

CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT, QUARTER TWO 2020/21

Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Scrutiny



The Corporate Plan

The Plymouth City Council Corporate Plan 2018-2022 sets out our mission of 'making Plymouth a fairer city, where everyone does their bit'. It was approved by Full Council in June 2018.

The Corporate Plan priorities are delivered through specific programmes and projects, which are coordinated and resourced through cross-cutting strategic delivery plans, capital investment and directorate business plans.

The key performance indicators (KPIs) and their associated targets detailed in this report for the first two quarters of 2020/21 (April to September 2020) tell us how we are doing in delivering what we have set out to achieve in the Corporate Plan.

OUR PLAN A CITY TO BE PROUD OF



CITY VISION Britain's Ocean City

One of Europe's most vibrant waterfront cities, where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone.

OUR MISSION

Making Plymouth a fairer city, where everyone does their bit.

OUR PRIORITIES

OUR VALUES

WE ARE DEMOCRATIC

We will provide strong community leadership and work together to deliver our common ambition.

WE ARE RESPONSIBLE

We take responsibility for our actions, care about our impact on others and expect others will do the same.

WE ARE FAIR

We are honest and open in how we act, treat everyone with respect, champion fairness and create opportunities.

WE ARE CO-OPERATIVE

We will work together with partners to serve the best interests of our city and its communities.

A GROWING CITY

- A clean and tidy city
- An efficient transport network
- A broad range of homes
- Economic growth that benefits as many people as possible
- Quality jobs and valuable skills
- A vibrant cultural offer
- A green, sustainable city that cares about the environment.

A CARING COUNCIL

- Improved schools where pupils achieve better outcomes
- Keep children, young people and adults protected
- Focus on prevention and early intervention
- People feel safe in Plymouth
- Reduced health inequalities
- A welcoming city.

HOW WE WILL DELIVER

Listening to our customers and communities.

Providing quality public services.

Motivated, skilled and engaged staff.

Spending money wisely.

A strong voice for Plymouth regionally and nationally.

Plymouth
Britain's Ocean City

www.plymouth.gov.uk/ourplan

Structure of this Report

The purpose of this report is to provide a risk-informed analysis of performance against the priorities of the Corporate Plan 2018-2022. The priorities are grouped under 'A Growing City' and 'A Caring Council', and the outcomes for 'How We Will Deliver' – the enablers of the Corporate Plan – are also reported on.

Trend (RAG) colour scheme

A red-amber-green (RAG) trend rating is provided to give an indication of whether performance is improving or declining based on the two latest comparable periods for which information is available. For example, repeat referrals to Children's Social Care is compared to the previous quarter in the same year; household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting is compared to the same period in the previous year (due to seasonality); and annual measures, such as public satisfaction with traffic flow, are compared to the previous year.

- Indicators highlighted **green**: improved on the previous value or is on an expected trend
- Indicators highlighted **amber**: within 15% of the previous value (slight decline)
- Indicators highlighted **red**: declined by more than 15% on the previous value
- Indicators not highlighted or 'N/A' have no trend or the most recent value is not comparable with previous values.

Target (RAG) colour scheme

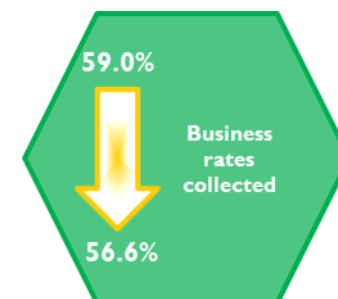
A RAG target rating is applied for indicators that have a target. For these indicators, the bar for the latest reporting period is coloured either red, amber or green in the chart to visually display how we are performing compared with the target.

- Indicators highlighted **green** show where Plymouth is better than target
- Indicators highlighted **amber** show where Plymouth is within 15% of target
- Indicators highlighted **red** show where Plymouth is more than 15% worse than target
- Indicators not highlighted or 'N/A' show where no in year data is available to compare against target, or no target has been set.

Summary page

Performance summary pages are presented at the start of this report to visually display how we have performed against our Corporate Plan priorities. Our RAG rating on these pages is used to show whether we have done better, worse or had a slight decline from the previous quarter or year (coloured arrows), and whether we have done better, worse or got close to the target (coloured hexagons). Some indicators do not have a target (for example, due to being a new indicator) and will therefore have no target RAG rating (blue hexagons). Similarly, some of our indicators are new and we do not have any previous data to compare our performance to or it is not appropriate to compare to previous data; these will have no trend RAG rating in the summary pages.

For example, the hexagon for the percentage of business rates collected is green because at 56.6% in quarter two 2020/21 it is above the target (53.1%), whilst the arrow within the hexagon is amber because there was a decrease when compared to quarter two in 2019/20 (59.0%).



Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Quarter Two

Executive Summary

Improvements have been seen across the areas relating to Brexit, infrastructure and legislative change in the first half of 2020/21. As shown in the performance summary below, five of the eight key performance indicators that can be trend rated have shown improvements when compared to the previous comparable reporting period. Some of the Brexit, infrastructure and legislative change highlights from the quarter two report are outlined below.

- The Plan for Homes set a target of delivering 1,000 homes every year. The number of gross additional homes delivered in 2019/20 was 952, taking the total for the previous five years of the Plan for Homes to 5,544. This averages approximately 1,110 new homes per year, compared with an average of 630 new homes per year in the five years prior to the launch of the Plan for Homes, indicating a significant step change in delivery.
- Despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, The Box opened to visitors and is proving to be a genuine success, while Mayflower 400 generated £81 million (Advertising Value Equivalent) for the city. Plymouth's pipeline of development is more than £1 billion and kick starting this will help to fast track the economy out of slowdown.
- The percentage of young people in education, employment or training increased to 90.0% in quarter one 2020/21, compared with 89.0% in quarter one 2019/20. Stakeholders and partners across the city have been developing the Skills Launchpad Plymouth, which is a one-stop-shop free skills service established to deliver a city-wide response to COVID-19 within a Resurgam programme.
- Our response to the COVID-19 pandemic has seen Economic Development support over 4,500 businesses. The Public Protection Service has also provided much needed support by responding to more than 900 COVID-19 related service requests. By the end of quarter two, 4,043 business grants had been administered to local businesses, totalling £46.9 million.
- Between April and September 2020, we saw 225,445 people taking part in cultural activities organised by Plymouth City Council, with many events effectively moved online as a response to the pandemic.

The individual pages within this report reflect on what is working well, what we are worried about and what needs to happen for all of the key performance indicators relating to Brexit, infrastructure and legislative change. In particular, we acknowledge areas in which performance is not meeting the targets that we have agreed and set out how we are working to address concerns and improve performance in these areas.

Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Quarter Two Performance Summary

Key performance indicators (KPIs) are used to measure performance against the priorities in the Corporate Plan. Eleven of the KPIs included in the full Corporate Plan Performance Report relate to Brexit, infrastructure and legislative change, spanning two of the three main Corporate Plan priority themes. The latest performance for these 11 KPIs is summarised below and more detail on each KPI is given in the corresponding pages of this report.

A Growing City



How We Will Deliver



A Growing City

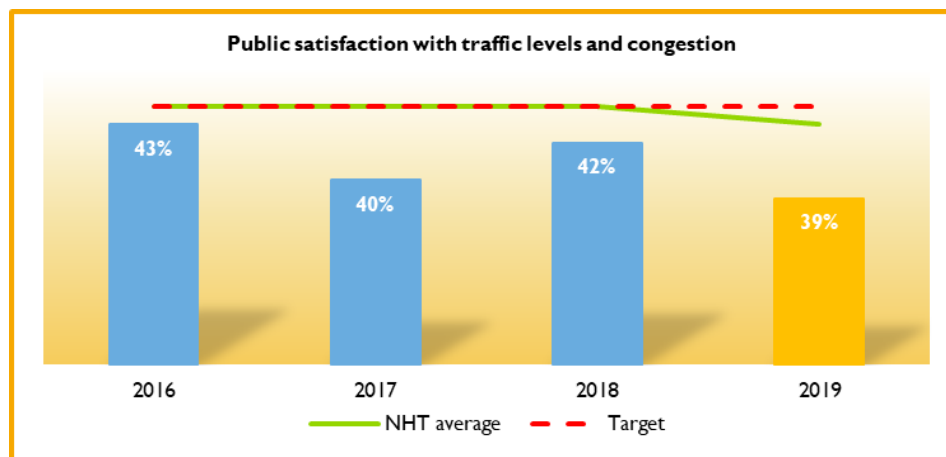
Corporate Plan priorities	Key performance indicators	Page number
An efficient transport network	Public satisfaction with traffic flow	7
	Principal roads (A) in good or acceptable condition	8
A broad range of homes	Gross additional homes delivered	9
Economic growth that benefits as many people as possible	Inward investment (including foreign and domestic)	10
	Inclusive growth	11
Quality jobs and valuable skills	Jobs created and facilitated by the Council	12
	Young people in Education, Employment or Training	13
	Businesses supported	14
A vibrant cultural offer	Number of people taking part in cultural activities organised by PCC	15

An efficient transport network

Public satisfaction with traffic flow

What we measure: Public satisfaction with traffic levels and congestion on Plymouth's roads, collected via the National Highways and Transport (NHT) Network annual survey.

Why we measure it: Traffic congestion can impact negatively on the economic health of the city through increased non-productive activity; the environment by increasing air pollution and carbon dioxide emissions; and on individuals who can suffer from delays and late arrival for employment, meetings, and education. As we undertake a lot of work to deliver a 'free flowing' road network, measuring people's perception of traffic flow is important.



How have we done? 39%

Decrease of 3 percentage points from the previous survey in 2018, which is a decrease of 7.1%.

Trend rating: **Amber**

Target for 2019: 44%

The decrease puts performance at 5 percentage points (11.4%) below the target.

Target rating: **Amber**

What's working well? We have seen the continuation of several network improvement programmes, such as the Forder Valley Link Road and the Eastern Corridor Junction Improvement Scheme, some of which will have been delayed due to the response to COVID-19. Despite the short term disruption caused by these schemes, we are still focusing on maintaining the quality and functionality of the resilient network in line with our Asset Management Framework and keeping our city moving. We have also introduced our new permitting scheme, which has enabled us to better coordinate works during this time of enhanced requirement for network access.

What are we worried about? This year we continue to face a unique challenge on programmed works due to the impact of COVID-19, both for Plymouth City Council as the local authority and other bodies who will need to carry out works on the network. It has been the case that many major works schemes by statutory undertakers and Plymouth City Council have been delayed due to lockdown and the impact of this is still affecting works on the network.

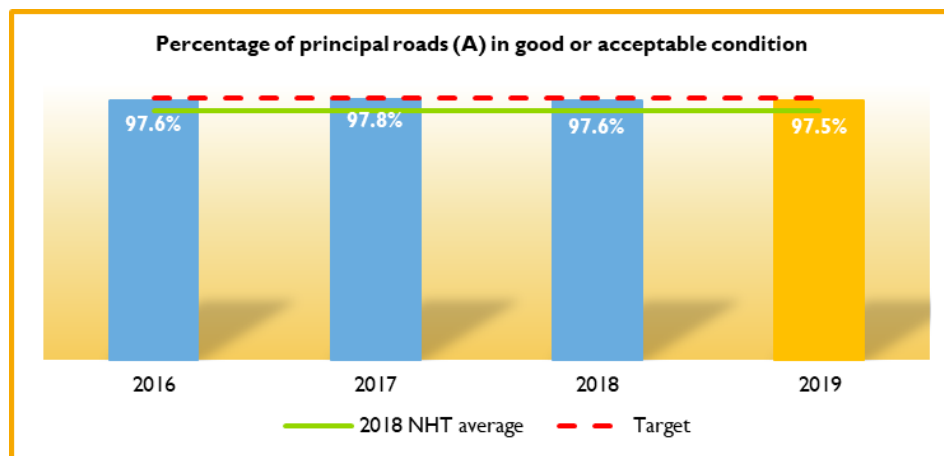
What needs to happen? With the national rollout of Street Manager in July, we now have an enhanced platform for communication with all bodies undertaking works on the network. Street Manager is an ever-changing system and regularly updates or introduces new functionality; we need to continue to follow the changes within the system to ensure that we have an effective ongoing approach to managing street works.

An efficient transport network

Principal roads (A) in good or acceptable condition

What we measure: The condition of principal roads (A roads) in the city, collected via a mechanical condition survey.

Why we measure it: We undertake a lot of work to maintain and improve the condition of our roads in the city to keep it moving. It is therefore important for us to know the condition of our roads.



How have we done? 97.5%

Decrease of 0.1 of a percentage point from the previous survey in 2018.

Trend rating: **Amber**

Target for 2019: 98%

The decrease in 2019 puts performance at 0.5 of a percentage point below the target.

Target rating: **Amber**

What's working well? By continuing our regime of monitoring the condition of the highway network, we have managed to make informed and targeted decisions about where we need to invest in our resilient highway network to ensure that optimal condition is maintained. Our efforts throughout the COVID-19 crisis have meant that our works programmes and inspection regimes were largely uninterrupted and have been able to make the most of the reduced traffic volumes on the principal roads.

What are we worried about? Given the increasingly extreme weather events that we have witnessed in recent years, there is a concern around the impact that such weather events will have on the deterioration profile of the network. The current global COVID-19 pandemic may also present local authorities with significant financial pressures, which may disrupt the intended investment strategies as both the political and financial climates face an unprecedented challenge.

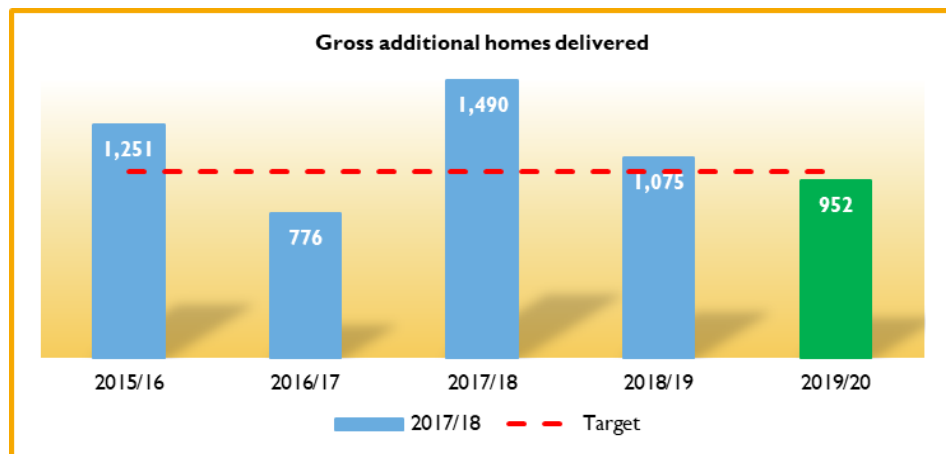
What needs to happen? We are continuing to examine new and innovative approaches to highway maintenance that take into account the unique challenges posed by the character of our network and situations that are beyond our control.

A broad range of homes

Gross additional homes delivered

What we measure: The annual gross additional homes in the city, for example through new house building completions, conversions, and changes of use.

Why we measure it: To continue meeting the current housing need and accommodate future population growth, it is important to have a strong programme of new homes within the city. New house building is the main contributor to the success of this indicator.



How have we done? 952

952 gross additional homes were delivered in 2019/20, totalling 5,544 homes over the first five years of the Plan for Homes. This averages **1,110** new homes per year, compared with 630 new homes per year in the five years prior to the Plan for Homes.

Trend rating: **Green**

Target for 2019/20: 1,000

The Plan for Homes rolling target is to deliver an average of 1,000 new homes each year over five years. We are cumulatively exceeding this target with 5,544 over the past five years.

Target rating: **Green**

What's working well: We continue to exceed our ambition of 5,000 homes over five years, demonstrating achievement of a significant step change in delivery through our Plan for Homes activity. In 2019/20 208 new affordable homes were completed, meeting a range of identified housing needs in the city. Of the affordable homes, 129 were for rent and 79 for affordable home ownership/rent to buy. Partnership working and progress is continuing on our Estate Regeneration priorities. We have now secured the infrastructure funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to help complete phase four of the North Prospect Regeneration. We are supporting registered providers who are on site completing the demolition of obsolete homes in Barne Barton, with planning approved for the replacement with new and improved homes.

What are we worried about? Delivery and viability challenges remain around existing and pipeline housing sites, particularly brownfield city centre sites where development costs are high but values remain relatively low. The need for gap funding to support projects into delivery remains, and we continue to engage the MHCLG and Homes England to secure new and existing funding opportunities. There are impacts of current COVID-19 circumstances in slowing down overall housing delivery on a number of sites, delays in investment decisions by delivery partners and the availability of affordable development finance. This is a particular issue for a number of small and medium enterprise builders in the city, and we will engage with them to see how they can be supported to continue.

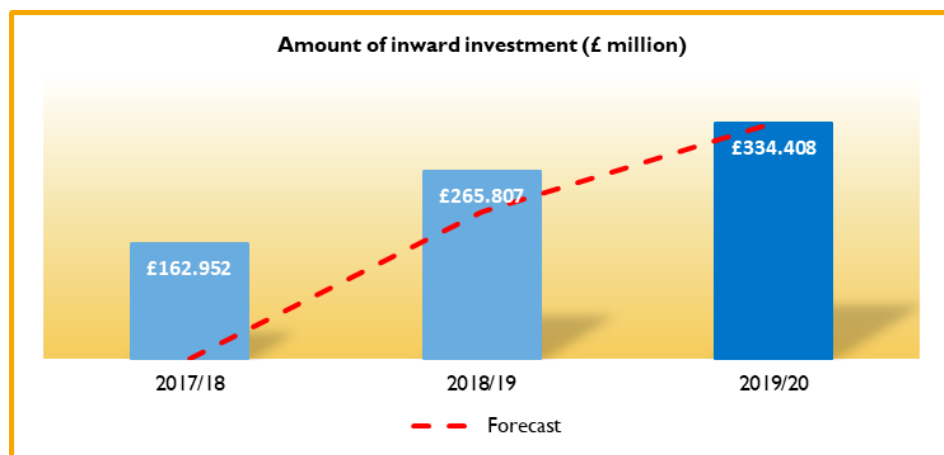
What needs to happen? We are engaged with Resurgam to respond to these impacts and to get house building back on track, supporting Plymouth's economic recovery. We are working with Housing Association delivery partners to identify projects and initiatives that can move quickly to start housing projects. We are focusing on housing delivery strategies on all Joint Local Plan housing sites, ensuring that we are doing everything we can to drive forward the delivery of new homes, as well as working to unlock a number of stalled sites in the city. We are developing a strategic partnership with Homes England to help align government funding with housing sites to help unlock and build the pipeline of future delivery.

Economic growth that benefits as many people as possible

Inward investment (including domestic and foreign)

What we measure: The total value of strategic projects, third party investment and notable Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) brought into the city or facilitated by the Council.

Why we measure it: This provides insight into the level of investment brought into the city to encourage economic growth benefiting as many people as possible.



How have we done? **£334.408m**

£334.408 million is due to be invested in 2019/20, which is a forecasted increase of 26% on the amount invested in 2018/19.

Trend rating: **Green**

Target for 2019/20: **£334.408m**

The amount of inward investment is a forecast for 2019/20 as we will not know the actual amount of investment until the value of all investments has been finalised later in the year.

Target rating: **N/A**

What's working well? 11 FDI projects successfully landed in Plymouth in 2019/20, which is the highest total number of projects that we have seen. The total value of FDI flowing into Plymouth in 2019/20 was £33,375,000, creating 83 new jobs. Meanwhile, the strategic projects across the city continue to deliver investment; The Box is now open to visitors and is proving a genuine success despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Mayflower 400 has generated £81 million (Advertising Value Equivalent) for the city, and the recent Commemoration event welcomed global ambassadors to Plymouth to launch the autonomous ship. Plymouth's pipeline of development is over £1 billion and kick starting this will help to fast track the economy out of slowdown.

What are we worried about? The pipeline for FDI flows into Plymouth at the end of quarter two 2020/21 was strong, with multiple projects due to land and more expected to emerge and convert in time. Globally, however, the flow of FDI is reducing, which combined with both the COVID-19 pandemic and the uncertainty caused by transitioning out of the European Union (EU) suggests that the FDI flows into Plymouth may reduce. Intelligence indicates that while investors see the UK as a good destination to invest in, they are currently postponing any major decisions until more certainty can be provided.

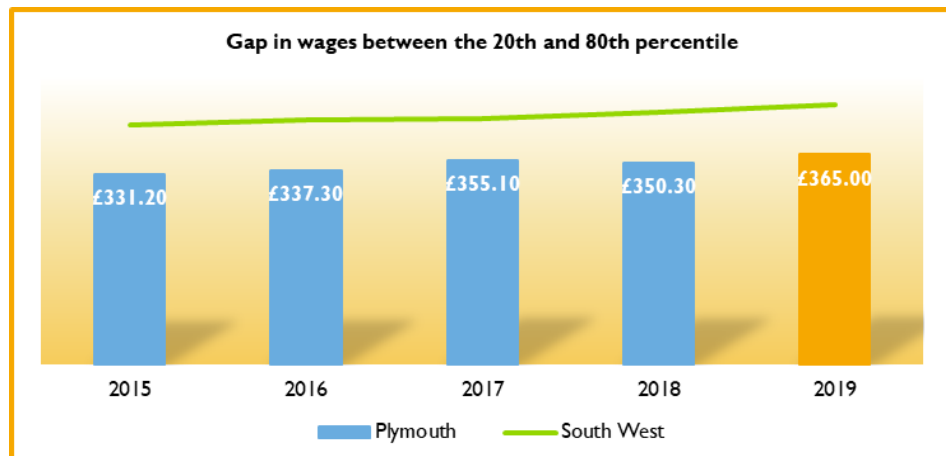
What needs to happen? The Economic Development department will continue to work across the Council and the private sector to ensure the delivery of £1 billion worth of development that sits within its pipeline. Where possible, Economic Development should seek to work with the private sector to fast track the recovery of the city and to strengthen its position in the UK ahead of leaving the EU. A key strand of the Resurgam economic recovery plan is to confidently support and progress multiple major pipeline projects to continue to attract significant investment into the city.

Economic growth that benefits as many people as possible

Inclusive growth

What we measure: The gap in gross weekly pay between the top 20% and the bottom 20% of earners within Plymouth.

Why we measure it: This measure provides insight into the gap in earnings between the lowest and highest earners in the city.



How have we done? £365.00

The gap in gross weekly wages increased by £12.70 from 2018, which is an increase of 3.6%.

Trend rating: **Amber**

Target for 2019: Trend decrease

We have not set a formal target for this indicator because many factors affect the gap in wages that are outside of our control. However, we are seeking to influence these and would like to see a year on year decrease.

Target rating: **Amber**

What's working well? The Inclusive Growth Charter was agreed in February 2020 by the Plymouth Growth Board and in March by Cabinet, with agreement to adopt the Charter and to continue to resource the Inclusive Growth Group. It has now been adapted to form the Resurgam Charter and is due to be launched in November 2020. A campaign will engage businesses from all sectors and all parts of the city.

What are we worried about? Several of the factors that affect economic inclusivity have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and lasting impacts on skills, economic growth, health and wages are likely to be significant; this is disproportionately affecting young people (under 25) and the over 50s. For example, our workers with health limitations were restricted by shielding advice from March to August 2020 and those with caring responsibilities were significantly impacted by closures of schools, childcare and adult support services. A new economic downturn and ongoing COVID-19 related restrictions are especially affecting low wage jobs in retail, hospitality and leisure, leaving many people redundant or on short hours.

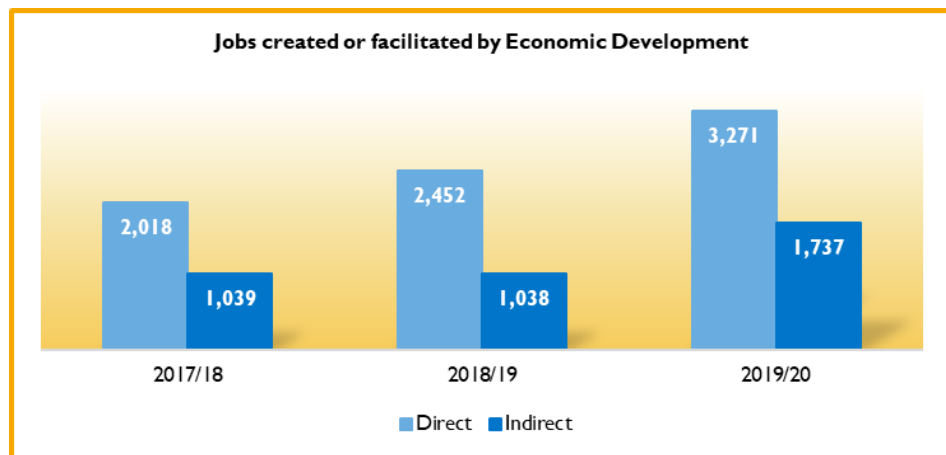
What needs to happen? We need to see a systematic and tenacious engagement of businesses in individual and collective action through the Resurgam Charter and its five programmes. The five programmes include two money related programmes (Spend for Plymouth and Grow for Plymouth); two people related programmes (Skills for Plymouth and Employ 4 Plymouth); and an environmental programme that encourages businesses and projects to address the climate emergency.

Quality jobs and valuable skills

Jobs created and facilitated by the Council

What we measure: Using the Advanced Modelling of Regional Economies (AMORE) economic impact tool, we model the capital expenditure and significant inward investments in order to forecast the direct and indirect number of FTE jobs created, in addition to those jobs resulting from the inward investment pipeline.

Why we measure it: One of the important ways that the Council impacts on the city level employment rate is through job creation by delivering major projects in the city.



How have we done? 5,008 (3,271 direct / 1,737 indirect)

In 2019/20, we estimate that 3,271 direct FTE jobs were created, rising to 5,008 when indirect jobs are included. This would represent an increase of 43.5% on 2018/19 (3,490 total).

Trend rating: **Green**

Target for 2019/20: 5,008 (3,271 direct / 1,737 indirect)

As the number of jobs is a forecast for 2019/20, we will not know the actual number of jobs created until all data has been collated later in the year.

Target rating: **N/A**

What's working well? Heavily bolstered by a pipeline of £1 billion of work, Economic Development has also supported job creation through the Mayflower City Readiness activity, which has seen public realm improvements across the city. Additionally, the train station regeneration project continues to provide invaluable opportunities for job creation; the £35 million funding package has now been approved, with early enabling works on site having commenced. In conjunction with this, the University of Plymouth has purchased Intercity House. It is now estimated that the total investment value within the wider station masterplan area will total in the region of £80 million, which is a hugely significant catalyst for job creation.

What are we worried about? In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has seen widespread job losses and serious concerns over unemployment rates as the furlough scheme ends, council-led job creation has become more important than ever. Furthermore, many of the significant capital programmes have visions that extend beyond 2020, introducing further risks around construction inflation and macro-economic factors such as Brexit and the ongoing impact of COVID-19. The support needs to extend beyond construction jobs and look broader through the sectors; there are significant opportunities in the defence/marine and health sectors.

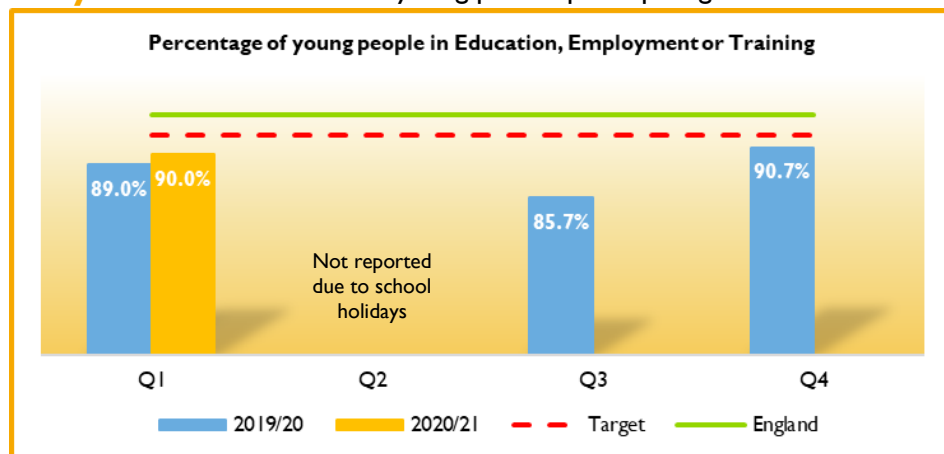
What needs to happen? The Economic Development team need to provide all of the support possible to ensure that the current pipeline of investment is delivered, ensuring job creation at such a critical time. Where these jobs become available, we must seek to ensure that employees who may become redundant are able to find alternative employment. Where possible, Economic Development must identify early opportunities for employment and investment across our key sectors and ensure that a pipeline of labour is available.

Quality jobs and valuable skills

Young people in Education, Employment or Training

What we measure: The percentage of young people aged 16 to 18 in academic years 12 to 14 who are going to, or remaining in, education, employment or training (EET).

Why we measure it: A young person participating in EET is an enabler to achieving better life outcomes.



How have we done? 90.0%

Increase of 1.0 percentage point from quarter one 2019/20.

Trend rating: **Green**

Target for 2020/21: 92%

Performance in quarter one is 2 percentage points below the target.

Target rating: **Amber**

What's working well? Stakeholders and partners across the city, led by Plymouth City Council, have been developing the Skills Launchpad Plymouth, which is a one-stop-shop FREE skills service established to deliver a city-wide response to COVID-19 within a Resurgam programme. The Skills Launchpad Plymouth was in place to support students at the end of August when exam results were announced and to aid choices for transition into post-16 education, employment or training. Careers South West responded to the impacts of COVID-19 through targeted support for young people in vulnerable categories and those identified in danger of becoming 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEET). In particular, those young people in apprenticeships, or due to start apprenticeships, were contacted to identify difficulties and discuss alternative offers if appropriate. Careers South West have restructured teams to enhance support arrangements to meet these young people's needs.

What are we worried about? Work-based post-16 opportunities and routes are expected to diminish in the short and possibly medium term due to the impacts of COVID-19. The proportion of 16 and 17 year olds claiming Universal Credit between April and September has significantly increased (125%); whilst actual numbers are relatively low, we remain concerned as the proportion of 16 to 25 year olds has risen by 24% over the same period. Reduced income across communities may affect the ability of young people to remain in education, employment or training due to study costs. The range of provision available may need to meet the needs of more vulnerable groups and the inability of funding regimes to deliver responsive study packages could increase the number young people not in education, employment or training.

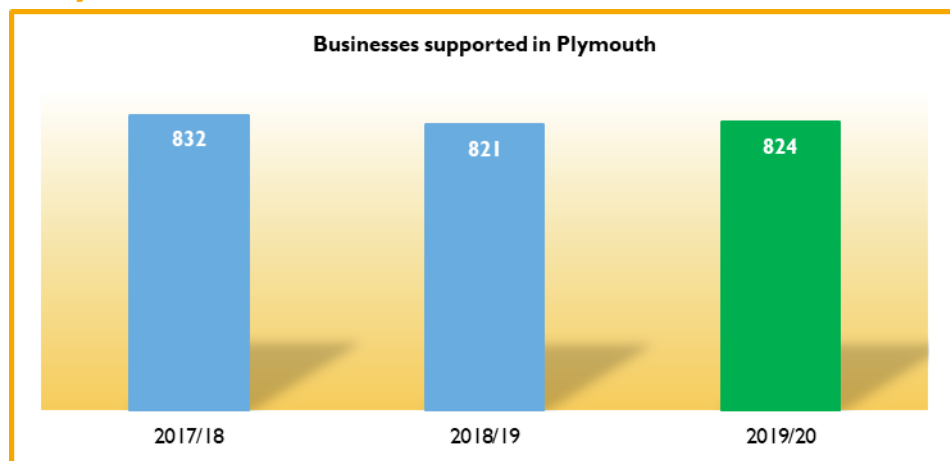
What needs to happen? Further roll-out of the Skills Launchpad Plymouth to include an Education Hub will support Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) in schools. Multi-agency discussions on provisions and the support needs of NEETs and those at risk of becoming NEET need to galvanise support to develop flexible delivery options and bids for funds (e.g. Education and Skills Funding Agency/European Social Fund).

Quality jobs and valuable skills

Businesses supported

What we measure: The sum of businesses supported through the Business Relationship Programme alongside businesses supported through the Social Enterprise Investment Fund, Growth Hub and Growth Support Programme, as well as the number of businesses resident in the Council's business parks.

Why we measure it: Supporting businesses in Plymouth to thrive is another way in which we support a strong economy.



How have we done? 824

824 businesses were supported through various programmes in 2019/20, which is three (0.4%) more than in 2018/19.

Trend rating: **Green**

Target for 2019/20: Trend increase

We have not set a formal target for this indicator because the number of businesses supported is affected by many factors, for example the size of the businesses. However, we would like to see a year on year increase.

Target rating: **Green**

What's working well? The COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally altered the way in which Economic Development is supporting businesses and to date our response to the pandemic has seen us support over 4,500 businesses, with 458 businesses having been supported by 121 sessions. The Public Protection Service has also provided much needed support by responding to more than 900 COVID-19 related service requests. Additionally, we have engaged with over 80 major suppliers. Despite being an immensely challenging time, the pandemic has vastly improved in-house intelligence, broadened the businesses in which the department engage with and raised the profile of Economic Development among the business base. To date, 4,043 Business Grants have been administered to local businesses, totalling £46.9 million; a further £2.27 million has been awarded to over 350 businesses in discretionary grants, stabilising and supporting local businesses throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

What are we worried about? A large proportion of the businesses expected to be hit extremely hard by COVID-19 operate in the Creative or Tourism sector; Economic Development needs to ensure that a lens is being shone over those sectors currently paralysed. Keeping these sectors alive will ensure that the city will not lose those pools of talent to other cities or sectors. Research has shown that businesses have used up their resilience to deal with COVID-19 and preparing for Brexit.

What needs to happen? Economic Development must continue to collaborate and work with businesses to understand their pressures and offer as much support as possible. In addition to this, the department must continue to lobby government to increase the provision of business support and end the uncertainty facing businesses from Brexit.

A vibrant cultural offer

Number of people taking part in cultural activities organised by PCC

What we measure: The number of people taking part in cultural activities organised by PCC. This includes signature events such as the British Fireworks Competition and Armed Forces Day; smaller events such as Plymouth Pirates Weekend and the Lord Mayor's Festival; as well as the number of people volunteering their time on a cultural activity; visiting our sites including the Box Plymouth, Smeaton's Tower and Mount Edgcumbe; and taking part in our public learning and engagement programmes and other workshops and activities online, on-site and off-site.

Why we measure it: Reporting the number of people taking part in Plymouth's cultural activities enables us to understand whether we are providing a relevant offer so that we can respond to the needs of Plymouth residents and visitors meaningfully.

What's working well? In spite of the global pandemic, we saw 225,445 people take part in cultural activities organised by Plymouth City Council between April and September 2020. Mount Edgcumbe Park and surrounding landscape remained open throughout the initial lockdown period and whilst all physical events programmed to take place between April and September, such as the British Firework Championships, were cancelled, many other events were able to be moved online, including VE Day, Pirates Weekend, Flavour Fest, the Seafood Festival, and the Plymouth History Festival. Similarly, new online cultural initiatives were trialled, including the 'Box on the Box', which was piloted and launched with colleagues from the Transformation team and Adult Social Care to livestream film footage from the Box's film archive into residential care homes each Wednesday. The new Mayflower Trail was opened at the start of lockdown followed by the launch of the trail app in July, with just over 2,770 downloads to date. Work on the Box project resumed on site from June onwards as the lockdown restrictions eased, and was completed by early September. September also saw a Seafood and Harbour Market open to supplement the online Seafood Festival. The reconfigured Mayflower 400 programme was launched on the 16 September, attracting a total of 10,500 people and, by the end of the month, the Box Plymouth finally opened to the public. The public's response to the Box was tremendous; in its first three weeks, over 16,500 people visited the Box, there had been 108,000 Facebook shares and posts, 244 tweets and over 100 excellent/five star reviews on Trip Adviser and Google. Plymouth has received over £1 million of positive media coverage with all of the major regional and national newspapers and TV channels, and an audience reach of 60 million.

What are we worried about? The impact of COVID-19 continues to be a significant worry. The lockdown meant that all scheduled events were cancelled and cultural venues closed for the first three to four months of the financial year. Despite efforts to overcome the obstacles faced, Smeaton's Tower and the Theatre Royal Plymouth remain closed because of the difficulties for these venues to safely manage groups of visitors in confined spaces. Adjustments were made to ensure that the Box opened in a COVID-19 safe way so numbers were restricted to 25% of original capacity. Although we were successful with a Cultural Recovery Fund grant application from the Arts Council in September, the global pandemic has had a huge impact on income projections for all cultural activity in this financial year.

What needs to happen? We need to ensure that we can respond proactively to changing circumstances in a continuing COVID-19 environment, and to seek out all funding opportunities where appropriate that can both offset the financial impact of COVID-19 and/or help to develop alternative ways of reaching our audiences as widely as possible. We also need to continue to take into account customer feedback and analysis to shape and inform the ongoing development of a high profile cultural programme for all audiences.

How We Will Deliver

Corporate Plan priorities	Key performance indicators	Page number
A strong voice for Plymouth regionally and nationally	Offers and Asks	17
	Regional influence	18

A strong voice for Plymouth regionally and nationally

Offers and Asks

What we report: This is a narrative update on progress made regarding our 'Offers and Asks' for the first six months of 2020/21.

Why we report it: The Offers and Asks is our way of influencing the government on what we need for the city. The 'Asks' are updated regularly and are used to advise and inform Plymouth's three Members of Parliament (MPs). A multi-disciplinary approach draws in knowledge and experience from across the local authority. It is this approach that ensures that we have the best intelligence to enable us to identify key issues, in particular any impacts on local services.

What's working well? In the first two quarters of this year the focus of the Council's public affairs activity has continued to be on raising vital issues with government as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic to seek corrections on national policy and plug gaps in the support measures introduced. Specifically, we have been lobbying ministers for increased support for the bus industry and home to school transport provision; the availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) for health and social care workers; free school meals eligibility, vouchers and food supply; improved provision of COVID-19 testing facilities; and support for renters and the homeless, as well as calling for an extension to the homelessness eviction ban. We have also been lobbying for increased support for the tourism sector and the Theatre Royal Plymouth, and working closely through the Local Government Association (LGA) for increased support for businesses in the city affected by the pandemic.

We have also continued to raise the wider issues that are important to the city. We have now received the £2.3 million of funding for the North Prospect Regeneration scheme and secured £381,780 Next Steps Accommodation Programme Funding to support rough sleepers and vulnerable people into accommodation in the city. We continue to lobby for initiatives that support our climate change ambitions, such as the Renewable Heat Incentive and Future Homes Standard. The Leader has also written to the Secretary of State for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to ensure that our fishing industry receives the support that it needs in a post-Brexit world and we continue to lobby for investment in port infrastructure to preserve existing trade routes as we leave the European Union.

We have hosted a number of notable visits including the Mayflower 400 celebratory event, which was attended by the First Sea Lord, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Sport, Tourism and Heritage, and ambassadors from the Netherlands and US. The Minister of State at the Department of Transport also visited the city to hear about the Brunel Plaza development at the railway station and to understand some of the connectivity issues faced by the city and region. More recently the Leader, alongside partners in the city, gave evidence to the House of Commons Defence Committee on the importance and impact of defence spending in Plymouth. The Council submitted evidence to the Integrated Defence Review call for evidence to continue to make the case for the defence sector in Plymouth.

What are we worried about? Whilst local government has received emergency funding from the government to deal with the pandemic, there is an imperative to ensure that government honours its commitment to fully cover the costs of responding to COVID-19 in terms of additional expenditure and lost income. The Leader wrote to the Prime Minister setting out the details of the cost pressures faced by the Council and detailed the in-year financial gap. The Council has continued to lobby government ministers on the factors that are contributing to this gap, and in particular to include our outsourced leisure services within the emergency reimbursement scheme and to cover the cost of providing the temporary mortuary as a separate item. The financial pressures faced by councils remain a concern and we have responded to HM Treasury's Comprehensive Spending Review call for evidence to highlight the fundamental changes that need to be made to the way that local government is financed going forward to ensure the continued viability of local councils.

What needs to happen? We are continuing to monitor the situation in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit and will continue to highlight to government where national policy decisions have a detrimental impact on the city. Over the next six months we will be responding to the government's Planning White Paper consultation and the Devolution White Paper (yet to be published), and will continue to use our regional partnerships and national networks to amplify our voice and make the case for Plymouth, and for local government.

A strong voice for Plymouth regionally and nationally

Regional influence

What we report: This is a narrative update on progress made during the first six months of 2020/21 regarding our work with partners and neighbouring councils, as well as how we promote our regional leadership role.

Why we report it: We need to ensure that our area has a strong voice with government and does not lose out on any additional powers or devolved funding opportunities that other parts of the country have benefited from. As the largest urban area in the South West Peninsula, it is natural that Plymouth plays a leading role in promoting the region with government.

What's working well? The Heart of the South West (HotSW) Joint Committee has met twice since April, in virtual format. At the Annual General Meeting in June there was a change of Chair, with the Leader of South Somerset District Council becoming the Chair and Councillor Tudor Evans re-elected as Vice-Chair. There has been a great deal of focus on economic recovery to address the impact of COVID-19, working closely with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and reflecting local councils' recovery plans. The Housing Task Group has also reconvened during this period and has prepared a response to the Planning White Paper on behalf of the Joint Committee.

The HotSW draft Local Industrial Strategy was co-developed with government and was ready to publish in January; however, government appears to have stepped back from publishing any more of these strategies for local areas. It was recently agreed by the LEP and the Joint Committee to publish the document locally so that it can be used as the framework, setting out the key industrial strengths of the HotSW area. Plymouth's strengths are predominantly around high-tech engineering and marine, but also increasingly health technologies. Despite not getting to a published co-owned document with government, the Local Industrial Strategy will act as a focal point for conversations with government departments to secure future commitments and investment.

Over the last six months, leaders and chief executives from councils across the South West have been coming together more frequently to address the ongoing issues created by COVID-19. These meetings have been hosted by South West Councils, working closely with the Local Government Association. The group has jointly commissioned a piece of work looking at the impact of COVID-19 on the economy and modelling potential job losses. They have also collated evidence of the implications of responding to COVID-19 for local authority finances and the anticipated losses in income streams. This information has been shared with government to help inform emergency financial relief packages.

What are we worried about? There is a risk that Plymouth and the wider South West peninsula fails to get traction with government. Following the election in December 2019, the government committed to rebalancing the economy across the UK with a 'Levelling Up' agenda. With the significant challenges presented by COVID-19 and the impending final exit from the European Union in December, there has been little evidence of a more decentralised approach or any increase in investment for the South West. The Great South West partnership, which stretches from Cornwall to Dorset, has been campaigning to be recognised as a pan-regional partnership by government, similar to the Northern Powerhouse. However, government has yet to clarify what geography they would prefer to engage with the South West on. If the government decides that the whole of the South West is more appropriate, the distinctive needs and challenges of Plymouth and neighbouring council areas could become overshadowed by the larger municipalities around the Bristol city region.

What needs to happen? Plymouth should continue to work with partners in the Joint Committee and through other groupings and networks to push for more funding and recognition, based on the existing set of asks and strategic plans. There are likely to be a series of funding opportunities over coming months as the government tries to kick-start the economy. By having an agreed framework in the Local Industrial Strategy and associated plans, with a pipeline of projects, the area will be ready to take advantage of this.

Further Information

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