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Democratic Support

Plymouth City Council
Civic Centre
Plymouth PL1 2AA

Please ask for Katey Johns
T (01752) 307815
E katey.johns@plymouth.gov.uk
www.plymouth.gov.uk/democracy
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#yourplymouth

YOUR PLYMOUTH

Monday 4 November 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 30 September 2013.

5. PLYMOUTH COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP : (Pages 7 - 10) CRIME FIGURES

The panel will receive an update on the latest crime statistics for the City.

6. PERSONAL DEBT (Pages 11 - 14)

The panel will receive a situation report on the level of personal debt in the City and how this is being managed.

7. CUSTOMER SERVICES TRANSFORMATION (Pages 15 - 20)

The panel will receive an update on progress with delivery of the Customer Services Transformation project.

8. TREE MANAGEMENT (Pages 21 - 44)

The panel will receive an update in respect of Tree Management.

9. ROADSIDE MEMORIALS (Pages 45 - 50)

The panel will receive an update in respect of roadside memorials.

10. PUBLIC FUNERALS (Pages 51 - 54)

The panel will receive an update in respect of public funerals.

11. TRACKING RESOLUTIONS (Pages 55 - 56)

The panel to review and monitor the progress of tracking resolutions and receive any relevant feedback from the Cooperative Scrutiny Board.

12. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 57 - 62)

To review the Your Plymouth work programme 2013 – 2014.

13. 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 30 September 2013

PRESENT:

Councillor Tuffin, in the Chair.

Councillor Bowyer, Vice-Chair.

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

Co-opted Representative: Mr Steve Meakin

Apology for absence: Councillor Martin Leaves.

Also in attendance: Councillor Vincent, Cabinet Member for Environment, Councillor Penberthy, Cabinet Member for Cooperatives and Community Development, Jayne Donovan, Assistant Director for Environmental Services, Ann Thorpe, Service Manager (Revenues and Benefits), Andy Netherton, Manager Health Safety and Licensing, Darin Halifax, Lead Officer, and Katey Johns, Democratic Support Officer.

The meeting started at 4 pm and finished at 5.40 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.

12. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by councillors in accordance with the code of conduct in relation to items under discussion at this meeting.

13. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

Unauthorised Encampments

The Chair and Democratic Support Officer reported on the difficulties encountered in progressing the cooperative review into Unauthorised Encampments. Due to the large number of members who had expressed an interest in participating, it had not been possible to identify a date where all members could attend prior to mid-November 2013. The Chair therefore requested that the panel consider reducing membership of the cooperative review in order to facilitate an earlier start.

Agreed that membership of the cooperative review into Unauthorised Encampments is reduced from nine to five with a political ratio of 3:2. Chair and Vice-Chair to confirm their respective group nominations to the Democratic Support Officer.

14. **MINUTES**

Agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2013.

15. **CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT**

The panel heard from the Cabinet Member for Environment who was in attendance to provide an overview of his portfolio responsibilities and identify areas which he felt may benefit from scrutiny. Accompanied by the Assistant Director for Environmental Services, the following three areas were highlighted as being in need of policy review / criteria development –

- Roadside Memorials;
- Tree Management; and
- Public Funerals.

In response to questions raised, members were advised that –

(a) with regard to roadside memorials –

- there is a growing trend for people who have lost loved ones in fatal accidents to adopt ‘temporary’ roadside memorials;
- some sites were more prominent than others and therefore had more of an impact on those living nearby or passing, however, all sites had to be treated with the same sensitivity and sympathy;
- consideration needed to be given to the length of time such memorials were permitted to remain;

(b) with regard to tree management –

- a new policy had been established in 2012;
- significant improvements had been made in reducing waiting times from two years to six months;
- on receipt of a complaint, an inspection would be undertaken and an assessment made as to whether any immediate action was required. If no immediate health and safety action was required the tree would be placed on the waiting list. If the tree was an immediate health and safety risk it would be dealt with expediently and any other priority I trees dealt with within six months;
- the council was working with developers to ensure that development proposals which included provision for tree planting would not present problems in the future;
- councillors could use their community grant scheme funds to assist their constituents in dealing with tree-related issues;

(c) with regard to public funerals –

- public funerals were those where a person had died without leaving finances in place to cover the cost of their funeral and there was no-one else willing to pay;
- whilst the number that the Council had to pay for was relatively low (between 10-15 a year at a cost of £1,000 each), the number was rising and, given the current economic climate, members need to be aware of areas impacting upon the council's already stretched resources;
- this number was expected to rise as whilst the majority of our older generation continued to make provision in their wills this was not the case with the current generation.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and Assistant Director for Environmental Services for their attendance.

Agreed that separate briefing reports in respect of Roadside Memorials, Tree Management and Public Funerals are submitted to the next meeting of the panel in order that members can consider more detailed information and review facts prior to deciding whether to take any of these issues further.

16. **REVIEW OF THE LICENSING ACT STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY AND INTRODUCTION OF THE LATE NIGHT LEVY**

The Chair welcomed Andy Netherton, Manager Health, Safety and Licensing, who was in attendance to inform members on progress with the consultation being undertaken in respect of a review of the Licensing Act Statement of Licensing Policy and introduction of the Late Night Levy. Members were advised –

- although the current Licensing Policy had been adopted in 2011 and the requirement was for it to be reviewed every five years, the Government had, over the last 18 months, introduced a series of additional controls which amended the Licensing Act and it was, therefore, appropriate to review the policy in light of these legislative changes;
- the new controls provided 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);
- the consultation had been broken down into three areas:
 - Late Night Levy
 - Changes to the Cumulative Impact Policy
 - Amendments to the Current Policy
- that the main changes to the current policy were inclusion of consideration of:
 - alternatives to the use of glass
 - increasing maximum occupancy
 - provision of free tap water
 - greater controls on the number of off-licences and how they trade
 - greater controls on opening hours

- inclusion of off-licences and take-aways within the Cumulative Impact Policy
- the consultation would close on 5 October 2013.

In response to questions raised, members were advised that –

- (a) the Late Night Levy would only impact upon businesses with alcohol sales taking place after midnight;
- (b) members of a Business Improvement District (BID) would be exempt from a Late Night Levy, however, they would be required to submit a work plan to demonstrate how they would address issues of crime and disorder in the ENTE;
- (c) supermarkets were classed as off-licences and therefore were covered by the same controls;
- (d) the ENTE was a large employer and as such a major contributor to the City's economy. Consideration was therefore being given to employment of an Evening and Night Time Economy Manager to help promote the ENTE and grow this economy further;
- (e) the amount of levy required from each business was set and controlled nationally. It was calculated based on a sliding scale depending upon what business rates they paid, e.g. £299 Band A, £768 Band B, £1,493 Band E etc.;
- (f) monies received from the levy would go into a centralised ringfenced pot administered by the Plymouth Community Safety Partnership for use in schemes that contribute to making the ENTE a safer environment such as extra CCTV, policing, street marshalls, street lighting improvements etc.;
- (g) a response to the consultation had not yet been received from the Police, however, the officer was aware it had been drafted and was confident it would be received before the closing date on 5 October;
- (h) to date, the public responses received could be split as follows –
 - those residents living outside of the ENTE and not directly affected had general concerns about how much alcohol harm was costing;
 - those residents living within the ENTE had two concerns:
 - lateness of disturbance/crime and disorder;
 - street drinkers.
- (i) following closure of the consultation, a report would be submitted to Cabinet.

The Chair thanked the officer for the update and his attendance.

17. **EMERGENCY WELFARE SCHEME**

The Chair welcomed Councillor Penberthy, Cabinet Member for Cooperatives and Community Development, and Ann Thorp, Service Manager (Revenues and Benefits), who were in attendance to update the panel on progress with the Emergency Welfare Scheme following its introduction in April 2013. Members were offered an apology for the submission of a late amendment to the report which presented a much better financial overview of the situation to that included within the report.

In response to questions raised, members were advised that –

- (a) it was thought that the difference between the number of applications expected and the number of applications granted was due to –
 - the fact that people were traditionally used to going to the DWP and had initially continued to do so;
 - people were using crisis loans as a form of revolving credit;
 - people had applied to the council for funds which were still available from the DWP and had therefore been referred back;
 - the particularly good summer which has resulted in a lesser demand on many services;
- (b) there was still currently no facility in council offices to allow customers to top-up payments in respect of their gas and electricity meters, however, this was being moved forward particularly in regard to the Civic Centre;
- (c) it was acknowledged that in tough economic times more people were turning to payday loans as a means of addressing their financial difficulties and a lot of work was being done with the City's credit unions to tackle this issue. However, funding for this work was met from the social inclusion budget and not the Emergency Welfare Scheme. One of the areas being discussed was the possibility of credit unions helping those with energy debt over £500 and who were prevented from switching suppliers as a result;
- (d) the EWF was about grants and not loans, recipients were not expected to pay the money back. Staff from Money Advice Plymouth were working with Plymouth City Council staff to help co-ordinate and signpost people in crisis to the relevant agencies in order that they can receive appropriate support and advice about managing their finances better;
- (e) specific organisations and internal departments had been identified and presentation sessions run in order to promote the scheme, the council would continue to work and engage with as many agencies as possible to ensure that they understand the benefits of the scheme to their

clients, this included the Foodbank where consideration was being given to allow for financial support based on the referrals actually made;

- (f) all enquiries commenced with a requirement for applicants to complete a form which would then help staff to identify areas of concern and signpost applicants on to other agencies who can provide support;
- (g) it was possible for customers to achieve savings of between £100-£150 per year on pre-payment meters and work was ongoing to raise awareness of Plymouth Energy Community and offer support to help engage with the scheme. In addition, the Council had negotiated a very favourable rate on pre-payment meters.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet member and the Service Manager (Revenues and Benefits) for their attendance.

Agreed that a further update is submitted to the panel in six months' time when the scheme will have been in place for a year.

18. **WORK PROGRAMME**

In considering its work programme for 2013/14, the panel noted the requests made under minutes 15 and 17 and agreed –

- (1) the co-operative review into Customer Services be deferred pending submission of a situation update report to, and attendance by the Assistant Director for Customers Services, at the panel's next meeting;
- (2) that a situation report in respect of the level of personal debt in the City and how this is being managed (to include rent arrears) is submitted to the next panel meeting.

19. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.

CRIME FIGURES

Your Plymouth Scrutiny Panel – 4 November 2013



INTRODUCTION

This report provides the Your Plymouth panel with an overview of performance against crime reduction targets and levels of overall crime in Plymouth.

BACKGROUND

In liaison with Plymouth's Community Safety Partnership, the council monitors performance against five key areas of crime. In line with our values – in particular 'Responsible and Fair' – these represent crimes which are high harm/vulnerability with a focus on victims: serious acquisitive crime, violence with injury, domestic abuse, anti-social behaviour and the gap in levels of crime between neighbourhoods.

For four out of these five crimes we are on target with reductions, and the other is slightly off-target. However for overall crime ie including crime types outside these priorities – we are seeing a rise compared to last year.

Each area is explored in more detail below.

REDUCE SERIOUS ACQUISITIVE CRIME:

ON TARGET - (2013/14 target of not more than 2,216 crimes)

1089 crimes were reported between April and September 2013 which represents a decrease of 5.4% (62 fewer crimes) compared to April - September 2012 (1151). This year's target is a 1.8% reduction in the rate per 1000 population.

REDUCE VIOLENCE WITH INJURY (EXCLUDING DOMESTIC ABUSE):

ON TARGET - (2013/14 target of not more than 1,764 crimes)

878 crimes were reported between April and September 2013 which represents a decrease of 4.4% (40 fewer crimes) compared to April to September 2012 (918). This year's target is a 1.6% reduction in the rate per 1000 population. (This measure previously included domestic violence but this is now considered separately).

The Police have a 2013/14 target to reduce Violence Against the Person (excluding domestic abuse) by 3%. This is a wider crime group than the partnership target and also includes both Violence with Injury and Violence without Injury. Performance against this target for April to September 2013 shows an increase of 3.4% compared to the same period last year.

INCREASE REPORTING OF DOMESTIC ABUSE:

ON TARGET - (2013/14 target of more than 6,435 reports)

3588 domestic violence related incidents and crimes were reported between April to September 2013 which represents an increase of 17.4% (532 more incidents/crimes) compared with April to September 2012 (3056). This year's target is to increase the number of crimes/incidents recorded by 6%, reflecting our wish to ensure we get a true picture of the situation and address it.

REDUCE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR:

ON TARGET - (2013/14 target of not more than 10,044 incidents)

5643 incidents of anti-social behaviour were recorded between April and September 2013 which represents a decrease of -1.9% (112 fewer incidents) compared to April to September 2012 (5755). This year's target is a reduction of 2.6% in the rate of ASB incidents.

CLOSING THE GAP IN CRIME BETWEEN NEIGHBOURHOODS:

OFF TARGET – (2013/14 target to achieve a 2% reduction in the gap (expressed as a rate per 1000 population between the ten worst neighbourhoods and the city as a whole – not more than 73.5 crimes per 1000 population)).

At the end of 2012/13 the gap between the combined rate across the ten worst neighbourhoods (147.8/1000) and that of the city as a whole (72.8/1000) was 75.

Between April and September 2013 there have been increases across a number of crime types, and particularly in some of the 10 priority neighbourhoods. To be on target, the gap at the end of September would have needed to be at 36.6/1000, currently the gap is 39.5/1000 meaning we are just off target.

Between April and September 2013, 58% of all recorded crime occurred within the 10 priority neighbourhoods. Table I below shows the ten priority neighbourhoods with the numbers of crimes recorded in each between April and September 2013, and have been compared with the same period last year. Neighbourhoods are also ranked by percentage change in crime volumes;

Table I

Neighbourhood	Crime 2013/14	Crime 2012/13	Change in Crime numbers	% change in crime
Stoke	517	337	180	53%
Devonport	487	346	141	41%
East End	423	359	64	18%
Mutley	376	319	57	18%
Plymouth City Centre	1540	1491	49	3%
Barne Barton	320	316	4	1%
Stonehouse	966	995	-29	-3%
Honicknowle	349	389	-40	-10%
Greenbank & University	515	580	-65	-11%
Whitleigh	252	318	-66	-21%

Four neighbourhoods have seen significant increases between April and August 2013 when compared to the same period last year.

Stoke has recorded an increase of 180 crimes (+53%) including increases in Shoplifting (+60), Burglary Dwelling (+19), Other Theft (see note at end of report) (+24) and Criminal Damage (+17).

Devonport has seen an increase of 141 crimes (+41%) including increases in Other Theft (+41), Violence without Injury (+28), Violence with Injury (+25), Public Order offences (+13) and Burglary Dwelling (+17).

East End has seen an increase of 64 crimes (+18%) including increases in Criminal Damage (+36), Other Theft (+17) and Public Order offences (+13).

Mutley has seen a rise of 57 crimes (+18%) including increases in vehicle offences (+28) and Criminal Damage (+13).

The rises in crime in these neighbourhoods broadly reflects the city-wide position (Table 2) with these priority neighbourhoods performing slightly worse, hence the target not being met.

OVERALL CRIME

During April to September 2013 there has been an overall increase of 528 crimes (+5.7%) including increases in, for example, Dwelling Burglary (+12/+2.9%), an increase in Shoplifting (+173/+22.3%), Other Theft (+210/+15.4%), Violence without Injury' (+200/+21.3%) and Public Order offences (+210/29.5%):

Table 2

	Apr-Sep 12/13	Apr-Sep 13/14	Number change	% change
City Total*	9325	9853	+528	+5.7%
Worst neighbourhoods**	5745	5450	+295	+5%

*from Devon and Cornwall Police

**from Universal Data Set provided by Police

This illustrates that the overall rise in crime – whilst unwelcome – has not impacted on our priority crimes except for the “closing the gap” target which can in part at least, be attributed to this overall rise.

The Police have a 2013/14 target to reduce ‘total crime’ by 2%. Performance for April to September 2013 shows an increase of 5.7% compared to the same period in 2012.

WHAT WE'RE DOING

Working with our partners, we continue to undertake a wide range of crime reduction work. This consists of a mixture of initiatives to keep momentum on the targets whilst maintaining an overview on emerging crimes. For example we are currently investigating the causes/drivers for an increase in shoplifting.

Other recent examples of activity include:-

- Launch of the “Community Action Against Crime” small grant fund which provides £5,900 in each of the top ten neighbourhoods to tackle the top three crimes.
- Support for a community safety radio campaign in the run up to Christmas including information on illegal money lending.
- Supporting some police covert and overt operations to tackle burglary.
- A Focus Day/Week in Stoke.
- City-wide roll out of the DASH (domestic abuse) training.
- On-going victim champion work.
- Targeted interventions in Evening Night Time Economy ‘hotspots’
- Support for Street Safe’s treatment centre that operates on a Saturday evening to reduce the number of unnecessary ambulance call outs and hospital admissions).
- Championing the Best Bar None Group to create safer drinking environments.

- Promoting 'Top Night' personal safety campaign that reminds young people to have fun safely and know their limits.
- Ensuring CCTV operation has the necessary staffing to cope with increased demand in the "breakfast economy" (5am – 9am Fri, Sat, Sun).
- Barbican road closures on Bank Holiday weekends.
- Promoting personal safety messages at events eg – Freshers, Universities of Plymouth & Marjon, and City College.
- Production of ICE (In Case of Emergency Cards)
- Implementation of the 'Night Net' radio system.
- Designated Driver Campaign.
- Support the Information brief advice Alcohol project at the Magistrates Court to help reduce re-offending.

CONCLUSION

Overall we are performing well with most of our crime reduction targets, thereby maintaining a focus on high harm/vulnerability. The increase in overall crime can be attributed to crimes outside this eg 'other theft', shoplifting, criminal damage, and violence without injury. This has also adversely impacted on the one target which we are not performing well on – "closing the gap". We are 5th best out of 15 similar cities for overall crime.

We continue to undertake a wide ranging programme of community safety work in partnership with the police and others.

Note - "Other theft" consists of the following (in rank order by typical number of incidents per year):-

Theft - non specific
Theft - steal in dwelling not auto machine/meter
Theft - of pedal cycle
Make off without payment
Theft - by employee
Theft from automatic machine or meter
Theft of conveyance other than motor vehicle or pedal cycle
Take or ride pedal cycle without consent
Take conveyance other than motor vehicle or pedal cycle
Theft of mail bag or postal packet
Blackmail
Abstract electricity

PERSONAL DEBT

Social Inclusion Unit



1. Introduction – what is debt?

1.1 Many people live with debt throughout their lives in one form or another. Mortgages, rent, credit cards, loans and overdrafts are all common forms of credit or debt. Debt however is not an intrinsic problem for everyone; many people manage their debt repayments and are able to pay off any money they owe without incurring additional costs. Borrowing and credit activities are essential to a healthy economy. However, where people are financially excluded, have a limited income or have experienced an unexpected change in circumstances, debt has the potential to become unmanageable and seriously affect quality of life.

2. Debt as a problem

2.1 For one person a debt of £1 million may not be a problem, for another a debt of £50 may pose a huge problem in terms of affordability. Obtaining credit poses an issue for those who are not deemed credit 'worthy' and cannot access mainstream financial providers. Recently there has been an explosion of high interest lenders (doorstep lenders, payday lenders, loan sharks) who are easily accessible to various financially excluded groups. High interest borrowing often results in increasing levels of debt due to payments being defaulted and additional fees and charges added to loans not paid back on time.

3. Problem debt locally

3.1 Advice Plymouth, our local information and advice service has seen a changing scene of debt over the time they have been operating. (Since October 2012). Under the previous Citizens Advice Bureau contract, from July to September 2012 they delivered intensive debt casework to 111 customers with a total of £0.5million problem debt. Under the Advice Plymouth contract, for July to September 2013, 114 customers were seen with a total of £1.5million problem debt. This trend illustrates that customers who approach Advice Plymouth have a larger level of personal problem debt.

3.2 Some examples of increases in why customers are seeking advice services include:

1. Unsecured personal loan debts have risen from 6.17% in 2012 to 10.20% in 2013
2. Council Tax arrears which have risen from 0.73% to 4.70%, and
3. Rent Arrears with Housing Associations which have risen from 0.0% to 1.11%

See the table below for comparisons between 2012 and 2013 on customers presenting with debt issues

Type of debt	Amount dealt with 2012 Jul-Sep £	% of customers seeking advice services 2012 Jul-Sep	Amount dealt with 2013 Jul-Sep £	% of customers seeking advice services 2013 Jul-Sep
Mortgage and secured loan arrears	71,869	16.63	59,000	3.79
Fuel Debts	26,948	7.29	15,925	1.02
Telephone and Broadband Debts	0	0	2,629	0.17
Rent Arrears (Local Authority)	2,681	0.58	2,756	0.18
Rent Arrears (Housing Associations)	0	0	17,308	1.11
Rent Arrears (Private Landlords)	2,927	0.63	2,525	0.16
Council Tax arrears	1,068	0.73	73,187	4.70
Magistrates court fines and arrears	0	0	2,100	0.13
Bank and Building Society Overdrafts	0	0	3,697	0.24
Credit, store and charge card debts	6	0	90,883	5.83
Unsecured personal loan debts	26,400	6.17	159,055	10.20
Water supply and sewerage debts	3,293	0.71	15,764	1.01
Unpaid parking penalty and congestion charges	0	0	200	0.01
Overpayments of working and child tax credit	1,022	0.72	31,197	2.0
Social Fund debts	0	0	800	0.05
Payday loan debts	0	0	3,345	0.22
Private Bailiffs	0	0	0	0.0
Debt Relief Order	147,865	32.24	78,409	5.03
Bankruptcy	155,693	33.83	543,259	34.85
Other	2,203	0.47	456,610	29.29
Total	465,796	111 customers seen	1,558,639	114 customers seen

3.3 Our Housing Options Department has an Advice Plymouth member of staff based at their counter to offer financial assistance to customers who present with a Housing issue. Between July and September 2013 they held Financial Capability workshops for 80 people, helped another 36 with debt advice sessions, and resolved £209,845.00 worth of debt and associated debt issues.

3.4 Plymouth City Council no longer holds any housing stock, with virtually all Social Housing in the City provided by Housing Associations. None of them currently report their arrears figures to Plymouth City Council as they class this to be sensitive information, although there are regular meetings between Plymouth City Council Housing Managers and Housing Associations in order to discuss areas of concern.

3.5 155 single homeless people presented themselves to Plymouth Access to Housing (PATH) between July and September 2013. None of these people could afford a rental deposit without assistance from PATH. For this period PATH also helped 71 households manage their rent arrears.

3.6 Due to the introduction of the council tax changes from April this year, locally 16,000+ residents now have a council tax liability for the first time. For this group of customers, between April and September 2013 14,408 reminders have been issued, 6224 summonses sent, and 3,798 liability orders have been issued. Due to the fact that the scheme run from April 2013 is a different scheme to previous years, there are no comparable figures to show. However, the fact that 16,000+ customers now have a council tax liability for the first time, and 90% of them have received a reminder, does indicate a high number of these new council tax payers are in council tax debt.

3.7 Plymouth Citizen's Advice Bureau delivers a contract for South West Water to run a water debt gateway, where customers can get advice, arrange affordable payments and in some cases apply to have their debt written off. Between April and October 2013 the fund wrote off a total of £64,500 of water debt. This represents a 189% increase on the same period in 2012 when £33,900 of debt was written off.

3.8 Our local food bank has seen dramatic increases in customers over the past year. Between January and October this year, 2507 vouchers were issued. This compares with 1484 for the whole of 2012. If the referrals continue at the same rate the food bank expect a 237% rise in customers in one year.

4. What are we doing about it?

4.1 We have commissioned Advice Plymouth, a universally accessible information and advice service that serves the needs of local people. The service combines the expertise of four experienced advice agencies in the city – Plymouth Citizen's Advice Bureau, Plymouth Age UK, Routeways Ltd and Disability Information and Advice Centre. Advice Plymouth provides professionals who can support customers with their financial issues. Through a combination of telephone, counter and digital access, customers are able to access advice and information, and specialist case work where required.

4.2 The Revenues and Benefit staff who administer the Emergency and Welfare Fund have close contacts with Advice Plymouth and refer customers for further assistance as required.

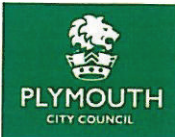
4.3 We work very closely with our local Credit Unions in order to encourage customers to save and to access affordable borrowing. This month, we have supported the opening of a shop in the City Centre (Frankfort Gate) for City of Plymouth Credit Union. In September 2013 the City of Plymouth Credit Union administered 51 loans totalling £40,165.00. The total amount of interest attracted on these loans would be £4,149.45, whereas the same loans from a doorstep lender would attract interest of £32,935.30.


4.4 We ensure customers have access to qualified debt advice via referrals to Advice Plymouth. Our Housing Options Department accommodates an Advice Plymouth debt adviser at their customer services desk. Any customer who presents with a housing issue is automatically offered a consultation with the adviser who will look at their financial situation, including debt and welfare benefits as well as offering financial capability workshops.

4.5 We hold several discretionary pots of money which can offer financial support to eligible customers. Our Emergency and Welfare Fund will meet financial needs in the case of a crisis or resettlement in the community. The Discretionary Housing Payment Fund supports those who cannot afford rent or removal costs. Our Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Fund can be accessed for those struggling to afford their council tax payments. Finally our Housing Options team can access a Homeless Prevention Fund. Customers are assessed and directed to the relevant fund for their particular need. So far this year these schemes have assisted over 1,200 customers.

4.6 The Revenues and Benefits Department are currently planning to utilise the Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Fund to help customers having difficulty paying their council tax bills. As take-up is low, all officers who deal with recovery are being directed to encourage applications from those customers in difficult situations. They are also planning to work proactively by targeting groups of customers. For customers who claim Council Tax Support, where we have had a request for an Attachment to their Benefit returned from the Department for Work and Pensions as unsuccessful, these are likely to be vulnerable customers who are already experiencing high levels of deductions from their limited income. Plans are to contact these customers and encourage an application. Trials are currently being undertaken to consider whether phone contact or sending a form will get the better response from these customers.


CUSTOMER TRANSFORMATION





Your Plymouth Scrutiny Panel 4th
November 2013

CORPORATE PLAN

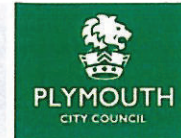


Pioneering Plymouth

We will be pioneering by designing and delivering better services that are more accountable, flexible and efficient in spite of reducing resources.

Outcome	Measures	Key Actions
The Council provides and enables brilliant services that strive to exceed customer expectations.	80% of customer contacts with the Council will be managed through the single point of contact, with 80% of enquiries dealt with at first point of contact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the Customer Transformation Programme. Focus performance improvement on top priorities identified by Plymouth residents.

JULY 2013 RECAP



Customer Services - vision and principles 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

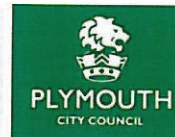
PROGRAMME CHANGES



- Programme has been re-shaped as a result of:
 - Civic decant
 - New “City Centre Shop”
 - Budget
 - Transformation

Three work streams in place that will prepare us for service reviews as part of the Transformation Programme:

WORK STREAM PROGRESS



- **Customer Insight** – Developing a toolkit to engage with service areas to aid business planning & service transformation

To promote an understanding of their customer base, highlight clear focus on customer needs, preferred communication and identify alternative delivery models e.g. on line (maximising channel shift where appropriate)

Delivery date Feb/March 2014

WORK STREAM PROGRESS



- **Customer access and management model** – based on single point of contact for each channel “one front door to meet customer need”

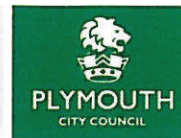
Define and deliver the operating model for face to face contact in new City centre “shop”

- Started and on-going

Oversee the delivery of the technology and operational changes required in the contact centre to enable service migration into it (30% to 80% target)

- Requirements defined/ awaiting ICT implementation

WORK STREAM PROGRESS



▪ Customer led service design

Support the delivery of the face to face service delivery through analysis and redesign of the services to be provided in the new shop

Started & on-going

Define and implement standards across the Council for responding to customer feedback

Delivery Q1 2014

HIGHLIGHTS TO DATE



- 10,000 survey forms completed with customers
- 4,000 views from them
- 20% were visitors for officers in building
- 92% agreed we had dealt with their enquiry first time to resolve their issue
- Identified key groups of customers and their preferred channel of access
- Staff workshops continuing
- Customers will be involved in future re-design
- Wi-fi in libraries
- Developing self-serve & assisted self-serve options and links to the library network

THANK YOU



- Questions?

TREE MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

Your Plymouth Scrutiny Panel – 04 November 2013



1. Purpose of the report

To provide Your Plymouth Scrutiny Panel with an update on the City Council's view on managing its tree stock in relation to existing pressures, up to date national guidance and proactive maintenance to ensure the management of the city's the tree stock is risk based and appropriate. It sets out the guiding principles for managing our tree stock, for guiding arboricultural management decisions on all Council owned and managed tree stock.

2. Background

As a local authority with a duty of care to residents and visitors to the city there is a need to implement and continually develop a risk-based approach to tree maintenance.

There is a growing need for the Council to provide accurate information on all of its assets, to show transparency in local government processes. Tree risk management is a systematic and proactive approach that prioritises work based on potential risk of hazardous trees. This assessment method provides an efficient process for establishing an inspection schedule and methods, and enables the prioritisation of works based on perceived risk.

Each tree or groups of trees that have been inspected will be given a category based on the ground inspection information and the level of risk they pose to the general public.

These priority categories are documented below-

Priority 1 – Dead, dying or dangerous trees. Trees in this category warrant work to make safe within 3 months.

Priority 2 – Tree(s) that are showing signs of decay or stress. These trees will be monitored for further decline but do not warrant work to be undertaken immediately including trees that need to be pruned or felled in relation to insurance claims

Re-Inspection – Tree(s) that are causing an issue to a resident or residents (such as dropping leaves/sap on cars or creating shade). These trees fall outside of Priority categories 1 and 2.

The process for tree inspection includes a ground inspection to evaluate if there are any trees that are hazardous and require maintenance works or additional inspection. This inspection would be recorded on Plymouth City Councils Tree Management database. This incorporates the identification of the existing tree problem (if any) and stipulate any remedial action necessary based on best practice to address the specific issue.

The Tree Management Statement also deals with tree selection for new plantings ensuring the 'Right Tree, Right Place' ethos governs decision making as well as ensuring there is a good mix of trees to further encourage wildlife and biodiversity within the city boundaries.

3. Implementation

The management statement has been drafted to standardise how all requests for tree work are dealt with in Plymouth and it seeks to detail to Plymouth City Council Officers, Elected members and residents how trees are being and will be managed now and in the future.

Application of the management statements will ensure trees within Plymouth are managed in a pro-active and systematic manner, leading to improvements in tree health and a more sustainable tree population.

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TREE MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

Street Scene Services



DOCUMENT CONTROL

Author: Gareth Harrison-Poole
 Department: Street Scene Services
 Distribution:
 Review date; October 2012

DOCUMENT HISTORY / CHANGES

Version 1.0	Gareth Harrison-Poole	20 Aug 2012	Set up original document
Version 1.1	Gareth Harrison-Poole	05 Sep 2012	Changes made following comments by NMaker
Version 1.2	Gareth Harrison-Poole	11 Sep 2012	Changes made following internal comments. Section numbers added
Version 1.3	Gareth Harrison-Poole	09 Oct 2012	Hedgerow section added. Changes made following internal comments
Version 1.4	Gareth Harrison-Poole	22 Jan 2013	Minor changes made following internal comments
Version 1.5	Gareth Harrison-Poole	07 Mar 2013	Hedgerow section amended
Version 1.6	Gareth Harrison-Poole	07 Mar 2013	Appendix 2 added
Version 1.7	Gareth Harrison-Poole	19 Sep 2013	Minor changes to priorities following internal comments

DRAFT

1.0 Introduction

This tree management policy is designed to provide a framework for the management of trees owned and managed by Plymouth City Council. It sets out the guiding principles for managing our tree stock, for guiding arboricultural management decisions on all Council owned and managed tree stock.

Trees enhance the quality of life in the urban environment and form an important part of its diversity. They contribute to our health and well being and enhance the enjoyment of the city.

2.0 Aims and Objectives

These overall objectives will be achieved by implementing and continuously developing the management statements contained in this document.

The policy statements have been formed to ensure that the large range and benefits of Plymouth's tree stock are all considered and provide a framework for effective management.

3.0 Aims

- carry out regular inspections to identify problems early and take preventative action, example, felling of dead, diseased or dangerous trees in high traffic areas before it falls naturally;
- retain trees unless there are external influences on arboricultural, environmental, or risk-related reasons not to do so;
- grow a wide range of tree species through our planting programmes;
- where necessary proactively manage our trees based on maintenance cycles ranging from 1 - 5 years depending on age, distance from property, species, health and other arboricultural factors;
- not remove or prune trees for the following reasons:
 - I) Seasonal nuisance, to reduce leaf fall and berries or honeydew
 - II) To reduce activities of birds or invertebrates
 - III) To change natural light levels
 - IV) To improve TV reception for satellite or improve vistas
 - V) To enable solar panel installation

4.0 Objectives

To manage the tree resource, through best technical practice for the multiple aims of landscape, biodiversity, conservation, amenity and environmental benefits.

To guide elected members, employees, contractors and residents on the management principles for Plymouth's tree stock.

5.0 Tree types

5.1 Street trees

Street trees are defined as planted and growing in pavements and road verges along the city's highway network.

Street trees are beneficial to the city, they help to filter traffic pollution, and they can provide shade to car parking and pedestrian passage. A tree-lined street will improve the appearance of a street. In most cases property value is increased with street trees.

5.2 Trees in parks

Trees growing in the city's parks and green spaces, including cemeteries are the most significant in terms of providing visual amenity and valuable in providing leisure extensions. If the tree cover is to survive, their high value will remain in perpetuity from the benefits derived from a sustained high quality management programme.

5.3 Trees on non PCC land

Private tree owners have a direct responsibility for their trees. However The Highways Act 1980 allows the Plymouth City Council to serve notice on a landowner (or occupier of the land) to undertake specified works or works as necessary to remove a danger or obstruction, within 14 days of the serving of the notice. Failure to do so would result in the Local Authority being able to undertake the work and recover all reasonable costs in undertaking the work. The Local Authority also have powers under the same Act to enter private property with no notice to remove any severe or imminent threat from a tree in land adjacent to the highway. This would be instructed as part of the duties of the controlling authority to take action to remove any danger to the highway.

TMS 1

The Council will not carry out general tree work on private property at our own expense. Any tree works carried out on land not owned by us will be a chargeable service.

The Council will prosecute any tree owner who carries out or allows another to carry out on his/her behalf unauthorised works to a tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order or within a Conservation Area.

5.4 Trees in woodland

The Council is keen to ensure that woodland management across the Plymouth is consistent and that knowledge and examples of best practice are shared between the different organisations responsible for woodlands.

As a local authority with a duty of care to residents and visitors to the city there is a need to implement and continually develop a risk-based approach to tree maintenance.

There is a growing need for the Council to provide accurate information on all of its assets, to show transparency in local government processes. One of the ways we meet this is through independently verified management systems. Our Street Scene Services Department is certified to BS EN ISO9001:2009 and this must be reflected in our overall approach to managing trees in the urban environment.

6.0 Risk Management

6.1 Principles of tree risk management

Tree risk management is a systematic and proactive approach that prioritises work based on potential risk of hazardous trees. This assessment method provides an efficient process for establishing an inspection schedule and methods, and enables the prioritisation of works based on perceived risk.

TMS 2

The Council will carry out regular inspections of trees in parks and open spaces.

6.2 Tree work priorities

Each tree or groups of trees that have been inspected will be given a category based on the ground inspection information (ascertained through the application of VTA or QTRA) and the level of risk they pose to the general public.

TMS 3

The Council will only carry out tree work based on its listed priorities.

These priority categories are documented below-

Priority 1 – Dead, dying or dangerous trees. Trees in this category warrant work to make safe within 3 months.

Priority 2 – Tree(s) that are showing signs of decay or stress. These trees will be monitored for further decline but do not warrant work to be undertaken immediately including trees that need to be pruned or felled in relation to insurance claims

Re-Inspection – Tree(s) that are causing an issue to a resident or residents (such as dropping leaves/sap on cars or creating shade). These trees fall outside of Priority categories 1 and 2.

6.3 Risk management procedure

A proactive tree management system is coupled with scheduled tree inspections to identify and mitigate future incidents. Plymouth City Council uses a systematic process that utilises tree assessment and management works based on levels of risk.

TMS 4

The Plymouth City Council will programme tree inspections and management works to ensure the health and safety of trees is maintained and the potential for tree-related damage is kept to a reasonable minimum.

Tree risk zones are classified as High Risk, Moderate Risk and Low Risk, to show how these areas are to be treated in relation to the type and timing of scheduled tree inspections. The 'risk zone' determines the timing of scheduled tree inspections and is shown in table 1. The method of scheduled inspection will also vary depending on the risk zone and type.

The process for tree inspection includes a ground inspection to evaluate if there are any trees that are hazardous and require maintenance works or additional inspection. This inspection would be recorded on Plymouth City Councils Tree Management database. This incorporates the identification of the existing tree problem (if any) and stipulate any remedial action necessary based on best practice to address the specific issue.

Further to this the following information is gathered to ensure sufficient information to allow for relevant monitoring and decision making -

- Inspection date and officer
- Location
- Species
- Age
- Tree measurements; height, canopy spread and trunk diameter
- Condition and health of the tree
- Any defects, i.e. damage to stem or limbs, decay
- Work history
- Recommendations

The inspections will generate maintenance works that will be prioritised (see Section 6.2 for priority descriptions).

Determining the level of risk is based on public use and tree within public area, which could be considered to be low, moderate or high the tree characteristics, including tree condition, species characteristics or age, and location factors and further considerations, the presence of known 'problem' species and declining tree populations.

Table I presents the risk classification, inspection schedule and method of inspections.

Table I: Tree risk categories and inspection schedules

Risk Zone Category	Location
High Risk	High-use parks and sport grounds and high use areas within a park; Playgrounds Buildings Shopping precincts Tree's on the annual monitoring list School playgrounds – Where PCC are contracted to do so Street trees with very high-risk tree characteristics such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tree roots causing severe pavement buckling - Close to buildings - Overhanging bus routes Main thoroughfares: congested intersections and visually obstructed traffic signs and stoplights and street lights.
Moderate Risk	General parks Parking areas/Car Parks Minor roads
Low Risk	Low use public areas within dispersed recreation, e.g., Open areas, Nature Reserves, playing fields

(Note – the location list is not exhaustive)

6.4 Tree risk assessment method

Tree inspections will be carried out by qualified and experienced arborists that can demonstrate good judgement by their arboricultural knowledge and experiences of tree assessment methods on tree condition, location, land use and perceived risk. The main principles of tree assessment are the Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) method and the Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA).

The VTA is a method of evaluating the structural condition, health and stability of a tree. The first stage is the visual inspection of the tree for defect, symptoms and vitality. If a defect is suspected on the basis of the symptoms, thorough examination is carried out. If the defect is confirmed remedial action will be carried out to reduce the risk the tree or limb poses.

The Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA) system applies accepted risk management principles to tree safety management. The system can assist the identification of acceptable risk levels and priority for action.

Tree risk assessment methods generally consider three components of tree failure: risk-target value, probability of failure, and impact potential.

Tree hazard is able to assess and quantify the risk, therefore the risk can be kept within acceptable or reasonable limits with appropriate risk control measures. The assessment of tree hazards will enable managers to operate and actions can mitigate the tree risk to a minimize level.

TMS 5

The Council will classify the tree risk zones and undertake inspections and subsequent tree work based on risk.

6.5 Ground inspections

Ground inspection can be applied for scheduled tree inspections. The method can also be adopted to execute more detailed street tree inspections. These could be grouped into two types, informal and routine.

Informal: A quick scan by to pick out a tree with an obvious warning sign after reports of damage or following significant storms

Routine Programme: Individual tree inspection to pick out obvious warning signs and completing the inspection checklist

6.6 Specialised diagnostic tools

Tree risk inspections provide a systematic method of assessing tree by evaluating the level of risk trees will cause hazardous to public safety occasionally visual inspection is insufficient to evaluate all probability of tree failure. In-depth inspections and the use of specialized diagnostic tools maybe required.

Decay assessments determine the location and extent of decay exist in a tree to assess the structural integrity of the tree. The outer shell of sound wood is measured to ensure safe limits are met and the tree does not pose an unacceptable

level of risk. The use of specialised diagnostic tools will only be used in extreme cases where the qualified arboriculturalists can not ascertain sufficient information about the health of a tree from a ground inspection.

6.7 Ancient trees

We recognise the importance of mature and ancient trees and will balance safety with our duty to protect the environment. Higher levels of risk will be acceptable in areas of lower footfall (e.g. the middle of a woodland site) as opposed to highly visited areas (e.g. play areas). This will allow us to keep veteran trees to encourage biodiversity without creating undue risk.

6.8 Method of review

Plymouth City Council Street Scene Services department is certified to BS EN ISO 9001:2009 (Risk Management) and this must be reflected in our overall approach to managing trees in the urban environment. The tree risk management program will be reviewed every four years. The process will include reassessment of classification into risk zones, and evaluation of the tree inspection and assessment methods and recording processes.

7.0 Tree Removal

Plymouth City Council will seek to avoid tree removal wherever possible. The potential risk of a tree is related to the tree size and structure that increase the opportunities of tree failure. Public safety is the first consideration on tree removal request. Due to safety reasons, the action should be to reduce the high risk to an acceptable level or mitigate it through treating the tree or removing the tree. All tree management options will be investigated prior to the recommendation for removal.

Plymouth City Council will only remove trees if the following reasons exist:

- A tree is dead, dying, diseased or dangerous
- A tree is seriously infected with a fungus or a disease or fungus which threatens to spread to other trees
- The tree has caused damage to property, roads and buildings or is likely to cause damage to adjacent structures & underground services where pruning is not a viable option
- A tree severely interferes with adjacent tree or tree group to the extent with fully potential development.
- The tree is a species which it is known will ultimately outgrow its location and in doing so unreasonably restrict the use of the areas
- Trees that are proven to be the cause of subsidence by qualified professional arborist
- The tree stands in the way of agreed development work via Plymouth City Council's Planning Committee

TMS 6

In case of tree disease outbreak, we will provide advice and information regarding control and prevention methods to private tree owners, in line with national guidance and advice.

Where birds are found to be nesting in trees, tree works will be delayed until the end of the nesting season unless there is a specific Health and Safety reason that requires urgent remedy. Any trees identified and confirmed to be supporting roosting bats will not be worked on until advice is sought and remedial action agreed.

TMS 7

The Council will not carry out tree removal in direct response to any natural or seasonal phenomena.

Plymouth City Council will not carry out tree removal for the following reasons:

- Natural and seasonal phenomena as leaf fall as berries, honeydew;
- Emission of sunlight or man made lighting during any part of the day;
- TV or satellite signal reception;
- Blocking or obstruction of a view from a residence

7.1 Tree removal associated with infrastructure improvements

When tree removal is to facilitate the construction of new infrastructure or the maintenance of existing infrastructure a consultation process is sought with the relevant stakeholders to ensure the tree work is warranted and carried out minimise the impact on the treescape.

Plymouth City Council will work with developers to ensure the value of trees in developments are championed and any existing trees in planned development sites are protected. If tree removal is warranted by planned new development Plymouth City Council will ensure the trees are relocated and/or replaced with appropriate species.

7.2 Unauthorised tree removal

If a Council managed tree or group of trees is removed by any person or authority without Council authorisation, that person may be required to pay the full cost of tree reinstatement for tree purchasing, tree planting and a minimum two-year tree maintenance period of the tree.

TMS 8

Under the Town and Country Planning Act (1990), Plymouth City Council has responsibility to protect certain identified trees under Tree Preservation Orders. Our planning officers can protect the tree from lopping, topping, cutting down or willful damage.

8.0 Procedures for Tree Work Requests

8.1 Tree work requests

Tree work will only be carried out following the inspection from Plymouth City Council's qualified tree officers or approved qualified contractors. Residents may ask for an inspection by contacting Plymouth City Council and the tree officer will be scheduled to inspect the tree(s) if it is warranted. All tree inspection requests shall be recorded and then inspected and assessed by a suitably qualified person. All tree work should be carried out to BS 3998 (2010) Tree Work recommendations.

8.2 Approvals

All approvals for tree removal shall be authorised by Plymouth City Council. Tree work requests will be rejected if the tree(s) do not meet one of the criteria listed in section 7.0.

8.3 Out of Hours

Plymouth City Council operates a 24hr on call service and we have a selection of tree maintenance contractors available to operate within the city out of office hours if the

9.0 Tree Selection, Planting and Replacement

9.1 Tree selection

An appropriate planting site and tree selection can have the following benefits:

- Mitigate conflicts between tree roots and adjacent buildings /property and road surface;
- Reduce the occurrence of tree disease through selecting resistant type of trees ;
- Reduce maintenance cost of tree pruning and root protection;
- Reduced tree demand like tolerances of drought in urban environment;
- Attractive streetscapes that emphasize the landscape and architectural character

TMS 9

The Council will create a varied and sustainable tree population in parks and open spaces.

Plymouth City Council will take consideration of plant tolerances and adaptability in tree selection for all planting schemes. Based on the principles of 'right tree, right place', appropriate tree selection can minimize nuisance and maintenance cost.

Tree selection will need to consider:

- Ecology considerations of tree diversity, maintaining and the opportunity for contributing to local biodiversity
- Availability, concerning the space available and potential size and numbers of tree planting programme
- Functional and spatial considerations that relates to the tree root system and limited impact on adjacent buildings /property, pavement damage.
- Ground conditions (in particular soil type and drainage), relates to a trees ability to tolerate urban conditions
- Health considerations, select low levels of toxic or allergenic characteristics of tree species
- Aesthetic considerations for enhancing the visual amenity of a streetscape or area
- Historic associations and the opportunity for new tree planting to reflect historic planting patterns

General guidelines for tree selection:

- Native tree species will be given priority for tree planting.
- Species will be selected that can maintain spatial constraints within a street, e.g. pedestrian and vehicle clearances, overhead power line clearances, root volume restraints and hard surfaces.
- Select tree species that have moderate to high tolerance of stress relating to climatic suitability, soil oxygen levels, soil compaction, drought, pest and diseases, high wind and atmospheric pollution.
- Priority will be given to tree species that do not need additional establishment to keep in safe and aesthetically pruning practices. Tree species that can cause damage to property/buildings will be avoided.
- Using tree species that are known to have low or manageable litter drop, such as leaves, flowers, fruit and bark.

9.2 Tree planting guide

Plymouth City Council will seek to ensure that all new tree planting is planted in a suitable location with tree pit (if necessary); appropriate size, ground preparation, staking, irrigation and protection. The choice of tree species will need to take into consideration local conditions including the space available, soil type, street character and presence of services.

TMS 10

The Council will select species based on the principles of ‘right tree, right place’. When selecting trees for planting in the street, the council will select the appropriate species and location. Specification of all new tree planting by the Council or partners is approved prior to implementation in the tree planting programme.

9.3 Tree pit

If trees are being planting in a built up area adjacent to development or infrastructure, tree pits may be required to be used. Prior to planting the excavation works will need to be inspected by a qualified arboriculturist.

Tree pit location and specification will need to consider:

- Type of surface
- Ground conditions (e.g. soil type, pH and drainage)
- Space available for the tree pit
- Presence of street lights
- Proposed tree species
- Shape of tree pit

9.4 Tree root barrier

Root barriers are used to prevent or reduce conflicts between tree roots and adjacent buildings. Barriers provide deflection of lateral growing roots down below the depth of the barrier or constrict them within a designated area.

The type and size of tree root barriers installation will be determined by assessing the factors shown below:

- Tree species
- Tree age
- Tree condition
- Relative tolerance of tree to root severance
- Distance available for root pruning
- Potential of tree root conflict
- Soil type
- Distance from tree to infrastructure
- Significance
- Feasibility

10.0 Trees and the Environment

10.1 Biodiversity

Tree’s and woodland’s, including traditional orchards, are very important to the city in terms of providing a wide range of habitats and biodiversity for a large range and

variety of mammals, birds and invertebrates. Trees make a contribution by acting as food source, nesting location, roost sites and as links between otherwise fragmented habitats.

Tree, woodland and orchard planting provide important chances for enhancing biodiversity in Plymouth. Native trees provide wildlife habitat for nesting / foraging opportunities, and cover for birds from predators. Orchards are hotspots for biodiversity supporting a wide range of wildlife and containing UK BAP priority habitats and species, as well as an array of Nationally Rare and Nationally Scarce species. Trees also provide roosts, commuting routes and foraging opportunities for bats.

TMS 11

The Council will ensure that its woodlands are managed as a long term sustainable resource for the public, for education and for nature conservation and biodiversity. The Council will encourage expansion of the urban woodland in appropriate locations ensuring layout and selection of native species of local provenance to reflect the local woodland character.

The UK Biodiversity Action Plan was produced in 1994 and sets out action plans to identify, conserve and protect existing biological diversity in the UK, and identify opportunities for enhancement. Target habitats include wet woodland, neutral grassland, ancient hedgerows and Traditional Orchards. The creation of such is widely supported and encouraged throughout Plymouth ensuring planting schemes have community involvement and are suitable and sympathetic for the local area.

TMS 12

The Council will allow to remain *in situ* any dead or felled trees in order to create wildlife habitats. The Council will manage woodland to fulfill its obligation as owners to ensure safety of people and property whilst remembering that woodlands are natural places and the level of acceptable risk must reflect this. Trees within our woodlands will not be felled without adequate arboricultural or legal justification. Where appropriate the Council will ensure standing dead and fallen wood is left on site unless there are sound conservation and / or safety reasons for its removal. Natural regeneration will be supported on appropriate sites.

10.2 Climate change

Climate change is the biggest issue facing the world and threat to the presence of trees in urban areas. The Forestry Commission has noticed that the climate of the UK will become milder and wetter in winter, and significantly hotter and drier in the

summer periods in the coming years. As a result of this, trees are likely to experience drought stress in the summer and will be more easily affected by pest and disease.

TMS 13

Correct species selection during new planting schemes will prevent planting tree species that are intolerant to climate change.

11.0 HEDGEROWS

Hedgerows play an important role in the city providing shelter, creating landscape features and defining boundaries. They also provide an important habitat for wildlife and are often seen as defining the character of the English landscape.

Many hedges and trees grow on the edge of the highway and mark its boundary with private property. In such cases it is the responsibility of the adjacent landowner or occupier to properly maintain them. This also applies to trees that overhang the highway or those which may fall on to it. Plymouth City Council will maintain all hedgerows growing within the highway limits.

11.1 Maintenance

Maintenance on Plymouth City council owned hedges is carried out usually twice a year. Inspections are also carried out twice a year (During February/March & the end of May /beginning of June) any work resulting from the inspections will be actioned by the end of the coinciding inspection periods (end of March and beginning of June). This removes the initial early growth to stop summer growth over growing paths and roads.

Inspections on private hedges are also carried out twice a year by Plymouth City Council's highway contractor (During February/March & the end of May /beginning of June). Any work resulting from the inspections will be programmed for Street Scene Services to action by the end of the coinciding inspection periods (end of March and beginning of June). This removes the initial early growth to stop summer growth over growing paths and roads. Plymouth City Council's highway contractor will seek to claim back the cost incurred.

Autumn/winter maintenance requires all three sides to be cut back (if warranted) to ensure hedges do not outgrow their location. The general accepted standard for hedgerow maintenance is to remove all vegetation back to last year's growth point.

Please see Appendix 2 for flow diagram detailing the process in more detail.

ACTION PLAN

Action No	How we are going to do it?	How will we know we have been successful?	Timescale for action	Priority	Responsibility for delivery
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					

APPENDIX I: BENEFITS OF TREES

Trees provide a vital benefit to the city. Trees planted in the city help to make life more pleasant for residents and visitors, their presence can help towards creating tranquillity and help reduce stress. Trees have many benefits, for example, they:

Provide shelter - Trees reduce wind speed around buildings. Dappled shade from trees provides a useful barrier from ultra violet radiation.

Cool the air - Trees regulate evaporation, provide shade and absorb heat. Trees release oxygen into the air.

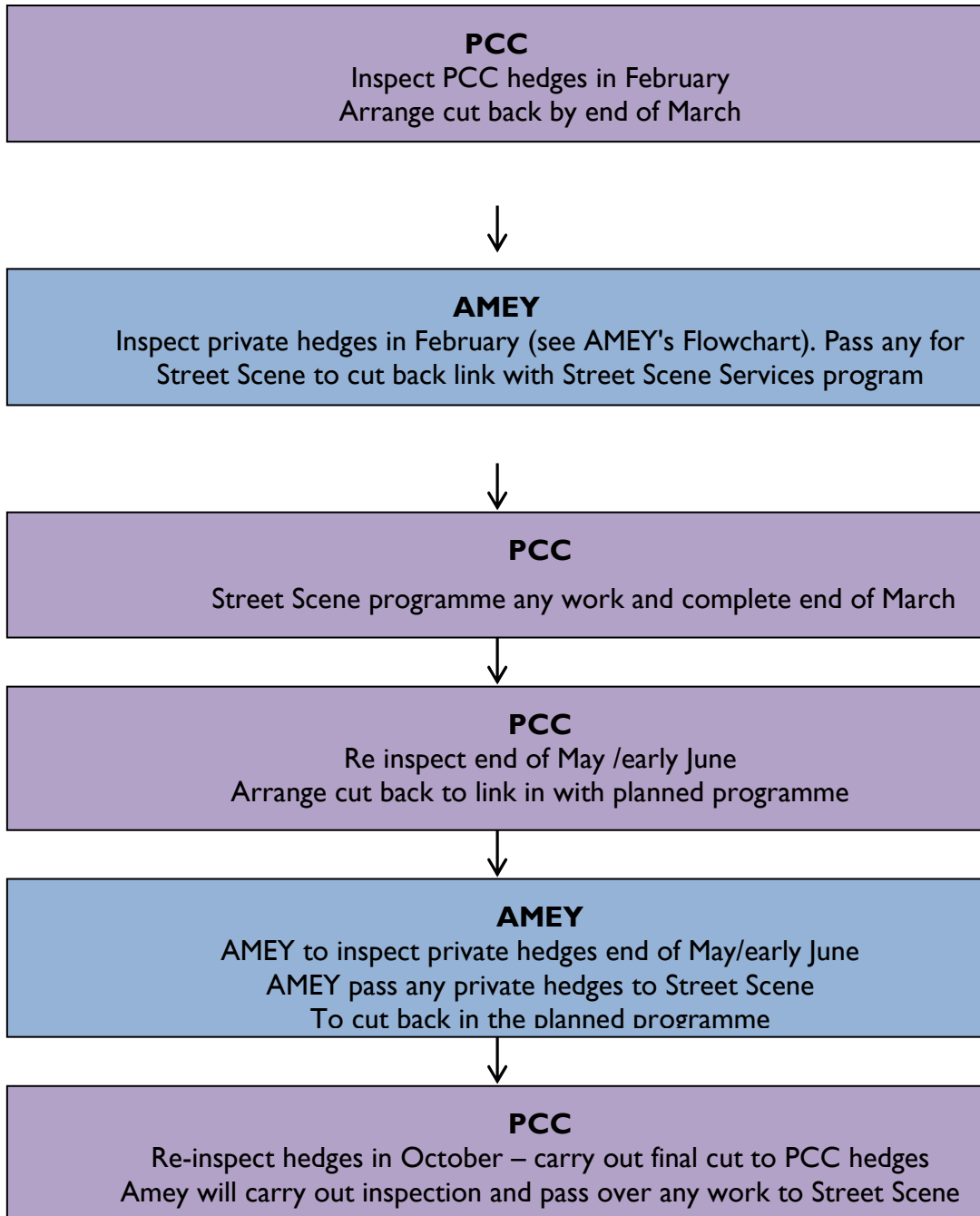
Stabilise soil - Soil erosion on areas where there are no trees is up to one thousand times greater than a tree covered area.

Filter air pollution - Trees act as filters to remove particulate pollution deposited on leaves. Trees remove carbon dioxide from the air. Trees planted close together can absorb noise provide sonic barrier.

Create wildlife habitats - Trees of varying ages provide a wide range of habitats and biodiversity for a large range and variety of mammals, birds and insects.

Improve the landscape - The presence of trees provides a softening effect to built structures and the built environment. Trees can form backdrops to urban settings to improve people's enjoyment of the city's landscape and form a visual screen.

**APPENDIX 2: PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL STREET SCENE SERVICES
PROTOCOL WITH PLYMOUTH TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS/AMEY**



ROADSIDE MEMORIAL GUIDANCE

Your Plymouth Scrutiny Panel – 04 November 2013



1. Purpose of the report:

To provide Your Plymouth Scrutiny Panel with an update on the city Council's view on roadside memorials and other memorialisation that occurs mainly on Council controlled land, following sudden accidental road deaths. It provides guidance to the bereaved, nearby residents, Police, elected members and Council officers.

2. Background:

Recent high profile roadside memorials have highlighted that Plymouth City Council needs to have a coordinated, consistent, robust but sensitive approach in dealing with memorials of this nature. Roadside memorials can be difficult to manage. There are many ways to permanently memorialise an individual in a dignified manner, without the use of a roadside memorial, and the Council offers a range of options to residents through Weston Mill and Efford Crematorium, which have extensive grounds and gardens of remembrance. Memorials in the grounds of the crematorium are easier to look after and visit, and are in a more pleasant environment that allows quiet reflection and contemplation.

Plymouth City Council officers have met with representatives of the policing team and highways contactor AMEY to ensure that there is a consistent message given to all parties when dealing with roadside memorials.

3. Implementation

The guidance is not meant to bring about the immediate removal of small temporary memorials that cause no distraction, hazard or distress to others, but to control the establishment of large memorials that could present such difficulties for other road users.

The aim is to ensure that so long as a memorial does not give rise to any hazard or nuisance, it can be allowed to remain for a period of 13 months (to allow the marking of the first anniversary of the accident), after which time, Council officers can contact the relatives or friends of the bereaved and arrange for any items that are still wanted to be temporarily stored at Weston Mill / Efford Crematorium, or returned.

The guidance also offers alternative longer terms memorials to bereaved families through the Green Gifts programme such as Bulb planting and tree planting. These longer term memorials require the proposed memorial to be vetted and sanctioned by Plymouth City Council.

ROADSIDE MEMORIAL GUIDANCE



1.0 Introduction

This document gives the Council's view on roadside memorials and other memorialisation that occurs mainly on Council controlled land, following sudden accidental road deaths. It provides guidance to the bereaved, nearby residents and Police or Council officers.

Roadside memorials can be difficult to manage. There are many ways to permanently memorialise an individual in a dignified manner, without the use of a roadside memorial, and the Council offers a range of options to residents through Weston Mill / Efford Crematorium, which has extensive grounds and gardens of remembrance. Options include memorial rosebushes with name plaques, benches and ornamental shrubs and trees. Memorials in the grounds of the crematorium are easier to look after and visit, and are in a more pleasant environment that allows quiet reflection and contemplation.

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/communityandliving/deathandbereavement/cemeteriesandcrematoria.htm>

However, the Council accepts that there may be a need to acknowledge a sudden death caused by a traffic accident, by marking an area of highway verge with an informal memorial e.g. flowers, small decorative items, or a other items placed on highway verge. This practice has grown considerably in recent years. Usually, tributes are placed for a short period of time, immediately following an accident, but this may not always be the case.

As the grieving process is intensely private and emotionally charged, the Council has no wish to unduly interfere or intrude, especially in the very difficult days or weeks immediately after an accident.

This guidance is not meant to bring about the immediate removal of small temporary memorials that cause no distraction, hazard or distress to others, but to control the establishment of large memorials that could present such difficulties for other road users. The aim is to ensure that so long as a memorial does not give rise to any hazard or nuisance after which time, Council officers can contact the relatives or friends of the bereaved and arrange for any items that are still wanted to be temporarily stored at Weston Mill / Efford Crematorium, or returned.

For personal floral tribute sites if the family can be contacted, sensitive discussions about deconstruction should be offered as well as the choice to take cards and notes. If the sites are substantial following a major incident, the option to separate the flowers for composting should at least be considered, if the remains of the flowers are to be removed they should be collected discreetly (e.g. at a time when there will be few if any passers-by or any traffic, such as early on a Sunday morning & ensure the date does not clash with anniversary dates such as birthdays or the anniversary of the incident) and there may be a historic value to retaining cards and notes.

Whether it occurs in respect of personal or major floral tributes, deconstruction needs to be undertaken in the knowledge that people directly affected by the event (e.g. survivors, bereaved family and friends) may be watching. A letter will be attached to the site to

indicate where these items have been removed to and the time period it will be kept to ensure affected parties are aware of the removal and the reasons why.

2.0 Time allowed for a memorial to remain

The Council cannot authorise long term or permanent roadside memorials. Laying of floral, or other tributes will be allowed on the understanding that they will be removed within 13 months of the accident and that they do not block sight lines, or otherwise present a danger through obstruction or distraction to motorists. This assessment will be made by a Council Highways Inspector.

After the 13 months, remaining floral items will be disposed of. Non floral items will be taken to Weston Mill / Efford Crematorium, stored for 3 months and then disposed of, but known family or friends will be informed of this beforehand, where possible.

In some instances, and after the 13 months have elapsed, the memorial site may become established as a place to revisit on anniversaries etc. This situation might not arise if a permanent memorial has been arranged elsewhere and the need may eventually fade with the passage of time. However, the Council will not intervene at this point unless a hazard or nuisance is being caused as described above. On anniversaries such as this, an officer (Police or Council) will liaise with the family to remove any new personal items from the roadside, 7 days later.

3.0 Suitability of memorials and sites

Where a memorial site is close to properties, residents' views may be taken into account in determining where personal memorials and tributes should be placed.

Assessments of highway memorial sites may be carried out by the Police and or by a Council Highways Inspector. Items must not be placed at locations that are hazardous or difficult to access, such as the central reservation of dual carriageways, on busy roundabouts or very close to the carriageway of any road. Items that are considered to have an effect on road safety may be removed at any time, but will be retained if possible, as above.

Personal memorials and tributes should not include materials that might physically deteriorate rapidly, detracting from the immediate area, and indeed, the temporary memorial itself. There should be no moving objects such as toy windmills or wind chimes, no lights of any sort and decorations such as tinsel that could distract road users should be avoided

White bikes (also known as Ghost Bikes) are a relatively recent development where a white bike is parked at the site where a cyclist has been killed in a traffic accident. These also often attract floral tributes. As long as the white bike isn't positioned in a way or at a location where it could present an obstruction or hazard to other road users they should be left alone. At major roundabouts and/or junctions they serve as a reminder to motorists and cyclists alike, to concentrate and be alert to the presence of other road users.

4.0 Alternative long term memorials

Aside from the possibility of using memorial services provided at Weston Mill / Efford Crematorium, after the roadside memorial has finally gone, friends or relatives may wish to request that a memorial bench or tree be placed on Council controlled land, such as a green space or at a suitable point along a footpath. Consideration will be given to such requests, but it may not always be possible to accommodate them.

If a bench or tree is requested, Street Scene Services and Highways Officers will assess the preferred location for suitability. If the preferred location is not acceptable, efforts will be made to find a mutually acceptable alternative. Those requesting benches or trees will be liable for all costs incurred by the Council. Tree species must be appropriate to a location and be in line with any existing tree planting policies. Planting will be carried out by the Council's contractor but initial watering will be the responsibility of those requesting it.

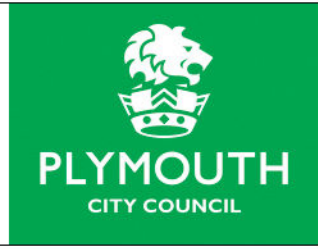
Factors that will be considered by Street Scene Services Officers when siting a memorial bench or tree include impact on the visual amenity of an area, the potential for antisocial behaviour, the need to ensure access for highway maintenance general highway access requirements. If it is not possible to agree a site it may still be possible for friends or relatives of the deceased to arrange for a memorial at Weston Mill / Efford Crematorium as previously detailed.

The Council does not accept responsibility for the maintenance of any personal memorials and tributes, or the loss, damage, removal or relocation of temporary roadside memorials that may occur through vandalism, or due to road maintenance or construction activities. The Council and others must continue to perform all construction and maintenance works required on the Public highway, and this may include areas where there are personal Memorials and tributes.

PUBLIC FUNERALS

'Your Plymouth' Scrutiny

4 November 2013



What is a Public Funeral?

Plymouth City Council has a legal duty under the Public Health (Control of Diseases) Act 1984 to

‘cause to be buried or cremated the body of any person who dies or has been found dead, within its area, in any case where it appears to the local authority that no suitable arrangements for the disposal of the body have been or are being made otherwise than by the local authority.’

This duty applies to anyone who has died within the Plymouth City boundary including non residents. Current arrangements excludes any person who dies within Plymouth after being admitted to a ward at the local Hospitals. Hospital have similar arrangements in place.

The following table indicates the numbers of enquiries and cases where the Council duty to make arrangements has been invoked.

Public funerals	Male	Female	Total where council made arrangements	Additional Enquiries where advice given
2008/ 2009	27	1	28	
2009/ 2010	5	3	8	8
2010/ 2011	15	2	17	10
2011/ 2012	14	6	20	12
2012/ 2013	21	5	26	13
2013/2014 to date (22/10/13)	4	3	7 to date	25

Procedural steps

The Public Protection Service (PPS) undertake the Public Funerals duties on behalf of the Council. When PPS are informed of a death enquiries are made as to whether there is a next of kin.

To identify next of kin, officers undertake research into the deceased including identifying and where appropriate gathering together personal papers and assets. Officers attempt to locate a will. If this is found, contact is made with the executor. In most cases a will is not found.

If there is no next of kin or executor or any other person prepared to make the necessary arrangements the following steps are followed: -

- The Council arrange a dignified but no frills non-denominational burial, using forfeit graves. Burial is currently the cheapest option and it enables any next of kin who may be identified in the future to make alternative arrangements.
- PPS specifies a graveside service, where the Funeral Director conducts a short non-denominational service.
- The Council has a right to recover any expenses including officer time from the estate. The deceased’s property is searched, and if any assets or valuables are found in the property, they are sold to recover the expenses. If the deceased owns the property, it would be referred to the Treasury Solicitor, if there is no next of kin.

- In many cases, there are no assets.
- The officer searches are conducted under controlled procedures, by a minimum of two officers, who video record their actions. The procedure and the search are subject to external audit.
- The sale of assets is controlled by procedures and is subject to external audit.
- The sales process is via a local auctioneer.
- Where assets are liquidised a claim is made by PPS for the cost of the funeral and officer time from the estate
- If more than £500 funds remain after the full payment for the Council's costs is made, the estate is referred to the Treasury Solicitor. Where a next of kin or executor is known, they are advised to approach a solicitor to recover the funds remaining.
- The Banks or Building Societies often do not release the details of the amounts held in the bank accounts of the deceased to PPS officers. However where accounts are identified officers will seek to recover our costs from those accounts.
- It is difficult for PPS officers to see if the financial institutions refer the residual estate of the deceased to the Treasury Solicitor.
- Many properties are rented and the cost of clearing the property, after any available valuables are sold, is the responsibility of the landlord.

Where the next of kin are on benefits, the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) provide a Funeral payment, on application, entitling successful claimants to help with the cost of a basic funeral.

PPS officers will provide advice on how to obtain quotes from Funeral Directors known to the service to ensure the most competitive quote is obtained.

Where there are no next of kin or family members are not on benefits, and cannot afford the cost or do not accept responsibility for the arrangements, and in effect 'walk away', PPS managers assess if the Council should accept responsibility for the burial. If it is clear that no other arrangements will be made, the Council accepts responsibility.

How much does a funeral cost?

The cost to the Council for each Public Funeral, is in the region of £2000 to £2200 but could be more, dependant on the time spent investigating the case.

This cost is made up of the cost of officer time expended in investigating the deceased and collecting assets together, the officer time in organising the burial of the deceased, the cost of the burial and the cost of funeral directors services.

PPS is exploring ways of reducing the cost of Public Funerals. Currently we use local Funeral Directors. The Council offers a tender for the provision of public funerals on an annual basis although the current tender agreement has been extended, whilst the Council review what service is provided. Information obtained from this scrutiny of services would be used to inform the tender process

PPS officers have identified two new funeral directors offering a different service whereby the body is collected and taken to a crematoria. These are at a significantly reduced price to the Local Funeral Directors, in the region of £1500.

PPS make next of kin or others who are taking responsibility for the arrangements of the deceased aware of all local Funeral Directors and the two newer types of service so they can make informed choices.

Issues suggested for consideration

- The funeral arrangements are made at a time to suit the Bereavement Service, rather than give a choice to family members. Should we accommodate the wishes of the family?
- Even when family members have not accepted responsibility, we still notify them of the time and date of the funeral. Should we continue to do this?
- The Council offer a simple, non-denominational burial, and no choice is given to family members for burial or cremation. The law requires that cremation should not be carried out if it was contrary to the wishes of the deceased, and if a next of kin was unable to be traced, the Council would always be legally required to provide a burial only. Should we offer a choice of burial or cremation to family members, even if cremation is more expensive?
- Should we employ a minister where the denomination of the deceased is known, which currently has a fee of £179?
- The service is basic and minimal and does not provide for flowers or anything but a graveside service, and no marking of a grave. Are the Council happy that this is acceptable? Some information is available from other Councils but further benchmarking data could be obtained about what is offered elsewhere.

YOUR PLYMOUTH

Tracking Resolutions and Recommendations
2013 - 2014



PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

Date and Minute number	Resolution	Progress
30/09/13 Minute 13	<p>Unauthorised Encampments</p> <p><u>Agreed</u> that membership of the cooperative review into Unauthorised Encampments is reduced from nine to five with a political ratio of 3:2. Chair and Vice-Chair to confirm their respective group nominations to the Democratic Support Officer.</p>	<p>Membership confirmed at Cllrs Tuffin, Bowyer, Darcy, Jarvis and Kate Taylor. First meeting took place on 15/10/13 with two further meetings scheduled to take place on 29/10/13 and 31/10/13.</p>
30/09/13 Minute 15	<p>Cabinet Member for Environment</p> <p><u>Agreed</u> that separate briefing reports in respect of Roadside Memorials, Tree Management and Public Funerals are submitted to the next meeting of the panel in order that members can consider more detailed information and review facts prior to deciding whether to take any of these issues further.</p>	<p>Briefing reports requested and are scheduled for consideration at panel meeting on 4/11/13.</p>
30/09/13 Minute 17	<p>Emergency Welfare Scheme</p> <p><u>Agreed</u> that a further update is submitted to the panel in six months' time when the scheme will have been in place for a year.</p>	<p>Added to work programme and scheduled for consideration at panel meeting on 10/03/14.</p>
30/09/13 Minute 18	<p>Work Programme</p> <p>(I) the co-operative review into Customer Services be deferred pending submission of a situation update report to, and attendance by the Assistant Director for Customers Services, at the panel's next meeting;</p>	<p>Update report requested and scheduled for consideration at panel meeting on 4/11/13.</p>

Date and Minute number	Resolution	Progress
	(2) that a situation report in respect of the level of personal debt in the City and how this is being managed (to include rent arrears) is submitted to the next panel meeting.	Situation report requested and scheduled for consideration at panel meeting on 4/11/13.

Action taken under delegated powers by Chair, Vice-Chair and Lead Officer on behalf of Cooperative Scrutiny Board.

Resolution	Target
<p>Cooperative Review</p> <p>The cooperative review for ‘the effect of the expansion of Plymouth University and its students on the surrounding residential areas’ was approved by the Chair, Vice-Chair and Lead Officer under delegated authority with three changes –</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the inclusion of Mutley; 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review to commence in early March 2014; 	March 2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review a previous piece of work that was completed in 2012; 	
<p><u>Agreed</u> that the review is undertaken by the Your Plymouth panel</p>	

Recommendation/Resolution status

Grey = Completed item.

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

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
	Roadside Memorials	Update on existing policy and current situation / issues	To identify whether further issue specific scrutiny action is required	
	Tree Management	Update on existing policy and current situation / issues	To identify whether further issue specific scrutiny action is required	Gareth Harrison-Poole
	Public Funerals	Update on existing policy and current situation / issues	To identify whether further issue specific scrutiny action is required	Nicola Horne
	Customer Services Transformation	Update on progress with project delivery	To establish whether it is still appropriate to continue with the planned Co-operative Review	Dave Saunders
	Personal Debt	To receive a situation report on the level of personal debt in the City and how this is being managed (to include rent arrears)	Personal debt and the growth of the pay day loan market is a major concern.	
10.03.14	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 after first 12 months of operation	Ann Thorpe

Cooperative Reviews	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 (to be reviewed following update report to panel on 04/11/13)	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
Cooperative Reviews Referred from Co-operative Scrutiny Board		
Review of Procedures used by the Council when dealing with unauthorised encampments	Commenced 15/10/13	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.
The effects of the expansion of Plymouth University and its students on the surrounding residential areas	To commence March 2014	<p>The expansion of Plymouth University over recent years has resulted in an increase in the student populations living in the surrounding areas to the University. The increase in students living in Mount Gould, Mutley, Greenbank and Lipson areas has had detrimental consequences which have predominantly been felt by local residents who have regularly had to deal with an increase in issues of Anti-Social Behaviour, noise, litter and reported crimes.</p> <p>The review will seek to analyse the effects of an increasing student population on the local surrounding areas to establish if a link exists between increased student populations and an increase in issues of ASB, noise, litter and reported crimes. To include a review of a previous piece of work completed in 2012.</p>

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REQUEST FOR A COOPERATIVE REVIEW



Please submit this document to Democratic Support once complete.

The request will be submitted to the Co-operative Scrutiny Board for consideration against the approval criteria and you will be notified of its success. If the Board approve the request for a Co-operative Review on the subject matter below then a project plan will be completed and you may be asked for further information.

What is the name of the review?	The effects of the expansion of Plymouth University and its students on the surrounding residential areas
Please provide a brief outline of the subject and scope of the review?	<p>The expansion of Plymouth University over recent years has resulted in an increase in the student populations living in the surrounding areas to the University. The increase in students living in Mount Gould, Mutley, Greenbank and Lipson areas has had detrimental consequences which have predominantly been felt by local residents who have regularly had to deal with an increase in issues of Anti-Social Behaviour, noise, litter and reported crimes.</p> <p>The review will seek to analyse the effects of an increasing student population on the local surrounding areas to establish if a link exists between increased student populations and an increase in issues of ASB, noise, litter and reported crimes. To include a review of a previous piece of work completed in 2012.</p>
Please outline the reasons as to why you believe a review needs to take place?	<p>The main reasons for the review are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There has been an increase in resident complaints to local ward councillors about ASB, noise and litter in the area; - There have been an increase in vandalism and reported crimes; - The University is committed to expansion and the local residents need to feel that there is an appropriate management plan for the area in order for the local community to benefit and feel safe;
What will the review attempt to achieve?	<p>The review will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - make recommendations to the University, Local Landlords, the Student Union, the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary on the need for the area to adopt an effective student management plan to alleviate the concerns and issues felt by local residents; - establish a better co-ordinated and joined-up approach to dealing with issues of ASB, noise, litter and crimes the University area and surrounding neighbourhoods; - attempt to create a central point of contact for local residents when they experience these issues; - look at best practice management plans from other

	University cities to establish the best way for students and local residents to live confidently and safely in their local communities.
Who will benefit from the review?	The review will provide benefits to a large section of the local community including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local residents; - Local businesses; - Students; - Landlords; - Plymouth University; - The Student Union; - The Devon and Cornwall Constabulary.
How long do you think the review might take?	The review will likely last approximately three – four meetings with an extensive witness schedule required in order for the cooperative review panel to make smart, evidenced based recommendations.
When do you think the review should commence and why?	The review should begin as soon as possible.
When do you think the review should be completed by and why?	The review should be completed no later than May 2014 in order for the recommendations to be agreed and implemented prior to Plymouth University's 2014 / 2015 student intake.
Review requested by?	Councillor Eddie Rennie

Received in Democratic Support Section:	Reviewed by the Co-operative Scrutiny Board:
Date: <input type="text"/>	Date: <input type="text"/>
Scrutiny Review Approved/Rejected	
If approved initial Project Plan meeting date:	