

Cabinet



CABINET RESPONSE TO BUDGET SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS



No.	Recommendation	Proposed Cabinet Response	Action(s) Taken
1.	<p>That Cabinet continue to make all efforts to build the working balances back up to 5% within two financial years to ensure an effective financial buffer for the organisation and therefore reduce financial risk.</p> <p>Budget Scrutiny also recommends that Audit and Governance Committee look at the methodology behind the setting of the 5% target and whether financial modelling of future risks and past performance could be used to recommend a more appropriate level in the future.</p>	<p>Agree: Achieving and maintaining working balances to mitigate financial risk to the Council remains a priority for the Council. However, this is conditional on Plymouth not suffering further and damaging reductions in funding as a result of the government's Fairer Funding review. The Audit and Governance Committee will be asked to review the methodology for setting an appropriate level of balances.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every effort is being made to build the working balances back up to 5%. The 2020/21 budget had a £350,000 contribution to the working balances, which has been built into the base budget. • The Chancellor confirmed that as announced earlier this year, the implementation of the fair funding review has been delayed. • The Audit and Governance Committee is still to be asked to review the methodology for setting an appropriate level of balances.
2.	<p>That Cabinet reconsider the approach to legacy savings, particularly with regard the vacancy saving factor of 5%, and determine an alternate approach to addressing the challenge of meeting those savings in a more effective way.</p>	<p>Agree: Measures will be considered for implementation to address the requirement to maintain a vacancy saving target of 5%, and directorates will report on further measures to address other 'legacy' savings targets</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A set of savings proposals is being developed and will be included in the draft budget 2021/22 to mitigate against the impact of existing legacy savings.
3.	<p>That the referendum threshold for setting Council Tax and the</p>	<p>Agree: Subject to the Council's ability to set a balanced budget in line</p>	<p>Complete</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to the Council's ability to set a balanced budget in line with statutory

	Adult Social Care precept is not breached.	with statutory requirements	requirements, there are no plans to breach the threshold.
4.	That Cabinet seek ways to increase the Community Grant for each Councillor as per the December 2019 Motion on Notice and clarify the allocation within the 2020/21 budget. This should include a review of the Community Grants guidance and criteria by a small cross-party group to ensure the best value and greatest impact is achieved from the grants.	Agree: The Cabinet Member will consider this request in line with the December 2019 Council Motion on Notice, and commission a review of the Community Grants guidance and criteria.	<p>Complete</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New guidance for 2020/21 has been issued. A new three year plan has been agreed. • Plymouth City Councillors will each have an annual grant allocation of £4,000 for 2020/21, £4,500 for 2021/22 and £5,000 for 2022/23
5.	Cabinet ensures that the Medium Term Financial Plan is made available to Finance and Performance Scrutiny as soon as available, following clarification from Government on funding allocation, including fairer funding.	Agree: As soon as Government provides clarity about medium term funding allocations for local government, the implications for Plymouth will be analysed and shared.	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The government set out in the Spending Review that there will be a continuation of the current <u>single year</u> funding allocation for local government. The lack of certainty over future funding is disappointing, and coupled with the outstanding Fair Funding proposals means the council has not been able to provide a three-year financial plan at this stage.
6.	That Cabinet explore all avenues to promote caring careers within the city to support Adult Social Care (ASC), including mental health services, in order to support the workforce. This is with the intent of positively impacting both ASC service users and the ASC budget; acknowledging that both are interlinked. That Cabinet consider identifying and focussing the budget on key preventative and/or early intervention activities, such as	Agree: A cross Council focus on promoting caring careers is prioritised, and prevention and early intervention remain a priority for the People Directorate, at the same time as balancing resources to meet acute demand.	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All partners are working with DWP, JobCentre Plus, On Course SW, City College Plymouth and Prince's Trust, designing a fast track introduction/ access to care training programme to develop entrant requirements including the support of transferable skills. • Exploring opportunities for Kickstart, apprenticeships and traineeships as routes for new entrants into Care, ensuring the right skills wraparound support. • The Resurgam Health sector lead is developing a business case to establish a fast track Health Skills Academy at Plymouth Science Park, to create a care environment to enable competency based training for new entrants. • Local citywide campaign "Caring for Plymouth" messages promoted through the

	community youth, sports development and mental health services.		Skills Launchpad Plymouth, DWP and providers, and hosted virtual career events. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have maximised the 'Proud to Care' campaign for Plymouth - linking to the "Caring for Plymouth" branding.
7.	That Cabinet consider identifying and focussing the budget on key preventative and/or early intervention activities, such as community youth, sports development and mental health services.	As above	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council already invests in a wide range of key preventative and early intervention services, including with partners, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Befriending and social inclusion for people aged over 50 (Elder Tree, Extra Care Social Inclusion and Sheltered Accommodation support) Mental health services – we commission MIND (Recovery college including I-I therapeutic support, peer support, group activities) and Rethink (I-I support); Devon STP has put a bid into NHS England to increase investment into the Voluntary Sector mental health services from April 2021, this is Devon-wide but includes Plymouth Wellbeing Hubs – we provide core funding to the Hubs to co-ordinate a range of services and opportunities within the neighbourhoods where there is a hub Time Banks – community based social activity, peer support, informal volunteering The Plymouth Good Neighbour Scheme and Our Plymouth – formal volunteering, including one-off community action in partnership with Plymouth Octopus Project (POP) POP – we fund POP to support the smaller community groups in the city Advice and Information service (Advice Plymouth) Youth and Sports –we invest in the Leisure Management contract to provide a range of activity for children and young people in our leisure facilities Children and Young people – we invest in some emotional and mental health support
8.	That Cabinet identify which lessons learned from Adult Social Care, in terms of introducing new ways of working, could be transferred to	Agree: The current change programme in Children's Services is drawing on all the lessons learned from Adult Social Care, and is receiving support from	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is being achieved through continued work within the People Federation, including the secondment of a member of staff from Adults.

	Children's Social Care, recognising that key aspects of success included a long-term view, whole Council approach with cross-party support.	across the Council's leadership, both from officers and politicians.	
9.	That Cabinet enhance the approach to improving educational attainment by continuing to collaborate and engage with other local authorities with similar demographics to learn from and implement best practice.	Agree: Visits to, and collaboration with other high performing councils are underway.	Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits were planned but did not take place, (due to COVID). However, we have continued to work with the Teaching Schools Council and have secured input from others nationally and regionally, including the Education Endowment Foundation, and the Ambition Organisation, running Webinars for secondary school leaders.
10.	That the Cabinet Member seek clarity from Government on the funding for Troubled Families programme beyond 2021 in order to provide assurance of the sustainability of the service and update Full Council as and when required.	Agree: The Cabinet will continue to press the Government for clarity about medium term funding for this important work, and will keep the Council updated	Complete <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding was confirmed for next year as part of the 2020 Spending Review announcement; however this has again been set for one year only.
11.	That Cabinet prioritise in house foster caring with a view to increasing in-house provision of foster homes through improved training, skills and support for foster carers in the city.	Agree: Foster for Plymouth remains a key priority, and will be the focus of further support activity in the coming year for existing and new foster carers	Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A service review has been undertaken and a new service design implemented, alongside commissioning a marketing company to run a recruitment campaign. We have been successful in meeting the targets to date. • We expect to have recruited sufficient foster carers to provide 21 new placements (approximately 16 new foster carers) in 2020-21. This will increase to 36 new placements (approximately 22 new foster carers) in 2021-2022.
12.	That Cabinet consider how the carbon/environmental impact of the budget can be clarified and quantified in future budget reports.	Agree: Following the adoption of the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan, and Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan (CCRP) the environmental impact of all key decisions including financial decisions will be further	Complete <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A completed action from the CCRP, year 1 ensures that carbon/environmental impact is now considered in every decision that Cabinet/Full Council makes.

		developed, communicated and reported.	
13.	That Cabinet and the whole Council continue to communicate the tangible benefits of the impacts associated with carbon reduction/climate emergency actions, including clarification of the performance reporting framework, and the positive impacts for residents both environmentally and financially.	Agree: As (12) above. The Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) makes clear commitments to taking immediate action to address carbon reduction challenges as well as assessing longer term initiatives for effectiveness. Commitments extend to facilitating a city-wide conversation and inspiring rapid local action through effective leadership to ensure a Plymouth-wide, bottom up response to this emergency.	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council is a key player in the City's Net Zero Carbon group, engaging with Babcock International, the NHS, University of Plymouth, Marjon University, Plymouth City Bus, Devon and Cornwall Police and Plymouth Science Park to tackle climate change. • The Performance team are currently developing a performance reporting framework, which will report to scrutiny. • The Comms team are preparing a communications plan for staff and the public with the support of the green champions. • The Plymouth Plan Climate Emergency Consultation and review have been completed, and will be going to Full Council on 25th Jan 2021. • A 'Plymouth Climate Challenge Live' competition was undertaken. • We will develop our residents' survey to include questions on Climate Emergency, to capture residents' views. • In 2021 planned works with communities includes a themed day at Plymouth libraries and a climate summit with the Youth Parliament • Planned promotion of a 'Car Free' day – and anti-idling.
14.	That Cabinet continue to lobby central government in relation to the National Planning Policy Framework and Department for Transport guidelines to strengthen the climate/carbon emergency focus.	Agree: The Council will continue to use its relationship with the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government to push government to strengthen the emphasis on carbon reduction through planning and transport guidelines, and will use the opportunity of the publication of the Planning White Paper during 2020 as a focus for this.	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CEAP includes a number of Transport lobbying actions, but also in our public affairs activity we set out specific lobbying of central government regarding transport related issues, specifically asking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Commit to delivering "Speed to the West" and other track and train service improvements to achieve faster journey times to and from the south west and leading towards the achievement of 2h 15m journey time between Plymouth and London while also reducing carbon emissions. – Produce an investment strategy on decarbonising rail including electrification of the mainline and the eventual replacement of diesel traction with a mixture of overhead electric, hydrogen and battery technologies to be deployed

			on inter-city, regional and branch line trains as appropriate.
15.	That Cabinet commits to the setting up of a cross-party Group to review Climate/Carbon impact of proposals and progress.	Agree: The Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene is developing proposals for appropriate governance to oversee the further development and delivery of the Climate Emergency Action Plan and the Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan	<p>Complete.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A governance framework has been created and agreed. This also includes regular reviews of both Climate Emergency plans by the Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee