



**Democratic Support**

Plymouth City Council  
Ballard House  
Plymouth PL1 3BJ

Please ask for Lynn Young  
T (01752) 304163  
E [lynn.youngplymouth.gov.uk](mailto:lynn.youngplymouth.gov.uk)  
[www.plymouth.gov.uk/democracy](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/democracy)  
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#yourplymouth

## YOUR PLYMOUTH

Monday 14 December 2015

4.00 pm

Council House, Armada Way, Plymouth, PL1 2AA

**Members:**

Councillor Jordan, Chair

Councillor Kate Taylor, Vice Chair

Councillors Churchill, Damarell, Drean, Martin Leaves, Michael Leaves, Morris, Rennie, Riley and Sparling.

**Co-operative Representative:**

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

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

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**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 - 10)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2015.

#### 5. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT

(Pages 11 - 28)

The Panel will be provided with updates on Key Performance Indicators K22, K24, K25 and K52 of the Corporate Plan – Performance Report Q2 2015.

**A further report for this agenda item will be sent as a supplement.**

#### 6. PROBLEM DEBT REVIEW UPDATE

(Pages 29 - 36)

The Panel will be provided with an update on the Problem Debt Review.

#### 7. TRACKING RESOLUTIONS

(Pages 37 - 40)

The Panel will monitor progress on previous recommendations.

#### 8. WORK PROGRAMME

(Pages 41 - 44)

To review the Your Plymouth work programme for 2015 – 2016.

#### 9. EXEMPT BUSINESS

To consider passing a resolution under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item(s) of

business on the grounds that it (they) involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

## **PART II – PRIVATE MEETING**

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

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

NIL.

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## Your Plymouth

**Monday 12 October 2015**

### PRESENT:

Councillor Jordan, in the Chair.

Councillor Kate Taylor, Vice-Chair.

Councillors Churchill, Damarell, Drean, K Foster (substitute for Councillor Martin Leaves), Michael Leaves, Rennie, Riley and Sparling.

Co-opted Representative: Steve Meakin.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Martin Leaves and Morris.

Also in attendance: Councillor Philippa Davey, Cabinet Member for Safer and Stronger Communities, Councillor Penberthy, Cabinet Member for Co-operatives and Housing, Sarah Hopkins, Community Safety and Partnerships Manager, Chief Superintendent Andy Boulting, Devon and Cornwall Police, Pete Honeywell, Transformation Programmes Manager, Faye Batchelor-Hambleton, AD for Customer Services, Emma Rose, Strategic Development Manager (Customer Services), Pete Aley, Head of Neighbourhood and Community Services, Di Charlton, Lead Officer, and Katey Johns, Democratic Support Officer.

The meeting started at 4 pm and finished at 6.30 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.*

### 11. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with the constitution, the following declarations of interest were made in respect of items under consideration at this meeting –

<b>Name</b>	<b>Minute</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Interest</b>
Mr Steve Meakin	15 – Emergency Welfare Scheme Update	Works for the CAB who contribute financially to the scheme	Personal
	18 - Work Programme	Is a landlord of student accommodation	Personal

### **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

### 12. **Co-opted Representative**

On behalf of the panel, the Chair offered a warm welcome to Mr Steve Meakin who was continuing in his role as co-opted representative.

13. **Unauthorised Encampment Update**

Councillor Rennie referred to the Unauthorised Encampment Update provided to the last meeting and voiced concern that, despite a fence having been erected around the Prince Rock field site, a number of caravans and vehicles were once again insitu. Through the Chair, he sought an urgent response from officers as to how this had happened.

Agreed that a response would be sought for Councillor Rennie, with the panel copied in for information.

14. **MINUTES**

Agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2015.

15. **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT - PERFORMANCE INDICATOR UPDATE**

At its meeting on 19 August 2015, the Co-operative Scrutiny Board had referred a number of performance indicators to panels in order that progress could be monitored and, if necessary, challenged. A total of ten indicators had been referred to Your Plymouth, four of which were on the agenda for consideration today, with the remaining six being split between the panel's next two meetings.

Pete Aley, Head of Neighbourhood and Community Services, was in attendance to report on K29.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Action – K29</b>	<b>PI</b>
People are treated with dignity and respect	Become a welcoming city that is diverse, inclusive and that combats hate crime and discrimination	Percentage of residents who believe Plymouth is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together

The panel was advised that –

- (a) a great deal of work had been undertaken (and was ongoing) with partners across the city to improve on the 69.9% figure recorded in 2008 which was well below the national average of 75.8%;
- (b) by 2014 the city's rating had improved to 76% - above the national average;
- (c) in liaison with the police, any information received was recorded, analysed and, where appropriate, acted upon. This included provision of extra police patrols in any areas identified as having a 'spike' in incidents;
- (d) examples of partnership working and activities aimed at improving communities perceptions of 'getting on well' included –
  - development of 'safe reporting' centres;
  - development of bespoke interventions in response to incidents or crimes related to racism, homophobia, transphobia, disability or belief;

- co-ordination of a range of initiatives during Hate Crime Week (12/10/15);
- provision of small grants to diverse communities in order to promote and celebrate our welcoming and inclusive city;
- Devonport Multiagency Inclusion Day;

In response to questions raised, Members heard further that –

- (e) the information provided in the report had come from the last corporate survey on wellbeing. The results were statistically validated to determine whether or not the returns received were enough to be representative of the city;
- (f) intervention was tailored to address the particular issues within a community – extra Policing along Ebrington Street being one example in response to a spike in incidents. In addition, supporting community events and challenging discriminatory attitudes were other positive measures used in targeting neighbourhoods where there were problems or community cohesion was low;
- (g) information was available by neighbourhood, however, as the number of BME people likely to be included in the sample would be low, and not everyone would state their ethnicity as part of the survey, analysis by ethnicity would not be robust;
- (h) the question ‘do you believe Plymouth is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together’ was one of a package of questions contained within the wellbeing survey which was undertaken in 2014;
- (i) the small grants scheme comprises grants of up to £1,000 of which approximately 10 had been issued to date;
- (j) incidents of race crime accounted for 60% of all hate incidents;
- (k) along with other voluntary and community agencies, those working with refugees and asylum-seekers would be likely to be experiencing financial pressures, creating challenges in meeting demands;
- (l) feedback from victims who had received support following an incident of hate was positive, with high satisfaction rates of over 90%.

Members welcomed the update however voiced concerns over the validity of the data provided, given it was based on a survey of 1,000 people in a city with a population of 250,000 – the margin of error therefore being quite substantial. It was suggested that, in future, a specific questionnaire on hate crime was undertaken in order to more accurately take account of margins for error, demographics, and capture people’s differences of opinion and where their prejudices actually lay.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Action – K30</b>	<b>PI</b>
People are treated with dignity and respect People are treated with dignity and respect	Implement the findings of the Fairness Commission	Percentage of residents who believe Plymouth is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together

Unfortunately, there was no officer present to provide an update in respect of this performance indicator. The panel voiced its disappointment and asked that the item be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

With regard to Performance Indicators K01 and K02, Pete Honeywell, Transformation Programme Manager, and Faye Batchelor-Hambleton, Assistant Director for Customer Services, were in attendance to update Members.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Action – K01</b>	<b>PI</b>
The Council provides and enables brilliant services that strive to exceed customer expectations	Speed up the delivery of Customer and Service Transformation Programme service reviews through developing a Council wide Customer and Service delivery blueprint and Customer Access Strategy	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 Provide fully transactional services on the web – through a “Citizen Portal” with a target of the national average and 2% (from 3% to 25%) by volume

The panel received a presentation which informed Members of –

- what was being done to improve services delivered by the City Council;
- how the Customer Strategy improved service to customers;
- the action plan, resources and milestones in place to drive and deliver the Customer and Service Transformation Programme.

In response to questions raised, Members heard further that –

- (m) the driver for change had been the inconsistent provision of customer service across the authority, with many departments operating like independent franchises within department stores;
- (n) most modern authorities were adopting this style of customer-related approach, which was well-used in the private sector and was far more cost-effective;
- (o) an integral link to these changes was the overhaul of the Council’s website which was too complicated and not designed for use on smaller devices. For those customers not able or willing to use digital services they will still be able to call into the First Stop Shop or visit their local library where support will be available;



- (p) there were two payment machines located at the First Stop Shop; one outside for use 24/7 whether the shop was open or closed, and one inside available when the shop was open. It was acknowledged that a sign outside the shop indicating that there was an additional machine inside would be useful;
- (q) the restructure of Customer Services had improved services, reduced a backlog of revenues and benefits claims, and was expected to deliver £1m of savings this year;
- (r) staff had been engaged and supported throughout the process with many of the ideas for change having come from them. Library staff in particular had been keen to take on additional responsibilities within their role and were key players in taking the digital inclusion service forward.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Action – K02</b>	<b>PI</b>
The Council provides and enables brilliant services that strive to exceed customer expectations	Intensify performance improvement on top priorities identified by Plymouth residents	(New) Proposed that a measure is included which tracks customer satisfaction (still to be described) will be included in Quarter 3)

The panel was advised that –

- (s) the Plymouth Plan was the culmination of one of the Council’s largest and most inclusive consultation exercises ever undertaken, involving 3,000 comments from over 60 public events and 30 different key strategic partners;
- (t) now that there was an understanding of resident’s priorities, work would continue to ensure that the understanding was maintained via an ongoing cycle of review and consultation;
- (u) all of the milestones relating to the Plan had been achieved and the Plan was shortly to be submitted to Government for statutory approval.

In response to questions raised, Members heard further that –

- (u) consideration could be given to incorporating an element to capture people’s perceptions on diversity and cohesion within the Plymouth Plan as part of its ongoing review;
- (v) the information captured in the performance data only related to calls coming into the Council through the contact centre and not those calls made direct to individual members of staff. The total number of incoming calls had only been captured in the last quarter and, once a clearer picture had been established, it was possible that the targets quoted could be revised.

Concern was expressed that the consultation undertaken on the Plymouth Plan may not have been as far reaching as it could have been in terms of diversity and

cohesion and therefore the priorities may not be reflective or in the best interests of all citizens. Discussion also took place on whether 'customer' was the right terminology to be using, and whether 'citizen' may be more appropriate, however, as no agreement could be reached on which term to use or a suitable alternative identified, the status quo remained with agreement that the matter be kept under review,

With regard to consultation, with the second phase of the Plymouth Plan shortly to be launched, it was suggested that more should be done to promote the consultation and to make it more inclusive. One idea put forward was use of the back of the big screen in the City Centre piazza to advertise it.

The panel recommends that –

- (1) a specific questionnaire on hate crime is undertaken in order to more accurately take account of margins for error, demographics, capture people's differences of opinion and identify where any prejudices lie;
- (2) consideration is given to incorporating an element to capture people's perceptions on diversity and cohesion within the Plymouth Plan as part of its ongoing review;
- (3) consideration is given to improving advertising/promotion of the consultation on Part 2 of the Plymouth Plan to ensure that the public are aware and can engage if they wish;
- (4) a sign is placed outside the First Stop Shop at New George Street to advise customers that there is an additional payment machine inside;
- (5) with regard to performance indicator K30, the item is deferred for consideration at the panel's next meeting on 14 December, 2015.

### 16. **EMERGENCY WELFARE SCHEME UPDATE**

The panel welcomed Councillor Penberthy, Cabinet Member for Co-operatives and Housing, and Emma Rose, Strategic Development Manager (Customer Services), who were in attendance to provide an update on the latest position regarding the Emergency Welfare Scheme.

In response to questions raised, Members were advised that –

- (a) whilst funding had initially been for two years, the implementation of an efficient administration process and robust governance meant that the Council had managed to extend availability of the fund for a third year up to 31 March 2016;
- (b) with regard to the spend profile, further work was being done over the next few weeks to dip sample some of the applications coming through in order to try and establish why demand in some areas was greater than in others. It was, however, thought to be related to the level of vulnerability of the people living in those areas rather than their proximity to the city centre and accessibility to the service;
- (c) there was a limit on the number of claims applicants were allowed to

submit, with a maximum two being allowed in one year. Further work was done with those applicants to establish whether they were getting all of the benefits they were entitled to and to identify if other areas of support could be offered in order to prevent them coming back again, including money management;

- (d) there had been a significant reduction in community care grant payments and this was possibly due to being stricter in terms of the criteria, however, the dip sampling exercise being undertaken would hopefully find the underlying reason;
- (e) demand was increasing considerably. The total number of applications for 2014/15 had been 2,822 whereas in the first six months of 2015/16 staff had processed 1,899 applications;
- (f) it was estimated, based on current projected spend levels, that there would be approximately £275,000 remaining in the fund at the end of the financial year. However, a particularly harsh winter could increase demand further so it was very difficult to say whether there would be anything left in the pot to either carry forward or hand over to the voluntary and community sector should they even wish to come forward and take the fund on;
- (g) 18% of successful crisis payment applications had been for assistance to pay for gas/electric. Money was deposited onto a payment card rather than issued in cash form and officers liaised with landlords to ensure that properties were energy efficient. Where appropriate, referrals were made to Plymouth Energy Community (PEC) who, in partnership with British Gas, were offering free cavity wall and loft insulation.

Members welcomed the update and acknowledged the importance of the scheme. However, concern was expressed that there was nothing in place for it to continue beyond the third year. Councillor Penberthy shared the panel's concerns and asked that consideration be given to how the scheme might be extended beyond March 2016.

The panel noted the report with thanks.

### 17. **SAFER PLYMOUTH PARTNERSHIP - CRIME UPDATE**

Members welcomed Councillor Philippa Davey, Cabinet Member for Safer and Stronger Communities, Sarah Hopkins, Community Safety and Partnerships Manager, and Chief Superintendent Andy Boulting, Devon and Cornwall Police, who were in attendance to report on the new approach being adopted by the Safer Plymouth Partnership Board and the latest levels of overall crime in Plymouth.

The panel heard that –

- (a) the Partnership had recently embarked on a period of review and development based on the principles of systems leadership (as recommended by the Fairness Commission). As a result, Safer Plymouth members had agreed to move to a more dynamic and innovative way of working, working effectively together toward agree outcomes that

benefitted Plymouth, irrespective of whether or not they were top priorities for individual organisations;

- (b) since 2006/07 there had been a long-term trend of reducing crime in the City; almost 9,500 less crimes altogether, and between April 2015 and August 2015 there had been 7,658 recorded crimes; representing a 3% reduction on the same period the previous year.

In response to questions raised, Members were advised that –

- (c) the new partnership approach would be more reactive, focusing on issues through 'deep dive' exercises as necessary, as opposed to the committee-style approach which was more meeting based and focused. An example of a recent multi-agency event was a review of the Quality Inn following the latest arson incident. Safer Plymouth had organized a well-attended public meeting represented by the Police, Planning, Fire, Public Health and Public Protection to hear and respond to the community's views and respond to questions. Following that meeting Safer Plymouth had continued to co-ordinate multi-agency action, including successful prosecution of the owner and was continuing to press the owner to fully resolve the situation;
- (d) spikes in crime could appear for many reasons and sometimes for no reason at all other than random, one-off incidents. For example, in Greenbank last Saturday evening eight windows were taken out in one street. Sector meetings would look at every crime which had taken place to determine whether they were repeats or part of a theme. Whitleigh was one area which had been looked at where there was no apparent reason for the spike, this could be as a result of domestic abuse or other incidents taking place behind closed doors, including youth on youth or youth on adult incidents;
- (e) operation Encompas was still running, however, more publicity was required to promote the fact that it was still in existence as people seemed to think that it was not. Concerns remained with data recording and dissemination as there were still issues in getting information to school by the next morning;
- (f) there was concern that the number of reported crimes was going down because of people's lack of confidence in reporting crimes. This had been the subject of discussion at last week's meeting of the Police and Crime Panel, particularly the failings in the 101 service which had recently been reviewed by the Police and Crime Commissioner. The review had resulted in a 12-point action plan which was due to be reported to the December meeting of the Police and Crime Panel;
- (g) the impending cuts to the police would, in the words of the Police and Crime Commissioner, be disastrous and result in a force and service which would be very different to that which we knew today;
- (h) Safer Plymouth continued to support the re-commissioning process for SARC services in Plymouth and were pleased to report that a further year's contract had been awarded;

- (i) a successful application had been secured to close a legal high retailer in Cornwall Street which resulted in the retailer agreeing to cease selling legal highs immediately and pay costs. A further prosecution in respect of a retailer in Ebrington Street was also being pursued and whilst it had been delayed on a technicality it was anticipated that the case would be in court within the next 21 days;
- (j) only 25% of policing was spent dealing with crime with the remaining 75% spent dealing with 'other' issues. The proposed budget cuts would mean that there would have to be a move toward pushing things that were traditionally directed to the Police toward other agencies and work was already under way to achieve this, such as using the Fire Service to be aware of any safeguarding concerns when they enter people's homes and training taxi drivers to be aware of and flag any concerns regarding CSE.

With regard to the renewal of the SARC contract, Councillor Jordan reported that he had been involved in the recent CSE review and suggested that consideration be given to linking the work of the two together.

The update was noted.

18. **TRACKING RESOLUTIONS**

The tracking resolutions schedule was noted.

19. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The panel considered its work programme for 2015/16.

Councillor Rennie referred to the co-operative review request he had submitted on 'the effects of the expansion of Plymouth University and its students on the surrounding residential areas' and reported that other ongoing work in the area meant that this review was no longer required. He therefore asked that the review be removed from the work programme.

Councillor Kate Taylor suggested that it would be useful to receive an update from the panel's Cabinet Members on their priorities, particularly given that there had been changes to some of the portfolio responsibilities since the last update.

Agreed that the –

(1)	co-operative review 'the effects of the expansion of Plymouth University and its students on the surrounding residential areas' is removed from the 2015/16 work programme;
(2)	Cabinet Members with portfolio responsibilities within the panel's terms of reference are invited to attend the panel's meeting on 14 March 2016.

20. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.

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## Your Plymouth Scrutiny Panel -14<sup>th</sup> December 2015– PI progress report on K24

Outcome	Action	PI	Plan	Resources	Milestones / deadlines	Progress toward Outcome
We will help people take control of their lives and communities	Strengthen and support co-ordination and capacity building in the voluntary sector and reinvigorate volunteering	The % of (adult) residents who volunteer at least once per month	<p><b>Background</b> - The Community Life Survey 2013/14 shows that 41% of adults questioned reported volunteering formally (i.e. through a group, club or organisation) at least once in the previous year. 27% said they took part at least once a month. If the survey results are applied to the wider UK population as a whole, this would produce an estimate of 15.2 million people volunteering at least once a month in the UK, and 23.1 million volunteering at least once a year. If this was replicated in Plymouth, this would mean approximately 87,000 people volunteering at least once a year and almost 58,000 volunteering once a month.</p> <p>However, using figures from current local providers and volunteer brokerage services, estimates suggest that approximately 21% of the adult population (almost 45,000) are currently formally volunteering at some level in the city, which is approximately half of the national average. However, the true figure is likely to be much higher with many people volunteering and not realising</p>	<p>Core officer time and contributions from partner agencies.</p> <p>One Plymouth support</p> <p>Small levels of financial input.</p>	<p>Target</p> <p>22% 2015/16</p> <p>23% 2016/17</p> <p>50% 2030/31</p> <p>Quarterly monitoring of people accessing Volunteer Plymouth, Timebank SW and Our Plymouth.</p> <p>One Plymouth Action Plan December 2015</p> <p>Pledge Plymouth and Right to Read launch January 2016</p> <p>PCC Timebanking Model January 2016</p>	<p>Our internal volunteer policy and, volunteer handbook has been revised and published</p> <p>An improved Better Together portal</p> <p>Cities of Service has created 125 new volunteer roles</p> <p>One Plymouth action plan has been agreed and funding established</p> <p>Cities of Service new projects impact metrics have been agreed</p>

Outcome	Action	PI	Plan	Resources	Milestones / deadlines	Progress toward Outcome
			<p>that they are and informal volunteering not being recorded.</p> <p><b>Plan</b></p> <p>In October 2015 One Plymouth partners formed a steering group to modernise the volunteering infrastructure in the city. It has raised funds to support this work and aims to improve the gateway to volunteering, improve I.T support including a new app and to encourage micro-volunteering – people being able to volunteer for small amounts of time from a place that is convenient to them. This work is supported by an action plan which was agreed by One Plymouth partners in December 2015.</p> <p>In October 2015, Better Together, the web portal that links private sector volunteering opportunities to community groups and neighbourhood action was updated to make it easier for organisations to fulfil their corporate social responsibility</p> <p>In January 2016, Cities of Service is launching 2 further projects to build on the success of Energy Champions and Grow, Share, Cook. Right to Read will recruit volunteers to enable</p>			



Outcome	Action	PI	Plan	Resources	Milestones / deadlines	Progress toward Outcome
			<p>children to read to and be read to by an adult and Pledge Plymouth will encourage people to give 15 minutes a month of their time to improve life in our city on a variety of themes using social media to report what they have done.</p> <p>In January 2016, a volunteering opportunity of the month for our staff will be advertised on the Our Plymouth website along with information on staffroom, Facebook and Twitter. This will be done in partnership with Volunteer Plymouth with opportunities being selected by the Cities of Service Chief Service Officer and the Volunteer Plymouth manager. Staff will be encouraged to volunteer in their own time, but will receive support from both Cities of Service and Volunteer Plymouth on how to apply.</p> <p>From January 2016, we will launch the time-banking model for Plymouth City Council staff. This pilot project is funded through Department for Communities and Local Government funding awarded to the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Service. Colleagues are working with Street Services and Adult Social Care to look</p>			

Outcome	Action	PI	Plan	Resources	Milestones / deadlines	Progress toward Outcome
			<p>at how swaps with communities can be managed and support a cultural change of better valuing and supporting volunteer activity in the city as well as supporting the TimebankSW model.</p>			

# Delivering the Plan for Private Rented Housing

The following actions will be overseen by the Charter Steering Group in order to deliver improvements to:

- Quality and management of properties in the private rented sector including fair trading by business
- Health and wellbeing of tenants
- Choice of and access to private rented housing
- Tenants ability to sustain tenancies in the long term

Key:

- To be done
- Ongoing/in progress
- ✓ Done

	Aims	Actions	Who	When	Resources	Targets
I	Promote the Plymouth Charter for the Private Rented Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Secure publicity on launch</li> <li>✓ Article on Staff Room</li> <li>✓ Place on PCC website</li> <li>• Take to Private Rented Forum</li> <li>✓ Include in email newsletter to landlords/agents</li> <li>✓ Wider distribution across stakeholders in PRS.</li> <li>✓ Article in Chamber of commerce newsletter</li> <li>○ Develop Logo for the work of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications Team</li> <li>• Private Sector Housing Manager (PSHM)</li> <li>✓ All Steering Group Members</li> <li>✓ SAMS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2015 and ongoing</li> <li>December 2015</li> <li>April 2015</li> <li>May 2015</li> <li>Spring 2016</li> </ul>	Within existing staff resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Initial landlord/agent audience of 1000.</li> <li>✓ Initial tenant support agency audience of 50</li> <li>Logo to be used on</li> </ul>

	<b>Aims</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Targets</b>
		the steering group/Charter – currently liaising with West of England Authorities on a SW wide mark of quality	✓ PCC			member stationery, websites.
2	Support the delivery of training and accreditation of landlords and agents working in the city.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Promotion of available courses and benefits of attending.</li> <li>✓ Promotion of 50 discounted places to mark launch of Charter/Plan in e newsletter</li> <li>✓ Provide talks and presentations through Private Rented Forum</li> <li>• Consider feasibility of making training a condition of HMO licensing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ All Steering Group members</li> <li>• PSHM</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Sept 2016</p>	<p>Within existing staff resources</p> <p>Within existing staff resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of trained landlords by 20% each year</li> <li>• Increase the number of accredited landlords by 20% each year.</li> <li>• Option appraisal produced</li> </ul>
3	Promote best practice in contracts for private renting and the standards required to manage the tenancy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review model tenancy agreement at PRF.</li> <li>○ Articles in e newsletter promoting code of practice, training and model tenancy agreement</li> <li>✓ Signpost tenants and landlords to Redress Schemes where poor quality of service from letting/managing agents.</li> <li>✓ Improve information on website to emphasise good practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ PRF</li> <li>✓ PSHM</li> <li>✓ All Steering Group Members</li> <li>✓ PSHM</li> </ul>	<p>April 2016</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>April/May 2015</p>	<p>Within existing staff resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on pros and cons of the document with recommendations</li> <li>• Information sent to all known agents operating in city.</li> <li>• Information to all known agents operating in City.</li> </ul>

	<b>Aims</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Targets</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Publicise requirements of Consumer Rights Act 2015 (requirement on letting agents to display all fees)</li> <li>✓ Undertake visits to main agents and carry out mini audit on fees, EPCs, good practice.</li> <li>○ Provide comparison of fees for tenants/landlords</li> <li>✓ See also section 10 – investment in EasyLet with a view to improving management of scheme.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ TS/PRT</li> <li>○ TS/PRT</li> <li>○ TS/PRT/HO</li> </ul>	<p>May 2015</p> <p>Summer 2015</p> <p>Nov 2015</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1500 on mailing list</li> <li>• At least 20 agents visited</li> <li>• Information on website and in hand out.</li> </ul>
4	Explore the viability of a 'virtual' Tenants' forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Examine pros and cons of proposed scheme</li> <li>○ Identify best model or scheme</li> <li>○ Determine costs to implement and run proposed scheme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ PSHM, CAB, Shelter, University of Plymouth and Students Union, PCH.</li> </ul>	April 2016	Additional resource is likely to be needed to implement and manage such a project.	Costed plan with recommendations to implement or not
5	Develop a 'Plymouth Healthy Homes Guide'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Research best practice</li> <li>✓ Consult on content</li> <li>✓ Agree final version and promote.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PSHM</li> </ul>	May 2015	Within existing staff resource	Guide on website and distributed to approximately 1500 recipients of newsletter
6	Explore the best way of tackling substandard houses in multiple occupation across the City.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Review options available including costs, benefits and risks.</li> <li>✓ Produce report with recommendations for best</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Private Sector Housing Officer</li> </ul>	May 2015	Resources needed for best option will be identified.	Production of report showing costs/benefits of different options and recommendation for optimal strategy

	<b>Aims</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Targets</b>
		option				
7	Helping tenants understand energy costs and how to achieve a healthy environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Production of short video showing how to manage indoor environment and prevent damp and mould</li> <li>• Produce/promote information about SAP ratings and their implications for energy costs</li> <li>• Target information on need to improve energy efficiency on landlords/tenants in properties known to be rated F – G</li> <li>• Visit Estate Agents to advise on upcoming restrictions so that they can advise purchasers</li> <li>○ Promotion of energy efficiency grant funding to landlords/tenants</li> <li>○ Where necessary, take enforcement action to provide affordable heating and prevent damp/mould</li> <li>✓ Signpost tenants to Advice Plymouth for energy advice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PRT/PEC/LCT</li> <li>• PRT/PEC/LCT</li> <li>• PRT/PEC/LCT</li> <li>• PRT/LCT/TS</li> <li>• PRT/PEC/LCT</li> <li>• PRT/PEC/LCT</li> <li>• PRT</li> <li>• HO/PRT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May 2015</li> <li>Dec 2015</li> <li>From Jan 2016 – 2018</li> <li>From Jan 2016 - 2018</li> <li>When opportunity arises</li> <li>As necessary</li> <li>As necessary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funded through successful bid to DEC</li> <li>Within existing staff resource</li> <li>Within existing staff resource</li> <li>Within existing staff resource</li> <li>Reliant on successful funding bids</li> <li>Within existing staff resource</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Initial landlord/agent audience of 1000.</li> <li>✓ Initial tenant support agency audience of 50</li> <li>✓ Offer use of video to members of Plymouth Housing Services Partnership</li> <li>✓ Place video on website and run at NGS</li> <li>• Target audience as above</li> <li>• All landlords contacted at least once before new regulations in place</li> <li>• At least 20 estate agents visited.</li> <li>• Removal of at least 50 instances of Cat I hazard for Excess Cold</li> </ul>

	<b>Aims</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Targets</b>
8	Ensure tenants understand rights, responsibilities and how to manage their tenancies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Encourage landlords and agents to provide 'How to Rent' leaflet when setting up tenancies</li> <li>✓ Encourage tenant support groups to provide 'How to Rent' leaflet</li> <li>✓ Promote 'How to Rent' leaflet on correspondence with landlords, tenants, agents etc.</li> <li>• Establish workshops for students about to move to private rented housing – this to be pilot for wider delivery</li> <li>✓ Develop 'Housing Fayre' for University.</li> <li>• Development of housing pack/App for private renting advice and information.</li> <li>✓ Delivery of a credible, accredited pre-tenancy training package, accessible throughout the single homeless pathway</li> <li>✓ Hold focus group to explore</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All</li> <li>• All</li> <li>• All</li> </ul> <p>LJ/SW/VB</p> <p>UoP/UPSO/PRT</p> <p>TBD</p> <p>DC</p>	<p>tbd</p> <p>6/7 October</p> <p>September 2015 - August 2016</p>	<p>Within existing staff resource</p> <p>Approximately £20k earmarked from single homelessness project funding. Within existing staff resource.</p>	<p>It is now a statutory requirement to provide this leaflet at the commencement of new tenancies.</p> <p>200 single people receive pre-tenancy training.</p>

	<b>Aims</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Targets</b>
		landlord perspectives regarding further development of pre tenancy training into an accredited tenant scheme.	DC/LJ	October 2015		
9	Respond quickly to complaints about housing standards, poor management, harassment, illegal eviction and unfair or aggressive practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review existing policies and procedures including target response/resolution times</li> <li>○ Produce clear guidance on service standards to be delivered</li> <li>○ Update team procedure guidance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ PSHM</li> </ul>	Sept 2015	Within existing staff resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear service standards on website and other literature.</li> <li>• Clear guidance for staff on intervention in range of situations.</li> <li>• Quarterly reports on performance and outputs.</li> </ul>
10	Investing in the development of HouseLet and EasyLet Schemes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Transfer of management of EasyLet to PATH</li> <li>○ Review options for management of HouseLet following ending of existing contract</li> <li>• Develop model for using private rented property to discharge homelessness duty including decisions on 'fit and proper' landlords</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ PCC Accommodation Team/PATH/PRT</li> <li>• Accommodation Manager</li> <li>• Housing Casework Manager/PSHM</li> </ul>	<p>April 2015</p> <p>Feb 2016</p> <p>April 2016</p>	Within existing staff resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced delivery costs, voids and more flexible accommodation for homeless families</li> <li>• Sustainable model and procedure guide for use of private rented housing.</li> </ul>
11	Supporting the Plan for Empty Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Refer empty properties to Housing Delivery Team as need arises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PRT</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Within existing staff resource	Complaints about condition of empty properties to be deal



	<b>Aims</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Targets</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Take enforcement action to reduce nuisance from problem empty properties</li> <li>✓ Investment in development of HouseLet and EasyLet as a means of bringing empty properties back into use. See Section 10.</li> </ul>				with within target timescale of 90 days.
12	Opportunities for institutional investment to create new private rented accommodation in the City.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver the Plan for Homes, which aims to work with institutional investors to attract new investment for housing including new private rented accommodation. The Council is currently working with QSH to deliver 10 new rented apartments at the site of the former SHIP hostel.</li> <li>• We are also exploring the Opt-to-Buy scheme, which enables people to rent whilst improving their credit histories and save for a deposit.</li> <li>• Support applications to the Homes and Communities Agency for Build-to-Rent applications.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RPs</li> <li>• Developers</li> <li>• PCC</li> <li>• Institutional investors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Plan for Homes covers the five year period up to March 2019.</li> <li>• As and when funding is available.</li> </ul>	<p>Within existing team resource</p> <p>Resources will need to be reviewed if PCC is to take a more proactive approach to identifying opportunities for new build private rented housing.</p>	To deliver the first 10 private rented units on PCC land at the former SHIP hostel, during 2016/17.

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# PLAN FOR PRIVATE RENTED HOUSING



# FOREWORD



Poor standards of private rented housing are a massive issue in Plymouth. Over a third of all private rented housing is classed as 'Non Decent' – this means over 7,500 households are living in accommodation of varying poor condition, some of which will be so bad they are deemed unfit for habitation.

As a member of the Fairness Commission I visited private rented housing in many wards across the city, including my own ward and saw first-hand the difficulties people face. This plan sets out our response to the Fairness Commission report and recommendations.

The City is committed to improving private rented housing, to make sure both landlords and tenants get a better deal. We have worked with our partners to develop a Charter for Private Rented Housing. Our Plan for Private Rented Housing responds to this, aims to improve the quality of private rented housing and take action against rogue landlords.

I look forward to working with tenants, landlords, agents and partners to ensure that people living in private sector rented housing in Plymouth are able to enjoy good quality homes.

**Councillor Chris Penberthy**

**Cabinet Member for Co-operatives, Housing and Community Safety**

## INTRODUCTION

The private rented sector represents around 20% of all housing in Plymouth. It is a growing sector and is increasingly the tenure of choice for many whilst also being housing of last resort for others, many of whom are vulnerable residents. Whilst there are many high quality private rented homes, the sector also has the poorest standards which can impact adversely on living conditions and quality of life for many of Plymouth's citizens.

The Fairness Commission has recommended that the Council develop a comprehensive and resourced response to raising standards in the private rented housing sector\*. In turn, the Council has pledged to develop a programme to improve the quality of private rented housing and take action against rogue landlords\*\*. This Plan for Private Rented Housing responds to the Fairness Commission recommendations and the Council pledge.

The Council has responsibilities and duties that it must undertake but it cannot improve private rented housing alone. To achieve measurable success, we need the full support of and a close working partnership with landlords, letting agents, tenants, investors, the University and Colleges, Student Unions and housing support agencies.

The first action of the Plan is to promote the Plymouth Charter for Private Rented Housing. The Charter sets out our key values and aims which we believe will bring about sustainable improvements in Plymouth's private rented housing.

The Council wants to make this a true 'Plymouth Charter' with the full backing and support of the key agencies, organisations and individuals involved in the sector.

Working together, we want to improve conditions by supporting good landlords, by helping to bring more landlords up to the standards of the best and by taking robust action against those that do not meet what is required of them. Tenants have rights and responsibilities and we want to work with tenants and tenant representatives to make both clear. We also want to increase the supply of good quality accommodation.



\* Creating the Conditions for Fairness – The Plymouth Fairness Commission Final Report March 2014

\*\* Our Pledges for a Better Plymouth (April 2014)

# PLAN FOR PRIVATE RENTED HOUSING

<b>1</b>	We will work with partners to promote the Plymouth Charter for the Private Rented Sector.
<b>2</b>	We will support the delivery of training and accreditation of landlords and agents working in the city.
<b>3</b>	We will promote best practice in contracts for private renting and the standards required to manage the tenancy.
<b>4</b>	We will explore the viability of a 'Virtual' Tenants' Forum linked to advice on the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants.
<b>5</b>	We will develop a 'Healthy Homes Guide' which clearly sets out what the minimum standard for a safe and healthy home is.
<b>6</b>	We will explore the best way of tackling substandard houses in multiple occupation across the city.
<b>7</b>	We will ensure that tenants have the information they need to understand the energy costs of their accommodation and know how to achieve a healthy environment.
<b>8</b>	We will ensure tenants are aware of their responsibilities as well as their rights and understand how to manage their tenancies.
<b>9</b>	We will respond quickly to complaints about housing standards, poor management, harassment, illegal eviction and unfair or aggressive practices.
<b>10</b>	We will invest in the development of the HouseLet and EasyLet Schemes to help provide housing solutions.
<b>11</b>	We will support the Plan for Empty Homes which seeks to reduce the nuisance caused by long term empty properties and bring properties back into use.
<b>12</b>	We will develop opportunities for institutional investment to create new private rented accommodation, helping to increase competition, and widen choice.

The Plan for Private Rented Housing will help deliver Policy 18 of the Plymouth Plan, in particular by targeting intervention and resources to improve the standard and quality of private sector housing.



**CONTACT**

Housing Services  
Plymouth City Council  
Ballard House Plymouth PL1 3BJ  
T 01752 307075  
E [private.rent@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:private.rent@plymouth.gov.uk)  
[www.plymouth.gov.uk/privatehousing](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/privatehousing)  
February 2015

# THE PLYMOUTH CHARTER FOR PRIVATE RENTED HOUSING

## Our shared values and aims

- To value fairness for everyone in all housing and to champion the belief that everyone is entitled to a good quality home where they can live safely, settle and thrive.
- To acknowledge the vital role of the private rented sector in helping to meet the housing needs of many of Plymouth's residents.
- To seek a fair balance between the interests of landlords and tenants.
- To raise the profile of the best private landlords and agents who improve Plymouth's reputation and that of the private rented sector.
- To increase the number of good quality landlords, responsible agents and private rented homes.
- To increase understanding of what a good quality home is and encourage landlords and agents to provide this.
- To reduce fuel poverty and improve energy efficiency in private rented housing.
- To expect landlords and agents to do what is reasonable and proportional to resolve any problems with their properties.
- To take appropriate enforcement action to protect tenants and to act swiftly against 'rogue' landlords and agents with unfair practices.
- To provide advice and training so that tenants are aware of their responsibilities as well as their rights and are able to sustain their tenancies.
- To provide help and advice to enable tenants to make informed decisions about their housing options.
- To work with landlords and tenants to help sustain tenancies and avoid eviction wherever possible.



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**PROBLEM DEBT SCRUTINY UPDATE**

Social Inclusion Unit – December 2015



## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In February 2014, Your Plymouth Scrutiny Panel agreed to hold a cooperative review into Problem Debt with the aim to ascertain the level and depth of personal Problem Debt in the city and the effectiveness of how we respond as a Council.
- 1.2 The review took place in October 2014 and looked to a) establish the causes b) the local impact and c) the quality of the response in respect of personal problem debt.
- 1.3 The following witnesses were called over two sessions:
- Pete Aley, Head of Community Services, PCC
  - Laura Griffiths, Financial and Social Inclusion Officer, PCC
  - Paul Elliot, Low Carbon City Officer, PCC
  - Eunice Halliday, Foodbank
  - Jenny Endean, Devon and Cornwall Housing
  - Sarah Mcneice, Advice Team Manager, Citizens Advice Bureau
  - Paul Williams, City of Plymouth Credit Union
  - Ann Thorp, Service Manager, Customer Services, PCC
  - Councillor Penberthy, Cabinet Member for Co-operatives, Housing and Community Safety.
- 1.4 Written evidence was also considered from:
- Alison Seabeck MP for Plymouth Moor View providing details of issues seen in her constituency [Alison Seabeck MP letter](#)
  - Plymouth Citizens Advice Bureau [Plymouth CAB case studies](#)
- 1.5 The findings of the review were published in a report ([Debt Review report](#)) which was endorsed by the Cooperative Scrutiny Board on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

## 2. Context

- 2.1 The review found that almost a third of adults in Plymouth are over-indebted, that is 3 or more months behind with repayments. We are the most over-indebted Local Authority in the South West and nationally 48<sup>th</sup> out of 406 Local Authority areas.
- 2.2 Since last year's scrutiny session, the issue of problem debt remains a concern. Nationally, the most common problem debt for Stepchange clients is credit cards and arrears on household bills such as council tax and energy bills are rising. Debt owed on credit products where lending is traditionally small-scale is beginning to rise such as catalogues and home credit.
- 2.3 In January 2015, the Financial Conduct Authority introduced new payday lending regulations and we have seen the market shrink. Several large companies have left the market and some announced staff reductions.
- 2.4 In Plymouth, Stepchange reports that since 2012, for Plymouth residents, there has been a 64% increase in calls for advice; 75% increase in debt management plans; a 30% reduction in unsecured debts. In the first 6 months of 2014/15, Advice Plymouth saw clients with over £3.8m debt.

## 3. Recommendations from the review

- 3.1 The report made 19 recommendations from the review and 18 were accepted by Cabinet. The progress of these recommendations is below.

No.	Recommendations	Progress	Update
1	That the Council carries out a review of the options to encourage early engagement with appropriate services by those in debt with the specific aim of preventing cyclical debt;	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reviews and workshops have taken place with advice service and welfare benefit advice providers across the city.</li> <li>▪ An advice and information plan is being developed in line with Care Act duties and steering group meeting regularly to progress.</li> <li>▪ We have ensured that our draft Health and Wellbeing Commissioning Strategy includes debt advice.</li> </ul>
2	That a letter signed by the Your Plymouth Scrutiny Panel Chair, Cabinet Member for Co-operatives, Housing and Community Safety and Leader of the Council is sent to the responsible government ministers urging them to reconsider their decision to scrap provision for Emergency Welfare Hardship Funding;	NFA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We responded to Government consultation on the decision to discontinue the Emergency Welfare Hardship Funding.</li> <li>▪ In February 2015, the Government decided to release further funds to local authorities 'to assist them in dealing with pressures on local welfare and health and social care'</li> <li>▪ A review of our Emergency and Welfare Fund is being carried out.</li> </ul>
3	<p>That in order to support credit unions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ further communications are sent to all councillors and council staff encouraging them to join;</li> <li>▪ a letter signed by the Your Plymouth Scrutiny Panel Chair, Cabinet Member for Co-operatives, Housing and Community Safety and Leader of the Council is sent to the city's housing associations asking them to encourage their tenants to join;</li> </ul>	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The credit unions are currently undergoing a significant transformation and as such have asked that we hold off any further promotion until early 2016 – at which time we will complete these recommendations.</li> <li>▪ However, we have continued to promote credit unions to our staff and highlight them as alternative source of lending when running campaigns such as anti-loan sharks.</li> </ul>
4	That the Council continues to ban advertising of payday lending companies on council-owned billboards and computers, and investigates what else it can do to deter predatory lending;	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We have continued to ban advertising of payday lending companies on council owned billboards and computers.</li> <li>▪ In March 2015, we launched an anti-loan shark campaign in partnership with the National Marine Aquarium and the National Illegal Money Lending team. We used social media spread the message using #fishyfinance (See Appendix)</li> </ul>
5	That the City Council's investigations into becoming an ethical creditor are supported;	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ With have investigated this and due to new tougher regulation within the pay day lending industry, we are not currently pursuing.</li> <li>▪ In January 2015, the Financial Conduct Authority introduced tighter controls on interest rates and default charges along with the previously introduced limits on rollovers and continuous payment authority, affordability checks and the crackdown on advertising.</li> </ul>

No.	Recommendations	Progress	Update
6	An investigation into the effect/consequences of writing off uncollectable debt as done by Lambeth Council, particularly the financial effect on the authority;	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Since November 2014 the Customer Services Council Tax team have been routinely reviewing uncollectable debt particularly that over 6 years old. This is part of the normal Council Tax recovery regulations timetable, applied to all charge payer debt, which is subject to appropriate decision making, review and audit.</li> <li>▪ The approach has been supported by the recent report on Income, uncollectable debt and payment services published by Lambeth Council.</li> <li>▪ Plymouth is committed to maximising income collection, through appropriate recovery methods and supporting charge payers to ensure their Council Tax payments are up to date through the introduction of three options for instalments, 10, 11 or 12 months over the financial year and is currently developing plans to increase the number of available direct debit date to support residents' budget requirements.</li> </ul>
7	<p>That the Council continues to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ abolition of the bedroom tax, which disproportionately affects disabled people;</li> <li>▪ affordable housing and its commitment to building homes for the city's residents;</li> </ul>	Completed	<p>We have supported households impacted by the bedroom tax by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Providing Between Discretionary Housing Payments to 184 households between April – September 2015 with approx. £74k;</li> <li>▪ Working in partner with RSLs to identify and support those households most disproportionately affected;</li> <li>▪ Continuing to commission advice and information services.</li> </ul> <p>We continue our commitment to affordable housing via our plan for homes and in the past 12 months have achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 971 all homes completions – a 27% increase on previous year;</li> <li>▪ 396 affordable home completions – we are in the top quartile for performance;</li> <li>▪ Enabled an average 302 homes per year since 2011 via HCA programmes.</li> </ul>
8	<p>Writing to the City's MPs highlighting the issues and effect on residents of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ bedroom tax;</li> <li>▪ lack of decent affordable housing;</li> <li>▪ having rent benefit capped without any limits being set on what landlords can reasonably charge;</li> <li>▪ rising energy bills;</li> <li>▪ and asking them what they have done to try and tackle these issues</li> </ul>	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We have provided briefings to our MPs regarding these issues.</li> <li>▪ With the progression of the Welfare Reform and Work Bill 2015, we have continued to provide local information to our MPs and have submitted evidence to the appropriate select committee.</li> </ul>
9	That a letter signed by the Your Plymouth Scrutiny Panel Chair, Cabinet Member for Co-	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Letter has been prepared.</li> <li>▪ Communication has been sent to the 1,000 club via their newsletter about benefits of</li> </ul>

No.	Recommendations	Progress	Update
	operatives, Housing and Community Safety and Leader of the Council is sent to members of the 1000 Club encouraging employers in the city to pay their staff a living wage;		<p>paying national living wage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Information has been placed on their website to promote the living wage. <a href="http://www.1000club.co.uk/">http://www.1000club.co.uk/</a></li> <li>▪ All construction companies have received a letter with further information.</li> </ul>
10	That the Council continues to support and encourage local implementation of financial education into the schools' curriculum together with the 'Starter-4-Ten' initiative;	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We have trained 6 teachers across the city to deliver financial education. They will act as Lead Teachers in this area to support other schools.</li> <li>▪ Our corporate banking partner is delivering the Skills for Life programme in schools which incorporates budgeting skills.</li> <li>▪ The starter 4 ten scheme ran last academic year. 10 out of 17 schools expressed an interest; approx. 1,150 students received budgeting and credit union information of which 20% redeemed their voucher.</li> </ul>
11	<p>That the city's University and colleges be asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ consider following the Council's example of banning the advertisement of pay-day lending on their campus sites and computers;</li> <li>▪ raise awareness of the issue of problem debt amongst their students and the existence of credit unions;</li> </ul>	Ongoing	We have raised with the University and are waiting for an update.
12	A leaflet advertising/promoting the benefits of credit unions is sent out with all council tax bills;	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A promotion leaflet was sent out with all Council tax bills in March (see appendix)</li> <li>▪ As a result, credit unions saw membership rise and received a number of large deposits</li> </ul>
13	That officers responsible for the care of the City's looked after children are provided with the necessary information and skills regarding money management to help reinforce what children are taught at school and that this is particularly reinforced to care leavers whilst their pathway plans are being prepared;	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Children, Young Peoples and Families Service identify needs surrounding skills for independence such as money management.</li> <li>▪ Foster carers and commissioned providers are often tasked with ensuring looked after children have the necessary skills regarding money management.</li> <li>▪ At 16, their care plans are transitioned into a pathway plan. Pathway plans reflect the needs of the young person and will include independence skills.</li> </ul>
14	That the Council investigates the possibility of establishing an alternative to Bright House to be run as a not-for-profit co-operative / social enterprise by local people / volunteers with all	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A feasibility study is being carried out to establish the opportunities, challenges and potential partners for establishing an alternative rent to own social enterprise.</li> </ul>

No.	Recommendations	Progress	Update
	money raised being invested back into the scheme;		
15	That the Council ascertains whether its temporary employment agency employs any of its staff on zero-hours contracts or pays the minimum living wage and considers, if not, whether it should be renewing its contract when it expires;	Completed	<p>The Councils temporary employment agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Does not operate zero hour's contracts. It offers a guaranteed contract of 336 hours per annum to all workers.</li> <li>▪ All staff, including temporary agency staff, are paid the Living Wage.</li> </ul>
16	That the Council considers no longer chasing outstanding council tax debt where it is known that the debtor is waiting for payment of universal credit;	Completed	<p>We have considered this recommendation and find the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We consider re-profiling instalments on a case by case basis for any customer identified as being in a position of not being able to pay their Council Tax whilst waiting for either benefits or their first salary payment;</li> <li>▪ Universal Credit rolls out in Plymouth January 2016. We will continue this commitment for these customers.</li> </ul>
17	That the Council supports continuing development of the existing welfare rights forum;	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The welfare rights forum meets bi-monthly and is represented by a range of organisations that provide frontline support to residents regarding welfare. It provides a valuable opportunity to network, share best practice and keep up to date with practice knowledge.</li> <li>▪ We have continued, when appropriate, to provide the forum with a meeting venue and facilities. As a Co-operative Council, Officers will continue to attend when appropriate to further our value as a partner.</li> </ul>
18	That the Council looks at ways of further regulating landlords, possibly by way of an accreditation scheme, to help reinforce new legislation being debated in Parliament to prevent whistleblowing tenants being evicted.	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We have launched our plan and charter for private rented housing.</li> <li>▪ A steering group of partners has been established to monitor progress against the 12 aims within the Charter (see appendix) and they are all on target.</li> <li>▪ Legislation is now in place under the Retaliatory Eviction and Deregulation Act 2015 to support whistleblowing tenants.</li> </ul>

**NATIONAL MARINE AQUARIUM**

**PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL**

# The only sharks welcome in Plymouth

Say no to Loan Sharks in Plymouth  
Find out more at [fishyfinance.co.uk](http://fishyfinance.co.uk)

[Twitter](https://twitter.com/fishyfinance) [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/fishyfinance) #fishyfinance

**Stop Loan Sharks** Report a loan shark  
**0300 555 2222**

**PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL**

# JOIN A CREDIT UNION TODAY

**A credit union is like a bank. It is somewhere you can save your money and when times are tight also get low interest loans.**

Like banks and building societies, credit unions are regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority so you can be confident that your money is safe. On top of this, when you open an account with one of the Plymouth credit unions, you get free life insurance. If you find yourself struggling to manage your finances, a credit union can also help you to access debt and budgeting advice.

Although the credit unions are independent organisations, Plymouth City Council actively encourages local people to use them as an ethical way to borrow and save.

When you save with the credit union you will get a share of any profit made that year. The money you save stays in the local community and can benefit the local economy.

Should you have an unexpected bill or financial pressure, credit unions are able to offer small sums of money as loans and is often more competitive than other lenders.

Working in partnership with:

**City of Plymouth Credit Union**  
Tel 01752 201329 or 01752 310698  
office@cpcu.co.uk www.cpcu.co.uk

**HOPE (Plymouth) Credit Union**  
Tel 01752 301871  
office@hopecreditunion.co.uk www.hopecust.co.uk

“

Some of these non-profit financial savings and loan co-operatives can be best-buys for those looking to borrow smaller amounts.

[www.moneysavingexpert.com](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com)

# THE PLYMOUTH CHARTER FOR PRIVATE RENTED HOUSING

## Our shared values and aims

- To value fairness for everyone in all housing and to champion the belief that everyone is entitled to a good quality home where they can live safely, settle and thrive.
- To acknowledge the vital role of the private rented sector in helping to meet the housing needs of many of Plymouth's residents.
- To seek a fair balance between the interests of landlords and tenants.
- To raise the profile of the best private landlords and agents who improve Plymouth's reputation and that of the private rented sector.
- To increase the number of good quality landlords, responsible agents and private rented homes.
- To increase understanding of what a good quality home is and encourage landlords and agents to provide this.
- To reduce fuel poverty and improve energy efficiency in private rented housing.
- To expect landlords and agents to do what is reasonable and proportional to resolve any problems with their properties.
- To take appropriate enforcement action to protect tenants and to act swiftly against 'rogue' landlords and agents with unfair practices.
- To provide advice and training so that tenants are aware of their responsibilities as well as their rights and are able to sustain their tenancies.
- To provide help and advice to enable tenants to make informed decisions about their housing options.
- To work with landlords and tenants to help sustain tenancies and avoid eviction wherever possible.





# YOUR PLYMOUTH

14 December 2015

Tracking Resolutions Schedule 2015-16



Date and Minute No.	Resolution	Progress								
12.10.15  13	<p><b>Unauthorised Encampment Update</b></p> <p><u>Agreed</u> that a response would be sought for Councillor Rennie, with the panel copied in for information.</p>	<p>E-mail response from Jackie Kings, Housing Services, circulated to the panel on 16/10/15.</p>								
15	<p><b>Corporate Performance Report – Performance Indicator Update</b></p> <p><u>Recommended</u> that –</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="331 1034 1111 1457"> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 1034 403 1294">(1)</td> <td data-bbox="403 1034 1111 1294">a specific questionnaire on hate crime is undertaken in order to more accurately take account of margins for error, demographics, capture people’s differences of opinion and identify where any prejudices lie;</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 1294 403 1457">(2)</td> <td data-bbox="403 1294 1111 1457">consideration is given to incorporating an element to capture people’s perceptions on diversity and cohesion within the Plymouth Plan as part of its ongoing review;</td> </tr> </table>	(1)	a specific questionnaire on hate crime is undertaken in order to more accurately take account of margins for error, demographics, capture people’s differences of opinion and identify where any prejudices lie;	(2)	consideration is given to incorporating an element to capture people’s perceptions on diversity and cohesion within the Plymouth Plan as part of its ongoing review;	<table border="1" data-bbox="1142 890 2074 1425"> <tr> <td data-bbox="1142 890 1214 1225">(1)</td> <td data-bbox="1214 890 2074 1225">The Council is currently consulting on its Hate Incidents targets. As part of this officers will be liaising with key representatives and groups across all the relevant protected characteristics in order to capture their views. Further information will be available by March 2016 and this will be used to inform future equality objectives and the welcoming city agenda.”</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1142 1225 1214 1425">(2)</td> <td data-bbox="1214 1225 2074 1425">These are the Plymouth Plan policies that particularly relate to this. <a href="http://www.theplymouthplan.co.uk/policy/so-1/t-1">http://www.theplymouthplan.co.uk/policy/so-1/t-1</a> <a href="http://www.theplymouthplan.co.uk/policy/so-6">http://www.theplymouthplan.co.uk/policy/so-6</a></td> </tr> </table>	(1)	The Council is currently consulting on its Hate Incidents targets. As part of this officers will be liaising with key representatives and groups across all the relevant protected characteristics in order to capture their views. Further information will be available by March 2016 and this will be used to inform future equality objectives and the welcoming city agenda.”	(2)	These are the Plymouth Plan policies that particularly relate to this. <a href="http://www.theplymouthplan.co.uk/policy/so-1/t-1">http://www.theplymouthplan.co.uk/policy/so-1/t-1</a> <a href="http://www.theplymouthplan.co.uk/policy/so-6">http://www.theplymouthplan.co.uk/policy/so-6</a>
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Date and Minute No.	Resolution		Progress	
	(3)	consideration is given to improving advertising/promotion of the consultation on Part 2 of the Plymouth Plan to ensure that the public are aware and can engage if they wish;		<p data-bbox="1261 357 1928 387"><a href="http://www.theplymouthplan.co.uk/policy/so-6/p-38">http://www.theplymouthplan.co.uk/policy/so-6/p-38</a></p> <p data-bbox="1261 411 2047 592">These will be monitored, this can include any qualitative monitoring from residents or communities. If there are causes for concern the performance of these policies will be monitored more closely. The policy text will be reviewed in Autumn 2016 if additions are required.</p>
	(4)	a sign is placed outside the First Stop Shop at New George Street to advise customers that there is an additional payment machine inside;	(3)	<p data-bbox="1261 667 1834 697">Advertising/Promotion has been as follows -</p> <ul data-bbox="1308 762 2047 1444" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a double page spread in the Shopper for every area and subsidised additional copies so they have gone to 96,000 homes;</li> <li>• worked with Plymouth Octopus project to raise awareness through the voluntary and community sector;</li> <li>• two page spreads in the Herald;</li> <li>• active on the Plymouth Plan Facebook Page and @plymccplanning on Twitter;</li> <li>• offered three briefings for Councillors and asked them to use their local networks to promote Part 2;</li> <li>• copies clearly on display at all libraries, First Stop and additional venues as requested by Councillors;</li> <li>• posters on the buses;</li> <li>• stall at the market every Friday;</li> <li>• posted information to 2000 people who have expressed an interest and e-mailed information to 6000 local people.</li> </ul>
	(5)	with regard to performance indicator K30, the item is deferred for consideration at the panel's next meeting on 14 December, 2015.		

Date and Minute No.	Resolution	Progress								
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**YOUR PLYMOUTH**

Draft Work Programme 2015/16



**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.

<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Purpose of the agenda item</b>	<b>Reason for consideration</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>
<b>13 July</b>	Unauthorised Encampments Update	To update members on progress following the review undertaken in 2013	Increasing UE occurrences and community interest	Matt Garrett
	Customer Services Transformation Programme	Update on progress with Project delivery		Ross Johnston / Pete Honeywell
<b>12 Oct</b>	Safer Plymouth Partnership Update : Crime Figures	To monitor City's crime trends and Community Safety Partnership performance	The panel has a statutory role in scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership	Sarah Hopkins
	Corporate Performance Monitoring (K01 / K02 / K29)	To monitor progress against KPI's falling within the Panel's terms of reference	Referred from Co-operative Scrutiny Board	Faye Batchelor-Hambleton & Craig McArdle
	Emergency Welfare Scheme Update	To monitor and review following its introduction in April 2013	Monitoring outcome of Social Fund Replacement task and finish review	Faye Batchelor-Hambleton
<b>14 Dec</b>	Corporate Performance Monitoring (K22 / K24 / K25 / K52)	To monitor progress against KPI's falling within the Panel's terms of reference	Referred from Co-operative Scrutiny Board	Matt Garrett, Darin Halifax & Judith Harwood

Date of meeting	Agenda item	Purpose of the agenda item	Reason for consideration	Responsible Officer
	Enforcement <i>Moved to March 2016 meeting</i>	To review current practice and performance	No review has been undertaken for some time	Robin Carton
	Problem Debt	To review outcome of recommendations arising from co-operative review undertaken in 2014	To monitor progress of scrutiny recommendations	Laura Griffiths
	Corporate Performance Monitoring (K26 / K43)	To monitor progress against KPI's falling within the Panel's terms of reference	Referred from Co-operative Scrutiny Board	Alison Botham, Andrew Hardingham/ Paul Barnard
	Safer Plymouth Partnership Update : Crime Figures	To monitor City's crime trends and Community Safety Partnership performance	The panel has a statutory role in scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership	TBC
14 Mar	Enforcement	To review current practice and performance	No review has been undertaken for some time	Any Netherton
	Portfolio Updates and Priority Review	To hear from Cabinet Members what has been achieved against their portfolio priorities for 2015/16 and what their priorities are going into 2016/2017	To help inform the 2016/17 work programme.	Cabinet Members / Directors
	External Funding	Performance monitoring - A key action in the Corporate Plan is to maximise opportunities to secure external funding	Referred by the Co-operative Scrutiny Board as this action is currently flagged as 'red'	Andrew Hardingham
<b>Cooperative Reviews</b>		<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Progress</b>
		<b>Priority</b>		
The Summer Budget and Implications for Plymouth Residents		I	On 8 July, Chancellor George Osborne delivered the first Conservative Budget since 1996.	Two dates have so far been confirmed – 19 October and 13 November 2015.

		<p>The review will focus on the elements considered to impact most keenly on the residents of Plymouth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working age benefits</li><li>• Benefits cap</li><li>• Free childcare entitlement</li><li>• The youth obligation</li><li>• Social housing (right to buy, pay to stay, rental rates)</li><li>• National living wage</li></ul>	
Sex Crimes on Campus	PID to be drafted and submitted to Co-operative Scrutiny Board		

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