

# Public Document Pack



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20 September 2013

## YOUR PLYMOUTH

Monday 30 September 2013

4 pm

Council House (Next to the Civic Centre), Plymouth

### **Members:**

Councillor Tuffin, Chair.

Councillor Bowyer, Vice-Chair.

Councillors Casey, Damarell, Philippa Davey, Jarvis, Jordan, Martin Leaves, Michael Leaves, Rennie, Ricketts and Tuohy.

### **Co-opted Representative:**

Steve Meakin, Money Advice Co-ordinator Devon & Cornwall.

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

**Tracey Lee**

Chief Executive

# YOUR PLYMOUTH

## AGENDA

### PART I – PUBLIC MEETING

#### 1. APOLOGIES

To receive apologies for non-attendance by members and to note the attendance of substitutes in accordance with the Constitution.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

#### 3. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS

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

#### 4. MINUTES

(Pages 1 - 6)

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting held on 8 July 2013.

#### 5. CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT

The panel will hear from the Cabinet Member for the Environment on his portfolio responsibilities with a view to identifying items for inclusion in its work programme.

#### 6. REVIEW OF THE LICENSING ACT STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY AND INTRODUCTION OF THE LATE NIGHT LEVY

(Pages 7 - 8)

The panel will receive a briefing paper on progress with the review of the Licensing Act Statement of Licensing Policy and Introduction of the Late Night Levy.

The full consultation document can be viewed via the following link:

[http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/consulation\\_licensing\\_policy\\_review.pdf](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/consulation_licensing_policy_review.pdf)

#### 7. EMERGENCY WELFARE SCHEME

(Pages 9 - 14)

The panel will receive an update on progress with the Emergency Welfare Scheme following its introduction in April 2013.

**8. WORK PROGRAMME**

**(Pages 15 - 16)**

To review the Your Plymouth work programme 2013 – 2014.

**9. 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**

**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.

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## Your Plymouth

**Monday 8 July 2013**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillor Tuffin, in the Chair.

Councillor Bowyer, Vice-Chair.

Councillors Casey, Damarell, Philippa Davey, Jarvis, Jordan, Martin Leaves, Michael Leaves, Rennie, Ricketts and Tuohy.

Co-opted Representative: Mr Steve Meakin

Also in attendance: Councillor Smith, Deputy Leader, Councillor Penberthy, Cabinet Member for Co-operatives and Community Development, Andrew Stephens, Assistant Director for Customer Services, Stuart Palmer, Assistant Director for Homes and Communities, Matt Garrett, Head of Housing Options, Darin Halifax, Lead Officer, and Katey Johns, Democratic Support Officer.

The meeting started at 4 pm and finished at 6 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.*

### 1. **TO NOTE THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

The panel noted the appointment of Councillor Tuffin as Chair and Councillor Bowyer as Vice-Chair, as had been agreed at the Annual General Meeting held on 17 May 2013.

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

In accordance with the code of conduct, the following declarations of interest were made –

<b>Name</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Interest</b>
Mr S Meakin	Housing Options – Homelessness	Citizens Advice Bureau has two people seconded to Housing Options	Personal
Councillor Damarell	Housing Options – Homelessness	Employed by Plymouth Community Homes	Personal

### 3. **APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED REPRESENTATIVES**

Agreed that Steve Meakin is appointed as a co-opted representative to the panel for the municipal year 2013/14.

4. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

5. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The panel noted its terms of reference.

6. **CABINET MEMBER FOR CO-OPERATIVES AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

The panel heard from the Cabinet Member for Co-operatives and Community Development who was in attendance to provide an overview of his portfolio responsibilities. Councillor Penberthy reported on the following four areas within his portfolio which he felt could benefit from scrutiny –

- Civil Society Policy – this will focus on how the council engages with the people of Plymouth, including neighbourhood working and localism, and is closely aligned to the Community Asset Transfer Policy which had been approved at the last meeting of City Council;
- Safer Plymouth (former Plymouth Community Safety Partnership Safe and Strong Board) - works collaboratively with statutory partners to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. In addition to its new name, the terms of reference are currently being redrafted and consideration given to its current responsibilities and structure;
- Welfare Reform – it is known that the benefit cap being applied within the next few weeks will impact on 140 families in Plymouth. This change, combined with the introduction of direct payments to landlords, will result in many people finding it hard to manage financially. The Council is working with its partners to find out what the implications of these major changes will mean for those directly affected and the for the City as a whole;
- Housing Delivery (waiting lists, homelessness, private sector housing) - there are currently not enough large properties in the city and those that are around aren't affordable. A major housing conference is being hosted in the City later in the year where, amongst other things, consideration will be given to how we can work differently in terms of housing provision.

In response to questions raised, members were advised that –

- (a) responsibility for Strategic Housing lay with the Cabinet Member for Finance and fell outside of this panel's terms of reference;
- (b) part of the on-going growth and development of the University of Plymouth includes provision for a large amount of student accommodation on campus which it is hoped will free up areas of the City which are currently occupied by students living off campus. Discussions were on-going between the City Council and the City's Registered Social Landlords to see if this would be a viable option for them to buy into. However, care

would need to be taken to ensure that any one community did not become overloaded and consideration would need to be given to how this could be mitigated and/or controlled;

- (c) in addition to a lack of three-plus bedroomed properties, there was also a shortage of one-bedroomed accommodation. Where possible, mutual exchanges were negotiated between occupants looking to up/downsize;
- (d) it was too soon to comment on the effect of the 'bedroom tax' as no studies had been undertaken though it was acknowledged that there were anomalies in the system which would take time to work through;
- (f) ten sites had recently been identified and sold providing 47% of affordable housing for the City;
- (g) whilst the Council was working hard to address the issue of blocked sites, unfortunately, there was nothing they Council could do to free up property that was restricted by covenants as this was a matter for Government to address;
- (h) the Council worked with 24 Registered Social Landlords in the City, including specialist housing providers of which 500 units had recently been agreed with Tamar Housing.

Whilst Members welcomed the growth of the University, concern was expressed at the assumption being made that students would move onto campus and out of private rented accommodation. As University accommodation was generally more expensive than that available in the private sector this could not be guaranteed.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for his portfolio overview and commented that many of issues highlighted had been identified as possible areas for scrutiny at the recent scrutiny conference.

## 7. **HOUSING OPTIONS - HOMELESSNESS**

The panel heard from Matt Garrett, Head of Housing Options, and Stuart Palmer, Assistant Director for Homes and Communities, on the 'Housing Choices Smarter Solutions Delivery Plan'. The report –

- (a) advised that the Housing Options Service was responsible for managing advice to people about housing issues, preventing homelessness, statutory homelessness, temporary accommodation and the housing register;
- (b) set the context for what was happening both locally and nationally;
- (c) provided details of service demand in respect of –
  - footfall;
  - telephony;

- casework;
  - temporary accommodation;
- (d) identified the Council's plans for –
- preventing homelessness and mitigating the likely rise in homelessness;
  - finding housing solutions for rough sleepers;
  - ensuring that vulnerable people can access a range of support to sustain accommodation and build skills toward independence;
  - make the best use of social/affordable housing;
  - linking with broader causes and effects of homelessness such as unemployment, poor health, and the transition from care, hospitals or prisons.

In response to questions raised, Members were advised that –

- (e) the length of time spent on the register was dependent upon the type of property available;
- (f) the amount of time people spent in temporary accommodation was increasing with one quarter of families staying for a period of more than six months compared to 12 per cent a year ago;
- (g) disabled children had been excluded from the 'bedroom tax' and the outcome of a Judicial Review into the cases of four adults with disabilities was awaited with interest;
- (h) the Housing Options Service was currently adequately resourced to cope with the demand, however, should demand continue to rise resources would need to be reviewed;
- (i) there were currently 850 empty homes in the City and the Council was proactively working to bring those properties back into use, however, this was difficult where no known owner could be identified;
- (j) with regard to ensuring that accommodation was of the required standard, the Council had proved successful in two areas –
- working with landlords by offering training and support to ensure that the benchmark is set at an acceptable level; and
  - tackling those landlords who neither wished to engage nor work at the required level through the courts.

The panel welcomed the concise and detailed report and thanked the officers for their attendance.

(Councillor Damarel and Steve Meakin both declared personal interests in respect of the above item).



8. **CUSTOMER SERVICES TRANSFORMATION**

The panel heard from Councillor Smith, Deputy Leader, and Andrew Stephens, Assistant Director for Customer Services, on progress with implementing the Customer Services transformation programme.

The presentation highlighted the Council's vision and principles for customer services which included –

- provision of a single point of access to most services;
- resolution of most customer enquiries at first point of contact;
- engaging customers in the redesign of services to make them more efficient and effective;
- delivering services through preferred channels to make them more accessible and deliver savings;
- making effective and efficient use of our investment in corporate customer facing ICT;
- working with partners to make services more customer focused, better connected and more efficient.

In response to questions raised, Members were advised that –

- (a) the process comprised three phases – modelling/discovery phase, service review and implementation. Consultants had been engaged for the first phase of modelling and this model was now being used to train staff in-house;
- (b) sufficient resources were in place to undertake the service reviews and, as each review took place and generated change, more resources would be freed up to put back into the process;
- (c) Directors were supportive of the proposals for change and there was buy-in throughout the organisation, headed up by the Chief Executive;
- (d) one area of focus was digital inclusion and, whilst many of the City's libraries provided free computer and internet access, they did not have wi-fi. A rolling programme of wi-fi installation was now underway with work at four libraries having already been completed;
- (e) it was acknowledged that communication with customers was not always simple, straightforward or in plain English therefore, as service reviews were undertaken, the various types of communication (letters, forms, etc) would be looked at by going through a check-list;
- (f) scrutiny into customer access to services, particularly through the internet and with a view to looking at what was done elsewhere, would be welcomed.

It was pointed out that whilst the internet may be less accessible in the more deprived areas of the City, it was also those areas who made most use of the payday loan providers and who were only accessible via the internet. Consideration should therefore be given to how this was happening and what opportunities were being missed.

The Chair thanked the Deputy Leader and Assistant Director for Customer Services for their attendance.

9. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The panel considered its draft work programme for 2013/14 and agreed that Close Up Reviews be undertaken in the following order of priority in respect of –

- (1) Locality Working - membership to comprise Councillors Casey, Philippa Davey, Jarvis, Jordan, Rennie, Tuffin and Tuohy;
- (2) Customer Services (including access) – membership to comprise Councillors Ian Bowyer, Casey, Jordan and Tuffin;
- (3) Recycling Rates – membership to comprise Councillors Michael Leaves, Tuohy and Tuffin.

10. **FUTURE DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS**

The dates of meetings for the remainder of the municipal year were noted as –

- Monday 30 September 2013
- Monday 4 November 2013
- Monday 10 March 2014

All meetings to commence at 4 pm.

11. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.

## Briefing Paper

### Consultation on the review of the Licensing Act Statement of Licensing Policy and introduction of the Late Night Levy

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#### Purpose

The Council's Policy Framework includes the Licensing Act Policy within its scope. The constitution requires that *'the Cabinet member will canvass the views of interested local stakeholders including the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in accordance with the protocol for consultation'*. (Constitution Part B, page 15, paragraph 2.3)

This briefing note seeks to comply with the constitution by providing the Cooperative Scrutiny Board with the opportunity to review the proposed changes to the policy, including the introduction of a late night levy and make comment.

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#### Background

The Licensing Act 2003 regulates the sale of alcohol, provision of certain entertainment and late night refreshment. This is achieved by the use of a licensing system administered by the Council.

Under the Licensing Act 2003 it is a statutory requirement that the Council publishes a Statement of Licensing Policy. This policy will state how the Council will administer applications and regulate licensable activities. It will also specify under what circumstances applications may be successful and measures necessary to promote the licensing objectives.

Any refusals or conditions must be appropriate to promote the licensing objectives which are:

- Prevention of Crime and disorder
- Promotion of public safety
- Prevention of nuisance
- Protection of children from harm

The current Licensing Policy was adopted from January 2011 and must be reviewed at least every 5 years. Over the last 18 months, however, the Government have introduced a series of additional legal controls which amended the Licensing Act. These new controls provide Councils with additional opportunities to exercise greater local discretion on licensing matters and control the negative aspects of the consumption of alcohol in the evening and night time economy (ENTE). It is appropriate, therefore, that the policy is reviewed in the light of these legislative changes. The introduction of the late night levy is a manifesto pledge and it is appropriate that this issue receives consultation as part of the wider review of the licensing policy.

Key policy areas for consultation include:

#### 1 - Late Night Levy

- Use of exemptions or reductions for certain businesses
- Hours covered
- Use of levy funds

## 2 - Changes to the cumulative impact policy

- Amendment of wording to be more flexible
- Include off licenses and late night refreshment within the policy

## 3 – Amendments to the current policy

- Consideration of presumed closing times for areas of our night time economy
- Introduce a more prescriptive glass alternatives policy
- The addition of maximum occupancy figures as a condition

### **How will the consultation be undertaken?**

Any changes to the policy must be consulted on in accordance with statutory issued under s182 Licensing Act 2003 and Home Office guidance regarding the Late Night Levy

The consultation documentation has been developed in conjunction with development of the Plymouth Plan. Engagement with interested parties will be through:

- Direct mail
- Public events in the main ENTE areas aimed primarily at local communities
- Events for the trade organised in conjunction with trade bodies, such as Best Bar None, Pubwatch
- Face to face meetings with critical stakeholders
- Internal mailing to all Team Plymouth and Councillors
- Briefing note to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

In accordance with statutory guidance a pre-consultation exercise has already been completed, which included the Police and Crime Commissioner. Feedback from this exercise has assisted in the development of the consultation document.

### **Action Requested**

The Cooperative Scrutiny Board is asked to note this report and consider how it would wish to comment. Appendix I contains a copy of the full consultation.

Any comments from the Board should be received by the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2013 so that they may be considered by the Cabinet Member and Cabinet prior to the submission of the draft policy to the City Council.

### **Contact Details**

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# **EMERGENCY WELFARE SCHEME**

Your Plymouth Scrutiny Panel – 30 September 2013



**PLYMOUTH**  
CITY COUNCIL

## **1. Purpose of the report:**

1.1 To provide Your Plymouth Scrutiny Panel with an update on the delivery of the Emergency and Welfare Fund following implementation of the new scheme in April 2013 and to enable any recommendations for improvement to be made:

## **2. Background:**

2.1 A report was presented to Cabinet on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2013 recommending the introduction of a local Emergency and Welfare Fund (EWF) to replace the national Social Fund commencing April 2013.

2.2 The Social Fund was a multi-faceted scheme that supports people in extreme financial difficulty via grants and loans. People historically accessing the scheme did so for a variety of reasons including lost or stolen money, experiencing a fire or flood, replacement of key household goods or support for moving out of institutional care.

2.3 Plymouth City Council was given funding to design and develop a localised welfare assistance scheme to replace the current Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans schemes administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). In December 2012, the amount of funding was confirmed as an un-ring fenced grant of £1,064,046. Of this DWP guidelines estimated that up to £185,618 (17% of the total budget) is required for administering the scheme, leaving £878,428 for the scheme itself. This represented a front line delivery budget cut of 28% (£345,272) from the amount DWP spent in Plymouth during 2010/11. This is equivalent to 5,114 less people being able to get a crisis payment at the average award level.

2.4 A service model was developed, based on 8 key principles, describing how the scheme will operate and addressed some key delivery and implementation issues arising from the principles including budget management, limiting awards, eligibility criteria, procurement of goods and services, administration arrangements, whether to have a loans or grants system and an appeals process

2.5 Cabinet agreed on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2013 to establish the replacement scheme to support people in extreme financial difficulty.

It was agreed that

1. The EWF was to be based on the following principles. It will –
  - Be limited to Plymouth residents only;
  - Deliver goods and services from wherever is most appropriate;
  - Spend the same amount of funding that the council are handed from government;
  - Broadly mirror the current Social Fund eligibility criteria (e.g those on low income and without access to other forms of income);
  - Provide crisis and welfare responses;
  - Minimise the spend on administration of the scheme so the council gets as much of the government funding as possible to people in need;
  - Provide goods, services and cash;
  - Apply limits to the number of awards an individual can access;
2. The recommended service model was to be adopted

3. The Your Plymouth Scrutiny Panel, previously Customer and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel, would review service delivery after 6 months of implementation and at the end of the first year with recommendations being made for improvements.

## **3 Emergency and Welfare Fund Update**

### **3.1 Implementation**

3.1.1 The Emergency and Welfare Fund is being delivered by a designated team within Revenues and Benefits. The team's primary objective is to deliver the Emergency Welfare Fund (EWF), The Discretionary Housing Payment Fund (DHP) and The Council Tax Support Vulnerability Fund to support people in extreme financial difficulties and for the benefit of the most vulnerable within the Community.

3.1.2 Combining these functions allows for a holistic view of the customer and their needs. The staff are trained to carry out benefit health checks, offer financial support and signposting to other departments or organisations dependant on the needs presented by the customer.

3.1.3 The team consists of 4 FTE staff and a Team Leader. Two members of the team are funded by the DWP grant to meet the needs of the Emergency and Welfare team, the remaining staff are funded internally. The administration costs to the EWF were estimated at £80,000(7.5% of the funding) less than the government suggested levels.

3.1.4 To help support customers or support workers apply for either Crisis Loans or Community Care Grants a dedicated Freephone telephone number was set as well as an online application form. The Freephone number is promoted the most as this allows for a faster decision for customers in crisis.

3.1.5 The expectations of the demand for this service were primarily based on the information received from the DWP and procedures were set up on that basis. It was anticipated that there would be a high demand on the fund and the risk of not meeting this need may impact on other council budgets. Since implementation in April, demand has been less than anticipated.

### **3.2 Customer Demand**

3.2.1 Since April the team have worked together to understand the customers' needs, gather signposting information and work with internal and external organisations to provide an effective service for the customer.

3.2.2 Based on the historical information from DWP 42 % of their applications were received between April and August and of those 76% were awarded.

3.2.3 Customer demand is lower than anticipated however there was a significant number of customers making application to PCC for funds still available from the DWP. This has reduced as the scheme has continued. This type of contact has been recorded as DWP signposting.

3.2.4 Although we have received less actual demand than anticipated the percentage of awards made is consistent with DWP awards. This is reassuring as it shows customers' needs continue to be met as well as the benefits of expertise that allows for the considerable signposting to other organisations.

3.2.5 Most of the customer demand has been made via the Freephone number with some customers using the online form. We have received 1647 applications and of those 308 (18%) were made via the online application form. The online method of application has been improved recently with customer being able to access the form via computers in the Civic Centre; this has helped to meet customer demand at peak times.

3.2.6 Promotion of the scheme has been undertaken at a low level, due to the expected high demand on the fund. The team have been working with specific groups, identified as working with vulnerable groups such as PATH, Housing Options and PCC Care Leavers team.

Customer Demand up to 31.8.13

2013/14 Up to 31/8/13	Crisis Loans	Community Care Grants	Total	% awarded
Anticipated Applications	2841	1117	3958	
Anticipated Awards	2225	446	2671	67%
Actual Applications	624	348	972	
Actual Awards	484	191	675	69%
Customers signposted (DWP)			288	
Customers signposted (Other)			1407	

### 3.3 Budgets

3.3.1 The EWF fund was allocated an un-ring fenced grant of £1,064,046. Of this DWP guidelines estimated that up to £185,618 (17% of the total budget) would be required for administering the scheme leaving £878,428 for the scheme itself. PCC are committed to using as much of the funding for the benefit of the customer and to reduce the risk of potential impact on other areas of the Council budget. It was therefore estimated that administration of the scheme could be delivered at £80,000 with the remaining £984,046 being used for vulnerable customers

3.3.2 Administration costs have remained in budget with £32,487.05 being spent to date against a projected spend of £33,333.33. Additional staffing has been agreed on a temporary basis to support the admin functions of the team allowing for technical staff to spend more time dealing with the customers. These additional costs have been included in the budget figures.

3.3.3 The current budget is showing an under-spend. Expenditure has been increasing as the scheme develops and it is anticipated that this trend will continue now there is a better understanding of the customer base and individual needs. The projected spend up to end of August was £413,382.00 with current spend being £133,450.60, showing a £279,931.38 under-spend.

	April	May	June	July	Aug	Cumulative
Community Care Grants	£5,770.00	£14,239.00	£11,920.00	£19,907.00	£18809.50	£70,645.50
Crisis Payments	£3397.50	£5874.50	£5,844.46	£7,764.00	£7,269.00	£30,149.46
Admin Costs	£6,413.69	£6347.88	£5939.47	£6462.44	£7492.18	£32,487.05
<b>Total Spend</b>	<b>£15,581.19</b>	<b>£26,461.38</b>	<b>£23,703.93</b>	<b>£34,133.44</b>	<b>£33,570.68</b>	<b>£133,450.60</b>
Budget	£74,072.00	£88,120.00	£85,486.00	£84,608.00	£81,096.00	£413,382.00
Difference	-£64,914.50	-£68,022.50	-£67,758.00	-£56,778.39	-£55,079.50	-£279,931.38



3.3.4 Budget forecasting shows an increase in demand over the winter months due to natural peaks in such areas as fuel payments and the Christmas period. Combined with continued promotion of the scheme it is anticipated that the expenditure will increase with a better understanding of the impact on the fund being available in Spring 2014.

## 3.4 Future Activity

3.4.1 It is clear that the fund is currently underspent. We are now in a better position to understand the demands on the fund and proactively engage with vulnerable client groups. This will support those in need and enable promotion of the scheme.

**3.4.2 Promotion of scheme:** Specific organisations and internal departments have been identified and presentation sessions are being run to promote the scheme, which are being well received by the attendees. Some of the initial organisations that we are planning to contact over the next few months are; Probation Service, Adult Social Care, Police and Neighbourhood Liaison groups. We anticipate an increase in demand as a result of this work as more professionals understand the benefits of the scheme to their clients.

**3.4.3 Utilities:** There has been a low level of customers seeking help with their utilities, especially gas and electricity bills. This may be a seasonal issue and therefore there is a likelihood of an increase in demand during the winter months. This is an area of concern so this risk group will be targeted and work will be undertaken with customers to raise awareness of Plymouth Energy Community and offer support to help engage with the scheme.

**3.4.4 Food Bank:** 129 customers have been provided with vouchers for the Foodbank instead of being given cash. As this a charity any referrals to this service do not incur a cost from the EWF. Based on the EWF cash allowances for food the 129 customers would have cost £2580.75 from the fund. There is a continual need within Plymouth for the services provided by the Foodbank and therefore it is planned to work with the Charity to allow for financial support to be given based on the referrals actually made. This will allow for the EWF to not be a drain on the Charity, but to allow continued support to customers.

**3.4.5 Other Funding Options:** There appears to be a perception that the EWF is for individuals claiming benefits. It is clear, however that there are other groups in the community that are in need of help due to a difficult period in their lives. For example those individuals who are trying to support themselves and get into work. The transition from benefits to work can cause financial difficulties and we are going to explore alternative ways to help support these individuals further.

**3.4.6 Benchmarking:** The trend Plymouth are experiencing is consistent with neighbouring authorities that are running similar schemes. Benchmarking with other Authorities within our family group will be undertaken to identify alternative methods of raising awareness of the scheme as well as sharing best practice in scheme management and customer focus.

**3.4.7 Streamlining:** Now there is a greater understanding of the demands on the scheme, there is an opportunity to review the processes and practices that are being undertaken, this has been started by working with internal audit for an external perspective of how we work. This will allow for a more efficient service, and enable additional resource to be available for the increase in demand.

**3.4.8 Customer Survey:** A customer survey is being conducted and is open until the end of October. The outcomes will enable customer feedback to be considered when reviewing the scheme and the customer experience.

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# YOUR PLYMOUTH

Work Programme 2013 - 2014



**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 and is subject to approval at the Cooperative Scrutiny Board.**

For general enquiries relating to the Council's Scrutiny function, including this committee's work programme, please contact Katey Johns, Democratic Support Officer, on 01752 307815.

Date of meeting	Agenda item	Purpose of the agenda item	Reason for consideration	Responsible Officer
08.07.13	Customer Services	To get an overview of where we are in terms of customer service provision to help identify the focus of the task and finish scrutiny review(s)	To help prioritise focus of task and finish reviews	Andrew Stephens
	Housing Plan : Homelessness	To get an overview of where we are in terms of delivering affordable housing	This is a key element within the Corporate plan	Matt Garrett
	Cabinet Member for Cooperatives and Community Development	To inform panel of portfolio responsibilities and to identify possible areas which could benefit from pre/post decision scrutiny	To help develop panel's work programme	Councillor Penberthy
30.09.13	Emergency Welfare Support (Social Fund)	To look at budget delivery and customer satisfaction following its introduction in April 2013	Monitoring outcome of Social Fund Replacement task and finish review	Ann Thorpe
	Cabinet Member for Environment	To inform panel of portfolio responsibilities and to identify possible areas which could benefit from pre/post decision scrutiny	To help develop panel's work programme	Councillor Vincent
	Consultation on the review of the Licensing Act Statement of Licensing Policy and introduction of the Late Night Levy	To form part of the consultation process and help inform the policy review	Consultation	Andy Netherton

Date of meeting	Agenda item	Purpose of the agenda item	Reason for consideration	Responsible Officer
04.11.13	Plymouth Community Safety Partnership (Crime Stats)	To receive an annual update on crime stats for the City	Statutory Function	Sarah Hopkins
10.03.14				

Task and Finish Proposals	Consideration	Description
	Priority	
Recycling Rates	3	Panel to hear from the Cabinet Member for Environment at its meeting on 30 September prior to any PID being drafted
Neighbourhood / Locality Working	1	The panel to review Neighbourhood / Locality Working
Customer Services (focus on website and interactive transactions)	2	The panel will hear from the Assistant Director for Customer Services on progress with the transformation programme at its meeting on 8 July, prior to preparing the PID and scoping documents for this review
Access to Buildings / Services (Annual Review)	4	Panel to look at barriers (including physical and language)
Advice / Revenues and Benefits Performance	5	Panel to look at performance and complaints
<b>Referred from Co-operative Scrutiny Board</b>		
Review of Procedures used by the Council when dealing with unauthorised encampments		To clarify current processes and procedures against a backdrop of legal, social and financial considerations and to attempt to ensure community cohesion and public reassurance.