



**Oversight and Governance**

Chief Executive's Department  
Plymouth City Council  
Ballard House  
Plymouth PL1 3BJ

Please ask for Democratic Support

T 01752 305155

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[www.plymouth.gov.uk](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk)

Published 26 July 2019

## **MEMBERS' WRITTEN QUESTIONS AND COUNCIL ACTIONS**

Members written questions and actions following Motions on Notice at Council Meetings are published on the last working Friday of every month.

For further information on attending Council meetings and how to engage in the democratic process please follow this link - [Get Involved](#)

**Tracey Lee**  
Chief Executive

# **Members' Written Questions and Council Actions**

**This document is updated on the last Friday of every month**

- 1. Council Actions following Motions on Notice (Pages 1 - 16)**

## **Members Questions**

- 2. Councillor Dann - Jennycliff and Mountbatten Beach (Pages 17 - 18)**
- 3. Councillor Dann - Homelessness Charities Commercial Waste (Pages 19 - 20)**
- 4. Councillor Dann - Chelson Meadow (Pages 21 - 22)**
- 5. Councillor Laing - Foster Carers (Pages 23 - 24)**
- 6. Councillor Haydon - Dog Fouling (Pages 25 - 26)**
- 7. Councillor Haydon - Customer Service Standards (Pages 27 - 28)**
- 8. Councillor Penberthy - Student Homes (Pages 29 - 30)**
- 9. Councillor Kate Taylor - Adults with Autism Care Packages (Pages 31 - 32)**
- 10. Councillor Coker - Abandoned Caravan (Pages 33 - 34)**
- 11. Councillor Coker - Living Streets (Pages 35 - 36)**

**COUNCIL ACTIONS 2019/20**

The table below summarises actions taken in regards Motions on Notice (MoNs) passed at Council meetings. Some MoNs passed by full Council in 2018/19 municipal year are also included where actions remain to be undertaken.

Items which are greyed out have been completed. Hyperlinks to the original motions and any letters already published are included below. Democratic Support publish an update to Council Actions in relation to Motions on Notice on the last Friday of every month.

Meeting Date	COUNCIL MOTIONS	LEAD OFFICER	PROGRESS
<b>2018/19 Council Actions from Motions on Notice</b>			
19/11/18	<b><u>COMMIT TO THE ACCELERATED REDUCTION IN SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BY 2020</u></b>	Service Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure	Partially Complete Actions progressing internally to take forward the commitments by September 2019
18/03/19	<b><u>CLIMATE EMERGENCY</u></b>	Service Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure  Head of Environmental Planning	Partially Complete Actions plans pending for approval by full Council in autumn 2019  <a href="#">Letter to Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth 30.04.19</a>  <a href="#">Letter to Secretary of State at the Department of BEIS 30.04.19</a>  <a href="#">Letter to Chancellor of the Exchequer 30.04.19</a>  <a href="#">Letter to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs 30.04.19</a>
<b>2019/20 Council Actions from Motions on Notice</b>			
24/09/19_I	<b><u>Veterans</u></b>  <i>This motion was amended and below is the approved substantive amended motion for action.</i>  The City Council therefore resolves that the Leader of the Council should write to our MPs calling on them to continue their efforts to ensure that Armed Forces veterans are	Assistant Chief Executive	Letters written to the three Plymouth MPs

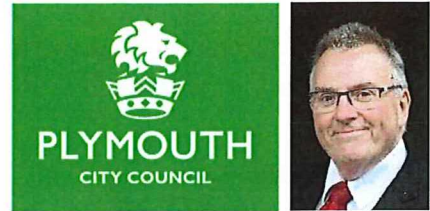
	supported fully in respect of their needs post-service. Additionally, in order that the government can further consider the extension of additional protections to include service in Northern Ireland, to ask our MPs to ensure that a clear understanding is established in Parliament of the need for robust new evidence to be the principal precursor for any re-opening of previous investigations.		
24/09/19_2	<p><b><u>Opposition to the Scrapping of TV Licences for Over 75s</u></b></p> <p>The City Council resolves to:</p> <p>(1) Ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Government to ask them to reaffirm their commitment to their own manifesto promise to protect free TV licences for over 75s until 2022.</p> <p>(2) Ask the Leader of the Council to write to the three Plymouth MPs to ask them to confirm their commitment to this important measure in tackling loneliness amongst older citizens in Plymouth.</p>	Assistant Chief Executive	(1) In progress  (2) Letters written to the three Plymouth MPs
24/09/19_3	<p><b><u>Food Justice</u></b></p> <p>The Council resolves to:</p> <p>1) Commit to food justice in Plymouth by nominating a Cabinet Member with responsibility of delivering food justice;</p> <p>2) Request the Leader to write to the relevant minister (following the appointment of a new Prime Minister and any related Cabinet reshuffle) to ask the government to enshrine its existing commitment to U Sustainable Development Goal 2 into domestic legislation;</p> <p>3) Ask the Scrutiny Management Board to establish a Select Committee to investigate the extent and causes of hunger in Plymouth and make recommendations about what can be done to tackle it; and</p> <p>4) Work with existing partnerships in Plymouth to develop and implement a Food Justice Action Plan to eliminate hunger in Plymouth.</p>	Assistant Chief Executive	In progress
26/09/19_4	<p><b><u>Inclusive Education and Schools</u></b></p> <p><i>This motion was amended and below is the approved substantive amended motion for action.</i></p> <p>We request the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Transformation to commit to supporting Plymouth schools which undertake</p>	Service Director for Education and Skills	COMPLETE  Letter sent to schools on 26 June 2019 from Service

	<p>this necessary part of preparing young people for the world around them and which don't give in to bigotry of any kind by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• issuing advice formulated in accordance with DfE<sup>1</sup> and OFSTED guidance to schools to empower them to teach an inclusive curriculum and develop a whole school approach to embed equality;</li> <li>• promoting school Diversity Week (1-5th July) and encouraging Plymouth schools to participate;</li> <li>• work with schools and other stakeholders to support and share good practice in promoting and delivering inclusive equality education in all schools;</li> <li>• support all those who work with children and young people to carry out their work free from discrimination and harassment.</li> </ul>		<p>Director and Cabinet Member encouraging engagement in School Diversity Week; drawing attention to key guidance; and inviting schools to share best practice.</p>
<p>24/06/19_5</p>	<p><b><u>South West Forensics</u></b></p> <p>Full Council notes that:</p> <p>On 28 January 2019, Plymouth City Council resolved to oppose the transfer of Devon and Cornwall Police forensic staff to Dorset Police as part of the South West Forensics collaboration with Dorset, Avon and Somerset and Wiltshire Police. We note the “Business Improvement Review” however is continuing and we restate our desire to see the strongest front line forensic provision in Devon and Cornwall.</p> <p>Plymouth City Council therefore resolves to ask our representatives on the Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel to review the situation and ensure this topic is scrutinised, with the results reported back.</p>	<p>Service Director for Community Connections</p>	<p>In progress</p> <p>The next Police and Crime Panel meeting is on 13 September 2019.</p>

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<sup>1</sup>  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/781150/Draft\\_guidance\\_Relationships\\_Education\\_Relationships\\_and\\_Sex\\_Education\\_RSE\\_and\\_Health\\_Education2.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/781150/Draft_guidance_Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education2.pdf)

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Sir Gary Streeter MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

**Councillor Tudor Evans OBE**  
Leader of Plymouth City Council  
Labour Councillor for Ham Ward

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23rd July 2019

Dear Gary

### **SUPPORT FOR ARMED FORCES VETERANS**

I am writing to you following a Motion on Notice regarding the above being agreed at the City Council meeting of 24 June 2019 to call on you to continue your efforts to ensure that Armed Forces veterans are fully supported in respect of their post-service needs.

As a city with strong military links, this Council welcomes the Government commitment to legislate to ensure service personnel and veterans are not subjected to repeated investigations on the basis of historical operations, many years after the events in question.

We applaud the hard work that our local MPs have done to bring this about and we recognise that there is much more to be done in making adequate provision for veterans on a wide range of concerns relating to their former service.

We are proud that members of our Armed Forces serve the United Kingdom, often in the most difficult and dangerous circumstances, and we know that our Armed Forces personnel having been trained to the highest professional standards, recognise their duty to operate within the law and accept that if allegations of misconduct arise, they must be properly investigated to establish whether a prosecution is necessary.

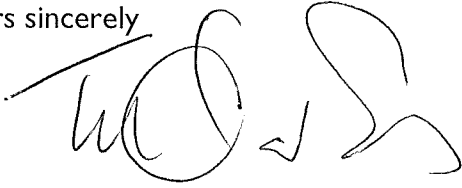
We note that the government's current intention is not to extend the provisions of the new legislation that will protect service personnel from repeated investigations including matters of operational service in Northern Ireland.

We strongly support the views of many veterans of service in Northern Ireland during the 'Troubles', that they are not getting adequate support from the government. We also recognise that the important outcomes of the Good Friday Agreement are under threat currently and that there are increasing tensions in Northern Ireland across both nationalist and loyalist communities.

We believe strongly that our veterans deserve better. I therefore ask you to continue your efforts to ensure that a clear understanding is established in Parliament of the need for robust new evidence to be the principal precursor for any re-opening of previous

investigations and that protections are applied to all serving personnel and veterans irrespective of the sphere of operation in which they served.

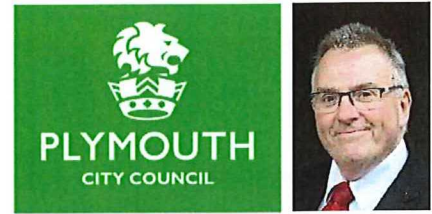
Yours sincerely

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Councillor Tudor Evans OBE  
**Leader, Plymouth City Council**

cc Luke Pollard MP  
Johnny Mercer MP





Luke Pollard MP  
House of Commons  
London  
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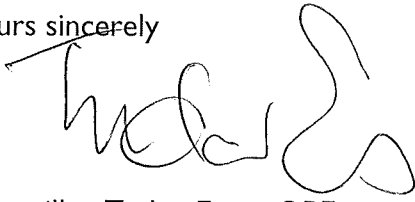
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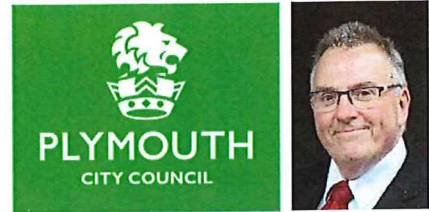
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**Leader, Plymouth City Council**

cc Johnny Mercer MP  
Gary Streeter MP



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House of Commons  
London  
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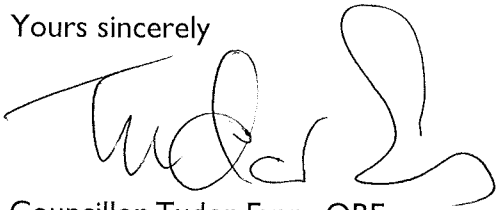
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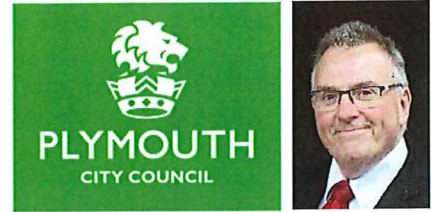
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Sir Gary Streeter MP  
House of Commons  
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23rd July 2019

Dear Gary

### **OPPOSITION TO THE SCRAPPING OF FREE TV LICENCES FOR OVER 75s**

Following the unanimous support for a motion on the above at the 24 June meeting of the City Council, I write to ask you to confirm your opposition to the scrapping of free TV licences for over 75s.

You will know that the BBC plans to scrap free TV licences for millions of people aged over 75 with the exception of those on pension credit from June 2020. I note that the evidence shows that Pension Credit is hugely under claimed, which means that in the future many pensioners will now miss out on their free TV licence.

We know that many over 75s are not able to afford this cost as they are on a fixed income, and are already struggling to meet their bills. With rising prices in other areas like food, gas and electricity, having one less thing to have to afford can be a real help – a full TV licence costs £150.50 a year.

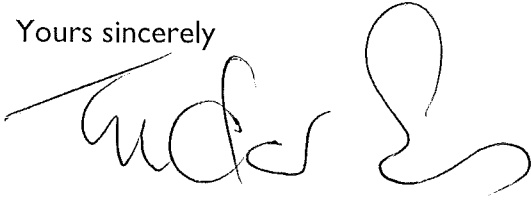
I note also the research undertaken by The Campaign to End Loneliness, which found that 40% of older people say their television is their main source of company, and recognise that supporting the continuation of TV licences for over 75s supports this council's ambition to tackle loneliness for older people.

Analysis by the House of Commons library shows this will affect 11,000 households in Plymouth. This will include 4,800 households in Plymouth Moor View, 5,000 households in Plymouth Sutton and Devonport and 1,200 in South West Devon. I am deeply concerned about the impact this will have on our residents.

The free TV licence was introduced by the Labour Government in 2000, in recognition of the fact that as people get older the TV becomes an ever more important way of keeping in touch with the world and to help with the rising prices of food, gas and electricity. During the 2017 General Election campaign the Conservatives promised in their manifesto to maintain free TV licenses for this age group until 2022.

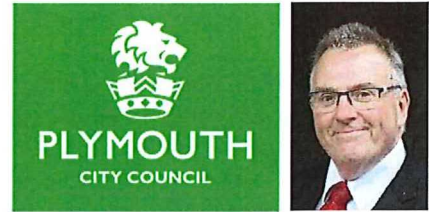
I hope that you will be able to confirm your commitment to oppose the change to this scheme which is an important measure in tackling loneliness amongst the older citizens of Plymouth.

Yours sincerely

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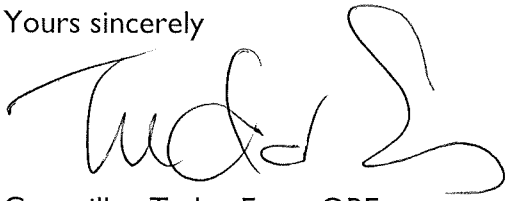
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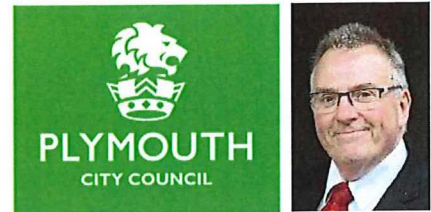
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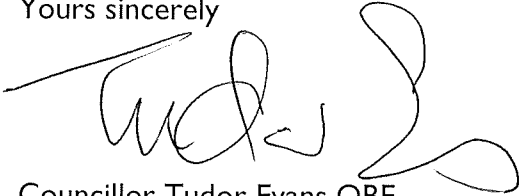
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Councillor Tudor Evans OBE  
**Leader, Plymouth City Council**

cc Johnny Mercer MP  
Gary Streeter MP

Questions from Councillors at City Council  
Chief Executive's Department



**Name of Member submitting the question Councillor Watkin**

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Date received by Democratic Support Team

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To Councillor Dann

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**Question**

*Jennycliff and Mountbatten beaches have both been closed for some months, adversely affecting the trading position of particularly coffee and tea shops as well as losing the amenity for residents and visitors and particularly children. When will they be reopened?*

**Answer**

Mount Batten:

We understand that it is frustrating for residents and business owners in the area that the beach has not yet been reopened.

To give some context to this, we have set up a multi-agency team to help us deal with this incident which is very unusual; previous experiences of experts with asbestos on beaches have been recent and small fly-tips, but in contrast this is both historic and very large in volume.

As residents of Plymouth are only too well aware, asbestos can be harmful, and the risk assessment around the beach is complex.

Although we know that the asbestos contained within cement is relatively safe (low risk) it is also clear that there is a chance that fibres can become airborne, as the cement breaks down. Though early indications were that there were no loose fibres in the surface sand, we have a number of tests underway and until we have the full set of results, and expert interpretation of them, we

Signed:

Date: 3 July 2019

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**Note**

- Written questions must be submitted to the Monitoring Officer via the Democratic Support Team.
- Written questions will be replied to within 10 working days.
- Written questions and answers will be published on the last Friday of each month.

cannot give a definite date for reopening. However, from the results found so far we believe that our aim of the start of the summer holidays should be attainable, at least for the majority of the beach.

### Jennycliff:

The access to the beach at Jennycliff is closed because, following a land slide during Spring 2019 the integrity and stability of the stepped path has been compromised. A survey of the situation has been carried out and in addition to the local undermining and damage to the existing path, it is confirmed that;

“The coastal slope is within an area of active erosion and subject to potential larger scale failures than observed in the immediate vicinity of the footpath. Winter rainfall could result in coastal slope instability on the footpath above the investigation area and high-tide storm wave action could wash the bottom of the footpath away...”

Various areas where stabilisation work will be required have been identified, however as the slope is susceptible to failure due to water ingress at the upper levels, from scouring close to the existing path and wave action at the bottom of the slope it is recommended that further monitoring is carried out before any significant work is undertaken. If this was carried out some or all of the work completed could become insufficient to adequately support the path or be lost due to further failure of the slope.

Due to the need to carry out further monitoring and because any rectification work has not been fully planned it is not possible to confirm a date when the access to the beach will re-open.

Questions from Councillors at City Council  
Chief Executive's Department



**Name of Member submitting the  
question Councillor Rebecca Smith**

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Date received by Democratic Support Team

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To Councillor Dann

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**Question**

*Homelessness charities being charged for collection of waste - is this council policy?*

**Answer**

There is no Council policy around charging charities for the collection of waste, but we adhere to Controlled Waste Regulations 2012, which provides a definition and classification of waste and lists the types of waste for which the Council may make a charge for collection and disposal of waste. Concerning registered charities waste, the Council may charge for the collection of waste arising from a charity for specific activities but cannot charge for the disposal costs. A charity can bring their wastes into the Household Waste Recycling Centre at Chelson Meadow free of charge. If they authorise a third party, which includes our commercial collection service to bring the waste into the Centre or to a disposal facility on their behalf then disposal costs apply as once the waste is transferred to another party the waste becomes commercial.

The determination of the charitable waste source and consequently if a charge for collection applies will require the assessment of the Council's Commercial Waste Officer. If any charity requires further information and/or assessment of their waste, the Commercial Waste Officer Contact details are [dave.houghton@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:dave.houghton@plymouth.gov.uk) or call 01752 304700".

Signed:

Date: 3 July 2019

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Questions from Councillors at City Council  
Chief Executive's Department



**Name of Member submitting the  
question Councillor Nicholson**

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Date received by Democratic Support Team

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To Councillor Dann

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**Question**

Chelson Meadow-The area where trailers can unload their rubble safely reducing manual handling has been closed due to fire. When will this reopen?

**Answer**

Following the fire at the refuse transfer station earlier in the year the contingency arrangements led to a traffic management review. The lower part of the recycling centre that had previously been available to residents for some unloading activities has now been ceased for safety reasons. The area is designed and designated for heavy goods vehicle and large container manoeuvring. In the interest of safety in this commercial zone it is no longer available for residents and small vehicles. Staff are available on site to assist with unloading at Chelson Meadow.

Signed

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Date: 12 July 2019

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Questions from Councillors at City Council  
Chief Executive's Department



**Name of Member submitting the  
question Councillor Lynda Bowyer**

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Date received by Democratic Support Team: 24 June 2019

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To Councillor Jemima Laing

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**Question**

Training courses for Foster Carers

**Answer**

Training for adopters is provided by Adopt South West and before Adopt South West, the training offered was separate to the rest of the Council.

We don't provide any training for special guardians unless this is via the adoption support fund. But this is something we have discussed recently as a possibility going forward.

Signed Jemima Laing

Date: 1 July 2019

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Questions from Councillors at City Council  
Chief Executive's Department



**Name of Member submitting the question Councillor Kelly**

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Date received by Democratic Support Team

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To Councillor Haydon

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**Question**

*Following some recent litter picks I've done throughout the city, I've noticed a significant increase in the amount of dog fouling not only on pavements but in the green areas. I think there has been a concerted problem with regards to the dog mess being bagged and left but this is now actually the dog faeces on the streets, on the pavements and in the green areas and as we know that can carry quite a lot of germs and have a public protection issue with children playing.*

*Quite a lot of residents have also approached me and when I've asked around on the litter picks, it's noted that it's not just me that's seen an increase, it's throughout the city. So, with regards to your 100 pledges to make a city to be proud of, no 92 is 'we will work with responsible dog owners to campaign for zero tolerance of dog mess on our pavements and fine those who do not clean up after their dog'. You came into office in May 2018 so would you just share with us how many fines have been issued, or people have been prosecuted for this please.*

**Answer**

There have been two FPNs issued for dog fouling since May 2018.

Dog fouling is something that we are actively trying to reduce across the city.

As you will appreciate dog fouling is very difficult to enforce against. This is because perpetrators know it is the wrong thing to do, and so tend to only commit the crime when there is no one to observe them (and certainly not a uniformed officer).

Signed

Date: 2 July 2019

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This is why our approach has been different; by bringing the environmental enforcement team in house, we wanted to enable them to focus more time on behaviour change, and less on making a profit. It must be recognised that it is far better to prevent people from committing the crime in the first place, than to focus just on enforcement.

We have campaigned extensively across social media, working with responsible dog owners to get the right messages across. Recently a local school Marlborough Primary Academy, came up with the fantastic idea of re-using old plastic bottles as dog-poo-bag dispensers and placed them around Devonport Park, to encourage people to do the right thing.

Our environmental enforcement officers are regularly patrolling parks at different times of day across the city, and also areas where local intelligence tells us there is a regular problem. We have increased signage to make sure people are reminded of the requirement to pick up after their dog.

We would welcome more reports especially where the perpetrator can be identified. This can be provided online at: <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/streetcareandcleaning/reportdogfouling>

Questions from Councillors at City Council  
Chief Executive's Department



**Name of Member submitting the  
question Councillor Johnson**

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Date received by Democratic Support Team

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To Councillor Haydon

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**Question**

What is your customer service standard for answering calls at the contact centre (in minutes)?

**Answer**

In Customer Services (contact centre and 1<sup>st</sup> Stop) we don't have a set target for speed of answer / to be seen as we moved some time ago to focusing on resolution at point of contact. We have received some excellent feedback on the results of this. We have data that clearly shows if a target is set for speed of answer for call, this drives behaviour to focus on answer calls quickly rather than resolving the customer query to the best of our ability (often advising the customer of items they didn't know they needed)

I can also clearly state that we have been answering over 95% of our tier one and Social Care calls in under two minutes for over a year in the contact centre, which is above industry standard. We also removed the queuing function for the face to face enquires when we moved into 1<sup>st</sup> Stop, this as well as our digital offer means we rarely have waits in the face to face to face environment.

There are however certain times in the year where demand spikes to higher than normal levels, an example of this is, Council Tax Annual billing. At times like this we do our best to push as much information out to our customers as possible, and encourage them to either self-serve or contact / visit us at the quieter times of the day / week and or at other Customer Service sites, such as one of the libraries.

Signed

Date: 4 July 2019

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Questions from Councillors at City Council  
Chief Executive's Department



**Name of Member submitting the question Councillor Jordan**

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Date received by Democratic Support Team

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To Councillor Penberthy

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**Question**

It's been highlighted that we have 200 empty student homes. How many HMO's have come back into domestic use?

**Answer**

Although private rented sector landlords have raised concerns about the number of empty bed spaces, it is acknowledged that some student flats have turned into non-student houses, which is a good news story for the Council. It shows that as new purpose built student accommodation (PBSA) becomes available, houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) in traditional city homes are not being occupied by students, which means they are 'freed up' for other non-students with a housing need, which in turn can help with our 5 year land supply. This is the point we made at the recent Joint Local Plan Examination in Public and it was not challenged by the Planning Inspectors.

Our evidence published in February 2017 showed that from 2014 to 2017 there was a steady, consistent decline in the number of properties that were exempt from Council Tax owing to 100% student occupation and with the growth in purpose built student accommodation during this time, students were being given increased accommodation choices which influenced their decisions. The evidence base incorporates a methodology to calculate an annual estimate of dwellings that will be released to the open market from the delivery and occupation of PBSA.

From 2016 – 2021 a total of 224 dwellings were estimated to be released from student occupied properties to the open market. The evidence base and methodology supporting this assumption is

Signed

Date 9 July 2019

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explained in this document:

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/PlymouthStudentAccommodation.pdf>

As part of our commitment to plan, monitor and manage our Joint Local Plan policies, this evidence base is currently being reviewed and updated and will be published in due course.



Questions from Councillors at City Council  
Chief Executive's Department



**Name of Member submitting the  
question Councillor Lynda Bowyer**

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Date received by Democratic Support Team

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To Councillor Kate Taylor

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**Question**

Do we have any adults with autism or learning difficulties living in special units and if so how often are we reviewing their care packages?

**Answer**

Currently 6 adults are housed out of Plymouth and their care packages are funded by the CCG & NHS England. No one was placed out of area in June.

Plans are in place, informed by regular reviews, for all clients to return to Plymouth over the next 18 month period. 2 individuals may take longer as they are subject to Ministry of Justice restrictions against their discharge.

In relation to reviews, all Plymouth clients are being reviewed every 6 months using the Care Programme Approach (CPA), this is alongside specialist reviews called Care and Treatment Reviews (CTRs) every 6 months following the NHSE mandatory requirements. Livewell SW start discharge planning with the client as soon as an individual has been admitted into hospital.

Signed

Date: 12 July 2019

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Questions from Councillors at City Council  
Chief Executive's Department



**Name of Member submitting the question Councillor Dreaan**

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Date received by Democratic Support Team

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To Councillor Coker

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**Question**

Can the case with the abandoned caravan be looked into and a full report provided as to why this wasn't actioned sooner by Plymouth Highways.

**Answer**

When the caravan on Northampton Close was initially reported to us in April, it was positioned on non HMPE land, therefore we could not take any action. Following a further report in May, a further inspection found the caravan had been moved onto HMPE land. We've *legally got to give the owner 28 days to claim it before we can even think about removing it*, so at this point a notice to remove was placed on the caravan for removal by 3<sup>rd</sup> June.

Unfortunately Chelson Meadow were not taking caravans at that time due to the fire that was there recently. They have now cleared an area and removals have now commenced.

Signed:

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Date: 9 July 2019

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Questions from Councillors at City Council  
Chief Executive's Department



**Name of Member submitting the  
question Councillor Drear**

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Date received by Democratic Support Team

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To Councillor Coker

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**Question**

Living Streets Budget

**Answer**

Living Streets was last reviewed under the Conservative Administration where amendments were made to the allocation of funding, a consolidation of Living Streets and Safer Routes to School Funding, whilst also adjusting the amount available to reflect the number of Ward Cllrs in a Ward.

Since that time a wider review of the Living Streets (and Community Grant Scheme) has been undertaken by Devon Audit Partnership, this has yet to be released and will be used by the current Administration to review the current arrangements and possible changes that may introduced as a result.



Mark Coker

Signed:

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Date: 3 July 2019

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