



**Democratic and Member Support**

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## **PLACE AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Wednesday 1 November 2017

1 pm

Warspite Room, Council House

**Members:**

Councillor Bowie, Chair

Councillor Ball, Vice Chair

Councillors Carson, Churchill, Sam Davey, Fletcher, Fry, Mavin, Morris, Penberthy and Storer.

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

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**Tracey Lee**

Chief Executive

# **Place and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

## **Agenda**

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**
- 3. Minutes** **(Pages 1 - 8)**
- 4. Chair's Urgent Business**
- 5. Homelessness - Universal Credit (Housing Element)**
  - 5a Homelessness **(Pages 9 - 18)**
  - 5b Universal Credit
- 6. Waste Services (to follow)**
- 7. Transport Infrastructure (presentation)**
- 8. Allotments** **(Pages 19 - 24)**
- 9. Tracking Decisions** **(Pages 25 - 28)**
- 10. Work Programme** **(Pages 29 - 30)**

**Place and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee****Wednesday 6 September 2017****PRESENT:**

Councillor Bowie, in the Chair.

Councillor Ball, Vice Chair.

Councillors Churchill, Dann (substitute for Councillor Mavin), Sam Davey, Fletcher, Fry, Martin Leaves (substitute for Councillor Carson), Storer and Jon Taylor (substitute for Councillor Penberthy).

Apologies for absence: Councillors Carson, Mavin and Penberthy.

Also in attendance: Simon Arthurs (Senior Financial Analyst), Dawn Auger (Interim Strategic Director for Transformation – Transformation), Faye Batchelor-Hambleton (Assistant Director for Customer Services), Andrew Hardingham (Interim Strategic Director for Transformation – Finance), Lou Hayward (Assistant Director for Street Scene), Peter Honeywell (Transformation Architecture Manager), Ross Jago (Lead Officer), Councillor Jordan (Cabinet Member for Culture), Councillor Michael Leavers (Cabinet Member for Strategic Street Scene/Environment), Emma Rose (Strategic Development Manager), Dave Saunders (Strategic Development Manager (Customer Services), Mark Vincent (Technical and Contracts Manager) and Helen Wright (Democratic Support Officer).

The meeting started at 1.00 pm and finished at 5.42 pm.

*Note: At a future meeting, the Panel will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.*

**10. Declarations of Interest**

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

**11. Minutes**

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2017 are a correct record.

**12. Chair's Urgent Business**

There was no items of Chair's urgent business.

### 13. **Registration Service Briefing**

Councillor Jordan (Cabinet Member for Culture), Andrew Hardingham (Interim Strategic Director for Transformation – Finance), Faye Batchelor-Hambleton (Assistant Director for Customer Services) and Emma Rose (Strategic Development Manager) presented the briefing on the Registration Service.

In 2015 the Customer Service Transformation carried out a service review on the Registration Service; the review involved working closely with staff at all levels of the service, as well as utilising insight gained through customer feedback. Following the review eight key improvements were outlined which included provision of death and birth registration from Derriford, prove birth/death/marriage certificate applications online and increase the portfolio of approved wedding venues city-wide.

The key areas of questioning related to –

- (a) the number of jobs that would be lost due to the re-location of the service;
- (b) the number of days that wedding ceremonies would be held in the Council House;
- (c) the loss of revenue due to the uncertainty of whether the service would be relocated;
- (d) the re-location of the emergency operations centre equipment from the Temeraire room;
- (e) the lack of detail regarding how the working process would support the revised working model;
- (f) the difficulty of accommodating the service within the confines of a democratic hub;
- (g) the loss of revenue due to the Council House not being able to accommodate the same level of wedding ceremonies;
- (h) the lack of options contained within the report regarding other potential locations such as the Guildhall and Pounds House;
- (i) whether consultation had been undertaken with members of staff from the Registration Service and members of the public;
- (j) concerns regarding whether the Contact Centre would be able to process the additional calls for the service (when registering births and deaths) and whether these calls could be prioritised;
- (k) the locations across the city where customers would be able to register births and deaths;

- (l) the need to look at the requirements of the service rather than the location.

The Committee agreed to –

- (1) support the disposal of the Lockyer Street site, for a capital receipt, as detailed in the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan;
- (2) support the principle of improving accessibility to services;
- (3) recommend to the Cabinet Member that proposals to relocate the registration service into the Council House are not acceptable, must be reconsidered and alternative accommodation must be explored; in particular the Cabinet Member should consider -
  - whether spaces such as the interview rooms and Members' rooms in Ballard House are currently being effectively utilised;
  - how death registrations may be provided seven days a week;
  - an additional exploration of Pounds House as an alternative wedding venue;
  - wider consultation with Members and the public on the use of the Council House.

#### 14. **Strategic Options for Corporate Services**

Andrew Hardingham (Interim Strategic Director for Transformation – Finance), Dawn Aunger (Interim Strategic Director for Transformation – Transformation), Faye Batchelor-Hambleton (Assistant Director for Customer Services, Peter Honeywell (Transformation Architecture Manager) and Simon Arthurs (Senior Financial Analyst) presented the strategic options for Corporate Services.

Cabinet in February 2013 approved the outline business case for a new model moving PCC IT service delivery to Delt in partnership with NEW Devon CCG; it was envisaged that this model could be expanded to include other services in the future. The services that were proposed to be moved to Delt would be subject to a more detailed analysis of the transfer when the business case and service specifications were developed.

Kevin Treweeks (Unison) and Patricia Small (GMB) outlined the trade unions' key areas of concern, as follows –

- (a) the potential benefits of transferring services to another vehicle;
- (b) the savings or earnings that could be achieved through such a venture;
- (c) the risk of 'breaking' Delt by expanding the organisation;

- (d) the risk to the future political control of transferring some strategic services to this venture;
- (e) currently there was no proper trade union recognition agreement in place in Delt (the staff forum was not an acceptable model).

Diana Beal (Unite) submitted a written submission which the Panel took into consideration.

The key areas of questioning related to –

- (f) why other local councils had not taken the opportunity to join Delt;
- (g) the importance of having trade union representation when dealing with staff transferring to Delt;
- (h) concerns that the focus for the new venture would have to change to 'revenue hunting' which could have an impact on the public sector service;
- (i) the proposed services that had been included within the scope and whether they were a best fit for this model;
- (j) concerns that with no trade union agreement in place, terms and conditions could be diluted;
- (k) assurance that the right governance arrangements would be in place with such a venture;
- (l) the importance of Plymouth City Council having overall ownership of the venture;
- (m) concerns that there was no elected member representation on the Delt Board;
- (n) what the process would be to develop the business cases including service specifications.

The Committee agreed to recommend to Cabinet that –

- (1) the Scrutiny Committee supports the mandatory outcomes, as set out within the report but with the addition of 'jobs and investment being retained on the peninsula' and 'that partners are based in the public or voluntary community sectors' as mandatory rather than desirable outcomes;
- (2) Plymouth City Council to work with Delt to achieve Trade Union recognition before proceeding to business case and service specification development;

- (3) subject to recommendation two, that a cross party working group is established to consider the business cases as they are developed;
- (4) Trade Unions in the Council continue to be involved in the process through the Joint Strategic Consultative Forum;
- (5) the Scrutiny Committee will further consider business cases and service specifications as and when they are developed;
- (6) officers address the issues of future influence of councillors and future public sector ownership of Delt;
- (7) when considering which services to move to business case, the Scrutiny Committee asks that Cabinet work within the principle that transactional services are considered first.

### 15. **Waste**

Councillor Michael Leavers (Cabinet Member for Strategic Street Scene/Environment), Lou Hayward (Assistant Director for Street Scene), Dave Saunders (Strategic Development Manager (Customer Services) and Mark Vincent (Technical and Contracts Manager) were present to receive questions from the Panel relating to the information that it had requested at the meeting held in March 2017.

Key areas of questioning related to –

- (a) the need to develop a performance dashboard with 2016/17 data used as the baseline for the indicators;
- (b) when the review of the assisted bin collections would commence;
- (c) concerns that a private sector company was advertising for enforcement staff within Plymouth and the wider implications of outsourcing the public protection service;
- (d) the current waiting time for the bulky waste service;
- (e) the current waiting time for the provision of a green/brown bin;
- (f) concerns that new homes and customers with broken bins were having to pay £15 for a new/replacement bins; once the bins had been delivered the broken bins were not being removed;
- (g) the amount of revenue generated through charging for new/replacement bins;
- (h) how the service would enforce bins left on the highway;

- (i) concerns regarding the increase in street litter and the number of incidents of fly tipping.

The Committee agreed that –

- (1) a performance dashboard with quarterly performance trend against indicators using 2016/17 as baseline data, should be developed and available as soon as possible for Committee members;
- (2) new homes and customers with broken bins should not be charged for new bins, the current charging policy is to be emailed to members of the Committee;
- (3) future scrutiny to review the performance and enforcement in November 2017.

16. **Gypsy and Travellers - Unauthorised Encampments**

The Chair advised that this item had been included on the agenda for information, and as no issues had been identified for consideration prior to the meeting, no Cabinet Members or officers had been invited to attend.

Councillor Ball advised that the report had not covered the areas that he considered should have been included and requested that a Select Committee Review be undertaken.

The Chair advised that prior to considering this request Councillor Ball would need to complete the Select Committee Review Plan.

17. **Corporate Plan Quarterly Report - Quarter I 2017/18**

The Chair advised that this item had been included on the agenda for information, and as no issues had been identified for consideration prior to the meeting, no Cabinet Members or officers had been invited to attend.

18. **Capital and Revenue Monitoring Report 2017/18 - Quarter I**

The Chair advised that this item had been included on the agenda for information, and as no issues had been identified for consideration prior to the meeting, no Cabinet Members or officers had been invited to attend.

19. **Tracking Decisions**

The Committee noted the progress of its decisions.



20. **Work Programme**

The Committee agreed to include the following items on its work programme –

- (1) Select Committee Review – Gypsy and Travellers;
- (2) Waste (November 2017).

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**Place and Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee**  
**Homelessness Briefing**  
**01 November 2017**



**Homelessness Briefing for Place and Overview Scrutiny****01 November 2017****1. Introduction**

The term homelessness covers a range of situations that people may find themselves these include:-

- Nowhere to live in the UK or elsewhere in the world
- Can't stay where they live due to violence or threats of violence
- Have nowhere to live where people who could reasonably be expected to reside with them (such as a partner) can live
- Don't have permission to stay where they are
- Been locked out of home and not allowed back
- Home is a boat, mobile home or caravan and they have nowhere they are allowed to place it
- Have somewhere to live but it isn't reasonable to remain due to poor conditions etc

People become homeless for lots of different reasons. There are social causes of homelessness, such as a lack of affordable housing, poverty and unemployment; and life events which cause individuals to become homeless such as:

- Leaving prison, care or the army with no home to go to
- Many people become homeless through domestic abuse
- Many people become homeless because they can no longer afford the rent
- Mental or physical health problems, or substance misuse can be the trigger.
- Relationship break down,
- Losing a job,
- Being asked to leave by friends and family

**2. Current Statistics - National**

Homelessness has been on the rise across the country over the last couple of years.

Rough Sleeping (the most visible form of homelessness) has also been increasing nationally over the last few years. The number of Rough Sleepers recorded nationally in 2015 was 3,569. In 2016 this rose to 4,134 a rise of 16%.

Numbers of Rough Sleepers in London rose from 940 in 2015 to 964 in 2016 compared to the rest of England where figures rose to 3,170 in 2016 from 2,629 in 2015

Statutory Homelessness Applications across the country are also rising. 2015/16 saw 27,640 applications taken a quarter, compared to 29,090 applications a quarter in 2016 a rise of 5%.

With the rise in applications comes a rise in the number of households accepted for the main housing duty (those the local authority has a duty to find long term permanent accommodation for) the number of acceptances has risen nationally from 13,520 a quarter in 2015 to 14,760 in 2016 a rise of 9%.

### 3. Current Statistics – Local

The table below shows a range of Plymouth based statistics and how these have changed over the last couple of years

	14/15	15/16	16/17	%rise
Advice Casework	1644	1557	1654	6%
Statutory Homelessness Applications	710	698	804	15%
Statutory Homelessness Applications accepted as full duty	267	238	322	35%
Prevention	1242	1030	932	-10%
Number of Rough Sleepers	3	12	20	66%
Number of Vulnerable single people accepted as full duty	111	92	140	52%

\*% rise is between 15/16 and 16/17

### 4. Homelessness and numbers in Bed and Breakfast and Temporary Accommodation

#### 4.1 Current Numbers in temporary accommodation (as at 04/09/2017)

Numbers of Households in temporary accommodation 160

Number of Households in Bed and Breakfast 57

- Of which have children/are pregnant 8
- Of which are 16/17 0

#### 4.2 Number of Families or People who are pregnant in Bed and Breakfast at end of each quarter for the year 16/17

At end of Jun 16	At end of Sept 16	At end of Dec 16	At end of March 17
6	4	3	8

Average number at the end of the quarter - 5

Total number of families/households that contain children and/or pregnant female placed in Bed and Breakfast

- 2015/16 – 54
- 2016/17 – 81

Average stay families/households that contain children and/or a pregnant female placed in Bed and Breakfast

- 2015/16 – 2.25 weeks
- 2016/17 – 2.13 weeks

Even with the increased number of families we have managed to keep the average length of stay in Bed and Breakfast to a minimum and we are working with providers to reduce this further by providing further units of alternative temporary accommodation

As alternatives to Bed and Breakfast we have:

Houselet – Houses rented in the private rented sector for families/couples and singles  
 Raglan Court – Block of 13 flats owned by the council used to house families/couples and singles  
 Supported Temp – 48 units of shared housing used to house single people

#### **4.3 Number of Children in Temporary Accommodation**

Total Number of Children/unborn children in all forms of temporary accommodation

- 31/03/2016 – 135
- 31/03/2017 – 124

This number will fluctuate dependent on the size of the families that are accommodated in temporary accommodation. It is a snapshot on a particular date. This number has risen over the last few years due to a rise in the number of families approaching us.

#### **4.4 Number of 16/17 yr olds in Bed and Breakfast**

There are currently **NO** 16/17 yr olds in Bed and Breakfast

We do occasionally have to place 16/17 year olds in Bed and Breakfast although we minimise this through our use of Advantage Point.

The Department for Communities and Local Government Homelessness Code of Guidance and the additional guidance issued jointly by the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (following *R (G) v Southwark [2009]*) both state that bed and breakfast accommodation may not/ is not suitable for 16/17 yr olds.

In line with this, Community Connections endeavour never to place 16/17yr olds in bed and breakfast accommodation. This is not always possible for a number of reasons: - where there are no available places in commissioned accommodation; the young person is unable to be placed in the commissioned service bed because they cannot be placed with another young person; or the young person has displayed behaviours which mean they have been temporarily excluded from available commissioned services.

In the year April 2016 to March 2017, five 16/17 yr olds were placed in bed and breakfast accommodation. The minimum time was 1 day and the maximum time was 58 days.

The case of 58 days was highly unusual in that this decision was taken in conjunction with the young person and multiple agencies to best support this individual and their mental health. This was a success story and the young person moved on in a positive way which had never been achieved by this young person before.

In the year April 2015 to March 2016 five 16/17 year olds were accommodated in bed and breakfast. The minimum time was for 1 day and the maximum for 31 days. Again, the cases over 1 day were linked with the specific circumstances of the young people involved.

Community Connections continue to work in conjunction with partner agencies to best support homeless/vulnerable young people to minimise both the numbers in bed and breakfast accommodation and the risk to vulnerable young people in temporary accommodation.

#### **4.5 Number of Complex single/ childless couples**

Total number of Complex Single/Childless couples in Bed and Breakfast

- 31/03/2016 – 19
- 31/03/2017 – 64
  - Of whom 22 are 18 – 25 years old

We have seen a rise of the number of single people/childless couples in Bed and breakfast and are working with partners across the Complex Lives System to look at how we can find alternative solutions. We are currently looking at issues within move on from the hostel system, talking to providers about increased provision and talking to investors about supporting the delivery of alternative products to remove the reduce the reliance on bed and breakfast

### **5. Changes to Homelessness Legislation**

The Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) comes into legislation in April 2018. The Government says that the HRA will significantly reform England's homelessness legislation, ensuring that more people get the help they need to prevent them from becoming homeless in the first place. The Act makes changes to the current homelessness legislation contained in Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996.

The HRA places duties on local authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness in their areas. It requires local authorities to provide new homelessness services to all those affected, not just those who are protected under existing legislation

The HRA will increase the number of people who are eligible for services and will change how some services are delivered.

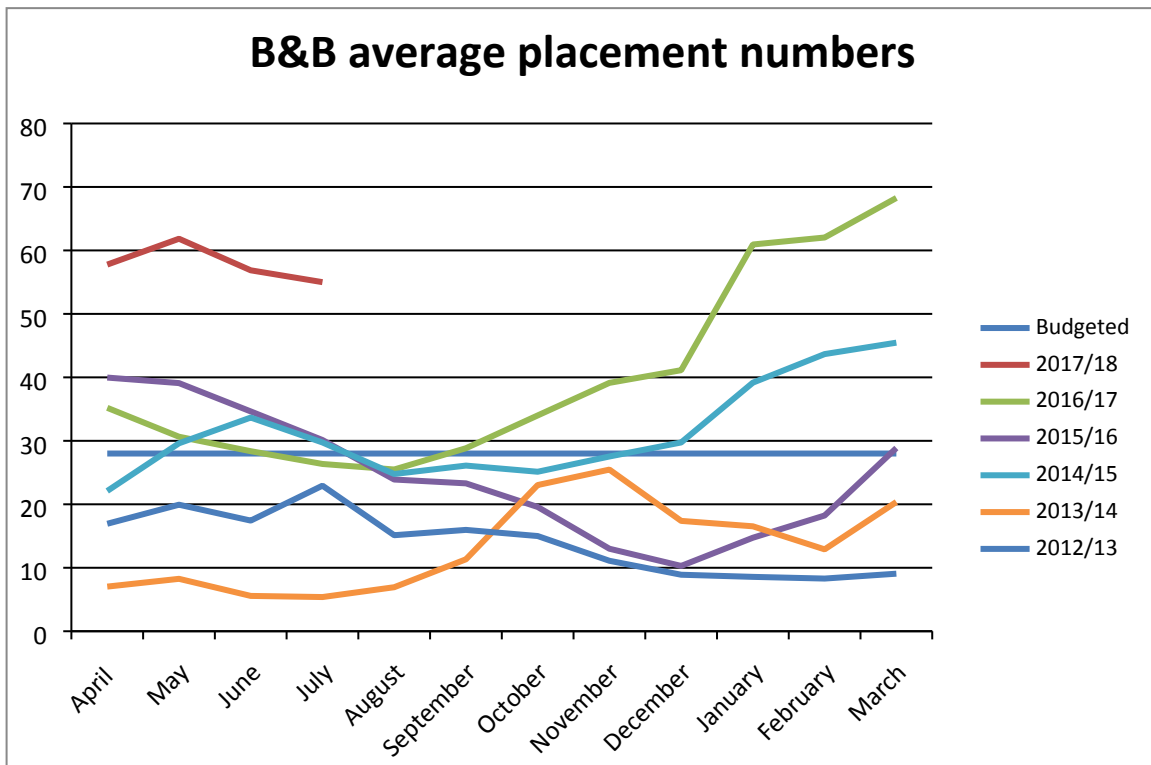
The Government has provided new burdens funding to support provision of these services and for Plymouth this amounts to £371,876 over three years

**6. Bed and Breakfast usage on Budget**

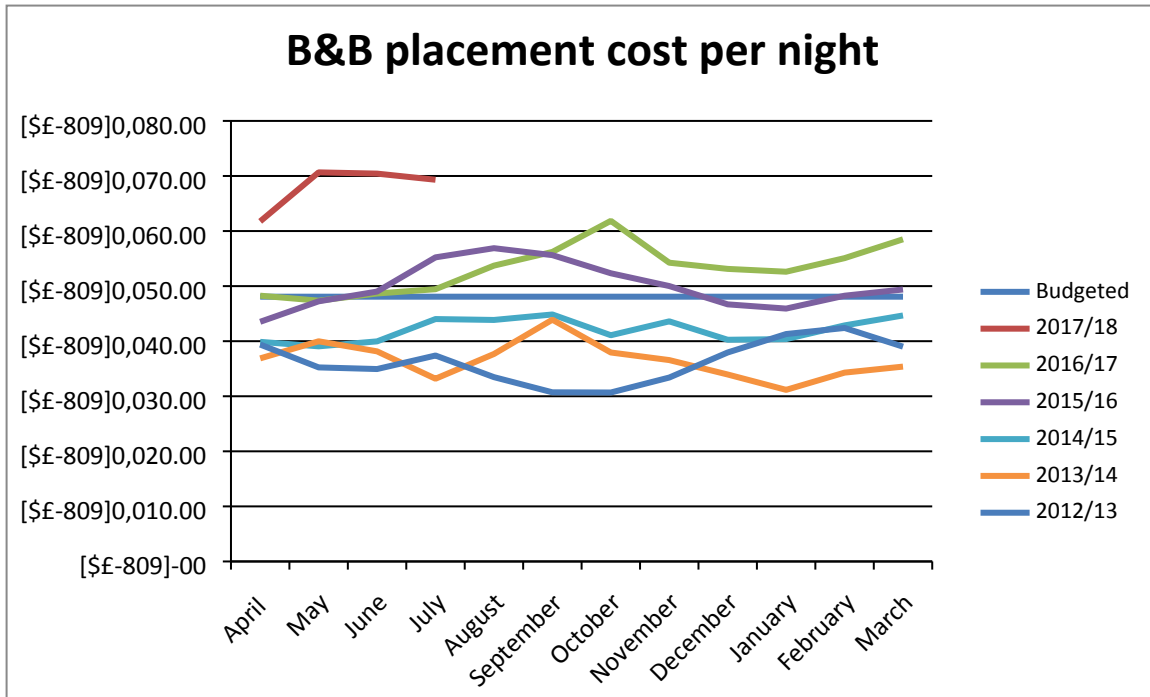
The budget for bed and breakfast spend for 2017/18 was originally built on a forecast of 30 households across the year.

The original budget was £330,000

We have seen both a rise in demand in the numbers of households in bed and breakfast and a rise in the average cost of bed and breakfast. This led to our month 2 forecast showing a £703k overspend







This overspend has already been managed down and by Month 5 has reduced to 494K (and is being offset by further budget savings) but the team continue to try and bring the overspend down further.

Current placement numbers are a challenge but a series of actions have been put in place to further reduce placements and thus reduce pressure on budgets

The team are currently working to reduce demand and thus flow into B+B, Cost of B+B and the length of stay of households once they are in B+B. All of which will help reduce budget pressure

**7. What are we and the system doing?**

We have a network of services some of which we currently commission to support the Local Authority to maintain our positive work on Homelessness and that have supported us to minimise some of the increases.

We have set up the System Optimisation Group (SOG) across homelessness, substance misuse, mental health and offending called complex lives to support this work and to bring partners together to discuss issues and find alternative solutions and to deliver services differently

We have an outreach service run by Plymouth Access to Housing that works with Rough Sleepers to remove them from the streets and into accommodation, monitoring and signposting to local services

We have emergency overnight stay provision such as Safesleep and WARN, where vulnerable people at risk of rough sleeping can be safely accommodated whilst longer term options are explored.

We have changed the way the local authority team works, we have restructured the team to allow more staff to do homelessness prevention and to allow us to intervene earlier to stop people becoming homeless

We commission a broad range of supported housing for vulnerable homeless people including hostels for the homeless; refuge for victims of domestic violence; accommodation with support provided for people with mental health issues and learning disabilities

We have a range of advice and information provision such as Housing Information Service and floating support provision through to day service provision for vulnerable people alongside practical support delivered to people in their own homes when they're crisis due to complex mental health, substance abuse and offending issues.

We have the Renting Support Scheme to support people to access good quality Private rented accommodation by supporting with deposits

We have a social letting agency in the city set up by Plymouth Access to Housing called PH4L to support vulnerable people to find and keep PRS accommodation

Targeted work to address poverty and financial exclusion, with income maximisation, support to manage debt and budgeting skills being key to supporting people to access and sustain housing.

We are working with partners to develop new types of delivery around temporary accommodation

Numerous contracts providing single homeless people with Hostel accommodation with providers such as BCHA, Salvation Army and DCH

We are also working with providers to provide 'move on' shared housing for people who are either homeless or vulnerably housed.

We are currently in the process of refreshing our action plan and will be consulting very shortly on our homelessness delivery plan

We recognise that in order to respond to the challenges within homelessness we require a whole system transformational approach. In 2018, homelessness services will be commissioned as part of the complex needs procurement which also encompasses substance misuse, offenders and some mental health provision. Using a collaborative model the focus will be on creating systemic change: changes to culture, funding structures, commissioning and policy which support a new way of working. Together we will create a contractual environment where suppliers share responsibility for achieving outcomes and are mutually supportive, making decisions based on the best outcome for the service user.

## **8. Commissioning spend for complex lives**

### **Accommodation Services**

Total spend is £2,785,057 on a range of accommodation services such as George House, Devonport Lifehouse

### **Advice and Support Services**

Total spend is £1,037,432 on a range of advice and information services such as the Housing information Support Service and the Renting Support Service

### **Substance Misuse Services**

Total spend is £4,038,822 on a range of substance misuse services such as treatment and day services

## 9. Specific Actions to reduce bed and breakfast usage and reduce budget overspend

- **Recommission Houselet service**

We are working with providers to recommission Houselet to ensure we have access to more properties, better turnaround and better flexibility to help us better meet demand. We have let the contract to a new provider and hope to be able to start working with them at the beginning of November. We will be looking for the new provider to offer an additional 10 properties within the first 6 months of the contract. This will increase additional properties in the Private Rented Sector for both families and single people which will enable us to move people out of bed and breakfast.

- **Procure more supported temporary accommodation beds**

We are working with BCHA the current provider to commission another 12 beds of supported temp. BCHA are procuring 4 new 4 bed houses to use as shared accommodation for single people.

This will reduce our need for bed and breakfast for single people and will take the total number of supported temp units to 58 by the end of 2017.

- **Work with Bed and Breakfast Providers to reduce costs**

We are working with providers to see if we can reduce costs of B+B by block booking beds rather than our current method of spot purchasing.

- **Refocus staff to proactive robust move on from Bed and Breakfast accommodation**

We have focused some of our locality staff to support our Access team in move on from Bed and Breakfast accommodation. This includes targeting specific individuals and working 1:1 to ensure quick move on into other forms of temporary or permanent accommodation.

We have also instigated weekly meetings for managers to problem solve difficult cases and to ensure oversight of current issues

- **Work with Complex Lives System Optimisation Group (SOG) to set up a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) to work with the most complex**

We are working with SOG to set up a MDT that can engage flexibly with the most hard to reach and hard to support complex homeless individuals. This will help break down barriers and provide move on support and prevent exclusions within the system. This will also provide assertive outreach into B and B accommodation to move people onto more sustainable accommodation in a timely way.

- **Work with SOG to look at training, evictions policy across the homelessness pathway to ensure that partners are supporting us.**

We are working with SOG to ensure that they are not creating demand for us through evictions from hostels and will be ensuring we are supporting staff with training such as Motivational interviewing and Assessing risk, relational security and de-escalation. This will help to reduce the number of households entering bed and breakfast by supporting maintenance of other placements

- **Audit of the front end**

Working with the Access team to ensure that placements and reasons for placements are robust and that we are maximising prevention and working with people to where possible keep them where they are whilst helping them solve their impending homelessness

- **Creative Solution Forum**

We are setting up a specific creative solutions forum to look at some of the more difficult cases in Bed and Breakfast and to support the team to find solutions. This is a multi-agency approach to problem solving and will provide move for a number of current people in B+B.

**PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL**

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>BRIEFING PAPER: Allotment Management in Plymouth</b>
<b>Committee:</b>	Place and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date:</b>	1 November 2017
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Nicholson
<b>CMT Member:</b>	Anthony Payne (Director for Place)
<b>Author:</b>	Kaja Curry, Acting Natural Infrastructure Manager (Maternity Cover)
<b>Contact details</b>	Tel: 01752 304339 email: kaja.curry@plymouth.gov.uk
<b>Key Decision:</b>	N/A
<b>Part:</b>	1

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**1. Plymouth's Current Allotment Services**

- 1.1. Allotments are provided under legislation, the first of which was the 1908 Small Holdings and Allotments Act which placed a duty of local authorities to provide sufficient allotments according to demand. Legislation was further strengthened and the Allotments Act of 1925 established statutory allotments that local authorities could not sell off without Ministerial consent, which is still the case.
- 1.2. Plymouth City Council has a number of sites and lets these out in accordance with the relevant legislation. Allotment holders are required to pay rent and to cover the water rates and general maintenance costs and must sign a tenancy agreement.
- 1.3. The Council's Allotment Service sits within the Natural Infrastructure Team of Strategic Planning and Infrastructure. The Service provides 1,757 allotment plots on 37 sites across the city. The Table in the Appendix provides details of all the sites with their names, number of plots and occupancy rates. Many sites also operate a Tenants Association which provides additional benefits.
- 1.4. Stats: In the last year - We terminated 393 tenancies, and made over 282 plot offers. We currently have 118 vacant plots to offer and have 55 on offer waiting for responses. We respond to a weekly average of 130 phone calls and 357 emails.

**2. Joint Local Plan & Plymouth Plan**

The Draft Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan sets out the principles for sustainable linked neighbourhoods and communities and identifies an aspirational target of 0.15ha of allotment / community growing space per 1,000 people.

Table 1: Allotment plots per Plymouth Plan Area

<b>Plymouth Plan Area</b>	<b>No Plots per 1,000 people</b>	<b>Approx. amount ha per PP area</b>
South West	15.1	0.27
West	5.3	0.09
Plymstock	4.26	0.07
South	0	0
North West	4.81	0.08
Plympton	5.2	0.09
Central	15	0.27
North	5.3	0.09
City Total	7.7	0.13

### 3. Management

3.1. In 2014 the management of the Allotment Service moved from Street Cleansing and Grounds to the Natural Infrastructure (NI) Team in order to provide an integrated service for green space management, particularly in terms of capital improvements. The service is now run by 1.5 FTEs plus the support of 0.5FTE admin support.

3.2. SCG provide maintenance support for the allotments through a dedicated operative. They also provide a path-cutting service during the growing season and maintain the hedges through periodical cuts.

3.3. Since moving to the NI Team the following improvements have been made:

- Programme of rent increases to enable the service to be self-financing (excluding support service costs) over a period of 5 years;
- Introduction of a new allotment management system which has introduced efficiencies for dealing with requests, queries and plot offers;
- Introduction of online payments and electronic communications for the majority of our tenants;
- Introduction of First Stop for dropping off keys and for payments.
- Integration of payments with Civica ensures that payments are correctly credited to Allotments.
- PCC officer serving on the Management Committee of the National Society of Allotments enable sharing of best practice.

3.4. The impact of the improvements that have been introduced has resulted in:

- The Plot Offer process has been reduced from 2 weeks to 3 days;
- Increased efficiencies in the financial systems;
- There have been few complaints about the rent increases with the majority of tenants stating that the Allotment service provides value for money.

### 4. BUDGET

4.1. The budget for Allotments is given in the following table but excludes the Natural Infrastructure Staff:

Table 2: Allotment Budget 2017/18

Description	(£)
Premises	27,469
Transport	12,132
Supplies and Services	1,500
Third Party Payments	50,264
Income	-100,187
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-8,822</b>

#### 4.2. RENT INCOME

In 2015, Plymouth introduced a five year programme of rent increases in order to enable the service to break even by 2020 which involved increasing rent from £25 to £76 for a small plot and £50 to £152 for a large plot. This was carried out in full consultation with tenants and the majority of tenants have been fully supportive.

### 5. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

5.1. The following key capital improvements have been undertaken in the last four years: :

- Creation of 20 plots at Channel Park Site (Efford & Lipson);
- Creation of 50 plots at Swarthmore Site (Peverell)
- Improvements to entrances and security at: Swarthmore, (Peverell) Penlee (Stoke), Mays & Frys (Devonport), Central Park & Venn Farm (Peverell), Blunts Lane (Moorview), Southway Drive (Southway), Hermon Terrace (Ham).
- Installation of composting toilets at Penlee, Swarthmore and Channel Park.
- Creation of 'Billy's Way' main access path at Central Park.
- Creation of community Orchard & Edible Hedge at Central Park, Channel Park, Southway Drive, Swarthmore.
- Capital improvements have been funded through a variety of sources including S106 and external funding sources.
- These have been funded through a variety of means, including S106 and external grant aid including Big Green Space Challenge and Tesco's Community Fund.
- Installation of water troughs on two sites to reduce water costs.
- Extensions to existing sites are also being explored.

### 6. ASSOCIATIONS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

- 6.1. Many sites also operate Tenant Association's which can provide many benefits for the tenants to work closely with the Council to raise funds for site improvements, support development and provide a single line of communication between the Council and the site tenants. Currently 30% of the sites have an association whilst one of the Council's sites, at York Road, with eight tenants is now self-managed.
- 6.2. We support and work with various growing organisations, NHS, Food Plymouth, Plymouth Community Orchard Network, Schools, Colleges and Universities.
- 6.3. We are the first local authority to have an elected officer on the National Allotments Committee. This gives us strong links and support from the National Allotment Society who are a consultee for any requests made to the Secretary of State for disposal of any allotment land.

### 7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1. There has been a large increase in the number of plot holders, due to implementing smaller plots by halving the vacated larger plots', this has meant more people can have an allotment.
- 7.2. We have managed the increase in workloads by implementing new systems and improving links with Finance, which includes us having direct access to amend or check records.
- 7.3. The assistance of an apprentice has made a huge difference to improving our media output and general day-to-day customer contact.
- 7.4. Our link with the National Society of Allotments meant that we had their support at the difficult time of increasing rents, which subsequently received only a few complaints.
- 7.5. The impact of the Northern Corridor Road improvements on one of our sites we managed well and this assisted Planning to achieve their aims.
- 7.6. We are continuously evolving our service by liaising with and listening to our site associations and individual tenants to make improvements to our sites and services as demand and needs dictate.

#### **Appendix:**

I: Wards waiting & vacancies report.

II: Rents increases Letter 2015 (decision made under delegated authority).



## Appendix I: Wards waiting &amp; vacancies report.

Ref No.	Name of site	Ward	No Plots	No Vacant	No under offer	No on waiting list	Association
01	Barn Park Road	Peverell	59	5	1	31	Y
02	Blunts Lane	Moorview	93	0	5	13	Y
03	Bridwell Road	Devonport	19	6	0	8	N
04	Brockley Road	Efford & Lipson	50	12	2	3	N
05	Central Park	Peverell	146	0	7	55	Y
06	Channel Park	Efford & Lipson	21	6	1	5	N
07	Chaucer Way	Hornicknowle	27	5	0	11	N
08	Derwent Avenue	Efford & Lipson	12	0	0	0	N
09	Ditch Gardens	Plymstock Erle	18	0	0	20	N
10	Dunstone Lane	Plymstock Dunstone	20	2	0	41	N
11	Eliot Street	Devenport	16	1	0	7	N
12	Embankment Road	Sutton & Mount Gould	53	1	4	44	N
13	Fosters Field	Ham	26	5	0	22	N
14	Henderson Place	Devonport	19	1	1	5	N
15	Hermon Terrace	Ham	46	9	0	19	N
16	Hooe	Plymstock Radford	48	2	0	58	Y
17	Ivydale Road	Sutton & Mount Gould	2	0	0	5	N
18	Kendal Place	Southway	30	5	0	9	N
19	Knowle Avenue	Devonport	50	3	5	12	Y
20	Lower Compton	Compton	53	14	0	8	Y
21	Lucas Lane	Plympton St. Mary	25	3	0	41	N
22	Mays & Frys	Devonport	57	0	4	11	N
23	Newnham Park	Plympton St. Mary	71	7	1	29	Y
24	Oreston	Plymstock Radford	29	0	4	22	N
25	Parkside	Devonport	32	7	0	24	N
26	Penlee Valley	Stoke	88	9	0	18	N
27	Peverell Park Road	Peverell	62	2	1	29	Y
28	Pike Road	Efford & Lipson	22	1	0	1	N
29	Rowdens Reservoir	Stoke	77	8	0	16	N
30	Seymour Road	Compton	78	7	1	11	N
31	Southway Drive	Southway	65	11	0	7	Y
32	Southway Lane	Southway	47	1	1	2	N
33	Stoggy Lane	Plympton St. Maurice	36	3	0	30	Y
34	Swarthmore Higher Field	Peverell	159	3	7	9	Y
35	Swarthmore Lower Field	Peverell	50	18	0	8	Y
36	West Park Terrace	Hornicknowle	39	9	0	8	Y
37	York Road	Devonport	12	0	0	6	N

Appendix II: Rents increases Letter 2015 (decision made under delegated authority).



To All Allotment Tenants

Natural Infrastructure (Allotments)  
Plymouth City Council  
Prince Rock Depot  
Macadam Road  
Plymouth PL4 0RZ  
01752 606034  
allotments@plymouth.gov.uk  
www.plymouth.gov.uk

21<sup>st</sup> September 2015

Dear Tenant

**Notice of Allotment Rent Increases**

As a result of continued government cuts to Plymouth City Council's budget, we are writing to all council allotment tenants to give notice of plot rent increases. However, these increases will not come into force for 12 months as recommended by the National Allotment Society.

Plymouth City Council provides high quality allotment services at 35 sites across the city with a range of support that includes:

- dedicated maintenance person which last year dealt with 40 tonnes of flytipped / mixed rubbish from across all sites;
- improved fencing and security at 15 sites;
- dedicated administration, advice and support for current tenants, new members and community groups.

This service is currently heavily subsidised by Plymouth City Council. The aim is to continue offering the same high quality allotment service which includes the popular maintenance person, whilst reducing the subsidy over the next 5 years. Therefore we are proposing to increase rents as follows:

Rent from 1 September 2015 (Inflation only)	Small Plot	£25	Large Plot	£50	
Rent from 1 September 2016	-	Small Plot	£35	Large Plot	£70
Rent from 1 September 2017	-	Small Plot	£44	Large Plot	£88
Rent from 1 September 2018	-	Small Plot	£55	Large Plot	£110
Rent from 1 September 2019	-	Small Plot	£65	Large Plot	£130
Rent from 1 September 2020	-	Small Plot	£76	Large Plot	£152

NB. Small plot is any size up to 179sqm. Large plot any size over 179sqm

By 2020 this will equate to a weekly cost of £1.46 for a small plot and £2.92 for a large plot.

There is no change to how water charges are calculated. These will remain as shared usage, the charges set and metered by South West Water, and recharged annually.

We'd like to find out how you use your allotment and how you think we can improve the sites and service. Please take 10 minutes to complete our survey at -

[www.plymouth.gov.uk/allotments](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/allotments) available until 31 October 2015.

Minute No.	Resolution	Target date, Officer responsible and Progress
<p>Strategic Options for Corporate Services</p> <p>Minute 14</p>	<p>1. the Scrutiny Committee supports the mandatory outcomes, as set out within the report but with the addition of 'jobs and investment being retained on the peninsula' and 'that partners are based in the public or voluntary community sectors' as mandatory rather than desirable outcomes;</p> <p>2. Plymouth City Council to work with Delt to achieve Trade Union recognition before proceeding to business case and service specification development;</p> <p>3. subject to recommendation two, that across party working group is established to consider the business cases as they are developed;</p> <p>4. Trade Unions in the Council continue to be involved in the process through the Joint Strategic Consultative Forum;</p> <p>5. the Scrutiny Committee will further consider business cases and service specifications as and when they are developed;</p> <p>6. officers address the issues of future influence of councillors and future public sector ownership of Delt;</p> <p>7. when considered which services to move to business case, the Scrutiny Committee asks that Cabinet work within the principle that transactional services are considered first.</p> <p><b>Completed</b></p>	<p>Date: September 2017 Officer: Ross Jago Progress: Recommendations were considered at Cabinet on 26 September 2017</p> <p>All were accepted and the Cabinet response is appended.</p>
<p>Waste Services</p> <p>Minute 15</p>	<p>1. developed and available as soon as possible for Committee Members;</p> <p>2. new homes and customers with broken bins should not be charged for new bins, the current charging policy is to be emailed to Members of the Committee;</p> <p>3. Future scrutiny review the performance and enforcement in November 2017.</p>	<p>Date: November 2017 Officer: Ross Jago Progress: Scheduled into the Work Programme for November 2017.</p>

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Cabinet Response to Scrutiny Recommendations on Corporate Services

Scrutiny Recommendation	Proposed Response
<p><b>1/. That the Scrutiny Committee support the mandatory outcomes as set out within the report, but with the addition of “Jobs and investment being retained on the peninsula”, and “that partners are based in the public or VCS sectors” as mandatory rather than desirable outcomes</b></p>	<p><u>Noted</u>, the Council will encourage Delt to continue to focus on public and VCS sector partners and to deliver jobs and investment on the peninsular (consistent with Delt’s constitution and business plan<sup>1</sup>) but wishes to avoid attempting to place an absolute restriction on Delt’s future business by suggesting this is mandatory at this stage</p>
<p><b>2/. That Plymouth City Council to work with DELT to achieve Trade Union recognition before proceeding to business case and service specification development</b></p>	<p><u>Accepted</u>, the consideration of business cases or service specifications will not be undertaken before engagement between Delt and Trade Unions has taken place. The Council are committed to finding an effective and scalable mechanism to safeguard the interests of staff working to deliver services for the Council</p>
<p><b>3/. That Subject to recommendation 2, that a cross-party working group be established to consider the of business cases as they are developed</b></p>	<p><u>Accepted</u>, business cases and service specifications for services to be considered for transfer will be brought to the working group for pre decision consideration.</p>
<p><b>4/. That Trade Unions in the council continue to be involved in the process through the Joint Strategic Consultative Forum</b></p>	<p><u>Accepted</u>, the Council remain committed to involving the Trade Unions throughout the process</p>
<p><b>5/. That the Scrutiny Committee will further consider business cases and service specifications as and when they are developed</b></p>	<p><u>Accepted</u>, business cases and service specifications for services to be considered for transfer will be brought to Scrutiny for pre decision Scrutiny</p>
<p><b>6/. That officers address the issues of future influence of councillors and future public sector ownership of DELT</b></p>	<p><u>Accepted</u>, officers are researching options and structures to be put in place to ensure that Councillors are able to engage with and have some oversight of Delt and other arm’s length organisations delivering services on behalf of the Council</p>
<p><b>7/. That when considering which services to move to business case the Scrutiny Committee asks that Cabinet work within the principle that transactional services are considered first</b></p>	<p><u>Accepted</u>, the first phase of services considered for transfer will focus on transactional services.</p>

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# Place and Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee

Work Programme 2017-2018



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

For general enquiries relating to the Council's Scrutiny function, including this committee's work programme, please contact Helen Wright, Democratic Adviser on 01752 304022.

Date of meeting	Agenda item	Prioritisation Score	Reason for consideration	Responsible Cabinet Member / Officer
<b>5 July 2017</b>	Corporate Performance Monitoring Q4 2016/17			
	Plan for Sport			
	Transport Infrastructure Community Item			
<b>6 September 2017<sup>6</sup> September 2017</b>	Registration Service	5 (High)	Member Request – Pre-Decision Scrutiny	Cllr Glen Jordan / Andrew Hardingham / Faye Batchelor Hambleton
	Future of Back Office Services	5 (High)	Pre-decision Scrutiny	Leader (Cross-Cutting) / Andrew Hardingham / Peter Honeywell
	Waste	4 (Medium)	Post decision / Scrutiny update	Cllr Mike Leaves / Lou Hayward / Gareth Harrison Poole
	Gypsy and Travellers – Unauthorised Encampments	3 (Medium)	Member request, written briefing only	Cllr Dave Downie / Matt Garrett
	Corporate Performance Monitoring	-	Standing Item – Written briefing only. Members to advise the Chair if matters arising require presence of an officer / or addition to work programme.	-
	Revenue and Capital Monitoring	-	Standing Item – Written briefing only. Members to advise the Chair if matters arising require presence of an officer / or addition to work programme.	-
<b>1 November 2017 November 2017</b>	Homelessness - Universal Credit (Housing Element)	4 (Medium)	Member request on the basis of Corporate Performance Monitoring and Universal Credit roll-out	Cllr Steve Ricketts / Matt Garret
	Allotments	2 (Low)	Member Request	Cllr Mike Leaves / Lou Hayward
	Transport Infrastructure	2 (Low)	Member Request	Cllr Patrick Nicholson / Paul Barnard
	Waste	4 (Medium)	Post decision / Scrutiny update	Cllr Mike Leaves/Lou Hayward

Date of meeting	Agenda item	Prioritisation Score	Reason for consideration	Responsible Cabinet Member / Officer
	Corporate Performance Monitoring		Standing Item – Written briefing only. Members to advise the Chair if matters arising require presence of an officer / or addition to work programme.	
	Revenue and Capital Monitoring		Standing Item – Written briefing only. Members to advise the Chair if matters arising require presence of an officer / or addition to work programme.	
3 January 2018	Corporate Performance Monitoring		Standing Item – Written briefing only. Members to advise the Chair if matters arising require presence of an officer / or addition to work programme.	
	Revenue and Capital		Standing Item – Written briefing only. Members to advise the Chair if matters arising require presence of an officer / or addition to work programme.	
7 March 2017	Corporate Performance Monitoring		Standing Item – Written briefing only. Members to advise the Chair if matters arising require presence of an officer / or addition to work programme.	
	Revenue and Capital Monitoring		Standing Item – Written briefing only. Members to advise the Chair if matters arising require presence of an officer / or addition to work programme.	
<b>Items to be scheduled 2017/18</b>				
	Employment in the City	4 (Medium)		
	Mayflower 400	4 (Medium)		
	Oceansgate	4 (Medium)		
	The Box	4 (Medium)		
<b>Items to be scheduled 2018/19</b>				
<b>Select Committee Reviews</b>				
	Gypsy and Travellers			
<b>Joint Select Committee Reviews</b>				
January	Budget	5 (High)		Cllr Ian Darcy