potential such as autonomous vessels, Floating Offshore Wind and alternative fuels.

The following section reviews each of the identified opportunities within the report and against each provides some narrative on progress made to date in moving these opportunities forward. Not all of this activity is directly delivered by PCC, however, it is clear to see that the Local Authority is involved in each of the activities in some way.

Progress and update on activity to date

1. Develop Local Skills

The city continues to support the development of local skills and specifically within blue / green disciplines. PCC is directly supporting and working with City College Plymouth to bring forward its planned Blue / Green Skills hub on the lower floors of the Civic Centre Building. It is expected this facility, in the centre of the city and in arguably one of the city's most iconic and recognisable buildings, will train thousands of young people and retrain careers transitioners in sustainable technologies and marine innovation. This builds on the incredible work already being delivered in the Centre of Higher Technical Innovation and Maritime Skills building strategically located in the Oceansgate Development in Devonport.

More broadly, Maritime UK South West, has recently produced a maritime careers focused magazine which highlights the various career opportunities within the maritime industries across the South West. Raising awareness of the local opportunities will enable the city to retain its talented individuals to support growth to happen, this is particularly important at this juncture where we have a forecast deficit in labour force to jobs across the city in the region of 25,000 in the next 10 years.

2. Maintain & Leverage Plymouth's Expertise and Innovation

The city was named the National Centre for Marine Autonomy in June 2025 recognising the strength and depth of the knowledge base and commercial expertise that exists in the city. The interest in marine autonomy has rocketed in recent years as the technology shifts from providing novel use cases to hard and real applications across numerous markets.

Plymouth and South Devon Freeport, Plymouth City Council and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government recently commissioned a piece of research that investigated the opportunities, barriers and recommendations around Marine Autonomy. Recognising that Plymouth is uniquely positioned to offer a blend

of expertise, infrastructure and strategic location to key defence and academic institutions, the research not only highlights the significant opportunities presented by the future development of marine autonomy, but also speaks to how best to address the potential barriers that could restrict the full realisation of this sectors growth. The research highlights that barriers (such as regulation, funding and skills shortages) are reflected both on regional and national scales and it is important that Plymouth continue to develop and leverage its expertise in this sectors in order to maintain its position at the forefront of marine autonomy development. Many of the recommendations proposed in this research have been incorporated into various projects throughout the city focused on advancing the city's position as the National Centre for Marine Autonomy. For example, the barrier related to skills shortages have been considered when developing the Green, Blue skills hub mentioned above; work to address the regulatory gaps was developed under the Regulatory Pioneer Fund and continues to be a project considered for development under Team Plymouth; and support for the marine autonomy and wider port related economic activity is a primary focus of the maritime and waterfront investable theme under the Plymouth Economic Strategy

We have seen recent investment signals from the defence market with UK MOD recognising a need to modernise its approach to National Security and the commercial market recognising the growing role that smart robots / autonomous vessels can play in the offshore surveillance of assets such as wind turbines (both fixed and floating in the future), and cabling as well as in surveying the ocean floor for critical minerals, and in monitoring the flora and fauna of our oceans. Plymouth is at the forefront of the development and testing of these vessels through its Smart Sound provision which relies on coordination across all port users, to deliver in a safe manner.

More recently and as part of the broader Team Plymouth work the city has established a Marine Innovation Board which is set to ensure future growth opportunities linked to this marine innovation are coordinated and optimised to maximise the impact felt locally.

The council is working with the owners of undeveloped waterside space in the city to help create the right employment space to support the innovative activity to happen.

3. Invest in Port Infrastructure

The city has taken an active role in supporting Port operators to invest into their own infrastructure, specifically and most recently in supporting ABP to invest into a shore side power offering. This would enable Brittany Ferries to plug into renewably sourced electricity while in port rather than running off the ferry's diesel engines. This significant project is expected to complete by the end of Q1 2026 if all things progress as planned.

The council is also monitoring funding opportunities to enable it to directly support the private sector to continue to invest in the Port Infrastructure of the city. While

these funding pots do not emerge regularly, being able to spot them early will enable the city to act quickly and in a coordinated way.

4. Preserve Port Space

Plymouth, under the current Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan, has a policy in place to safeguard employment land to ensure the city can provide enough employment space to meet the growth ambitions of the city. In light of recent activity around Team Plymouth, the Defence Growth Deal, and the designation as the National Centre for Marine Autonomy, the city's growth ambitions are being revisited. We are currently surveying industry in the city to understand growth ambitions to inform and strengthen the safeguards for employment land to include in the refreshed Plymouth Plan. Part of this will focus on safeguarding Port and surrounding land for marine related employment to ensure we are using our land in an optimised way for the city.

5. Foster Communication & Collaboration

The Council already enjoys a positive relationship with most of the stakeholders in the Port of Plymouth ecosystem, though organising a launch of the strategy which brought these stakeholders together did help to galvanise these relationships further.

On the back of this, in support of Maritime UK SW a range of stakeholders were brought together to discuss an upcoming funding opportunity linked to the ways to support the industry in decarbonizing – likely to result in a skills focused project which would aim to create the skilled individuals need to deliver decarbonisation projects.

There are already a variety of groups that bring a range of stakeholders together to support aspects of the Port's operations, the 'Cruise Partnership' for example. The Cruise Partnership brings together Associated British Ports, Cattewater Harbour Commissioners, Kings Harbour Master, Plymouth City Council, the two Business Improvement Districts and is led by Destination Plymouth. This group works together to bolster and maximise the city's offering to the cruise sector both by proactively marketing the city to cruise operators to increase the number of ships stopping in Plymouth but also to a great port welcome for visitors working with local businesses and volunteers. On the back of this work the city has seen its cruise numbers increase, bringing prosperity to the city.

There is an opportunity for the city to establish a Plymouth Ports Coordination Group for the city, the next stage in establishing this group will be to ascertain the unique role that it will hold. Many groups already exist in the city that have some overview of the marine environment, ports operations etc. and so deconflicting against these and ensuring the new group has a clearly defined role and remit is key to its success.

6. Prepare for Net Zero Transition

The various ports, wharfs and harbours across Plymouth will each face its own challenges in preparing for and embracing the transition to net zero. The role for the

council in this space is to communicate clearly on the opportunities that exist to support private entities to start on this journey. To date the city has hosted two Floating Offshore Wind focused events, raising awareness among our businesses of the opportunities for growth that this initiative potentially presents. Floating wind turbines are larger than the standard 'fixed to the sea bed' versions, allowing them to produce a greater amount of renewable energy. As they are floating structures they are also able to be sited in much deeper water, which is why the Celtic Sea has been identified for the roll out of the first at scale array of floating wind production in the UK with a plan for 4GW by 2035 growing to 15GW total. This will create manufacturing opportunities but also monitoring and surveillance requirements of the structures, a task that is likely to be completed by autonomous vessels.

In late 2025 the city hosted its first Net Zero Carbon event – showcasing and celebrating some of the activity that is happening around this agenda in the city. Events such as this provide an invaluable opportunity for businesses, including those who operate as port operators and corporate landlords, to hear about the latest technology and engage with companies at the forefront of this sector.

Continuing to deliver this event provides the stakeholders of the Port of Plymouth with an opportunity to learn and explore how they might go about delivering their transition to Net Zero.

Conclusion

Set out above is a broad overview of the activity that has kickstarted since the launch of the Port of Plymouth Strategy that aligns to the 'opportunities' set out within it. Many of the activities outlined would have been delivered without the Strategy being in place, however, there would remain a risk that this activity would have been uncoordinated, and its impact is reduced.

The power of the Strategy lies in its ability to galvanise a diverse set of stakeholders around a single vision over and above any single stakeholders' own priorities and drive activity to achieve that vision. The next stage for this Strategy is to establish the Plymouth Port Coordination Group to help ensure the broad activity being delivered remains coordinated.

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Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel



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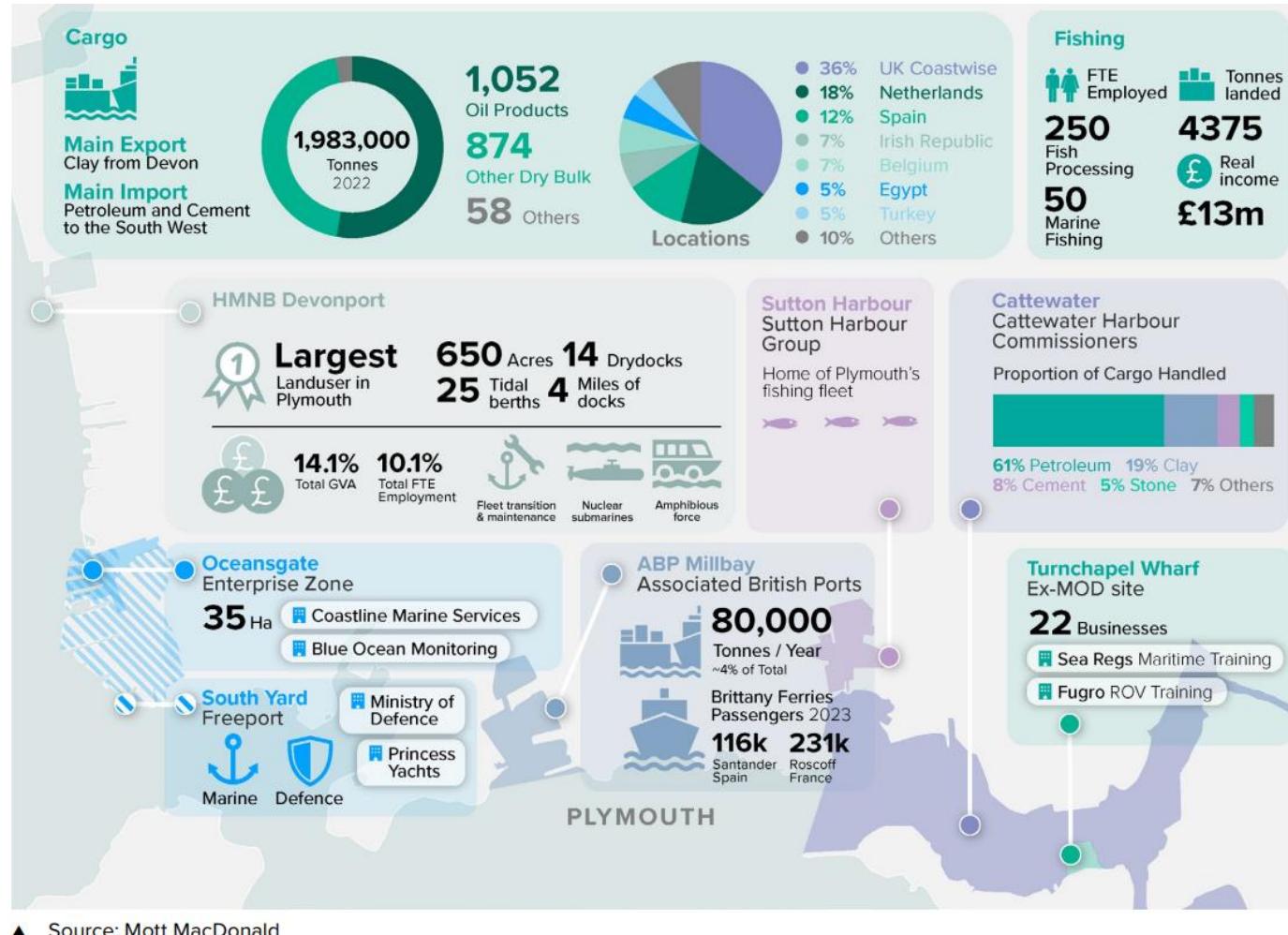
Plymouth Port Strategy Update

29th January, 2026

Plymouth Port: Economic overview



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Plymouth Port: Heritage and landscape



PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

Environmental Designations

6402 Ha
Special Area of Conservation

1955 Ha
Special Protection Area

1530 Ha
Marine Conservation Zone

4 Ha
Seagrass Potential Area

Plymouth Sound National Marine Park

UK's 1st
National Marine Park

1000+
Species of fish & other marine life

£11.6m
National Lottery funding to...

Monitor & Document Biodiversity Habitat Reservation Business Diversification

Heritage

750+ Listed buildings
25 Grade I Listed

1660s
Royal Citadel

1691 Coronation sank in its wreck site

Leisure

1400 Gold Anchor berths



Cruise liners booked

2018

12

4

5

12

pandemic
2021

7

12

2023

visitors (2019)

5.2m

local economy worth

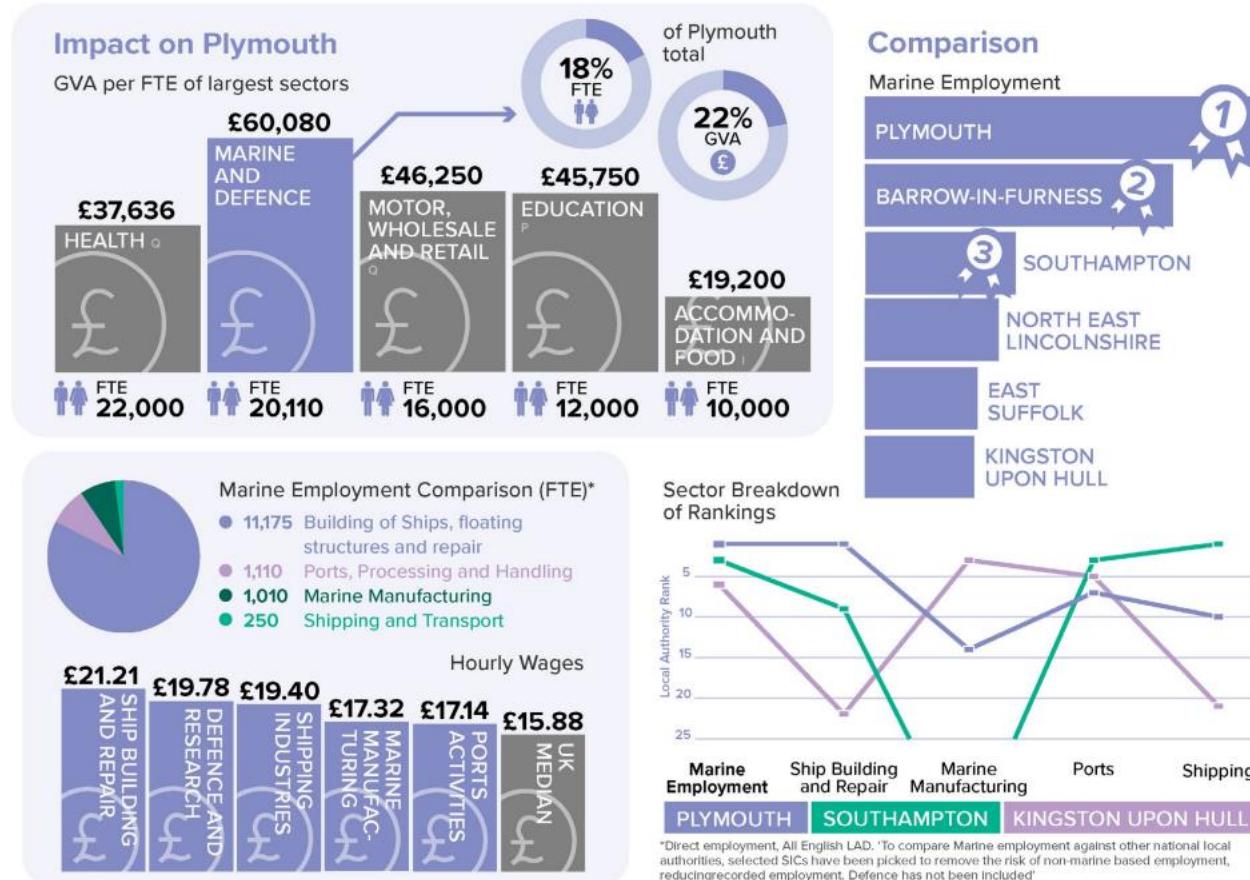
334m per year



Plymouth Port: Catalyst for growth



PLYMOUTH
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▲ Source: Mott MacDonald

Plymouth Port: Opportunity overview



- Develop Local Skills
- Maintain Plymouth's Expertise and Innovation
- Invest in Infrastructure
- Preserve Space for Ports
- Foster Communication and Collaboration
- Prepare for Net Zero



Case Study: Cruise Partnership



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https://youtu.be/JGL66VOit_k

Next steps



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- Establish Plymouth Port Coordination Group
- Formalise reporting and governance for this under the Plymouth Economic Strategy

Questions?

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Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel

Date of meeting:

Thursday 29 January 2026

Title of Report:

Waterfront Business Improvement District (BID) Renewal

Lead Member:

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (Leader)

Lead Strategic Director:

Glenn Caplin-Grey Strategic Director for Growth

Author:

Sarah Gibson CEO and Plymouth Waterfront Manager Plymouth Waterfront Partnership

Contact Email:

Sarah.gibson@plymouth.gov.uk

Your Reference:

Waterfront BID4 Renewal

Key Decision:

Yes

Confidentiality:

Part I

Purpose of Report

This report:

- Summarises the proposal to renew the Plymouth Waterfront BID for a fourth term Business Plan 2027-2032, along with emerging themes arising from early Waterfront business consultations.
- Invites the Panel's ideas for project consideration within the Waterfront BID4 Plan.
- Sets out Plymouth City Council's support for the renewal of the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership (PWP) Business Improvement District (BID) for Plymouth's Waterfront.

Recommendations and Reasons

That Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel:

1. Note the report and the proposal to renew the Plymouth Waterfront BID for a fourth term, to operate between April 2027 and March 2032;
2. Consider providing recommendations for Waterfront BID4, support the process of renewal of the Plymouth Waterfront BID and endorse the principles and overall approach to create a Waterfront BID4 Business Plan 2027-2032 as set out in this report.

Reason: To confirm the partnership approach to the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership and the Waterfront Business Improvement District and establish a framework for service improvement mechanisms within the Business Improvement District area.

Alternative options considered and rejected**Option 1: Progress Waterfront management through a different vehicle using a voluntary contributions approach**

This has been rejected by Plymouth Waterfront Partnership because the anticipated income and levels of commitment would be significantly reduced as a result of differential contributions from different businesses.

Option 2: Amend some of the assumptions in the Business Improvement District Business Plan

This was rejected as the level of service provision within the Waterfront must be enhanced above pre-Business Improvement District levels for the duration of the Plymouth Waterfront BID Business Plan to meet the requirements of the regulations. In addition, experience in delivering the BID Business Plans demonstrates the added value of a realistic but challenging programme of integrated initiatives in levering other sources of income above the basic Business Improvement District levy.

Option 3: Abandon the Business Improvement District Model

This was rejected as it might mean that some of the services and management to be undertaken by the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership would have to be managed in-house and it is not considered this would achieve value for money or efficient operations.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Since 2012 the Plymouth Waterfront Business Improvement District has played a key role in delivering the Council's vision of one of Europe's most vibrant waterfront cities. The BID principles are closely aligned to the Council's values as set out in the Corporate Plan, and the proposals are designed to deliver against the key Growing City priorities. The BID proposals support the strategic themes within the Plymouth Plan, as a growing, healthy and international city.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

Financial implications are included within the body of the report.

Legal Implications

The renewal of the Waterfront Business Improvement District (BID) requires compliance with the statutory framework established under the Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004. These regulations place duties on the Council to administer the BID ballot, validate the BID proposal and five-year plan, and undertake levy billing, collection and enforcement in accordance with statutory requirements. Members must also ensure that due regard is given to the Council's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 when considering the BID proposals, and that the decision-making process is robust and capable of withstanding challenge.

Implementation of Waterfront BID4 will require the Council to enter into baseline Service Level Agreements with the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership, which will create contractual obligations to maintain agreed service standards within the BID area throughout the BID term. The Council will also continue to provide statutory and in-kind support services, including legal, finance, ICT, HR and administrative functions, which must comply with internal governance, procurement and financial regulations. Clear delineation of responsibilities and maintenance of statutory environmental, public realm and health and safety duties will be necessary to mitigate the risk of breach of contract, service failure or legal challenge.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

Delivery of the Plymouth Waterfront BID Business Plan 2027-2032 will help address the City Council's commitment to improve Plymouth's environment and establish a carbon neutral city by 2030:

The Plan's 'Blue-green' theme, including support for the Plymouth Sound National Marine Park, aims to reconnect people to the ocean, leading to increased understanding, respect and care for Britain's Ocean City and its associated blue and green environment.

Plymouth Waterfront Partnership will also continue to promote use of non-single use plastics supporting the city's 'Plan for Plastic'.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.

The business plan and associated service level agreements will address risk and health and safety management. The Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change OSC will be invited to assess these implications in its review of the BID proposals.

Appendices

*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Plymouth Waterfront Partnership Business Improvement District (BID) Partner Survey							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Waterfront BID3 Business Plan see: www.waterfrontbid.co.uk							
Baseline Service Level Agreements see: www.waterfrontbid.co.uk							

Sign off:

Fin	N/A	Leg	N/A	Mon Off	N/A	HR	N/A	Assets	N/A	Strat Proc	N/A
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Draffan											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 20 January 2026											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Tudor Evans approved verbally											
Date approved: 20 January 2026											

Summary

1) What are BIDs?

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a defined area in which a levy is charged on all eligible business rate payers in addition to the business rates bill. This levy is used to develop projects which will benefit businesses in the local area.

There is no limit on what projects or services can be provided through a Business Improvement District. The only requirement is that it should be something that is in addition to services provided by local authorities. Improvements may include, but are not limited to, extra safety/security, cleansing and environmental measures.

The Business Improvement District proposer is required to develop a proposal and submit this to the local authority, along with a 5-year plan. The proposal should set out the services to be provided and the size and scope of the Business Improvement District. It will also set out who is liable for the levy, the amount of levy to be collected and how it is calculated.

Businesses located within the proposed Business Improvement District area must be consulted at ballot.

Once a BID has been established all businesses contribute the BID Levy annually based on the rateable value of their premises (hereditaments) to ensure fairness and equity. BIDs have a maximum duration of 5 years, hence the need to renew the Waterfront BID at this stage.

There are c.350 BIDs in the UK, including Exeter, Falmouth, Newquay, Tavistock, English Riviera, Bristol and Plymouth. A mark of their success is that c.92% of BIDs are renewed by business ballot for their third term ballot. The City Centre Company is in its fifth term following four successful renewals.

2) What is the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership?

The Plymouth Waterfront Partnership is an important delivery partner which provides dedicated, one voice representation for c.950 businesses located across the Waterfront area. Established in 2010, the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership is business led, as a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and driven by a Board of Directors which includes Cllr Sally Haydon Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Events, Cemeteries and Crematoria. The Plymouth Waterfront Partnership is the proposer of the Plymouth Waterfront BID and operates its delivery, prioritising projects including city marketing, events, cleanliness and safety in the public realm.

Initially started up in 2012 and delivering effectively since, the Plymouth Waterfront BID delivers 5-year business plans shaped by Waterfront businesses, which are designed to align with city policy and strategies. Currently working through its third business plan, the Plymouth Waterfront BID has contributed more than £4,523,430 since 2012 raised directly from Waterfront BID levy. More than 180 projects have been delivered, 60 events funded, and city ambitions supported, including the hosting of the Transat, Olympic Torch and National Armed Forces Day in 2012, the shaping of the Waterfront Masterplan in 2014, the first bid for City of Culture for 2017, and celebrations for Mayflower 400 in 2020.

The Plymouth Waterfront Partnership works closely with its partners, and codesigns and funds delivery plans with Destination Plymouth, Plymouth City Centre Company, Plymouth Culture and Plymouth City Council.

3) Waterfront BID3 (2022-2027) Achievements

The current Plymouth Waterfront BID plan known as Waterfront BID3, identified 46 projects for delivery within 4 key themes:

- Transformational – creating the waterfront of tomorrow, today!
- Vibrant Tourist Destination
- Environmental Excellence
- Business Voice

Plymouth Waterfront Partnership is currently reviewing the delivery of the Waterfront BID3 plan. Early surveys suggest that the plan is already around 80% delivered and is on target for delivery by its due end date in March 2027.

Plymouth Waterfront Partnership won GOLD in 2025's Britain In Bloom awards for floral planting schemes in the Barbican, Bretonside, Hoe and Millbay Park.

4) Early Ideas for Waterfront BID4 (2027-2032)

The Plymouth Waterfront Partnership intends that Waterfront BID4 is business led and will continue to focus on business priorities of increasing visitor numbers, customer spend and commercial success through:

- Leadership - Providing a strong business voice to lobby and influence for future investment and public realm improvements for the Waterfront.
- Marketing - Supporting regional and national marketing campaigns and key events linked to local businesses, to attract new customers to live, work, study and visit, and increase loyalty, whilst radically improving visitor signage and information.
- Operational management - contracts will hold the City Council and all area service providers to account for the standard of existing cleansing, maintenance, safety and security, and other services. BID investment will only be used to pay for additional services prioritised by businesses.
- Finance - attracting significant match funding in addition to levy contributions from businesses for expenditure within the Waterfront.

Since December 2025, the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership (PWP) has invited to survey more than 900 Waterfront businesses and organisations, held formal and informal consultation meetings and will continue to consult over the next two months. Following this early consultation of Waterfront businesses and consideration of the Waterfront BID's potential for aligning with city policy and strategy, project ideas have begun to emerge around four broad themes.

These are very DRAFT and set out in high level below and projects will continue to build on key, inter-related themes that represent the Waterfront area:

Place – Vibrant, Regenerative Waterfront:

Enhance business trading in the Waterfront area, through:

- support for major defence-linked growth and regeneration.

- enhance and promote Waterfront as Plymouth's cool place to live, work and play.
- influence city's "new town" ambitions for 10,000 new homes in the City Centre and Waterfront area.
- private sector-led approach to place-making in the Waterfront area including.
- major signage and interpretation improvements to link Waterfront businesses with benefits of Plymouth Sound National Marine Park.

People – Vibrant Culture, Day and Night:

Enhance business trading in the Waterfront area, through:

- help deliver 2020-30 Plymouth Visitor Plan.
- promote the UK City of Culture 2029 bid.
- champion safety and security, particularly through Purple Flag and PARC initiative support.
- establish a new Evening and Night-time Economy approach.
- deliver cultural events and story-telling.
- welcome visiting cruise ship visitors.
- support skills and talent development.
- unify the voices of Waterfront businesses.
- reduce business costs.
- champion projects that promote access, equality and inclusion for all.

Planet – Environmental Excellence:

Enhance business trading in the Waterfront area, through:

- support Plymouth Plan for Nature and People (2025–2030).
- support our re-imagined Britain's Ocean City brand, aligned to the city's new Brand Strategy 2030.
- boldly position the importance of our 'blue and green' economy and spaces, including our unique heritage.
- support the UK's first Plymouth Sound National Marine Park.
- signpost businesses to enable them to improve their environmental performance/standard.
- champion the Green Tourism scheme.

Overall, the Plymouth Waterfront BID4 plan will consolidate resources to continue to attract more visitors and visitor spend to the Waterfront, encourage enterprise, improve skills and help to make Plymouth a thriving regional centre; which in turn will attract people to live, work, study and invest.

Plymouth Waterfront BID3 already plays a key role in the city's visitor economy, working in close partnership with the Plymouth City Council, Plymouth City Centre Company BID, Destination Plymouth and Plymouth Culture to maximise delivery outcomes.

Waterfront BID4 will continue this work and align with Plymouth City Council-related policies, strategies, designations and partnership initiatives that relate to Plymouth's Waterfront, including defence-linked growth, regeneration, "new town" ambitions and economic growth deals, including:

Joint Local Plan – Waterfront & Growth Area Policies:

PLY20 – Managing and Enhancing Plymouth's Waterfront

PLY21 – Supporting the Visitor Economy

Plymouth & South Devon Freeport
Defence Growth Deal / Team Plymouth
New Town in the City / City Centre & Housing Growth
Vision & Economic Strategy (e.g., Driving Growth in Plymouth)
Plymouth Sound National Marine Park
Energy Policy
Food Strategy Plymouth Food Action Plan (2023–2026)
Plymouth Plan for Nature and People (2025–2030)
Port Strategy
UK City of Culture 2029 bid support
Visitor Plan 2030
Brand Strategy 2030

The Plymouth Waterfront Partnership intends to circulate a secondary consultation, describing the proposed 4 themes and projects that align with city policy and strategy as a **DRAFT** Waterfront BID4 plan and will incorporate this business feedback into the **FINAL** Waterfront BID4 plan as appropriate.

It is intended that Waterfront BID4 will generate a minimum of £1.675m of additional BID levy contributions across the 5 year term. It will include c.500 BID levy payers and c.400 entry level, non-voting/non-paying members, encompassing 1,165 hectares of the city's primary waterfront destinations and target 4 major strategic priorities.

The full draft version of Waterfront BID4 is in development and has the input of colleagues from Plymouth City Council, Destination Plymouth, Plymouth City Centre Company BID and Plymouth Culture. The Plymouth Waterfront Partnership operates an information website that contains a record of the Waterfront BID's delivery achievements so far. For this and a live example of the Waterfront BID3 Plan please visit: www.waterfrontbid.co.uk/pwp-bid-renewal

The Plymouth Waterfront Partnership will continue to seek ideas from Waterfront businesses and its partners for another few months.

Ideas generated from within the Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel will also be considered for inclusion within the first draft of the Waterfront BID4 plan.

The FINAL Waterfront BID4 plan will be available before the end of August 2026 at:
www.waterfrontbid.co.uk

5) What's Included Within the Waterfront BID Area?

The Plymouth Waterfront Partnership will continue to provide leadership and management and be directly accountable to Waterfront businesses for the delivery of the Waterfront BID4 plan, working in partnership with Plymouth City Council, Destination Plymouth, the Police Authority,

Educational Establishments and other public agencies to benefit businesses located within the Waterfront area. The map below shows the existing Waterfront BID3 area:



Following detailed consultations with businesses, the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership includes within the existing Waterfront BID3 boundary area the primary attraction areas of The Barbican, Sutton Harbour, The Hoe and foreshore, Millbay and Royal William Yard, Mount Batten, Mayflower Marina, Queen Anne's Battery Marina, Drake's Island and parts of Union Street and Durnford Street, to ensure a wide view is taken on the visitor experience and gateways into the area. The Waterfront BID4 boundary will also continue to include Bretonside, West side of Sutton Road, West Hoe, Notte Street, Vauxhall Street and Stonehouse. The addition of the Barbican Leisure Park, Friary Mill Business Park and South East side of the River Plym between Turnchapel and Laira Bridge are under consideration for additional inclusion, with business consultations underway. Early soundings suggest that the Barbican Leisure Park (indicated by the hatched line within the map) may be proposed to be brought into the area as a key gateway from the East into the Waterfront BID area.

The Waterfront BID4 area will continue to buffer against the boundary of the City Centre Company's existing BID area, ensuring enhanced links between the two areas and a seamlessly positive visitor experience.

6) What is the Ask of Plymouth City Council?

Waterfront BID4 is designed to attract and deliver investment in the Waterfront area, build sustainable partnerships and deliver agreed projects. The BID legislation does not require that the Local Authority endorse the BID proposals, however it is essential that Plymouth City Council confirms its support, financial and in kind.

The City Council will provide existing statutory services and in-kind support, such as premises, ICT, legal and administration. In addition, PCC will continue provision of BID levy billing, collection and enforcement costs (through the Courts to a maximum value of £9,000 per annum), HR, payroll, accountancy and invoice payment support.

Through the Waterfront BID the City Council will be held accountable to the business community and required to maintain their existing levels of service within the Waterfront. BID

projects will be entirely additional to existing City Council services. Service Level Agreements will be created between the City Council and Plymouth Waterfront Partnership.

National BID legislation enables the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership to establish a contractual agreement with the Council over its provision of existing services in the Waterfront BID area to guarantee that they continue throughout the five-year BID lifetime.

Once the Waterfront BID has been established, the Council will be contractually obliged to maintain agreed standards to conform to baseline service level agreements for all services provided (and listed in the body of this report).

7) Timeline and Next Steps

The Plymouth Waterfront Partnership is grateful for Plymouth City Council's support and for the time of the Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel in acknowledging the proposal to renew the Plymouth Waterfront BID.

It is the intention of the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership to continue with the development of Waterfront BID4 with the following indicative timeline and next steps:

February	Continue Waterfront business and partner organisation consultations.
Feb – Mar	Draft the Waterfront BID4 plan and review SLAs with the Council.
April	Consult on the DRAFT Waterfront BID4 plan.
May - June	Create the FINAL Waterfront BID4 plan.
July	Plymouth City Council Cabinet.
September	Launch the Waterfront business ballot.
October	Conduct the Waterfront business ballot.



Plymouth Waterfront Partnership Business Improvement District (BID)

Partner Survey

Hello from the team of your Plymouth Waterfront Partnership BID! We deeply value your partnership and the collaborative work we achieve together. We'd love to hear your views on Plymouth's Waterfront, its events and what you would like to see from another five year Waterfront BID business plan (2027-2032).

Hopefully you've subscribed to our Waterfront BID e-newsletters and tuned into our PWP social media posts on Facebook, Instagram or LinkedIn to stay updated. We keep our BID Members informed via these channels and you can always contact our team if you need more details.

We'd appreciate your views on what projects and services are working well, where we still need to make improvements and your suggestions for new projects so that the Waterfront area has the very best ideas from amongst us all to continue to thrive. We're listening to you. **Please complete this Waterfront BID survey by midday on Monday 9th February. If you would prefer to discuss with Sarah or Kim please get in touch: sarah.gibson@plymouth.gov.uk**

YOUR DETAILS

Name: _____ Position: _____

Organisation Name: _____

Organisation Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Email: _____

1 Are you aware of the news, projects, and services the Waterfront BID delivers? You can find more information on the Waterfront BID website: [HOME - Waterfront BID](#)

YES NO

How could we improve our communications for you? Please comment:

.....

.....



2 We've been operating since 2012 and contributed £4.5m which was raised from Waterfront business BID Levy as well as levering in additional income through sponsorship and street trading. How well throughout that time have the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership BID activities created a positive difference to the Waterfront area?

- Events including the annual Pirates, Seafest and Christmas lights switch on
- Flower displays and enhanced cleansing
- Signage, maps, orientation and trail projects
- Christmas lights in the Barbican, Sutton Harbour, Millbay Park and North Street
- Marketing and social media promotions
- Destination Plymouth membership
- Cruise ships strategy
- BID Member communications and benefits including business savings

Please give us a rating:

Excellent

Satisfactory

Good

Poor

Please comment further:

.....

.....

3 How would you like to see our Waterfront businesses engage with the UK City of Culture bid and the Plymouth Sound National Marine Park?

Please comment:

.....

.....

.....

4 Is there anything more you would like to see the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership BID achieve and include within our Waterfront business planning?

YES NO

If yes, please give details below:

.....

.....

5 Of the four key areas that the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership BID currently focuses on, please rank in order of importance to you and your business (1 being most important and 4 being least important). You can view the BID3 Business Plan here: [About BID3 - Waterfront BID](#)

Theme 1: Transformational – creating the Waterfront of Tomorrow, Today! This theme includes delivering Plymouth's National Marine Park and the Waterfront Masterplan

Theme 2: Vibrant Tourist Destination – This theme includes raising the profile of the Waterfront working with Destination Plymouth, promoting our world class attractions, supporting our hospitality industry and developing and promoting high impact events

Theme 3: Environmental Excellence - This theme includes our ambassador service, maintenance of the public realm reporting and sorting environmental issues, lighting, greening, support with environmental sustainability and delivering improved wayfinding and signage

Theme 4: Business Voice - This theme includes training, our SMARTA cost savings scheme and opportunities to network with you and other businesses

6 Should we place a stronger focus into tackling anti-social behaviour? We currently provide Taxi Marshalls on busy evenings in the Barbican between March and December, work closely with the Police and PCSOs, support Best Bar None and PARC and coordinate with the Evening and Night-Time Economy teams. Should we do more and if so what?

YES NO

Please Comment further:

.....

7 The Plymouth Waterfront BID is due to come to an end in March 2027. We are proposing to renew the Waterfront BID for operation between April 2027 and March 2032. Would you like to see the Waterfront BID continue and help design a new 5-year delivery plan?

YES NO

Please Comment further:

.....

8 Would you be prepared to give the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership BID a quote/testimonial that we could use in our publicity material please?

YES NO

If it's a yes, thank you – we will follow up with you very soon.

Thank you for your time in completing this survey.

PLYMOUTH WATERFRONT PARTNERSHIP BID

HOW WE WILL USE YOUR DATA

Please note that the information you provide will be kept confidential in line with GDPR and individual responses will remain anonymous. Information given by levy payers will be summarised and used as valuable feedback for the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership BID. Giving your business name allows us to understand the views of levy payers from different sectors, business sizes and areas within the BID boundary, as well as ensuring we have the correct details to keep in touch with you.

Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel
Work Programme 2025/26



Please note that the work programme is a 'live' document and subject to change at short notice. The information in this work programme is intended to be of strategic relevance.

For general enquiries relating to the Council's Scrutiny function, including this Committee's work programme, please contact Hannah Chandler-Whiting (Democratic Advisor) on 01752 305155.

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Prioritisation Score	Reason for Consideration	Responsible Cabinet Member/Lead Officer
09 July 2025	Plan for Homes 4: Year 1 Progress Report	3	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Penberthy/Matt Garrett/Nick Carter/Neil Mawson
	Economic Intelligence and Insight	Standing Item	Standing Item	David Draffan/Amanda Ratsey/Lauren Paton
	Productive Growth and High Value Jobs (Economic Strategy Pillar 1)	3	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Evans OBE/David Draffan/Amanda Ratsey/Richard Davies
	Freeport Annual Update	3	Annual Update	Cllr Evans OBE/Richard May/Ian Cooper
Site Visit 15 August 2025	Naval Base Tour			
10 September 2025	Skills (Economic Strategy Pillar 5)	4	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Cresswell/David Draffan/Tina Brinkworth/Amanda Davis
Site Visit 07 October 2025	Tinside Tour			

15 October 2025	Inclusive Growth (Economic Strategy Pillar 2)	3	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Penberthy/Anna Peachey/Amanda Ratsey/Lindsey Hall
	Plan for Nature and People	4	Added at agenda set 10 Sept 2025	Cllr Briars-Delve/Kat Deeney
	Brand Strategy	3	Added by Chair 18 Sept 2025	Cllr Evans OBE/Amanda Lumley
	The Box Annual Update	3	Annual Update	Cllr Laing/Victoria Pomery/Rebecca Bridgman
<hr/>				
03 December 2025	Sustainable Growth (Economic Strategy Pillar 3) (To include Economic Intelligence and Insight)	3	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Briars-Delve/Amanda Ratsey/Richard Stevens
	Plymouth Plan Update and Review	3	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Stephens/Paul Barnard/Jonathan Bell/Rebecca Miller/Sarah Gooding
	Plymouth Local Plan: Next Steps and Timetable	3	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Stephens/Paul Barnard/Jonathan Bell/Rebecca Miller
	Tree Management Principles Document	5	As part of a Council Motion/pre-decision scrutiny	Cllr Briars-Delve/Kat Deeney
<hr/>				
29 January 2026	Waterfront Business Improvement District (BID) Renewal	4	Suggestion by officers November 2025	Cllr Evans/David Draffan/Patrick Knight

	Plymouth Ports Strategy Update	3	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Evans/Amanda Ratsey
04 February 2026	Civic Pride and Regeneration (Economic Strategy Pillar 4)	4	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Laing/David Draffan/Emma Wilson/Victoria Pomery/Mike Page/James McKenzie Blackman
	Visitor Plan/Culture Plan Annual update	3	Annual Update	Cllr Laing/Hannah Harris/Amanda Lumley/James McKenzie Blackman/Paul Fieldsend-Danks
	National Marine Park Annual Update	3	Annual Update	Cllr Evans/Cllr Briars-Delve/Elaine Hayes/Kat Deeney
Items to be scheduled for 2025/26				
2025/26				
Items to be scheduled for 2026/27				
July 2025	Draft Net Zero Action Plan 2026-29 & Draft Net Zero Route Map	3	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Briars-Delve/Paul Barnard/Jonathan Bell
2026/27	Freeport Annual Update	3	Annual Update	Cllr Evans OBE/David Draffan/Ian Cooper
2026/27	Update on Plan for Homes inc modelling on long term impact new homes/jobs impact will have on rent	4	Action from 09 July 2025 Panel meeting. To include Min 4ll	Cllr Penberthy/Paul Barnard/Nick Carter
2026/27	Strategic Heat Network Procurement	5	Identified for consideration at the October 2024 meeting.	Cllr Briars-Delve/John Green/Jonathan Selman
2026/27	The Box Annual Update	3	Annual Update	Cllr Laing/Victoria Pomery

2026/27	Plymouth Plan for Nature and People Action Plan Annual Update	3	Annual Update	Cllr Briars-Delve/Chris Avent/Kat Deeney
2026/27	Co-op Strategy	4	Added prior to pre meet on 10 June 2024.	Cllr Penberthy/Anna Peachey/ Amanda Ratsey
TBC	Chelson Meadow Solar Farm	5	Agreed via recommendation at the March 2023 meeting.	Cllr Briars-Delve/Kat Deeney
Items Identified for Select Committee Reviews				
2026/27	Water/Flooding		Identified for consideration at the 15 October 2025 meeting	

Scrutiny Prioritisation Tool

		Yes (=1)	Evidence
Public Interest	Is it an issue of concern to partners, stakeholders and/or the community?		
Ability	Could Scrutiny have an influence?		
Performance	Is this an area of underperformance?		
Extent	Does the topic affect people living, working, or studying in more than one electoral ward of Plymouth?		
Replication	Will this be the only opportunity for public scrutiny?		
	Is the topic due planned to be the subject of an Executive Decision?		
Total:			High/Medium/Low

Priority	Score
High	5-6
Medium	3-4
Low	1-2

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Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel – Action Log 2025/26

Key:	
Green	Complete
Yellow	In Progress
Red	Not Started
Grey	On Hold

Minute No.	Resolution	Target Date, Officer Responsible and Progress
Minute 90 Tracking Decisions 1 March 2023	Request for regular updates on the Habitat Banking Vehicle.	Date Due: Ongoing Officer: Chris Avent Progress: Agreement to provide updates to Committee Members via Democratic Support at suitable milestones for the project. Latest update shared with members February 2025. Asked for update 13 August 2025.
Minute 34 Draft NZAP 2025-2028 12 February 2025	The Panel recommended developing a Climate Communications Plan to include making information more accessible via the Plymouth City Council Website.	Date Due: March 2026 Responsible Officer: Christopher Parsons Progress: This recommendation is currently under active consideration by the Net Zero Delivery Team and the Corporate Communications Team. Update August 2025: Teams from Net Zero and Corporate Communication continue to work together closely on planning and executing communications around a number of important NZAP actions. Conversations on producing not just a plan, but also an overarching strategic narrative to determine how we talk about, include and engage our residents on net zero have been fruitful and the drafting is ongoing. Alongside this, and to ensure we get this right, we are engaging partners to ensure that any potential messaging

Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel – Action Log 2025/26

		resonates and can be effectively rolled out. Meanwhile, Climate Connections continues to be a busy online hub for Plymouth's climate endeavours and has been prolific in terms of raising awareness of and promoting pro-climate messaging from the Council and its partners.
Minute 34 Draft NZAP 2025-2028 12 February 2025	The Panel recommended that the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change seek to secure ratchet funding in future years and to ask Finance to review any future caps to ensure the money was set aside and could be added to.	Date Due: March 2026 Responsible Officer: Paul Barnard/Emmanuelle Marshall Progress: This recommendation is currently under active consideration by the Net Zero Delivery Team and the Finance Department. Following the consideration of options, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change and Cabinet Member for Finance will review the position ahead of the 2026/2027 budget setting process.
Minute 13o Skills (Economic Strategy Pillar 5) 10 September 2025	A written response would be provided about whether military communications were to be improved within Devonport dockyard.	Date Due: 31 December 2025 Responsible Officer: N/A Progress: Advised 24 November 2025 that the team could not respond and the relevant Councillor would need to raise it direct to MOD. Councillor Morton advised 15/01/2026.
Minute 13p Skills (Economic Strategy Pillar 5) 10 September 2025	More information would be provided with regards to data on the specific job roles that would make up the 25,000 additional workers needed in Plymouth within the next 10 years.	Date Due: 28 February 2026 Responsible Officer: Toby Hall Progress: Data won't be ready for some months. Catch-up with officers scheduled for February 2026.
Minute 13ccc	Data would be provided on how many Councils had chosen to deliver the [Connect to Work] programme in-house and	Date Due: February 2026

Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel – Action Log 2025/26

Skills (Economic Strategy Pillar 5) 10 September 2025	how many had commissioned, but most had chosen to take a blended approach.	Responsible Officer: David Wales Progress: Data won't be ready for some months. Catch-up with officers scheduled for February 2026.
Minute 28ee Sustainable Growth (Economic Strategy Pillar 3) 03 December 2025	The single red rating noted in the report reflected progress rather than performance. It likely indicated that the project had not started yet, which the monitoring system captured in its assessment, more information would be provided.	Date Due: 17 December 2025 Responsible Officer: Mike Page Progress: Complete. Response shared via email 10 December 2025.
Minute 28ff Sustainable Growth (Economic Strategy Pillar 3) 03 December 2025	Officers would share an updated project list and findings following initial monitoring.	Date Due: March 2026 Responsible Officer: Mike Page Progress: Holding response shared 10 December 2025.
Minute 28gg Sustainable Growth (Economic Strategy Pillar 3) 03 December 2025	Officers would share updated statistics on air quality monitoring.	Date Due: 17 December 2025 Responsible Officer: Mike Page Progress: Complete. Response shared via email 10 December 2025.
Minute 28u Tree Management Principles 03 December 2025	The Tree Equity UK map provided clear neighbourhood boundaries and can apply mapping on health inequalities and socioeconomic data. Two major Council commissioned reports also explored this canopy data in more depth, details of which would be shared with Panel members ACTION ;	Date Due: 08 January 2026 Responsible Officer: Chris Avent/Kat Deeney Progress: Response shared via email 08 January 2026.

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