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## **SUPPORT SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

**Date:** Thursday 15 September 2011  
**Time:** 10.00 am  
**Venue:** Warspite Room, Council House

**Members:**

Councillor James, Chair

Councillor Lowry, Vice Chair

Councillors Berrow, Casey, Delbridge, Evans, Lock, Murphy, Rennie, Reynolds, Stark and Stevens.

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

Members and officers are requested to sign the attendance list at the meeting.

Please note that unless the chair of the meeting agrees, mobile phones should be switched off and speech, video and photographic equipment should not be used in meetings.

**Barry Keel**  
Chief Executive

# **SUPPORT SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

## **AGENDA**

### **PART I – PUBLIC MEETING**

#### **1. APOLOGIES**

To receive apologies for non-attendance by panel members.

#### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members will be asked to make declarations of interest in respect of items on this agenda.

#### **3. MINUTES**

**(Pages 1 - 8)**

To confirm the minutes of the Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 21 July 2011.

#### **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. ANNUAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORT 2010/11**

**(Pages 9 - 18)**

The panel will be provided with the Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report 2010/11.

#### **6. RELOCATION OF THE REGISTER OFFICE TO POUNDS HOUSE**

The Head of Capital and Assets will provide an update on the relocation of the Register Office to Pounds House.

#### **7. SCHOOL ACADEMY TRANSFER UPDATE**

**(Pages 19 - 22)**

The Assistant Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development will provide an update on School Academy Transfers.

#### **8. LOCAL CARBON FRAMEWORK**

**(Pages 23 - 32)**

The panel will receive an update on the Local Carbon Framework.

## **9. CORONERS SERVICE REVIEW**

To receive a presentation giving an update from the Head of Legal Services on the Coroner's Service.

## **10. CASHIERS SERVICE AND PAY POINT REVIEW (Pages 33 - 36)**

To receive a position statement on the Cashiers Services and Pay Point review.

## **11. VALUE FOR MONEY (VFM) UPDATE**

The panel will receive a VFM quarterly update on the ethos of VFM across the council.

## **12. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS**

- a. Impact of the restructure in Revenues and Benefits, Customer Services, Cashiers and Incomes and Creditors (Pages 37 - 40)**

The Panel will be asked to consider the PID and approve the membership of the Task and Finish Group.

(Overview and Scrutiny Management Board minute (122 (2) refers).

## **13. TRACKING RESOLUTIONS AND FEEDBACK FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD (Pages 41 - 44)**

To receive a copy of the panel's tracking resolutions and any feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on issues which concern this panel.

## **14. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 45 - 46)**

To receive the panel's work programme for 2011/2012.

## **15. EXEMPT BUSINESS**

To consider passing a resolution under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it (they) involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

## **PART II (PRIVATE MEETING)**

### **AGENDA**

### **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO NOTE**

that under the law, the Panel is entitled to consider certain items in private. Members of the public will be asked to leave the meeting when such items are discussed.

NIL.



## Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Thursday 21 July 2011

### PRESENT:

Councillor James, in the Chair.

Councillor Lowry, Vice Chair.

Councillors Berrow, Casey, Evans, Lock, Murphy, Rennie, Stark and Stevens.

Co-opted Representatives: Janet Isaac, University of Plymouth

Apologies for absence: Councillor Delbridge

Also in attendance: Councillor Ian Bowyer - Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and People, Mark Grimley - Assistant Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development, Chris Trevitt – Head of Capital and Assets, Karen Ward – Superintendent Registrar, Paul Chapman – Head of Value for Money and Efficiencies and Ross Johnston – Democratic Support Officer.

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 1.00 pm.

*Note: At a future meeting, the committee 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.*

### 15. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest in accordance with the code of conduct.

### 16. **MINUTES**

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2011 are confirmed as a correct record.

### 17. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

### 18. **STAFF TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

Ian Bowyer, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and People and Mark Grimley, Assistant Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development presented a Strategic Workforce Overview report and verbally updated the committee with regard staff terms and conditions.

The panel was informed that –

- (a) a collective agreement had been proposed with all three trade unions; after it was agreed by their memberships', it was assumed that the

council could now proceed with signing the collective agreement;

- (b) the terms and conditions had been simplified to reduce workforce overheads and introduce a single rate for overtime which would enable simplified administration and therefore a reduction in staff costs;
- (c) the delay in having to re-ballot the terms and conditions had cost the council £400K;
- (d) over 3,000 staff had been briefed on the terms and conditions and there was a comprehensive electronic briefing on the council's staffroom web pages.

Members congratulated Mark Grimley on the excellent staff terms and conditions package agreed and commented that the achievements in implementing the terms and conditions were remarkable.

Following members questions it was commented that –

- (e) the £400K deficit created by the delay in the terms and conditions being accepted by unions was being offset by savings created through the voluntary release scheme;
- (f) the local authority's sickness figures were a concern for the Council and the Cabinet would be reviewing this issue at their next meeting in August 2011;
- (g) a new capability procedure had been introduced to manage sickness absence which incorporated a form of target intervention rather than previous punitive measures;
- (h) the six per cent of staff who were not appraised included staff who had recently been employed or who were on long term sick; if managers did not complete their staff appraisals it meant that they themselves would fail to meet their appraisal expectations;
- (i) the 94 per cent of staff who had completed an appraisal did not include the 200 agency staff employed by the council each month.

It was agreed that –

- (1) the sickness policy and a report on sickness figures are to be submitted to a future panel meeting;
- (2) a report on appraisal completion rates by directorate is to be submitted to a future panel meeting;
- (3) following agency staff not receiving an appraisal a position statement on the management of agency staff and their capabilities is submitted to a future panel meeting;

- (4) a written response be provided to Councillor Tudor Evans by the Monitoring Officer on the legal advice given with regards to declarations of interest.

*(During this item members requested legal advice on declarations of interest with regard to Agenda item 21 – School Academy Transfers and were advised by Tim Howes, Monitoring Officer of the following –*

*It is always for individual Councillors to determine whether they should declare interests; however the advice was that local authority school governors and academy school governors would not be obliged to declare an interest in the particular matter under discussion.)*

19. **SENIOR MANAGEMENT RESTRUCTURING**

Ian Bowyer, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and People and Mark Grimley, Assistant Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development gave a verbal update about senior management restructuring.

The panel was informed that –

- (a) senior management restructuring was in response to the budget setting process which had planned to achieve cumulative savings of £1.05M by 2013-2014 with 20 per cent of that figure being achieved by the end of 2011-2012;
- (b) the Chief Executive was leading on the restructure and a final draft report would be completed by September when a consultation exercise would begin with managers;
- (c) the restructure was focused on Director's and Assistant Directors but would affect the management and reporting of approximately 200 Team Plymouth managers;
- (d) there was limited information available at this time as work was on-going to draft the report and meet the delivery plans; more information would be available after the consultation was undertaken with all managers.

Councillor James, Chair of the Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel informed members that in September the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board would receive feedback on the progress of the budget scrutiny recommendations agreed in January and more information on the senior management restructuring would be available at that time.

20. **REDEPLOYMENT POLICY**

Ian Bowyer, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and People and Mark Grimley, Assistant Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development gave a verbal update about Redeployment Policy.

The panel was informed that –

- (a) a new scheme had been introduced to provide more support to staff threatened with redundancy and to improve the prospects of staff being redeployed;
- (b) the voluntary redundancy scheme had created vacancies for staff in the redeployment pool and a new on-line application process and internal role matching had provided further opportunities for redeployment;
- (c) the new scheme ensured that when any council post was vacated employees in the redeployment pool were given priority for the role; feedback from staff who had used this process was that it had been significantly improved.

Following questions from members it was reported that –

- (d) there were currently 42 staff in the redeployment pool;
- (e) agency staff did not have access to the jobs in the redeployment pool, however, staff who were in the pool were automatically put on the books of Pertemps employment agency giving them access to temporary positions across the city;
- (f) the council were working closely with the jobcentre plus to ensure that staff received the required level of support when they were faced with possible redundancy, in addition to this the council had also produced a helpful redundancy handbook.

It was commented by members that the achievements in the new redeployment scheme were excellent.

## 21. **SCHOOL ACADEMY TRANSFERS**

Ian Bowyer, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and People and Mark Grimley, Assistant Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development gave a verbal update on School Academy Transfers.

The panel was informed that –

- (a) over the past 12 months, Plymouth City Council had seen the establishment of 10 Academy Schools, which had resulted in the transfer of 1868 staff to new employers;
- (b) the transfer of staff had a minimal impact on council overheads which would be further mitigated by the trading of services to academy schools;
- (c) in total six out of the 10 Academies were trading with Plymouth City



Council and due to changes in legislation new contracts had been designed and signed with these schools;

- (d) the council were offering services to all schools but could not subsidise services and as such may not always have been the cheapest option;
- (e) maintaining income through trading with academies was a risk, however, it was minimal and being monitored by a Corporate Impact Assessment Group.

Members commented that –

- (f) the Council should hold discussions with other local authorities in the South West Peninsula to deliver a shared service approach with academy schools as this would mitigate the financial risk on all local authorities;
- (g) if schools opted not to trade with the council there would be a financial burden with staff overheads increasing significantly.

Agreed –

- (1) to recommend that Cabinet undertake urgent discussions with Cornwall Council, Devon County Council and Torbay Council to minimise the difficulties that the exodus of local authority maintained schools to become Academies is causing Plymouth and its neighbouring authorities.

*(The above recommendation was voted on and carried by 6 votes to 3 with 1 abstention, however, due to the current Constitution the Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel are not permitted to recommend direct to Cabinet and therefore the recommendation will be heard by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board at their meeting on 27 July 2011.)*

- (2) a report is submitted to the next panel meeting assessing the impact of traded services and the indirect impact of increased overheads as well as highlighting the risk to the council if academy schools were to discontinue trading with the council.

Mark Grimley, Assistant Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development was thanked for his attendance.

## 22. **RELOCATION OF THE REGISTER OFFICE TO POUNDS HOUSE**

Councillor Ian Bowyer, Cabinet Member for Finance, People and Property, Chris Trevitt, Head of Capital and Assets, Karen Ward, Superintendent Registrar and Phillip Walker, Project Services gave a presentation on the Relocation of the Register Office to Pounds House. Councillors were informed that –

- (a) the proposal to relocate the Register Office to Pounds House formed

part of the second phase of the Accommodation Strategy;

- (b) Pounds House was a Grade II listed building currently used by Children's Services and previously as an office for the Life Centre project Team and formerly used as a wedding venue;
- (c) relocating the Register Office to Pounds House would be an advantage as it was a traditional building, would provide more office space and provide improved accessibility due to its proximity to the A38;
- (d) the relocation would cost £482k of capital and would create a revenue of saving of £75k per annum. Additionally the Lockyer Street building would be vacant and if sold could potentially raise in excess of £400k which would offset the majority of the initial cost.

Councillors were provided with copies of existing and proposed landscape drawings of Pounds House and were further informed that –

- (d) the plans were draft and could be amended, however, they could not alter or hinder the listed status of the building;
- (e) in order to improve accessibility and parking facilities the entrance to Pounds House would be widened and trees, without Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), removed to increase parking spaces;
- (f) following a survey of car users the majority of current users of car parking facilities at Pounds House were visitors of the Doctor Surgery..

Following questions councillors were informed that –

- (g) the temporary ramp could not be a permanent feature as it would impinge on the listed status of the building;
- (h) there was a growing list of guests delaying their wedding waiting until the Register Office was relocated to Pounds House;
- (i) rather than being sold Lockyer Street could be used as a corporate facility or be leased out when the relocation was completed;
- (j) a traffic impact assessment had not been completed on Outland Road.

It was commented by members that –

- (k) Pounds House was not completely Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant as the Second Floor, to be used as a storage facility and potentially a staff meeting room, was not accessible by lift;
- (l) the parking spaces proposed at Pounds House were not sufficient as car parking at Lockyer Street was augmented by the amount of available car parking on the Hoe and in the surrounding area;

- (m) the levels of public transport to and from Pounds House were not satisfactory and could lead to increased car users visiting the Register Office.

Agreed that –

- (1) an email would be sent to all panel members stating the destination and origin figures of buses going to and from Pounds House; this would be balanced out against bus company figures for the Register Office's current location on Lockyer Street;
- (2) a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA), to include traffic modelling on the impact of users of Outland Road and Peverell Park Road, to be completed and submitted to the panel's next meeting on 15 September 2011.

Councillor Ian Bowyer, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and People and Chris Trevitt, Head of Capital and Assets were thanked for their attendance.

23. **TRACKING RESOLUTIONS AND FEEDBACK FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The panel noted previous tracking resolutions and was informed by the Chair that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board had recommended that –

- (a) Plymouth's Local Carbon Framework be added to the Support Services OSP work programme to undertake pre-decision scrutiny at their next meeting on 15 September 2011;
- (b) the Procure to Pay item be removed from the Support Services OSP work programme.

24. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The panel agreed its work programme subject to the –

- (a) inclusion of Plymouth's Local Carbon Framework;
- (b) removal of the Procure to Pay item.

25. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.

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**Overview and Scrutiny  
Management Board**

**Annual Report**

**June 2011**



## **Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report 2010-11**

**Plymouth City Council**

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## Foreword

Our Constitution summarises the purpose of the Council's scrutiny function as follows:

- To add value to Council business and decision-making.
- To hold the Cabinet to account.
- To monitor the budget and performance of services.
- To assist the Council in the development of policy and review the effectiveness of the implementation of Council policy.
- Work to outcomes, which can be measured and have a positive impact on the community.

The last year has presented a number of challenges to the Council's five scrutiny panels and the Scrutiny Management Board in delivering against their objectives. There has been a change of government, bringing with it a number of significant pieces of new legislation affecting both local government and our strategic partners in the city. A period of financial restraint has meant that difficult decisions have had to be made about resourcing priorities. The regulatory regime has also changed, so that external oversight of the way that the Council works has reduced.

We feel that the Members and officers engaged in the scrutiny function have risen to these challenges well. In October 2010, the Council reaffirmed its vision, to become one of Europe's finest, most vibrant waterfront cities, where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone. We also adopted four priorities for the city, which we share with all our key partners:

- **Deliver growth:** Develop Plymouth as a thriving growth centre by creating the conditions for investment in quality new homes, jobs and infrastructure
- **Raise aspirations:** Promote Plymouth and encourage people to aim higher and take pride in the city
- **Reduce inequality:** Narrow the inequality gap, particularly in health, between communities
- **Provide value for communities:** Work together to maximise resources to benefit customers and make internal efficiencies

This report summarises the achievements of the panels and the management board against these priorities over the last year.

We want to take this opportunity to thank those who have contributed to the achievements that we have made this year. The Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the overview and scrutiny panels, with their Lead and Democratic support officers have delivered a large and varied scrutiny programme over the last year. We know that, behind the published results of their work, many hours of discussion, research and debate have taken place. The members of the panels have had to balance their contribution to the scrutiny process with their other commitments as Councillors, and their high attendance rate, as well as the quality of the work of their panels is testament to their success at this. A number of Co-opted members have given freely of their time and

expertise to support the panels and we would especially like to extend our thanks to them. All members of the Cabinet have been before scrutiny and we thank them for their attendance, which has not always been comfortable for them! Finally, our thanks go to the large number of officers, both senior and junior from the Council and its partners who have attended panels as witnesses and contributors and without whom our work would not be possible.



**Councillor James, Chair**



**Councillor Ball, Vice-Chair 2010-11**

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## Plymouth City Council Scrutiny Arrangements 2010-11

**Overview and Scrutiny Management Board**

Chair: Cllr James  
 Vice-Chair: Cllr Ball

Cllr Browne, Cllr McDonald (part), Cllr Nicholson, Cllr Ricketts,  
 Cllr Stevens, Cllr Thompson, Cllr Wildy and Cllr Williams (part),  
 Co-optees: Doug Flether and Jake Paget

### Overview and Scrutiny Panels

**Children and Young People**

Chair: Cllr Wildy  
 Vice-Chair: Cllr Stephens  
 Cllr Delbridge  
 Cllr Foster  
 Cllr Haydon  
 Cllr Mrs Nicholson  
 Cllr Roberts  
 Cllr Stark  
 Cllr Tuohy  
 Co-optees:  
 Kevin Willis  
 Pauline Purnell (part)  
 Jenny Evans (part)  
 Kerry Whittlesea (part)

**Growth and Prosperity**

Chair: Cllr Nicholson  
 Vice-Chair: Cllr Nelder  
 Cllr Roberts  
 Cllr K Foster  
 Cllr M Leaves  
 Cllr S Stephens  
 Cllr Berrow  
 Cllr Wright  
 Cllr Wheeler

**Customers and Communities**

Chair: Cllr Ball  
 Vice-Chair: Cllrs Coker (part) and McDonald (part)  
 Cllr Mrs Nicholson  
 Cllr Smith  
 Cllr Mrs Beer  
 Cllr Mrs Bragg  
 Cllr Martin Leaves  
 Cllr Vincent  
 Cllr Delbridge  
 Co-optees:  
 Chaz Singh  
 Dr Anita Jellings

**Health and Adult Social Care**

Chair: Cllr Ricketts  
 Vice-Chair: Cllrs McDonald (part) and Coker (part)  
 Cllr Bowie  
 Cllr Delbridge  
 Cllr Gordon  
 Cllr Dr Mahony  
 Cllr Mrs Nicholson  
 Cllr Dr Salter  
 Cllr Viney (part)

**Support Services**

Chair: Cllr James  
 Vice-Chair: Cllr Lowry  
 Cllr Berrow  
 Cllr Browne  
 Cllr Dann  
 Cllr Murphy  
 Cllr Stark  
 Cllr Lock  
 Cllr Thompson  
 Co-optee:  
 Janet Isaac

**Deliver growth:** Develop Plymouth as a thriving growth centre by creating the conditions for investment in quality new homes, jobs and infrastructure

The Growth and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Panel has taken the lead in support of this priority, although the work of other panels, and the Management Board has supported this priority. Over the past year, the panel has focused on Growth and Regeneration challenges in delivering the Local Economic Strategy, the Local Transport Plan and developing a fit for purpose strategic housing service. The panel has worked closely with the Wealthy Theme Group as it has become the Growth Board for Plymouth, and has delivered the following specific work items:

- Hoe and Foreshore Maintenance, ensuring that measures were taken to reduce the health and safety risk assessment for this key part of the city reduced from 'red' to 'amber'.
- The Port of Plymouth study, supporting the development of a 'port master plan' to deliver a major step change in the use and planning for this vital city asset
- Private Sector Housing peer challenge, supporting the implementation of the improvement plan completed following the review
- Review of the delivery of the commitments made to tenants of Plymouth Community Homes
- The development of a policy for road closure for community events, including an annual list of events for which the council will provide the temporary traffic regulation orders free of charge
- Ensuring that public consultation arrangements for the 'Local Transport Plan 3' are robust and inclusive
- Ensuring the delivery of development schemes funded through 'Section 106' monies due to the Council
- Improvements to the Council's approach to Highways Maintenance arrangements, ensuring better targeting of resources and a more proactive approach to the type of repairs carried out, and recommendations for stronger emphasis on this area of activity in budget setting.

**Raise aspirations:** Promote Plymouth and encourage people to aim higher and take pride in the city

This priority is supported across the scrutiny function.

- Input into the Place Management Strategy, aiming to create 7500 jobs in the tourism sector in the city over the next 15 years, and support for the new city branding Positively Plymouth, developing and delivering a new, coherent Visitor Strategy for the city
- Focused on the lessons to be learned from the policing and stewardship of major football matches at Home Park to safeguard the city's reputation for effective management of major sporting events
- Review of the Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Licensing Policy, including the Cumulative Impact Policy, supporting effective management of licensed premises to ensure the city's Night-time Economy is in keeping with the overall vision for the city
- Recommended the production and adoption of a Volunteering Plan for the city, and ensured the continued provision of resources to fund the Volunteer Centre and for infrastructure support to community and voluntary groups
- Championed the establishment of a 'small grants scheme' for community and voluntary groups, funded from partnership resources
- Heard from a range of media professionals about ways in which the Council could better promote its scrutiny activities through more effective use of a range of media channels
- Championed school attainment, with focus this year of Primary School educational outcomes

**Reduce inequality:** Narrow the inequality gap, particularly in health, between communities

- Raising the profile of the issue of Teenage Conception within the city, ensuring better understanding of the issues, more focus on achieving reductions in rates and improved championing and resourcing arrangements
- Renewing focus on the role of Young Carers in the city, and delivering improvements in identification and support arrangements
- Highlighting the issues facing young, unaccompanied Asylum Seekers in Plymouth
- Focus on the findings of Ofsted inspections into children's social care, and overview of the implementation of planned improvements
- Reviewed the strategic plans of NHS Plymouth agencies, ensuring a greater focus on the city's shared priorities amongst partner health organisations
- Input into the creation of the new Plymouth Provider Services health delivery organisation, with particular input into its governance and community benefit arrangements
- Providing a platform for users of specialist gynaecological cancer services to voice their concerns about a possible move of services from the city
- A review of consultation arrangements concerned with substantial changes to residential care arrangements in the city
- Responses to government consultation on the Health and Social Care White paper, resulting in changes in the proposed legislation around the role of scrutiny panels

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**Provide value for communities: Work together to maximise resources to benefit customers and make internal efficiencies**

- Supported a more integrated approach to the Council's Accommodation, People's and ICT strategies, ensuring that rationalisation of the way that staff occupy buildings is supported by the appropriate technology, training and people management arrangements
- A review of the Council's appraisal system, ensuring best practise is better reflected and delivery rates improved
- Oversight of the Council's 'Invest to Save' proposals, recommending improved governance arrangements, and improved alignment with city priorities
- Championed the use of Value for Money benchmarking with other authorities to ensure the Council is aware of its progress relative to others
- Highlighted the need for greater emphasis on 'shared service' arrangements with other Local Authorities and agencies to achieve greater efficiencies in the provision of 'back office' functions
- Delivered high quality scrutiny of the Council's budget and corporate plan, resulting in a number of recommendations to the Council, the vast majority of which were accepted
- Provided for Partner scrutiny of the Council's budget, with feedback from Health, Police and Community and Voluntary Sector colleagues taken into account in budget recommendations
- Championed the first 'on-line' budget consultation exercise across the city, so that the public's views could be considered during scrutiny of the budget

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# TRADED SERVICES – IMPACT

Support Services – Overview & Scrutiny Panel

15 September 2011



## Plymouth's Position

In 2008, Plymouth set in place its policy direction for all schools to develop autonomy, either through the formation of a Trust or academy status. This strategy for change, known as Investment for Children, outlines the Council's plans for maintaining the school estate. The strategy was adopted by the Full Council in December 2008 and it remains the Council's policy for all schools to develop independence through vertical networks of schools serving their localities.

Plymouth set up two academies under the "old style" academy route in September 2010; the Marine Academy Plymouth (MAP) and All Saints Academy, Plymouth (ASAP).

Since January 2011 a number of other schools in the city have also considered the opportunities the Academies Act 2010 brings and have successfully applied to the Secretary of State to convert to academy status. See Appendix A for the up to date position on schools that have transferred to academy status.

Currently a number of schools are discussing options for the future but to date only 1 Primary School has indicated to both the LA and the DfE their intention to move to Academy status. The LA through the School Organisation Team is in discussions with the Headteacher and the Governing Body regarding the date of conversion and whether this is a standalone academy or formed as part of a chain.

In June 2011 the government announced that two hundred of England's worst-performing primary schools will be academised. All Local authorities were asked to submit a "Below floor standards" plan to the DfE with regard to raising achievement. Plymouth's plan, which was very well received by the DfE, set out the LA Strategy with regard to the future.

## Traded Services

The Services 4 Schools directory formerly known as Trading Fair is the reference source of traded services for headteachers and governing bodies. It lays out details of services that the Council offers to support leadership, management and raising attainment in schools. The directory, which is prepared annually, also includes services which can be subscribed to for a three-year contract period.

Academies have access to this method of purchasing services, without procurement arrangements.

Whilst the Council endeavours to continue to deliver these traded services to all schools, regardless of their status, it is dependant on buy-back. Therefore, the provision of some services is vulnerable, and potential costs to the Council for redundancies could be considerable. Each Department within the Council will be considering which traded services are deemed necessary and practical to continue to offer.

## Impact

The impact of academy conversion can be broken down into the following areas:

- 1) Recoupment of the central Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)
- 2) Reduction in the LA Formula grant
- 3) Lost income from selling services traditionally offered through 'Trading Fair'

### **1) Recoupment of the central Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)**

There have been 11 schools transfer to academy status since the Academies Act 2010. The analysis of the financial impact on the DSG was reported to Schools Forum on the DSG monitoring report and 4<sup>th</sup> July (agenda item 6). This report indicated the position for 2011/12 is that the academies impact on the DSG has been managed by a favourable method of calculating the individual schools recoupment in respect of NNDR and charging for additional services previously provided for free by the council. Taking account of these factors the net position on the DSG this year is marginally positive.

### **2) Reduction in the LA Formula grant**

The LA Formula grant has been reduced by £629,489 as part of the national top slice of local authority funding to cover the LA element of the Local Authority Central Equivalent Grant (LACEG) paid to academies. This was reported to Overview and Scrutiny on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2011. The reduction for Plymouth has not been significant and the reductions in staff that may be brought about from this reduction are reported in the Services action plans as this has been absorbed in the councils overall budget reductions. The government has consulted on different arrangements for reducing the LA formula grant and there is a potential that the method of calculating this may be changed. If this were to happen the situation may be significantly different.

### **3) Lost income from selling services traditionally offered through 'Trading Fair'**

The final impact is in the take up of traded services and indeed the take up of additional services that schools haven't traditionally bought into. Analysis suggests that whilst there has been additional services sold the buy back from academies through trading fair has reduced. It is too early for this analysis to be applied to individual services as the results of a single buy back period is not sufficient information to form a trend. The new Services 4 Schools directory (previously Trading Fair) will be published in the autumn term; greater clarity will then be available on the percentage buy back from schools later that term.

### **Relationships**

Through its Investment for Children strategy, the Council has set out a long term pathway for the developing relationships between itself in its role as commissioner and schools as autonomous providers. The Council has invested enormous efforts in brokering academy sponsors that fit with the collaborative ethos of the city's schools. We wish to continue to work with all schools that are transferring to academy status in order to retain this long term vision and to avoid academy sponsor chains that do not share the vision and seek to expand their control through the support functions that can be offered through their own organisations.

### **Conclusions**

The DfE has made it clear that where standards are good, it will not force schools to become academies. The future, therefore, will be based on a mixed economy of schools with which the Council would hope to enjoy good working relationships irrespective of their status.

It would seem that it is in the interests of all schools, whatever status, to invest in this relationship to ensure that education provision for all the children and young people in our city is the best that can collectively be delivered.

Jayne Gorton

School Organisation, Access & Services to Schools Manager

September 2011



**Academies****From September 2010 to September 2011**

<b>Old Style Academies</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
Marine Academy Plymouth	1 September 2010	Opened
All Saints Academy Plymouth	1 September 2010	Opened
<b>New Style Academies</b>		
<b>New Style Academies</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
Oreston Community Academy	1 January 2011	Opened
Devonport High School for Boys	March 2011	Opened
Devonport High School for Girls	April 2011	Opened
Lipson Community College	April 2011	Opened
Stoke Damerel Community College	April 2011	Opened
Hele's School	April 2011	Opened
Coombe Dean School	April 2011	Opened
Plymstock School	April 2011	Opened
Ridgeway School	April 2011	Opened
Tor Bridge High	August 2011	Opened

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**CITY OF PLYMOUTH**

**Subject:** Progressing Plymouth's Local Carbon Framework  
**Committee:** Support Services Overview & Scrutiny Panel  
**Date:** 15 September 2011  
**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Michael Leaves  
**CMT Member:** Adam Broome  
**Author:** Jackie Young, Corporate Sustainability Manager.  
**Contact:** Tel: 01752 304220  
E mail: Jackie.young@plymouth.gov.uk  
**Ref:** JY/LCF1/  
**Key Decision:** No  
**Part:** I

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**Executive Summary:**

In February 2010, Plymouth was chosen by the Government to lead one of nine UK pilot projects looking at the production of a Local Carbon Framework (or LCF). Led originally by the Department for Communities and Local Government and, eventually, by the Department for Energy & Climate Change, these pilots were intended to test the roll out of these Frameworks prior to their introduction to every council in the UK.

Each pilot was different. Plymouth's focus was on developing a low carbon economy and our inclusion was based on recognised work to reduce the City's carbon footprint and engage local businesses in doing so.

The LCF, which will update the City's Climate Change Action Plan 2009, tests a number of newly introduced ideas including the use of a local carbon budget that requires the application of baselines, targets, milestones and actions. Supported from the outset by the City's Climate Change Commission, the report benefits from their input which draws on the City's wealth of expertise in this subject and combines it with decision making and business leadership. In keeping with best practice in partnership working, the Commission will also contribute to the report's final content.

The 'Preliminary Findings' Report prepared by the Commission, together with the reports commissioned as background evidence, can be found on the Local Carbon Framework webpage at : <http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/environmentandplanning/sustainableplymouth/susclimatechange/localcarbonframework.htm>

Funding to support the pilot project was allocated by the Government and this allowed the Council to commission a number of key studies. It also allowed support for a programme of events and engagement with the local community. However, the outcomes of these studies have proved far more significant than expected. Given the focus of attention on this issue and the speed at which action is being taken within the City, it was realised that the LCF could have a greater strategic role than first thought. Further engagement with citywide partner organisations is therefore necessary and is strongly recommended.

It was originally planned to produce the final report for adoption in the Summer of 2011. This option has now been revised to allow for a further phase of consultation – the programme outlined in the Updated May 2011

report. It is now planned to complete the final report, with DECC's permission, by December 2011 for formal adoption in January 2012.

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### **Corporate Plan 2011 – 2014:**

The Local Carbon Framework (LCF) report will set out how the Council's commitments to sustainability could be achieved (page 33 of the Corporate Plan). The LCF will suggest solutions to reduce both the Council's and the City's carbon footprint, support knowledge transfer and, more specifically, support the actions required for a more environmentally friendly economy.

The recommendations of the LCF report will contribute significantly to achieving the City's vision and will underpin the delivery of the four main priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan (page 2)

- To deliver growth
- To raise aspirations
- To reduce inequalities
- To provide value for communities

In particular, its focus on developing a low carbon economy will support the aspirations for growth (page 7) with 'knock-on' opportunities for investment, employment and skills. It will also significantly impact on future opportunities for partnership working.

The LCF report will also contribute to scaling back the number of strategies and plans the Council has by contributing to a combined sustainability plan that will combine commitments to climate change, environmental values and the Council's corporate approach toward more sustainable workplaces (page 29).

The LCF will support the responses to two priority indicators (L1 Per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the LA area and L2 CO<sub>2</sub> reduction from public sector operations) by providing a series of recommended actions, baselines, targets and milestones for reducing the carbon footprint of the City.(page 15 & 16).

Finally, the report will outline how Plymouth could respond to the Government's proposals for enhancing local accountability for action on tackling climate change by providing clear recommendations for corporate action and adoption of more strategic sustainability partnering across the City.(page 31).

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### **Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications: Including finance, human, IT and land**

The financial implications of the LCF's recommendations could be substantial in terms of both investment and savings on a citywide basis. The study undertaken by the University of Plymouth, for example, highlights the contributions made to the City's economy by the low carbon and environmental sector. By reducing carbon footprints and saving on energy resources both the Council and partner organisations could make substantial savings in both £s and tCO<sub>2</sub> which, in certain circumstances, could also reduce contributions to the CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme (or 'green' tax).

The proposed programme is not expected to place a major financial burden on the Council. Events and engagement will be undertaken with the minimum of financial input and will rely almost entirely on the prudent use of officer time, the access to local expertise (consolidated through the project) and the goodwill of partner organisations who have, to date, supported the report's production.

Updated May 2011

**Other Implications: e.g. Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management, Equalities Duty and Equalities Impact Assessment:**

No substantial negative impacts have been identified to date. At this stage the implications for complementary policies and strategies are being assessed and will be noted in further reports as they are defined.

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**Recommendations & Reasons for recommended action:**

Recommendation : To undertake 'Phase 2' of the LCF development as a programme of engagement and consultation prior to the production of the final LCF report in late 2011.

Responses to the development of the LCF to date, and the outcomes of the commissioned studies, have provided far greater opportunity for local action than was first estimated. The concept of developing a low carbon economy, and its implications for citywide aspirations, is rapidly gaining support; with issues such as low carbon energy featuring strongly in the prospectus for the Local Enterprise Partnership. The theme would also be highly supportive of emerging plans to create a Marine Energy Park in the city and, on a more down to earth note, in responding to two of the city's Priority Indicators (L1 per capita carbon footprints and L2 reducing the carbon footprint of public sector organisations).

Substantial interest in the low carbon economy is being upheld through national policy development and the Coalition Government's plans for localism, revised accountabilities at a local level, green investment and action on climate change within the economy. The City's LCF pilot status provides a clear and direct link with the Department of Energy & Climate Change in this respect.

The current emphasis on the need to pursue a low carbon future has resulted in a need for further analysis of the findings to ensure that the Local Carbon Framework's recommendations complement and support the City's current (and future) aspirations. This, in its own right will require more time to be completed properly and to the benefit of the City.

However, the main reason for extending the development of Phase 1 of the LCF is the need to advise colleagues and partner organisations of the options available for the report and to engage them in determining the final content of the report. As partnership support has been identified as essential to the delivery of the recommended actions, an extended period of engagement and consultation is being recommended.

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**Alternative options considered and reasons for recommended action:**

The original proposal was to base the final LCF report on the findings of the commissioned studies and the interactive action undertaken between December 2010 and March 2011. For the reasons stated above, this approach has emerged as insufficient. Despite providing essential background evidence, a second phase is now required to ensure an effective response. Producing the report without extending the engagement would limit its credibility and deny the City the chance to benefit from some of the unique opportunities highlighted by the research.

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**Background papers:**

The reports commissioned in support of the LCF can be found at

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/environmentandplanning/sustainableplymouth/susclimatechange/localcarbonframework.htm>

An Executive Summary of the findings, to be used as a 'prompt' in the engagement process will be available at the same site from the 8<sup>th</sup> August 2011.

The outcome of the Green Skills Task & Finish Group is likely to be a proposal for a Green Apprenticeship Consortium for Plymouth. The paper setting out this proposal is currently being developed.

The Data Management Task & Finish Group have endorsed the development of a Climate Change Info Hub that will be co-ordinated by the IT Unit and will pilot Sharepoint 2010 for the Council.

The agendas and minutes for all the Task & Finish meetings and many of the associated events are available on the S drive and on request from the SD Unit Team.

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**Sign off:**

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Originating SMT Member : MC1112.005											

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## Progressing Plymouth's Local Carbon Framework

### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 Plymouth's Local Carbon Framework (LCF) pilot project was awarded by DCLG in February 2010 at the recommendation of Government Office South West. In May 2010, central government responsibility for the pilot programme passed to DECC.

1.2 One of nine projects across the UK, Plymouth's project was to build on the role of Local Carbon Frameworks, responsibilities, accountabilities and local carbon budgeting in supporting the first steps towards a low carbon economy – an issue being closely supported through Government policy and an issue playing an increasingly influential role in proposals for the City's economy.

1.3 Although awarded, the 2011 election delayed the project bidding process; with agreement being reached in November 2010 and notification of the award reaching Plymouth on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2010. An initial injection of £50,000 had already been received and was used to fund three Graduate Interns whose roles were to support the LCF pilot project.

1.4 Between January and March 2011 (based on a detailed programme of events) the background to the LCF and hence the concept of local carbon budgeting was promoted across the City. A number of high profile studies were also commissioned to provide the supporting evidence required to underpin a series of recommendations.

1.5 The studies were :

- i. University of Exeter – Carbon Scenario Planning – footprinting economic sectors and using this data to predict future impacts.
- ii. University of Plymouth – The potential for a low carbon economy – establishing what the first steps might be and considering the skills and investment required.
- iii. The Marketing Works – Changing Behaviour – what is needed to encourage carbon awareness in different sectors across the City (focusing on SMEs, the community and private landlords).
- iv. University of Plymouth – Sustainable Tourism – the carbon impact as a case study.
- v. The development of an Energy Services Company for the City.

1.6 Two cross-departmental and inter-partnership 'task and finish' groups were also established to review :

- Skills – focusing on green skills and apprenticeships
- Data management – focusing on the creation of a climate change data hub for Plymouth.

1.7 In addition, time was spent researching methodologies for reducing the City's carbon footprint, establishing what a carbon budget might look like, how adaptation might be included in the LCF and how Plymouth's LCF might reflect the more dynamic approach being taken by national Government.

1.8 Plymouth's Climate Change Commission has overseen the development of the LCF from the outset and is providing an 'Editorial Board' to assist in its completion. The Board includes Prof Iain Stewart (University of Plymouth), Dr Tean Mitchell (Green Planet Media), Roger Higson (independent consultant) and Steve Whiteway of the Eco Business Group. A further business representative is being sought to join this additional Board.

1.9 Development throughout will be discussed with the corporate Communications Team.

### **2.0 Progressing the LCF**

2.1 Our original intent was to complete the LCF report by June and to circulate it for comment over the Summer period. However a number of significant factors have influenced this action. In the majority of cases this influence is considered a positive gain:

- As a result of funding from DECC not being available for the events planned from April to September 2011, the interactive element of the LCF programme has been curtailed. The programme is now being revised to take into account this limitation on financial support.
- The studies proved to be more technically involved than expected – mainly as a result of their innovative research content – so final reports were not made available until late May 2011.
- The findings of the studies proved to be more significant than expected. As a result, a far greater element of consolidation is required to create a meaningful LCF paper that will provide support to the City.
- The focus on a low carbon economy is increasing on a weekly basis; providing a far greater baseline for analysis. Again, more time is required to ensure the final report supports the existing and emerging aspirations for the City's economy.

2.2 In addition, the LCF document will be integrated with the Sustainability 'Strategy' and Action Plan which is currently being developed further. Although these documents complement each other, their integration will require:

- Focusing the LCF as a basic 'action plan' for citywide sustainability
- Identifying overall timescales and outcomes required
- Consideration of other sustainability issues and whether these should be incorporated with the LCF

2.3 Consequently, more time will be needed to consolidate the content of the LCF paper and additional time would be needed to finalise the proposals through the 'consultation' phase due to the breadth of issues being discussed.

### **3.0 Proposed Actions and Timescales**

3.1 The following Action Plan is suggested to complete the production of the LCF paper. The suggested interaction will be based on the Executive Summary created from the recommendations of the commissioned studies. The final LCF report will combine all recommendations and the outcome of the consultation.



**Table 1 : Outline Programme of Engagement.**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Partners</b>
Approval of approach	20 <sup>th</sup> July 2011	<b>Sustainability Programme Board.</b>
Integration of views on PCC Policy	From 5 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2011	<b>SDU team</b>
Support Services Overview & Scrutiny Panel	15 <sup>th</sup> September	<b>Panel Members</b>
Meeting to establish links with LSP members	4 <sup>th</sup> August 9.00am	<b>Claire Oatway</b>
Progress to be reported to CMT	October 2011	<b>Adam Broome</b>
Progress outline and Executive Summary report (see LCF webpage <sup>1</sup> )	Publication 17 <sup>th</sup> August 2011	<b>Climate Change Commission</b>
Climate Change Survey	Publication 22 <sup>nd</sup> August Responses due 5 <sup>th</sup> September Report to LGG <sup>2</sup> by 16 <sup>th</sup> Sept	<b>SDU team</b>
Establish programme of editorial meetings (Commission T&F group)	4 <sup>th</sup> August 2011 25 <sup>th</sup> August 2011 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2011 Dates for Oct, Nov and Dec to be agreed.	<b>Climate Change Commission members.</b>
Initial study briefings and interactive workshops : 1 : Behaviour changes 2 : Low Carbon Economy 3 : Carbon Scenario Planning 4 : Sustainable Tourism	28 <sup>th</sup> July 16 <sup>th</sup> August 8 <sup>th</sup> September October 2011	<b>The Marketing Works Dr Tim Daley Anthony Norton Emma Whittlesea</b>
Establish programme of updates to include : DMT/Corporate Business Managers Service Business Plan reps: Planning Housing Sustainable Transport Home Energy Climate change data hub VFM considerations Carbon Mgt considerations The ESCO The Marine Renewables Hub The Enterprise Zone The Growth Board The LEP Business Plan Education NB: This list is not exclusive.	By 31 <sup>st</sup> July	<b>Asst Directors</b>  <b>As detailed:</b> <b>Planning Team</b> <b>Colin Anderson/Paul Elliott</b> <b>Mark Smith (Transport)</b> <b>Colin Anderson (Housing)</b> <b>Julie McDonagh (ITC)</b> <b>Paul Chapman (VFM/Finance)</b> <b>Alex Hurth (Property)</b> <b>Jonathan Selman (Planning)</b> <b>David Wheeler</b>

<sup>1</sup> See<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/environmentandplanning/sustainableplymouth/susclimatechange/localcarbonframework.htm><sup>2</sup> Local Government Group

		<b>(University) Economic Development Douglas Fletcher/David Draffan/ Chris Grace Karl Sweeney</b>
Develop the green skills element of the LCF.  Establish a further series of Skills T&F group meetings.  Extend discussions to PCC's green apprentice teams.	By 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2011  12 <sup>th</sup> August 2011 5 <sup>th</sup> September 2011 4 <sup>th</sup> October 2011 Meetings to Dec 2011.  Outcome as a case study by 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2011.	<b>LCF Skills T&amp;F Group To include : Economic development Working Links Job Centre Plus. HR Sue Lorne/Nick Jones</b>
Agree case studies for the report.	By 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2011	<b>Guidance from Climate Change Commission. 186 Low Carbon Network members. Chamber members FSB members.</b>
Agree stakeholder meetings :  PCC staff (lunch & learn events) Chamber members 186 Low Carbon Network Local network members  FSB/PMG members  Neighbourhood Forums Conservative Group Labour Group Local interest groups Eco Business Group  Support meeting of citywide decision makers. Programme to be developed.	Between 1 <sup>st</sup> August and 15 <sup>th</sup> October        6 <sup>th</sup> October 2011  October 2011	<b>Key Links :</b>  <b>Staff/members David Parlby SDU team Sarah O'Leary/Econ Dev Team Richard Thomas/Steve Gerry Nick McMahon Cllr Linda Bowyer Cllr Rennie Tba Steve Whiteway</b>  <b>Business leaders Key decision makers</b>
Agree content of web based Staff room survey seeking views on the concept. Extend this to the 186 Network and other key email networks.	August to Sept 2011	<b>SDU team</b>
Agree communications protocol for the programme.  Regular press interaction.	By 31 <sup>st</sup> July  Ongoing as agreed	<b>Communications Unit  Keith Rossiter/Green City Campaign (Herald)</b>
Consultation with the LSP's Integrated Planning Group	October 2011	<b>Local Strategic Partnership</b>
Continued desktop research to provide the best possible background to the LCF including : Analysis of national policy	July to November 2011	<b>SDU Team.  Supported by the Climate Change</b>

Review of suitable indicators Consolidation of background evidence.		<b>Commission and report authors.</b>
Consolidation of the information gained in to the final report	Review on 3 <sup>rd</sup> October	<b>Sustainability Programme Board.</b>
Formal adoption	January 2012	<b>CMT Cabinet planning Cabinet</b>
<b>Post adoption publicity and promotion</b>	<b>Ongoing 2012 to 2020</b>	<b>SDU Communications Unit</b>

### 3.2 Projected Outcomes

3.3 The proposed interactive phase of the LCF's production will also enable the development of a number of recommendations for positive action that have emerged from the consultation and studies prepared to date. The intention is to review the potential of each of these recommendations and to include the final versions in the LCF report.

3.4 Although some of these 'projects' may appear simple, they will still require a commitment to development and, in some cases, the resources to apply them.

3.5 **Award Scheme.** An example is the renewed call for some form of 'award' that would recognise the efforts being made by local businesses to reduce the City's carbon footprint. Based on recognition at bronze, silver and gold levels, qualification for the award would include a set of criteria for each stage. Examples might be :

- For the bronze award – evidence that a carbon footprint has been established.
- For the silver award – evidence that an action plan has been drawn up and is being followed.
- For the gold award – evidence of positive outcomes and a reduced footprint over time.

3.6 Suggested by local businesses as a means of promoting those taking a positive approach to low carbon action, the scheme might include a plaque that could be displayed or a flag that could highlight inclusion. These would not require a substantial budget to be considered effective. However, if resources were to be made available, the incentives could be boosted by invitations to an annual awards dinner (perhaps with local sponsorship). The scheme could even be expanded with the potential to provide financial enticements such as a potential reduction in business rates (regulations permitting) in recognition of the commitments being made in each case.

3.7 As time is required to establish the potential for each of the recommendations, their development will also feature in the consultation for Phase 2.

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**CITY OF PLYMOUTH**

**Subject:** Review of the closure of the Former Cashiers Service & Position  
Statement on Current Bill Payment Use

**Committee:** Support Services Overview & Scrutiny Panel

**Date:** 15 September 2011

**Cabinet Member:**

**CMT Member:** Adam Broome

**Author:** Rob Batten Financial Services Team Leader

**Contact:** Tel : 01752 308189  
E mail : rob.batten@plymouth.gov.uk

**Ref:** rb/cashrev

**Key Decision:** No

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**Executive Summary:**

In December 2010 a decision was made to modernise the way the Council collects income from its customers. This resulted in the closure of the cashiers counter service in the Civic Centre. This report provides an overview of the closure and provides details on which payment channels customers have switched to.

No complaints have been received as a result of the closure of the cashiers counter service. The alternative payment streams were already well established and used by a large number of customers. No issues have arisen as a result of the increase in customer numbers using these services.

The collection rate figures for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June for 2010 and 2011 show there has been no detrimental impact on collection rates with the total Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates collected in 2011 approximately £57.7 million compared with £56 million collected during the same period in 2010.

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**Key Points****I. Background Information**

1.1 The Cashiers counter service closed on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011. In the last financial year there were 68,475 Customer visits to the counter service, which was slightly down on the previous financial year. In excess of 20% of the customers using the service were making payment for Plymouth Community Homes rent.

1.2 As part of the closure process the project team wrote to customers of the cashier counter service, providing them with details of alternative payment channels that were available to them. The information included a map detailing the location of bill payment facilities at local Post Offices and Paypoint agencies close to them.

1.3 A helpdesk was also set up in the Civic Centre and provided support and guidance to customers on the alternative payment options available. The helpdesk advised customers which of the available options best suited their individual needs.

1.4 A second self-service payment kiosk was installed alongside the existing kiosk in the Civic Centre. Council Tax, Non Domestic Rates, Invoices, Parking fines and miscellaneous payments can be paid using the kiosks. The kiosks accept payment by cash or debit/credit card and give change if required.

1.5 Following customer feedback a cheque deposit box was installed in the Civic Centre to allow customers to deposit cheque payments for processing by the back office function of the cashiers service.

1.6 The alternative payment options available to customers were already well established and used by large numbers of customers. Over 85% of customers who used the cashier's service paid other bills such as utility bills using these alternative payment services. No problems have arisen due to the increase number of customers using these services. Analysis of the payment channels and any increase in customer numbers are detailed in section two of this report.

1.7 Payments made using the bill payment services at Post Office and Paypoint agencies are scheduled to take three working days before they are received by the Council. Customers are advised of this delay on their bill or invoice. However the majority of time payments made using these services are received the next working day, with the customer's account updated upon receipt of the payment.

1.8 No complaints were received from customers in respect of the closure of the Cashiers Service.

## 2. Review of Payment Channels

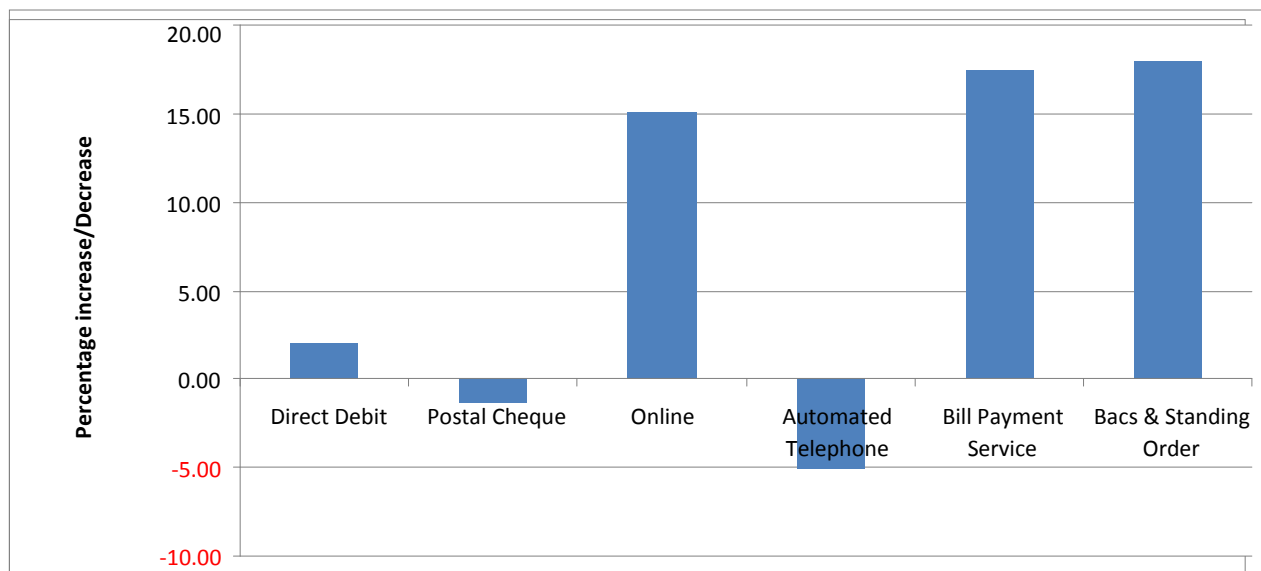


Figure 1

2.1 The review of the payment channels makes a comparison of the first four months of the current financial year, compared to the same period last year when the cashiers counter service was still available.

2.2 In the first four months since the closure of the cashier's service 10,011 payments have been made using the two self service payments kiosks. During the same period last year 2,800 payments were made when only one kiosk was available. This shows an increase in self service payments of 258%. However last year the cashiers counter was still open and the counter service processed 32,722 payments during the period of 1<sup>st</sup> April to the 31<sup>st</sup> July.

2.3 The number of customer now paying their Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates by direct debit has increased by 1,200 during first four months of the current financial year to 59,282 an increase of 2%.

2.4 The number of customers using the bill payments service has seen a significant increase. During the first four months of the last financial year 57,866 payments were made at Post Offices or Paypoint agencies. This year there have been 67,960 payments received using the bill payments service, an increase of 17.4%.

*Research undertaken by Paypoint has shown that bill payment customers visit their agents shops more often and spend 50% more in the shop than customers who do not use the shop to pay their bills. This is providing valuable support for local business during the current economic climate.*

2.5 During the first four months of the current financial year the number of online payments received has increased by 15% to 12,497 compared to the same period last year.

2.6 The number of payments received from customers paying their bills by Bacs or Standing Order has increased by 18% to 38,918 during the first four months of the current financial year, compared to the same period last year.

2.7 There has been a 5% drop in payments made using the 24/7 Automated Telephone payments service from 10,575 payments made in the last financial year compared to 10,066 in the current financial year.

2.8 There has been no noticeable change in the number of cheques received in the post for payment of Council bills with 12,715 payments received in the current financial year.

### **Significant Issues**

3.0 No significant issues have arisen. Customers are still able to pay their Council bills by cash. Customers who prefer to pay the Council direct using cash can still do so using the self-service payment kiosks in the Civic Centre.

3.1 Where customers require assistance to use the kiosks then Customer Service floor walkers and Cashiers back office staff advise and demonstrate where necessary. Due to the ease of use of the kiosks, generally once customers have been shown how to use them, they are able to use them without any further assistance.

3.2 Staffing levels prior to the closure of the cashiers counter service were 15 FTE. Staff levels, once the counter was closed, were to be reduced to 8FTE, with all cashier staff provided with the opportunity to apply for posts in the restructure of Value for Money & Efficiencies area.

3.3 Since the closure of the counter service was announced the staffing levels have reduced to 7.8 FTE. This is due to staff within the service either being successful in obtaining positions elsewhere

with the council or either opting to take early retirement or voluntary release where available. Currently the restructure of the Value for Money & Efficiencies area is still on going.

### **Conclusion**

It is clear that the work undertaken to advise customers of the closure and identify suitable alternative payment options worked well and contributed to the successful transition of the service to a more modern efficient and cost effective service for the collection of Council's income.

No customer complaints were received as a result of the closure of the cashiers counter and no significant issues have arisen or been identified.

Until the restructure of the Value for Money & Efficiencies area is complete then it is not possible to quantify the first year savings from the modernisation of the cashier's service.



### Request for Scrutiny Work Programme Item

1	<b>Title of Work Programme Item</b>	Impact of the restructure in Revenues & Benefits, Customer Services, Cashiers and Incomes and Creditors
2	<b>Responsible Director(s)</b>	Adam Broome, Director for Corporate Support
3	<b>Responsible Officer(s)</b>	Malcolm Coe, Assistant Director for Finance and Efficiencies 01752 304566 John-Paul Sanders, Assistant Director for Customer Services and Business Transformation 07917 264723
4	<b>Relevant Cabinet Member(s)</b>	Councillor Ian Bowyer, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property, People and Governance
5	<b>Objectives</b>	<p>To review the impact of the restructure in the four service areas in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The duty of care to staff</li> <li>• The impacts of an increased workload</li> <li>• The experience of customers and stakeholders</li> <li>• The backlog of cases</li> <li>• The processing times of cases</li> </ul> <p>To make recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board about how the service could negate the impact on the above concerns.</p>
6	<b>Who will benefit?</b>	Plymouth City Council and its Staff; Residents of Plymouth and the Customers of the four service areas; Stakeholders of the four service areas (Including DWP, Landlords and Plymouth Community Homes).
7	<b>Criteria for Choosing Topics (see table)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. City and Council Priority – Value for Communities</li> <li>2. A poor performing service (high cost and low performance identified through benchmarking exercises)</li> <li>3. An interest of the public and stakeholders</li> </ol>
8	<b>What will happen if we don't do this review?</b>	<p>The restructure of the service may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced staff morale and confidence in fulfilling their duties</li> <li>• The experience of customers and standards of the service may reduce below benchmarking standards</li> <li>• Potential higher budgetary cost as a result of reduced quality of data provided to the DWP which will result in a claw back of over-payments.</li> </ul>

9	<b>What are we going to do?</b>	A one/two day Task and Finish review led by the Support Services OSP. The review will be undertaken post-restructure with the aim to be completed in September/October 2011.
10	<b>How are we going to do it? (witnesses, site visits, background information etc.)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There will be site visits to the four service areas which will incorporate visits to the Civic Centre and Ballard House. Site visits would include speaking to customers and staff.</li> <li>• Witnesses would include, but would not be limited to, representatives from Plymouth Community Homes, DWP, Landlord Association and officers from the four service areas.</li> <li>• Questionnaire feedback to be provided from customers using the four services.</li> <li>• Review and compare the service performance for the past three years against performance indicators and benchmarked standards.</li> </ul>
11	<b>What we won't do.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review staff terms and conditions.</li> <li>• Review service opening times</li> <li>• Review service structure</li> <li>• Review financial implications of the restructure</li> </ul>
12	<b>Timetable &amp; Key Dates</b>	There will be a one/two day Task and Finish Review: Day 1 – Evidence gathering Day 2 – Review of all evidence, further evidence and recommendations.
13	<b>Links to other projects or initiatives / plans</b>	Corporate Plan Accommodation Strategy People's Strategy ICT Strategy Corporate Support Delivery Plans Comprehensive Spending Review
14	<b>Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel / Membership if Task and Finish Group (to be decided by OSP before submission to OMB)</b>	This work programme request has been prepared by the Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel.  Membership = 6 members
15	<b>Where will the report go? Who will make the final decision</b>	The report will be forwarded to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for recommendations to be forwarded to the Cabinet and the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property, People and Governance.

<b>16</b>	<b>Resources (staffing, research, experts, sites visits and so on)</b>	Officer time. Site visits (internal)
<b>17</b>	<b>Is this part of a statutory responsibility on the panel?</b>	No.
<b>19</b>	<b>Should any other panel be involved in this review? If so who and why?</b>	No.
<b>20</b>	<b>Will the task and finish group benefit from co-opting any person(s) onto the panel.</b>	No.

Criteria for choosing significant topics for Scrutiny Review  
(Items would be expected to meet at least two of the following criteria)

- Corporate priority area
- Poor performing service (evidence from PIs, benchmarking or where high levels of dissatisfaction from customers are recorded)
- High budgetary commitment
- Pattern of not reaching budget targets
- Issue raised by external audit, management letter, inspection report
- New government guidance or legislation
- Issue consistently identified by Members as key through constituency activity
- Public interest issue covered in local media

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## TRACKING RESOLUTIONS

### Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date/Minute Number	Resolution	Explanation/Minute	Officer	Progress	Target Date
9 23.06.11	Chris Trevitt, Head of Capital and Assets would provide a report to the next meeting of the panel on Pounds House to cover aspects including future use, user accessibility and consultation.	Members heard an update about Corporate Property and requested that a further report be provided on Pounds House.	Chris Trevitt, Head of Capital and Assets	A report was included on the agenda at 21 July 2011 and Chris Trevitt attended.  It was further resolved (see below) to be included as an agenda item at the next meeting on 15 September 2011, where a Traffic Impact Assessment would be provided.	15 September 2011
22 21.07.11	a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA), to include traffic modelling on the impact of users of Outland Road and Peverell Park Road, to be completed and submitted to the panel's next meeting on 15 September 2011.	Members heard a further update about Pounds House and requested that a further report be provided on a Traffic Impact Assessment.	Chris Trevitt, Head of Capital and Assets	See above.	
18 21.07.11	the sickness policy and a report on sickness figures are to be submitted to a future panel meeting;	Members discussed this issue during an item on staff terms and conditions.	Mark Grimley, Assistant Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development.	Included on the work programme and scheduled to be an agenda item at the meeting on 23 November 2011.	23 November 2011
18 21.07.11	a report on appraisal completion rates by directorate is to be submitted to a future panel meeting;	Members discussed this issue during an item on staff terms and conditions.	Mark Grimley, Assistant Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development.	Included on the work programme and scheduled to be an agenda item at the meeting on 23 November 2011.	23 November 2011

18 21.07.11	following agency staff not receiving an appraisal a position statement on the management of agency staff and their capabilities is submitted to a future panel meeting;	Members discussed this issue during an item on staff terms and conditions.	Mark Grimley, Assistant Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development.	Included on the work programme and scheduled to be an agenda item at the meeting on 23 November 2011.	23 November 2011
21 21.07.11	a report is submitted to the next panel meeting assessing the impact of traded services and the indirect impact of increased overheads as well as highlighting the risk to the council if academy schools were to discontinue trading with the council.		Mark Grimley, Assistant Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development.	A report was included on the agenda for 15 September 2011 and Mark Grimley was invited to attend.	15 September 2011
22 21.07.11	an email would be sent to all panel members stating the destination and origin figures of buses going to and from Pounds House; this would be balanced out against bus company figures for the Register Office's current location on Lockyer Street;	Following a further update about Pounds House and a request for a Traffic Impact Assessment., members also requested to receive details on local bus routes that visited the area.	Chris Trevitt, Head of Capital and Assets		

## Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

Date/min number	Resolution / Recommendation	Explanation / Minute	Response	Explanation
7 23.06.11	Agreed to recommend to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board that departmental delivery plans are shared with the relevant scrutiny panels so that value for money in each service area can be monitored to identify where efficiencies have been achieved.	During the VFM update on departmental delivery plans panel members felt that it was necessary for each scrutiny panel to monitor the relevant departmental delivery plans in their service areas to ensure that VFM was monitored effectively and efficiencies were being achieved.	Agreed that that with regard to the Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel, the request that departmental delivery plans are shared with the relevant scrutiny panels so that value for money in each service area can be monitored to identify where efficiencies have been achieved be approved;	
21 21.07.11	Agreed to recommend that Cabinet undertake urgent discussions with Cornwall County Council, Devon County Council and Torbay Council to minimise the difficulties that the exodus of local authority maintained schools to become Academies is causing Plymouth and its neighbouring authorities.	<i>The recommendation was voted on and carried by 6 votes to 3 with 1 abstention, however, due to the current Constitution the Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel are not permitted to recommend direct to Cabinet and therefore the recommendation will be heard by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board at their meeting on 27 July 2011.</i>	Recommended to Cabinet that that Cabinet undertake urgent discussions with Cornwall County Council, Devon County Council and Torbay Council to minimise the difficulties that the exodus of local authority maintained schools to become Academies is causing Plymouth and its neighbouring authorities;	

**Grey** = Completed (once completed resolutions have been noted by the panel they will be removed from this document)

**Red** = Urgent – item not considered at last meeting or requires an urgent response

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<b>Proposed work programme</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>A</b>
Redeployment Policy		21									
School Academy Transfer update		21		15							
Staff sickness review						23					
Appraisal Process review						23					
<b>Democracy and Governance</b>											
Coroner's Service review				15							
Member Learning and Development											
<b>Assistant Chief Executive</b>											
Local Strategic Partnership Resource Plan											
<b>Policy and Performance</b>											
Local Carbon Framework Review				15							
<b>Other Issues</b>											
Budget and Performance Report	23										
Review Data Sharing between agencies (referred by O&S Management Board 2010/11 – OSMB 97a (2) refers)											
<b>City and Council Priorities</b>											
Value for Communities											
<b>Task and Finish Groups</b>											
Revenues and Benefits, Cashiers, Incomes and Creditors and Customer Services					TBC						

**Key:**

New Item
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Deleted Item
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