

Cabinet



Date of meeting:	17 January 2023
Title of Report:	Budget 2023/24 - Update
Lead Member:	Councillor Richard Bingley (Leader)
Lead Strategic Director:	David Northey (Service Director for Finance and Section 151 Officer)
Author:	David Northey
Contact Email:	David.northey@plymouth.gov.uk Stephen.coker@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	Fin/Bud/2023/24
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

To provide an update on progress on the development of the 2023/24 budget and to seek agreement to the proposed Council tax rise and make delegations to enable final preparations for the presentation of a balanced revenue budget.

Under the Council's Constitution, Cabinet is required to recommend the 2023/24 Budget to Council. This report sets out the latest information available to enable Cabinet to consider the recommendations to Council in respect of the proposed budget.

Cabinet received a report at their meeting on 10 November which provided an update on progress at that date on the development of the 2023/24 budget. The report identified the initial budget shortfall of £11.394m. Over the last 2 months further work has been undertaken to enable this shortfall to be significantly reduced.

This report includes the outcome of the Provisional Local Government Settlement which was announced on the 19 December 2022. The focus of this report is the revenue budget. The scrutiny process will include the capital programme and full details will be included in the February Cabinet Report with recommendations to Full Council February 2023.

Recommendations and Reasons

That Cabinet:

1. Note this report, and that it is subject to change in line with any final Settlement adjustments.
2. Agree to recommend and endorse to Full Council on the 27 February 2023 the approval of a Council Tax rise of 2.99% and ASC Precept rise of 2.00%.
3. Delegate authority to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Economy, to propose final adjustments to achieve a balanced Revenue Budget.

4. Note a final Revenue and Capital Budget 2023/24 will be presented to the Cabinet meeting 9 February 2023, to be presented to February Full Council.

Alternative options considered and rejected

The approval of Council's budget is a statutory requirement so there are no alternative options to producing a report. A final report will be presented to Cabinet and Full Council in February; this update affords the Scrutiny Committee an updated position. An alternative option to freeze or not implement the maximum Council Tax increase or to not implement all or any of the Adult Social Care precept would leave a large budget gap to be closed. Options for closing would then require a drawdown of limited reserves, or further savings on top of the already unprecedented one-year savings of £26m, leading to other issues such as cuts to services.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The development and approval of the annual budget and the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is fundamentally linked to delivering the priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan. Allocating limited resources to key priorities will maximise the benefits to the residents of Plymouth.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The resource implications are set out in the body of the report. The Government have assumed we will maximise both the Council tax increase and the Adult Social Care precept when referencing the Council's Core Spending Power.

Financial Risks

The Council is a complex service organisation with a gross revenue expenditure budget exceeding £500m, and faces significant financial risks given the continuing forecast shortfall, uncertainty about resourcing from central government, the wider economic environment and the Council's comparatively low levels of financial reserves. Each savings proposal carries its own risks, the mitigation for which will be explored as they are developed.

The Council is under a legal obligation to set a balanced budget for each municipal year, and the Council's Section 151 Officer is required to produce a statement as part of the budget documentation giving his view as to the robustness of the proposed budget.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

No impacts directly arising from this report. As proposals are developed and where relevant, an assessment of the carbon footprint implications of each decision/proposal

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

The reducing revenue resources across the public sector has been identified as a key risk within our Strategic Risk register. As proposals are developed, officers will produce where relevant a risk register relating to the above areas specific to each proposal in order to inform decision making. The register will include mitigations of identified risks where necessary, and this will be reported as part of the decision-making process.

Appendices

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Movement from November 2022 Budget Report							
2	Additional Cost pressures and adjustments 2023/24							
3	Savings Proposals 2023/24 approved by Cabinet							
4	Indicative 2023/24 Directorate Budget							
5	Budget Engagement 2023/24 Results Report							
6	Budget 2023/24 Equality Impact Assessment							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Budget 2023/24 – Draft Budget							
Draft Budget Report 2023-24 – Cabinet 10.11.22 and appendices							
Chelson Meadow Report – Cabinet 10.11.22 and appendices							
Parking Modernisation and Environmental Plan Report – Cabinet 10.11.22 and appendices							
Garden Waste Subscription Charge Report – Cabinet 10.11.22 and appendices							
Non-Commercial Bus Routes Options Report – Cabinet 10.11.22 and appendices							
Reinstatement of Charges for Non-Household waste at Recycling Centres- Delegated Decision 16.11.22and appendices							

Plymouth Habitat Banking Vehicle – Delegated Decision 8.11.22 and appendices							
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Sign off:

Fin	pl.22. 23.3 41	Leg	EJ/3 8851/ 16.1. 23(2)	Mon Off	EJ/3 8851 /16.1 .23(2)	HR		Assets		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Northey (Interim Service Director for Finance)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 16/01/2023											
Cabinet Member approval: Deputy Leader after discussion with Cabinet colleagues											
Date approved: 16/01/2023											

REVENUE BUDGET 2023/24 - Update

Introduction

- I.1 This report provides an update on the latest position on the Council's budget for 2023/24, incorporating the impact of the December Provisional Settlement.
- I.2 The Council continues to manage a challenging financial environment where service demands continue to increase, the longer-term legacy impact of COVID-19 continues and where uncertain and unpredictable funding and cost levels remain.
- I.3 Together with all authorities the Council is in a serious and unprecedented position due to additional national and international factors largely beyond its control, including rapidly rising energy costs, broader inflation related cost increases and demand pressures and costs in both adults' and children's social care.
- I.4 The Council's administration remains ambitious in its vision and objectives for the city and is committed in particular to ensuring that services to children, vulnerable adults and the provision of high value jobs continue to be key priorities.
- I.5 This report will form part of the key budget papers that will be made available to the Budget Scrutiny meeting when it considers the draft budget proposals later this month.
- I.6 The Council delivers more than 300 services – as diverse as bin collections, protecting vulnerable children, providing libraries, making planning decisions, attracting investment and jobs in the city, providing leisure facilities, providing parking, maintaining roads and pavements and looking after Plymouth's parks and green spaces. Every part of the Council has been involved in the response to the budget situation and many employees and services will need to work in new ways. A significant amount of work continues to support the city's economy,

which has been severely affected by the recent pandemic and cost of living crisis: high value jobs remain a priority. It should be noted that options are limited by the fact that the Council needs to deliver a large number of services as a statutory requirement and has limited scope to influence how these services are delivered. Examples of this include supporting vulnerable children and adults in the city.

- 1.7 Despite these challenges, the City Council is ambitious for Plymouth and its residents and is keen to pursue its vision of making Plymouth a great place to live, work and visit. In doing so, listening to the views of city residents is a key part of the budget setting process and decision making.

Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement

2.1 On 19 December 2022, the Secretary of State for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), Rt. Hon. Michael Gove MP, released a written statement to Parliament on the provisional local government finance settlement 2023/24. The Settlement held few surprises as the main areas had been trailed in both the Autumn Statement and a subsequent DLUHC briefing note. The Settlement is provisional; and issued for consultation; the consultation is open to submissions for 4 weeks from 19 December 2022 to 16 January 2023. The Council will respond and copy its response through the LGA (Local Government Association) which responds on behalf of the sector.

2.2 A summary of the key points from the Provisional Settlement are:

- The referendum threshold for Council Tax as previously announced increases from the current 1.99% to the new 2.99% and councils can raise a further 2% through the Adult Social Care precept. These points were previously announced in the Autumn Statement.
- For Business Rates, the government has changed the inflation measure used to increase the local government funding amount within the Settlement Funding Amount (SFA). CPI (Consumer Price Index) (September increase of 10.1%) has been used, instead of RPI (September increase of 12.6%). However, this has been tapered by the revaluation adjustment of the base values.
- The Revenue Support Grant (RSG) remains and has been increased by 10.1% however existing grants have been subsumed into the amount allocated.
- A new one-off Service Grant was created for 2022/23 only. The 2022/23 settlement announcement stated this one-off Service Grant was to provide funding to all tiers of local government in recognition of the vital services delivered at every level of local government. Although this has continued for a second year, it has been reduced. This reduction is due to the cancellation of the increase in National Insurance Contributions and to move funding to the Supporting Families programme.
- The Lower Tier Services Grant (worth £111m nationally in 2022/23) has been removed and replaced by the Minimum Funding Guarantee of 3% for 2023/24.
- Funding Guarantee – This national £136m grant replaces the Lower Tier Services Grant. This grant is intended to provide a funding floor for all local authorities, so that no local authority would see an increase in Core Spending Power that is lower than 3% (before assumptions on council tax rate increases but includes those on Council Tax base).

- Nationally the Social Care Grant has increased by £1,506m to £3,852m. However, £161m of the increase is due to the roll-in of the Independent Living Fund. The “true” increase is £1,345m, which is funded from the postponement of adult social care charging reforms +£1,265m, and +£80m from other parts of the settlement.
- There is no change to the Improved Better Care Fund.
- The Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund created in 2022/23 has been rolled into the Adult Social Care Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund. Of the £562m total funding, £162m has been rolled in from above, with an additional £400m intended for local authorities to make tangible improvements to adult social care, and to address discharge delays; social care waiting times; low fee rates; workforce pressures; and to promote technological innovation in the sector.
- There is a new Adult Social Care Discharge Fund with a £300m national grant for 2023/24 intended to form part of Better Care Fund plans, aimed at reducing delayed transfers of care, allocated on the basis of the improved Better Care Fund shares in used in 2023/24.

2.3 The implications of the provisional Settlement on the Council’s resources for 2023/24 are set out in the relevant sections of this report. A movement summary from the November Cabinet Budget Report is set out in Appendix I.

Budget Engagement

2.4 A public engagement to support the 2023/24 budget setting process took place between Friday 11 November and Sunday 04 December 2022. A questionnaire was developed which asked respondents to give their views on a range of budget savings / income proposals being put forward by the Administration to help inform the Council’s budget setting for the 2023/24 fiscal year.

2.5 Some of the proposals in the November Cabinet report were not part of the engagement as work was being carried out to establish if some proposals could be brought forward to also help close the 22/23 funding gap. Where possible, those proposals will be subject to their own relevant statutory consultation and democratic processes.

2.6 307 online questionnaires were completed and entered for analysis and 17 emails were received with comments, ideas and suggestions. In addition, Plymouth’s Youth Parliament took part in a face-to-face feedback event on 07 December and an online engagement with business representatives took place on 21 December 2022.

2.7 Participants were asked to provide comment on the proposals including the proposed increase of fees and charges associated with some council services. The numbers of responses received to individual proposals was low, therefore the views outlined in the report are not representative of the wider city population and results should be considered in this context.

2.8 A summary of the results shows:

- Fees and Charges: while many respondents understood the need to increase fees and charges, the more negative comments tended to relate to fee increases for allotments and city centre parking charges. Respondents were generally in favour of charging for garden waste.
- Children’s Services: most responses to these proposals were positive with the largest responses relating to working with families to keep more children at home and reducing

the use of residential care, although there was concern about adequate safeguarding measures remaining in place.

- People Directorate: the largest responses related to managing demand on housing and adult social care and reviewing the sports development service.
- Customer and Corporate Services / Chief Executive Office: the largest responses related to reviewing Contact Centres / Customer Services and reducing the purchasing of library books with many responses to these proposals being positive - those who agreed cited the need to seek efficiencies and cut costs. Some respondents stressed the importance of focusing on supporting older people and those who are not able to use digital services.
- Place Directorate: the proposal to consider a charge for the Park and Ride sites received 54 responses, the majority of which were positive. While a small charge was considered acceptable, a small number were concerned that people would not be able to afford the charge or would opt to drive into the city centre. The proposal to seek sponsorship for Bonfire Night or stop the event completely received the most responses, again with the majority being supportive.

2.9 Full details are contained within Appendix 5.

Revenue Budget

Council Tax

- 3.1 The Council Tax base for 2023/24 has been calculated at 74,891 properties, an increase of 1,061 on 2022/23. The Council Tax Base report for 2023/24 appears elsewhere on this Cabinet agenda and will be presented to Council in January 2023 for approval.
- 3.2 The rise in the tax base for 2023/24 primarily reflects the increase in the number of properties within the City. The assumed collection rate continues at 97.5%; this is realistic and prudent due to the current economic climate.
- 3.3 As set out above, the Provisional Settlement set the Council Tax referendum limit at 2.99% (i.e., this is the highest level of increase permissible without a referendum) and an adult social care precept (ASC) of 2.00%. For Plymouth, every quarter percent (0.25%) increase in the Council Tax would yield an additional £0.312m.
- 3.4 As part of developing the 2023/24 budget, Cabinet is advised that adopting a 2.99% increase for Council Tax and a 2.00% level of ASC precept is required in order to present a balanced budget. If adopted, these increases would provide an additional £3.740m in council tax and £2.500m adult social care precept; a total of £6.240m. The Government have assumed we will maximise this when referencing Council's Core Spending Power
- 3.5 The final decision on these matters will be taken at Full Council on 27 February 2023.

Business Rates

- 3.6 The CSR22 stated the multiplier for the calculation of Business Rates would be set at 0%, but with a Section 31 Grant to compensate for the resultant impact. As a result, the business rates grant income will increase by £4.347m in 2023/24. Taken together with £0.999m of growth in the base, this equates to a total increase of £5.346m from the current £65.130m to a revised £70.476m.

Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

3.7 The Provisional Settlement announced a RSG of £11.562m. The increase includes rolled in grants totalling £0.497m. Excluding this the increase represents a CPI increase of 10.1% (£1.020m).

New Homes Bonus (NHB)

3.8 The allocation for New Homes Bonus payment in 2023/24 is £0.022m. This is £0.822m less than the forecast figure included in the budget report to Cabinet in November 2022. It reflects the Government changes which is now simply a one-year retrospective payment and is also due to the number of new homes being less than previously forecast. It should be noted this allocation settlement is for one year only and there is still no indication of what the replacement will be.

2022/23 Services Grant and Social Care Grant

3.9 Nationally, the Government has extended the grant to 2023/24 and Plymouth's allocation is £2.266m, a reduction of £1.755m. This reduction is due to the cancellation of the increase in National Insurance Contributions; to move funding to the Supporting Families programme and top-sliced to support the RSG growth.

3.10 The Council also receives a Social Care Grant. The additional payment is £8.199m in 2023/24 but includes rolled in grants worth £0.582m so the net increase is £7.617m.

3.11 Plymouth City Council has been allocated a net £2.140m from the Government's Adult Social Care Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund. The Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund created in 2022/23 has been rolled into this new grant. This is a ring-fenced grant intended for local authorities to make tangible improvements to adult social care, and, in particular, to address discharge delays; social care waiting times; low fee rates; workforce pressures; and to promote technological innovation in the sector.

3.12 There is a new Adult Social Care Discharge Fund with a 2023/24 £0.734m grant allocation for Plymouth, to form part of Better Care Fund plans, and is aimed at reducing delayed transfers of care.

Lower Tier Services Grant

3.13 The Government has announced the discontinuation of this grant (worth £0.416m in 2022/23). It has been replaced by the Minimum Funding Guarantee of 3% for 2023/24.

Public Health Grant

3.14 The Public Health grant is another key source of income and is used to improve the health of the population, and in particular to tackle large differences in health outcomes that we see between local areas. At the time of writing this report the 2023/24 grant has yet to be advised. The grant for 2022/23 is £15.940m and was announced in early Feb 2022.

Resources (Funding)

3.15 The total core resources available, incorporating the Settlement, and with and without a Council Tax increase and an Adult Social Care precept, are set out in the table below.

Resources (Funding)	2023/24 Draft Budget Cabinet Nov 2022 * £m	2023/24 No Council Tax increase and no ASC Precept £m	2023/24 with 2.99% increase in Council Tax / 2% Precept £m
Council Tax	(125.635)	(124.385)	(130.625)
Business Rates	(66.129)	(70.476)	(70.476)
Revenue Support Grant	(10.045)	(11.562)	(11.562)
Total Resources	(201.809)	(206.423)	(212.663)
Resources Required	213.203	213.280	213.280
Budget Balance	11.394	6.857	0.617

* Includes base growth and 1% ASC precept increase.

Directorate Spending Assumptions

- 3.16 A significant proportion of our revenue budget (circa 80%) is spent on two principal areas; adult social care services and children's social care provision. Nationally and locally the costs of providing health and wellbeing services are rising as demand and complexity increases. We have an ageing population and higher levels of young children requiring our services and the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on our cost base.
- 3.17 Adult Social Care supports over 4,700 people to meet their support needs in a range of settings, at home, within supported housing or residential and nursing care. Plymouth provides over 610,000 hours of care every year to help some of our most vulnerable residents in the city. During 22/23 the Council investigated over 1,700 referrals about the safety of adults.
- 3.18 The People budget in 2022/23 is £89 million in this area, but demand for services continues to rise due to a growing elderly population, the increasing complexity of the need following the COVID pandemic and in line with all areas increasing costs of care provision. However, the Council is committed to ensuring that there is care and support available for our most vulnerable adults and older people, through increased focus on reducing high-cost provision supporting more people to be healthy and well at home, engagement with care providers to reduce costs and further integration of support to deliver increased efficiencies.
- 3.19 The Council will continue to work in partnership with the NHS and other care and support providers to ensure services are more joined up and has been pioneering in combining our adult social care services with the community health services in Livewell Southwest as well as commissioning an Alliance to address complex health and housing needs in the city.
- 3.20 Nationally there has been significant pressures within Children's Services. A combination of increased numbers and increasingly complex cases has meant costs have been rising beyond the existing budget provision. Plymouth is responsible for ensuring children and young people are safe and protected from harm. This includes working with more than 2,177 children within its social care team.

- 3.21 Plymouth spends around £36 million on providing placements for children in care through foster carers, residential care and secure placements and services for children with special needs or a disability. There is also a range of services for children in children's centres, nurseries, and school transport and school places. The total budget on services for children in 2023/24 will be around £66 million.
- 3.22 Attention has been focused on early intervention and prevention to try to prevent children and young people needing to come into care and work closely with partners in health, schools and the police on this work.
- 3.23 This year Plymouth has witnessed increased pressures on budgets due to a small number of children entering into care with a high level of care needed and for some, an increase in the cost of care packages for children already in our care. The Council is determined to protect these vital services and is proposing to reduce costs by increasing the number of in-house foster carers we use, reducing the need for more expensive placements with external providers and supporting children to stay at home with their families or connected carers wherever possible.
- 3.24 The Place directorate has a net annual revenue budget of £27.3m (i.e., 14% of the Council's net revenue budget). Its Gross annual budget is £92.2m. It therefore has an income of £64.9m annually which is made up predominantly of grant and commercial income. The directorate has over the years significantly increased its income and reduced its net revenue spend significantly from £45m in 2013/14 to the current annual cost of £27.3m.
- 3.25 The Place directorate has three departments that carry out its work. These are Strategic Planning and Infrastructure (Strategic and development planning, housing, strategic transport schemes, public transport, climate change and green estate work), Economic Development (Regeneration, Economy and Enterprise, Commercial property, Freeport, National Marine Park, Culture, Events and Tourism) and finally Street Services (waste collection and disposals, street scene, trade and commercial waste, Highways, Parking and marine services). The majority of these services are universal services that benefit and interface with the lives all of residents, businesses and visitors to the city. However, the current financial challenges facing all businesses, individuals and councils have meant we have had to seek opportunities to address budgetary pressures and constraints.
- 3.26 Within Strategic Planning and Infrastructure, the reduced forecast spend in concessionary fares will be used to help address budgetary pressures. The costs of provision of non-commercial bus routes will be reviewed and options considered to maintain as many as possible, whilst at the same time looking to work within available budgets. The proposed introduction of charging at Park and Ride sites as part of ticketing for users of such sites will be introduced, meaning no increase to the cost of such facilities for park and ride customers. This will be subject to a further decision. A full review of Community Transport will be undertaken to ensure the efficient use of the limited available funding that is available. In areas where the city council currently contributes to partnership funded bodies, the level of investment will be reviewed and reduced, removed or alternate sources of funding sought to reduce pressures on PCC revenue. At the same time, the department will undertake a re-structure to deliver further savings.
- 3.27 The Economic Development department generates £24.7m income, covering the revenue costs of the overall economic development and includes projects grants for the Freeport, National Marine Park, The Box and Property Regeneration fund and providing a surplus of £1.1m to wider council budgets. The Budget priority will be to continue to drive income. It will also continue to seek to reduce costs, increasing efficiency and further maximise grants to help support delivery of a council wide balanced net budget. A range of proposals are being developed that will reduce revenue costs through the capitalisation of staff costs, additional grant funding, seek cost neutrality in the running

of the Tourism Information Centre, seek new commercial income streams and Increase events sponsorship thereby reducing costs.

- 3.28 The Street Services department provides year-round statutory services to residents across the city. It will continue to strive to provide those services and keep the city in as best a shape as possible, maintaining facilities and activities such as the continued operation of Household Waste Recycling Centres in Weston Mill and Chelson Meadow as well as the provision of a variety of daily front line services. The department will seek to maximise efficiencies and reduce costs wherever possible e.g., through the re-profiling of city-wide street lighting and a re-prioritisation of Highways maintenance; as well as maximising income in areas such as Highways Engineering client fees. It will seek to increase efficiency in the waste collection routes and services which collect 117,000 waste bins from residents every week. Reviews of charging for parking which have not changed since 2017 and Resident Permits, which have not changed since 2007, are proposed for implementing and charging introduced across a variety of waste service activities. This will include the introduction of an annual fee for the non-statutory service of garden waste collections as approved by Cabinet at its meeting of the 10 November 2022
- 3.29 The Customer & Corporate Services directorate has a net annual revenue budget of £45 two core objectives; supporting the organisation and delivering customer services. Core services include but are not limited to: finance, procurement, insurance, Human Resources, facilities management and our Customer and Digital service (business support, libraries, information governance).
- 3.30 During 2022/23, as part of the Council's Transformation Programme, the directorate has delivered a new business support service, introduced new ways of working, reduced our office accommodation, delivered the Council's new website and won awards for our digital inclusion network.
- 3.31 Looking forward and to support the delivery of our savings in 2023/24 our efforts will be focused on the Customer Service Strategy, ensuring the most vulnerable and digitally excluded have choice in how to access our services, consult on our front doors and libraries, improve our processes supported by automation where we can, refocus DELT, maximise our assets, deliver our people strategy and drive organisational change as well as considering how best to deliver our corporate services in the future.
- 3.32 Business Support is a vital component that underpins critical activities right across the Council, both in front line delivery as well as in our corporate functions. It is supported by the Council's Transformation Programme and will support the delivery of savings as it maximises opportunities to streamline, simplify and deliver services digitally.
- 3.33 The Chief Executive's office manages a net annual revenue budget of just under £5.4m, or just under 3% of the Council's total net revenue budget. Income, at over £0.500m is made up of a combination of services provided for other public bodies, grants and charges made for services specific to projects, such as legal support for capital schemes. Through a combination of increasing chargeable activity for other public bodies and the introduction of multi-disciplinary teams, the service has reduced its revenue requirement from the Council by over £0.700m since 2013/14.
- 3.34 The Chief Executive's service covers four main areas of work. The oversight and governance team provides support for the Council's democratic functions, including Members' support and all the Council's decision making, covering Cabinet, Scrutiny, and all other decision-making bodies. The team also provides and supports the Council's performance and risk framework, responsible

for the provision, reporting and analysis of our delivery of services to the public and the management and reporting of strategic and operational risk.

3.35 The Legal service provides services to all the directorates, ranging from commercial, litigation, and property related support to child and adult protection and the Council's Monitoring Officer responsibilities. We have plans to further minimise the amount of legal support that the Council commissions externally through greater provision from our own expertise, and tighter scoping of legal requirements.

3.36 The Communications team is responsible for the Council's external and internal communications arrangements and our relationships with external stakeholders. The elections and registration team manages the city's electoral register and delivers local and national elections. With significant changes in voter identification being implemented through the recent Elections Act, the team will be ensuring that additional burdens funding from the government will meet the inevitable extra costs incurred in successful implementation of new responsibilities in this area.

Additional Costs

3.37 The estimated additional budget costs for 2023/24 are set out in Appendix 2. These include;

- Cost and volume increases for Adults' and Children's Services
- Net cost and volume increased allocation for Homelessness.
- Covering the Council's commitment to the National Living Wage for our adult social care providers, and ensuring they receive the necessary funding
- Additional corporate costs covering salary increases and pension provision.
- The cost of financing the Capital Programme.
- Place Directorate specific pressures as a direct result of Covid covering reduced car park income and additional domestic waste collection costs.
- Energy and fuel cost pressures as a result of increases to the cost of gas, electricity and fuel. These cost rises impact street lighting plus the crematoria and Life Centre as examples.

3.38 The draft budget in November preceded the Autumn Statement announcement confirming the National Living Wage to take effect from April 2023. The original proposal included an allocation to care providers taking the increased rate from the current £9.50 to the forecasted £9.97. The Chancellor confirmed the new rate would be £10.42, meaning a further allocation of £3.300m is required, as shown in Appendix 2.

3.39 Further one-off adjustments to the cost base have also been identified totalling £0.633m, covering concessionary fares and capital funding in the Place Directorate (a net adjustment of £0.133m) and facilities management within the Corporate and Customer Services Directorate £0.500m. These are shown in Appendix 2.

Savings Plans

3.40 Savings plans totalling £26.166m were presented in detail at Cabinet on 10 November 2022. This comprised directorate savings of £21.413m and corporate, or council wide savings of a further £4.753m. This corporate figure included a fees and charges estimate of £0.760m which has been adjusted downwards by £0.367m following detailed analysis. This gives an overall revised savings total of £25.799m and the proposals for each Directorate (including both those requiring further decisions) are shown in Appendix 3.

Closing the Budget Gap

- 4.1 A budget gap of £11.394m was presented to Cabinet on 10 November 2022. As a result of the provisional finance settlement and other updates to the budget and the proposed council tax and precept increase, the gap now stands at £0.617m. Officers will provide an update to covering this shortfall at the February Cabinet. A final balanced budget will be recommended to Full Council at the end of February 2023.
- 4.2 Full details of the movement from the November budget report are set out in Appendix I.
- 4.3 The current position of the 2023/24 Budget now comprises:

Area	2023/24 Draft Budget Cabinet Nov 2022 £m	2023/24 Revisions £m	2022/23 Updated Budget £m
Additional Resources	(4.059)	(10.854)	(14.913)
Right Sizing the Budget	15.680	0.500	16.180
Additional Costs – Corporate	13.965	(4.855)	9.110
Additional Costs - Directorates	11.974	4.065	16.039
Savings – Corporate	(4.360)	0.367	(3.993)
Savings - Directorate	(21.806)	0.000	(21.806)
Budget Gap	11.394		0.617

Conclusion

- 4.4 This report sets out the remaining budget gap after the application of a Council Tax and precept increase which is proposed to be approved at Full Council on 27 February 2023.
- 4.5 To get to this position, Cabinet Members and Officers have: incorporated the impact of the Provisional Settlement as the Final Settlement has not yet been notified; it is not expected that this will result in any or significant variation.
- 4.6 Cabinet are therefore being asked to recommend to Council to approve a budget position that will require it to adopt
- A Council Tax increase of two point nine nine percent (2.99%)
 - An Adult Social Care Precept increase of two percent (2.00%)

Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

5.1 As part of developing the 2023/24 budget future years have been considered and modelled in the following table. This includes the full year effect of savings proposals introduced in 2023/24 and the ongoing pressures within all services.

5.2 For purposes of modelling only, for 2024/25 through 2026/27 Council Tax has been shown at the current referendum threshold limits. Attention is drawn to the ongoing forecast shortfalls in resources and the Council is already considering means of achieving balance in those years.

General Fund Budget	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m
Resources	(212.663)	(216.767)
2022/23 Base Budget Costs	197.750	
2023/24 Base Budget Costs		213.280
Additional Costs	49.528	14.484
Grant Funding	(8.199)	0.000
Savings	(25.799)	0.000
Shortfall	0.617	10.997

Note: It should be noted that when the shortfall in 2023/24 of £0.617m is met a commensurate adjustment will apply to the shortfall in 2024/25 to a revised £10.380m.

5.3 Moving forward the MTFP will be closely monitored to take account of proposals emerging from Government policy and Council initiatives as they become available to mitigate the shortfall. The full impact of the 2023/24 additional costs and savings, plus estimates of grant funding need full analysis.

Equality & Diversity

6.1 The Equality Act (2010) harmonised and replaced pre-existing equality legislation and extended statutory protection across nine 'protected' characteristics. It recognised forms of discrimination that were previously beyond the scope of legislation and introduced the concept of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

6.2 The protected characteristics include; age, disability, gender reassignment marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The PSED placed specific responsibilities on public sector organisations to consider equality in their decision making. It consists of a general equality duty, supported by specific duties. In summary, those subject to the equality duty must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not.
- Promote good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

6.3 Plymouth City Council is committed to equality and diversity and to ensuring that the decisions we take promote equality. To help inform the development of the Council's budget and to

ensure that we give 'due regard' to equality during this process, we are considering the equality implications of our budget decisions. A completed equality impact assessment will be presented with the final budget paper.

- 6.4 Alongside the overarching budget EIA (Equality Impact Assessment), separate assessments will be completed on individual decisions as they go through the decision-making cycle.

Appendix I

2023/24	
£m	
November Cabinet Report – gap	11.394
Business Rates multiplier	(4.347)
Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	(1.517)
Local Council Tax Support Grant (subsumed into RSG)	0.395
Additional Social Care Grant	(8.199)
Independent Living Fund (subsumed into Social Care Grant)	0.582
Lower Tier Grant - Abolished	0.416
Services Grant – reduction	1.755
New Homes Bonus (allocation = £22k v forecast £0.850m)	0.828
National Living Wage further increase to revised £10.42	3.300
Cost and income assumptions adjustments – income	0.367
Cost and income assumptions adjustments - costs	0.633
Revised post Settlement	5.607
Additional 1% ASC Precept *	(1.250)
Additional Council Tax 2.99%	(3.740)
Revised post Council Tax increase	0.617

* The £11.394m gap includes a 1% ASC precept increase.

Appendix 2

Net additional cost pressures and adjustments

Right Sizing the Budget	£m
Additional 2022/23 pay award consolidated into the 2023/24 budget	2.900
One off in 2022/23 COVID 19 Additional Grant Income	4.890
One Offs in 2022/23 budget	6.123
Other Budgets funded from one off allocations in 22/23 consolidated into the base for 23/24	2.267
Total Right Sizing the Budget Costs *	16.180

* Includes cost that will be allocated to Directorates

Corporate Items	£m
Energy pressures Hard FM (Facilities Management)	3.265
Energy pressures - Street Lighting	1.000
Energy pressures – Leisure facilities	0.500
Salary Increases 2023/24	3.800
Financing the Capital Programme	1.670
Interest and other TM pressures	2.550
PFI (Private Finance Initiative) contract	0.273
Lower Tier Grant	0.416
Services Grant	1.755
Local Council Tax Support Grant (rolled into Revenue Support Grant)	0.395
New Homes Bonus (NHB)	1.685
Social Care Grant	(8.199)
Total Corporate Costs	9.110

Children	£m
Social care provision – Additional cost and volume of placements	3.053
Short breaks	0.370
Home to school Transport	1.000
	4.423

People	£m
Adult Social Care – Care Packages	1.700
National Living Wage	5.300
Homelessness Cost and volume	1.000
Independent Living Fund (Now in Social Care Grant)	0.582
	8.582

Place	£m
Staffing - Streets	0.627
Vehicle fuel	0.446
Parking - 50% of legacy shortfall	0.450
Reversing one off income in 22/23	0.183
Waste tonnage and additional costs	0.628
Grounds maintenance	0.700
	3.034

Total Directorate Costs **16.039**

Appendix 3 Savings Proposals

Corporate	2023/24 £m
One Offs found for 23/24	(2.493)
Reduction in Corporate Budgets	(1.500)
	(3.993)

Summary of Savings by Directorate	2023/24 £m
Children	(4.575)
People	(6.030)
ODPH (Office of the Director of Public Health)	(0.292)
Place	(7.290)
Chief Executives and Customer and Corporate Services	(3.619)
	(21.806)

Children	2023/24 £m
Work with families to keep more children at home	(1.627)
Reduce the use of residential care, increase the use of foster care and work to ensure children in care can return to their families or a connected person in their lives	(2.275)
Review our workforce / organisational structure. Realigning services in Targeted Support and Social Care will reduce the need for agency workers and costs associated with external assessments	(0.673)
	(4.575)

People	2023/24 £m
Managing demand in homelessness	(0.500)
Managing and reducing cost pressures across care provider market	(1.000)
18-64 Review Programme and Reducing Transition Packages	(0.430)
Managing and Reducing Demand of ASC Packages (65plus)	(1.000)
Review Reablement Service, realising efficiencies through improved ways of working.	(0.250)
Review Early Help provision and Children's centres in partnership with Children's Directorate and partners across the city	(0.600)
Review Sports Development service and align function to Plymouth Active Leisure	(0.043)
Review Youth Services working in partnership with local providers to reduce costs.	(0.100)
Transfer funding for Health and Wellbeing Hubs to Public Health Grant removing cost from People Directorate budget	(0.119)
Maximise Grants to support wellbeing services	(0.508)

Review contracts to deliver efficiencies in partnership with Providers	(0.205)
Maximise Disabled Facilities Grant to support the provision of community equipment and adaptations in peoples' homes.	(0.500)
Develop a new operating model across the directorate	(0.200)
Increase Houses of Multiple Occupation licensing fee	(0.075)
Use £250k reserve to support range of children's services	(0.250)
Reduce Council subsidy associated with Leisure facilities. Tinside Lido: broaden offer including new events Plympton Pool: review operating costs and income Mount Wise Pools: Implement entry charge to contribute to costs of running Brickfields: develop community sports and wellbeing hub with partners	(0.250)
	(6.030)

ODPH	2023/24 £m
Maximisation of grants across ODPH	(0.250)
Increased Fees & Charges income	(0.042)
	(0.292)

Place	2023/24 £m
Reduce Concessionary Fares Budget - release underspends in this budget assessed against historic trends	(0.500)
Increase car parking charges as per Cabinet decision of 10 November 2022	(0.934)
Charging for collection of garden waste (councils are not required to provide garden waste collections as it is a non-statutory service) As per Cabinet decision on 10 November 2022	(0.530)
Re-instate charging for non-household waste at Household Waste Recycling Centres (Asbestos, soil, rubble, plasterboard)	(0.177)
Re-instate charging for bin delivery	(0.032)
Reduce budget for supporting non-commercial bus routes and implement charges at Park and Ride sites to support the city's bus network	(0.229)
Generate savings and income from the commercial estate (lease renewals, re-gearing and new income)	(0.343)
Capitalisation of Strategic Project Teams costs	(0.050)
Review costs of the Economic Development Team through capitalisation of costs, efficiencies, income and sponsorship targets	(0.077)
Secure new and additional income and grants from cultural trusts and foundations	(0.125)
Ensure Tourist Information Centre is cost neutral	(0.025)
Seek sponsor for Bonfire Night on The Hoe or stop the event.	(0.030)
Review of Community Transport provision including release of bike hire underspend, consideration of funding underspends, the optimisation of services and identifying alternative funding models.	(0.070)
Withdraw from Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership	(0.010)
Withdraw from South Hams/Plymouth Urban Fringe Team	(0.066)
Reduce/re-align financial contributions to environment/marine bodies	(0.010)
Increase Allotment income	(0.011)
Undertake a full-service re-structure of Strategic Planning & Infrastructure	(0.300)

Annual increase in parking fees and identify new forms of income	(0.423)
Highways Engineering Client Fees through capitalisation of back-office support	(0.128)
Re-profile Highways Maintenance in areas such as white-lining, gully work, barriers and ironworks as well as rationalising staffing and seeking capitalisation of back-office costs	(0.500)
Route optimisation savings of refuse collection service	(0.290)
Increase fees and charges in Street Services in line with fees and charges policy – areas include commercial, trade and bulky waste, MOTs, marine, playing pitches and beach huts	(0.234)
Reduce street lighting costs by investing in a new computer management system that helps reduce energy costs	(0.500)
Strategic Contract Optimisation	(0.430)
Introduce new Chelson Meadow Solar Farm to support energy savings	(0.050)
In line with national government policy, create a habitat banking scheme to generate income from developments to improve biodiversity and offset environmental impact	(0.029)
Maximise nature-based solutions to create additional income	(0.020)
One off saving – Reduce Foreshore Reserve	(0.129)
One off saving – Reduce Park and Ride Reserve	(0.100)
One off saving – Reduce Bad Debt Provision	(0.343)
One off saving - Strategic Projects License Fee	(0.048)
Utilise funding allocated for food waste collection service pending Government guidance on next steps for introduction	(0.200)
Recovery of owed land receipts	(0.050)
Increased Fees & Charges income	(0.296)
	(7.290)

Customer & Corporate Services	2023/24 £m
Review Contact Centres/Customer Services operating within the Council to look at broader efficiencies, bringing services together and focusing on those who are not able to use digital services and the most vulnerable communities we serve	(0.188)
Reduce purchasing of library books as eBook loans are increasing	(0.050)
Cease Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) and Key Cities subscriptions	(0.021)
Swap revenue budget funding for Community Grants programme with capital funding which is available	(0.213)
Share policy and performance functions across the Council	(0.084)
Bring together marketing, design and communications functions across the Council	(0.080)
Reduce external legal advice	(0.020)
Review Lord Mayor's events and streamline resources	(0.030)
Review senior management resource across the Council	(0.200)
One-off proposal to freeze the Head of Policy and Regional Partnerships role for 23/24	(0.070)
Improve processes and implement automation technology to reduce manual work in Business Support	(0.200)
Consult residents on how the Council re-provisions its Library Service alongside a review of other community buildings and services.	Subject to consultation – likely to be 24/25 saving

Introduce a plan to save money on IT as part of review of how services are best delivered across the Council	(0.600)
Freeze vacancies from Transformation and Digital teams and identify funding sources	(0.300)
Reduce spending on agency staff used in managing council buildings	(0.060)
Adjust security provision in council buildings	(0.123)
Reduce posts within the Human Resources Organisational Development (HROD) service	(0.220)
Review learning and development spend across the Council	(0.025)
Review of audit requirements from the Devon Audit Partnership	(0.050)
Review budget for the Finance team	(0.250)
Reduce external financial advice	(0.050)
Vacate Windsor House earlier than planned	(0.500)
Accelerate transfer of Children, Young People and Families service from Midland House and sell the building	(0.230)
Increased Fees & Charges income	0.055
	(3.619)
	(21.806)

Appendix 4 Indicative 2023/24 Directorate Budget

Directorate	Budget 22/23			Budget 2023/24		
	Expenditure	Income	Net Budget	Cost Increases	Savings/Income	Net Budget
Corporate	11.783	(50.891)	(39.108)	25.290	(3.993)	(17.811)
Children	151.478	(89.316)	62.162	4.423	(4.575)	62.010
People	132.561	(37.403)	95.158	8.582	(6.030)	97.710
ODPH	20.553	(20.861)	(0.308)	0.000	(0.292)	(0.600)
Place	92.162	(64.884)	27.278	3.034	(7.290)	23.022
Chief Executives and Customer and Corporate Services	121.971	(69.403)	52.568	0.000	(3.619)	48.949
	530.508	(332.758)	197.750	41.329	(25.799)	213.280
				Total Resources available		(212.663)
				Budget Shortfall		0.617

BUDGET ENGAGEMENT 2023-24

INTRODUCTION

A public engagement to support the 2023-24 budget setting process took place between Friday 11 November and Sunday 04 December 2022. A questionnaire was developed which asked respondents to give their views on a range of budget savings / income proposals being put forward by the Administration to balance the Council's budget for the 2023-24 fiscal year.

- 307 online questionnaires were completed and entered for analysis.
- 17 emails were received with comments, ideas and suggestions (these were included in the overall analysis).
- In addition, Plymouth's Youth Parliament took part in a face-to-face feedback event on 07 December and an online engagement with business representatives took place on 21 December 2022.

The results of all engagement activity will be considered by the Council's Cabinet and will also be submitted as part of the budget scrutiny process undertaken by Plymouth City Council Members in January 2023.

Some of the proposals in the November Cabinet report were not part of the engagement as work was being carried out to establish if some proposals could be brought forward to also help close the 22/23 funding gap. Where possible, those proposals will be subject to their own relevant statutory consultation and democratic processes.

METHODOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION

A questionnaire was developed which asked respondents to give their views on 67 savings and income generating proposals being put forward by each of the Council's Directorates, including a question regarding the proposed increase of fees and charges associated with some council services. The proposals were grouped to ensure the questionnaire was kept to a reasonable length for respondents and to assist in the analysis of comments. The final question asked respondents to provide suggestions and idea of other ways to make savings or generate income that may not have already been considered. There were 14 questions in total.

The questionnaire was available online through Plymouth City Council's consultation portal and available in other formats upon request.

A communications plan was developed which set out the required materials, branding and opportunities for advertising and promoting the engagement.

The engagement exercise was promoted in the local media and through the Council's own channels; social media, Plymouth Newsroom, resident e-newsletter and direct messaging to stakeholders.

Appendix A of this report provides an overview of how many people responded and the demographics of those respondents.

Comments were analysed separately for each proposal. Some respondents chose to comment on all proposals whereas others opted to comment only on specific areas. Therefore, the number of responses to each proposal varies. Only comments which specifically mentioned or responded to the proposals were included in the analysis.

It should be noted that the number of responses to individual proposals is relatively small therefore the results should be treated with caution, and views outlined in the report may not be representative of the city.

SECTION 1 – FEES AND CHARGES

Question 1 asked respondents to comment on the proposal being put forward in relation to the Council's fees and charges. There are several services that Plymouth City Council provides that are subject to additional charges. Some of the fees and charges are set nationally and cannot change. However, for those fees and charges where a local rate can be set, the Fees and Charges policy allows an annual uplift of fees by the rate of inflation. There is also further flexibility around changing the rates throughout the year.

As the cost of delivering many of our services has increased by up to 20 per cent, the Council's Cabinet agreed on 10 November 2022 that fees and charges should be increased; this includes charges for building control, allotments, venue hire, highway permits and parking.

As the initial increase will not close the funding gap for delivering the services and whilst inflationary pressures continue, the question asked respondents to consider and feedback views on the proposal that a further 10 per cent increase, where practical, be introduced on 01 April 2023.

200 comments were received in relation to increasing the Council's fees and charges and of these, 65 made comments unrelated to the proposal leaving 135 for analysis. 50 were supportive of the proposal to increase fees and charges while 50 were not supportive and 35 were categorised as neutral.

Respondents were generally in favour of charging for garden waste although there were some concerns about an increase in fly tipping. A small number of respondents voiced concerns around increasing fees for allotments and also charging more for city centre parking as this could reduce footfall, these concerns were mainly in respect of the wider cost of living increases. A few respondents suggested targeting any additional increases to avoid additional costs to vulnerable people or to certain services only. Example comments in relation to increasing fees and charges include;

"You need to increase charges in order to keep services going."

"I would rather pay more, than lose vital services."

"Not warranted at this time when so many are struggling. Stop wasting money instead"

"Surely a 30% rise in parking fees will have a major impact on footfall in the town centre and elsewhere, and will encourage parking in residential areas where you cannot yellow line."

Some respondents were of the opinion that the proposal was to increase Council Tax rather than fees and charges – where this was the case the comments were excluded from the analysis as they were not related to the proposal.

SECTION 2 – CHILDREN'S SERVICES

There are three proposals being put forward for Children's Services bridging the gap by £4.575m.

2.1 Proposals 1 - 3

Proposal 1: Work with families to keep more children at home

Proposal 2: Reduce the use of residential care, increase the use of foster care and work to ensure children in care can return to their families or a connected person in their lives

Proposal 3: Review our workforce / organisational structure. Realigning services in Targeted Support and Social Care will reduce the need for agency workers and costs associated with external assessments

Question 2 asked respondents to comment generally or more specifically on the proposals outlined above. 160 responses were received in total to this question:

- 78 were received for proposal 1 - 42 positive, 9 negative and 27 neutral
- 83 were received for proposal 2 - 49 positive, 10 negative and 24 neutral
- 51 were received for proposal 3 - 32 positive, 8 negative and 11 neutral

For **Proposals 1 and 2**, the majority of the neutral or negative comments referred to safeguarding concerns as there were worries that any changes to services could mean that children were left in settings that were unsafe. With **Proposal 2**, several respondents raised concerns over whether there would be sufficient numbers of foster carers and also around the cost of foster care meaning that this proposal could not be realised.

There were very few specific comments for **Proposal 3**, but where respondents did comment, there was general agreement that reducing use of agency staff would be a positive move.

A selection of sample comments include:

“In order to keep children at home with families, the council needs to invest more in more early help and targeted support, such as in Children's Centres and Family Hubs, not reduce this funding. It also needs to adequately remunerate and support foster carers and relatives who care for children, many of whom have additional needs.”

“You need to ensure C&YP are safe, many are not safe at home. Be cautious of being neglectful, this could cost more in the long run as well as costing some child their life. Where will you get the foster carer provision? There's a dire shortage in Plymouth.”

“Provided safety isn't jeopardised then effective savings will have to be made.”

SECTION 3 – PEOPLE DIRECTORATE

There are 12 proposals being put forward for the People Directorate, with savings or income bridging the gap by £5.955m.

3.1 Proposals 1 - 5

Proposal 1: Manage and reduce demand on housing and adult social care

Proposal 2: Review Reablement service

Proposal 3: Review early help provision and children's centres in partnership with Children's Directorate and partners across the city

Proposal 4: Review sports development service and align function to Plymouth Active Leisure

Proposal 5: Review youth services working in partnership with local providers to reduce costs

Question 3 asked respondents to comment generally or more specifically on the proposals outlined above. 150 responses were received in total to this question:

- 41 were received for proposal 1 – 16 positive, 22 negative and 3 neutral
- 26 were received for proposal 2 – 16 positive, 9 negative and 1 neutral
- 31 were received for proposal 3 – 17 positive, 12 negative and 2 neutral

- 40 were received for proposal 4 – 25 positive, 14 negative and 1 neutral
- 30 were received for proposal 5 – 17 positive, 11 negative and 2 neutral

For **Proposals 1, 2 and 3** the majority of comments centred on concerns around service capacity and future demand for services. There were worries that any changes to services could result in increased numbers of people without access to appropriate housing and/or adult social care provision. Where there were positive commentes for proposals 2 and 3, these tended to focus on an appreciation that these decisions were nessecary to reduce the Council’s costs.

On **Proposals 4 and 5**, comments both positive and negative tended to focus on the key role that youth services and sport play in the local community. A large proportion of respondents commented that the lack of detail included in these proposals hampered their ability to provide a response.

A selection of sample comments include:

“I agree to all five reviews with a definite view to cutting costs in the proposal number four”

“None of these will work either because there are insufficient services already...”

“...Think long term and [about] the welfare of the people in order to create a better person with healthier mental health that will be successful in the future.”

“Proposals 1-5 seem to produce as saving and seem reasonable.”

3.2 Proposals 6 - 11

Proposal 6: Transfer funding for health and wellbeing hubs to Public Health

Proposal 7: Maximise grants to support wellbeing services

Proposal 8: Review contracts to deliver efficiencies

Proposal 9: Maximise Disabled Facilities Grant

Proposal 10: Develop a new operating model across the directorate

Proposal 11: Use reserve to support range of children’s services

Question 4 asked respondents to comment generally or more specifically on the proposals outlined above. 58 responses were received in total to this question:

- 21 were received for proposal 6 – 16 positive, 3 negative and 2 neutral
- 21 were received for proposal 7 – 17 positive, 2 negative and 2 neutral
- 24 were received for proposal 8 – 17 positive, 5 negative and 2 neutral
- 25 were received for proposal 9 – 19 positive, 2 negative and 4 neutral
- 22 were received for proposal 10 – 18 positive, 2 negative and 2 neutral
- 24 were received for proposal 11 – 19 positive, 3 negative and 2 neutral

There were very few comments made specifically about **Proposal 6**. Where comments were made, they tended to be positive and cite the reasonable nature of the proposals. For **Proposals 7, 8 and 9** comments were broadly positive and respondents expressed that they were keen for the Council to maximise its income. Where respondents did comment on **Proposal 11**, these tended to be cautiously positive though some respondents queried the sustainability of the approach.

A selection of sample comments include:

“...these seem appropriate.”

“Yes, need to maximise other income and also use it to cover gaps.”

“Maximising grants and reviewing contracts are logical steps to achieving cost savings. Using the reserve should be a last resort as it can just delay difficult future decisions for a limited period of time.”

3.3 Proposal 12

Proposal 12: Reduce Council subsidy associated with leisure facilities:

- **12A Tinside Lido:** Broaden offer including new events
- **12B Plympton Pool:** Review operating costs and income
- **12C Mount Wise Pools:** Implement entry charge to contribute to costs of running
- **12D Brickfields:** Develop community sports and wellbeing hub with partners

Question 5 asked respondents to comment generally or more specifically on the proposals outlined above. 62 responses were received in total to this question:

- 30 were received for proposal 12A – 24 positive, 4 negative and 2 neutral
- 37 were received for proposal 12B – 26 positive, 8 negative and 3 neutral
- 43 were received for proposal 12C – 28 positive, 11 negative and 4 neutral
- 28 were received for proposal 12D – 24 positive, 3 negative and 1 neutral

For **Proposal 12**, respondents tended to be positive. They focused on the important role that swimming pools play in supporting people to have healthy lifestyles. Numerous respondents commented that they would be prepared to pay more to access facilities if they were better maintained. Others commented that in the current economic climate, any increases in fees may discourage use and push these facilities out of reach for some residents. Several comments were made in support of broadening the offer at Tinside and, the importance of partnership working.

A selection of sample comments include:

“Sports facilities need to be kept. Plympton pool is an important part of the community, and I personally would be prepared to pay more to keep it.”

“Sports are essential for wellbeing. These should not be cut. The Hoe and Mt Wise, which are in full view of visitors to the city, need to be maintained to a high standard.”

“I would support this in theory as long as any price increases passed onto users are proportionate and don't preclude people from being able to access leisure facilities.”

SECTION 4 - CUSTOMER AND CORPORATE SERVICES/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

There are 22 proposals being put forward for Customer and Corporate Services and the Chief Executive Office, with savings or income bridging the gap by £3.543m.

4.1 Proposals 1 – 3

Proposal 1: Review Contact Centres/Customer Services operating within the Council to look at broader efficiencies, bringing services together and focusing on those who are not able to use digital services and the most vulnerable communities we serve

Proposal 2: Reduce purchasing of library books as ebook loans are increasing

Proposal 3: Swap revenue budget funding for Community Grants programme with capital funding which is available

Question 6 asked respondents to comment generally or more specifically on the proposals outlined above. 127 comments were received in total to this question, and of these, 25 made comments unrelated to the proposals leaving 102 for analysis.

- 70 were received for proposal 1 – 45 positive, 5 negative and 20 neutral
- 78 were received for proposal 2 – 43 positive, 16 negative and 19 neutral
- 47 were received for proposal 3 – 39 positive, 2 negative and 6 neutral

Of those respondents who provided a comment for **Proposal 1**, where these were positive many also cited the need to seek efficiencies and cut costs. However, there were a number of comments that also stressed the importance of focusing on supporting older people and those who are not able to use digital services. The majority of the neutral or negative comments referred to the need for continued face to face and telephone contact or extending contact hours.

A selection of sample comments include:

“Contact should be with a person only, no bots/message/chats”.

“Totally agree with this proposal. I feel that the older generation still need that extra support.”

“The elderly and those digitally not connected or needing extra support need face to face. Offering a limited service ie short hours a couple of times a week would enable access for all in the contact centre. Perhaps change it to Ballard House if not wanting to maintain the current contact centre so maximising use of space/time”.

“Very important to always focus on those who are digitally excluded for whatever reason. A civilised, trauma informed city does not leave its most vulnerable people behind in quest for 'efficiencies' or 'progress’”.

Of those respondents who provided a specific response to **Proposal 2**, over half were in support, while the most of neutral and negative comments raised concerns that not everyone has access to computers / e-readers, in particular older people. **Proposal 2** also gave rise to a number of comments relating to the provision or reduction of library services more generally. These comments will be forwarded to the relevant department for consideration if the proposal to consult residents on how the Council re-provides its Library Service is agreed.

A selection of sample comments include:

“2. Would seem sensible to reduce number of books with increased use of e books, maybe supporting people to purchase and use kindles?”

“Library books are quite old fashioned nowadays”.

“While I and many like me read digital books the importance of libraries and library books for the elderly or lonely cannot be overstated”.

“These need to be carefully reviewed as not everyone has access to computers / e-readers etc. Libraries are part of the community and cannot be replaced digitally”.

Of those respondents who commented on **Proposal 3** the majority were in favour of the proposal. Those who did not agree or were neutral cited concerns around whether this capital funding would be to similar levels and cover the same scope. Several respondents felt that they were unable to comment on this proposal.

A selection of sample comments include:

“Please keep Community Grants - local communities see tangible benefits - getting capital funding seems sensible as long as it doesn't reduce the scope”.

“With regards to proposal 3 - this is a good idea, however is this funding the similar / above / less - things already don't work well in Plymouth will this change make it better or worse”.

4.2 Proposals 4 - 9

Proposal 4: Share policy and performance functions across the Council

Proposal 5: Bring together marketing, design and communications functions across the Council

Proposal 6: Reduce external legal advice

Proposal 7: Review Lord Mayor's events and streamline resources

Proposal 8: Review senior management resource across the Council

Proposal 9: One-off proposal to freeze the Head of Policy and Regional Partnerships role for 2023/24

Question 7 asked respondents to comment generally or more specifically on the proposals outlined above. 72 comments were received in total to this question, and of these, 14 made comments unrelated to the proposals leaving 58 for analysis.

- 33 were received for proposal 4 – 33 positive, 0 negative and 0 neutral
- 35 were received for proposal 5 – 33 positive, 0 negative and 2 neutral
- 37 were received for proposal 6 – 33 positive, 0 negative and 4 neutral
- 43 were received for proposal 7 – 42 positive, 1 negative and 0 neutral
- 46 were received for proposal 8 – 46 positive, 0 negative and 0 neutral
- 32 were received for proposal 9 – 31 positive, 0 negative and 1 neutral

Those respondents who commented on **Proposals 4 - 9** provided mainly positive responses.

Proposals 7 and 8 received the most responses citing high levels of support. On **Proposal 7** some respondents went further suggesting reviewing the necessity for a Lord Mayor. On **Proposal 12** comments emphasised the need to review or reduce senior management and, in some cases, middle management, including reviewing senior management salaries and benefits.

A selection of sample comments include:

“Most of these proposals are efficiency savings, which I agree with”.

“All similar functions across the council should be brought together to reduce unnecessary costs and duplication.”

“Drastically reduce senior management and can we get rid of the Lord Mayor completely, what is the point in the 21st century”.

“I am pleased to see this proposal listed. Too often organisations fail to fully include senior management in staffing resources reviews”.

“I'm very much in favour of Proposal 6 (reducing external legal advice) except where absolutely necessary. The legal officers on the strength of the council should be dealing with all but very few issues. Other proposals certainly worthy of consideration.”

4.3 Proposals 10 – 14

Proposal 10: Improve processes and implement automation technology to reduce manual work in Business Support

Proposal 11: Consult residents on how the Council re-provides its Library Service alongside a review of other community buildings and services

Proposal 12: Introduce a plan to save money on IT as part of review of how services are best delivered across the Council

Proposal 13: Freeze vacancies from transformation and digital teams and identify funding sources

Proposal 14: Reduce spending on agency staff used in managing Council buildings

Question 8 asked respondents to comment generally or more specifically on the proposals outlined above. 74 comments were received in total to this question, and of these, 13 made comments unrelated to the proposals leaving 61 for analysis.

- 32 were received for proposal 10 – 27 positive, 2 negative and 3 neutral
- 39 were received for proposal 11 – 31 positive, 1 negative and 7 neutral
- 33 were received for proposal 12 – 28 positive, 0 negative and 5 neutral
- 32 were received for proposal 13 – 27 positive, 2 negative and 4 neutral
- 27 were received for proposal 14 – 26 positive, 0 negative and 1 neutral

Those respondents who commented on **Proposals 10 - 14** provided mainly positive responses. However, while some respondents to **Proposal 11** commented that they agreed with consulting residents on how the Council re-provides its library services, the proposal also gave rise to a number of comments relating to the provision or reduction of library services more generally and some respondents chose this question to make the case for either closing or keeping library services. These comments will be forwarded to the relevant department for consideration if **Proposal 11** is agreed and taken forward.

Several respondents commented on the interdependencies between **Proposals 10, 12 and 13** in terms of the impact of freezing transformation and digital vacancies and implementing plans to make IT savings whilst at the same time proposing to improve processes and implement automation technology.

While responses to **Proposal 14** were mainly positive, the comments suggest that in many cases respondents were agreeing with reducing agency staff across the whole Council rather than specifically in relation to agency staff managing council buildings.

A selection of sample comments include:

“These proposals appear generally sensible. Use of IT/automation technology is likely to be essential to achieve greater efficiencies...”

“Seems reasonable to review these - glad any proposed changes to library services would have a consultation.”

“Consulting residents on how the Council re-provides its Library Service alongside a review of other community buildings and services is a very good point, they should be considered in every way necessary.”

“Freezing the digital vacancies at the same time as increasing automation seems like a mistake. But digital and automated solutions instead of business support is appropriate - recently applying for parking permits felt very manual. Too much free text on forms makes for lots of manual processing!”

“All of the above (10 -14). With specific focus on reducing agency staff across ALL council departments.”

4.4 Proposals 15 – 22

Proposal 15: Adjust security provision in Council buildings

Proposal 16: Reduce posts within the Human Resources Organisational Development (HROD) service

Proposal 17: Review learning and development spend across the Council

Proposal 18: Review of audit requirements from the Devon Audit Partnership

Proposal 19: Review budget for the Finance team

Proposal 20: Reduce external financial advice

Proposal 21: Vacate Windsor House earlier than planned

Proposal 22: Accelerate transfer of Children, Young People and Families service from Midland House and sell the building

Question 9 asked respondents to comment generally or more specifically on the proposals outlined above. 66 comments were received in total to this question, and of these, 9 made comments unrelated to the proposals leaving 47 for analysis.

- 25 were received for proposal 15 – 24 positive, 1 negative and 4 neutral
- 32 were received for proposal 16 – 26 positive, 3 negative and 3 neutral
- 30 were received for proposal 17 – 25 positive, 3 negative and 2 neutral
- 27 were received for proposal 18 – 26 positive, 0 negative and 1 neutral
- 28 were received for proposal 19 – 27 positive, 1 negative and 0 neutral
- 32 were received for proposal 20 – 30 positive, 0 negative and 2 neutral
- 37 were received for proposal 21 – 34 positive, 0 negative and 3 neutral
- 33 were received for proposal 22 – 29 positive, 2 negative and 3 neutral

Those respondents who provided a comment on **Proposals 15 - 22** gave mainly positive responses. Some of the responses to **Proposals 15, 16 and 18** cited the need to ensure a risk based approach is taken for any changes or reduction in these areas. Those respondents who disagreed with **Proposal 22** cited that children and families should be the priority for the council.

A selection of sample comments include:

‘I agree to all but one proposal. Re proposal 22, children, young people and families must be given 100% support and their welfare given total priority.’

“These proposals seem sensible.”

“Sell off unneeded buildings. Provide security for less buildings but of the correct nature.”

“15&16: Reducing and adjusting spending on security and HR will again be a short sighted vision that may end up costing PCC (Plymouth City Council) more. What happens if an employee is assaulted at work and the lack of security contributed to it? What happens when a serious matter needs to be addressed by HR but the demand on them is so great they all leave and you can't recruit into post?”

“Proposal 20, Why get expensive external advice when the in-house teams are perfectly capable of making these decisions. Proposal 21, very good idea, can the premises not be rented out to generate more income for the council?”

In general, of those respondents who provided a comment to the proposals under the Customer and Corporate Services / Chief Executive’s section, there was broad agreement with the proposals relating to back office support functions and the use of buildings and accommodation.

SECTION 5 – PLACE DIRECTORATE

There are 29 proposals being put forward for the Place Directorate, with savings or income bridging the gap by £4.82m.

5.1 Proposals 1 – 8

Proposal 1: Reduce concessionary fares budget - release underspends in this budget assessed against historic trends

Proposal 2: Consider and consult upon the implementation of charges at Park and Ride sites to support the non-commercial bus routes and contribute to savings already identified in the separate Cabinet report agreed on 10 November 2022

Proposal 3: Generate savings and income from the commercial estate (lease renewals, re-gearing and new income)

Proposal 4: Capitalisation of Strategic Project Team costs

Proposal 5: Review costs of the economic development team through capitalisation of costs, efficiencies, income and sponsorship targets

Proposal 6: Secure new and additional income and grants from cultural trusts and foundations

Proposal 7: Ensure Tourist Information Centre is cost neutral

Proposal 8: Seek sponsor for Bonfire Night on The Hoe or stop the event

Question 10 asked respondents to comment generally or more specifically on the proposals outlined above. 139 responses were received to this section in total. Most of the feedback in this section related to proposals 1, 2 and 8 so analysis was concentrated on these proposals.

29 responses were received to **Proposal 1** with the majority (24) being in favour. Three were negative and two were neutral. Several respondents were not clear that this proposal was to release the overspend rather than reduce or remove concessionary fares themselves and commented more generally on which fares should remain concessionary. Any comments not directly related to the proposal itself were excluded from the analysis.

54 responses were received to **Proposal 2** with 31 being positive, 20 negative and 3 neutral. Whilst many respondents felt that a small charge was broadly acceptable, a few respondents raised concerns that residents may not be able to afford additional charges or that any charge would increase the number of people travelling by car into the city centre.

“Increased charges for parking etc will disproportionately affect the poorest in the community trying to remain independent.”

“I agree with this proposal, as it is vital to provide funding for the non-commercial bus routes to avoid communities being cut off. It is fair to spread the cost between the many hundreds of Park and Ride users.”

“Making a small charge for Park and Ride seems sensible to support other bus services, but you need to make sure it's actually cheaper than driving into the city centre, even for more passengers.”

83 responses were received to **Proposal 8**. The majority (73) were positive with 4 negative and 6 neutral. There appears to be strong support for seeking sponsorship or cancelling Bonfire Night on The Hoe. Those who supported the proposal were either not in favour of the event (i.e.. consider it noisy, disruptive or not good for the environment) or believed the council should not be funding an event such as this when services are being cut elsewhere.

“Stop the bonfire night save the money and give wildlife and animals a break.”

“Agree re proposal 8 - cancel - unsustainable in the present climate.”

“Stopping the fireworks will only encourage people to run their own firework display which is bound to increase injuries and lead to possible conflict in areas. It's much safer on the Hoe.”

5.2 Proposals 9 – 15

Proposal 9: Review of community transport provision including release of bike hire underspend, consideration of funding underspends, the optimisation of services and identifying alternative funding models

Proposal 10: Withdraw from Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership

Proposal 11: Withdraw from South Hams/Plymouth Urban Fringe Team

Proposal 12: Reduce/re-align financial contributions to environment/marine bodies

Proposal 13: Increase allotment fees

Proposal 14: Undertake a full-service re-structure of Strategic Planning and Infrastructure

Proposal 15: Annual increase in parking fees and identify new forms of income (subject to consultation as required), in addition to those savings already identified in the separate Cabinet report agreed on 10 November 2022

Question 11 asked respondents to comment generally or more specifically on the proposals outlined above. 87 responses were received to this section overall. The majority of feedback in this section related to proposals 13 and 15 therefore analysis was concentrated on these proposals.

40 responses were received to **Proposal 13** with 18 being positive, 19 being negative and 3 neutral. Those in favour of this proposal only indicated their agreement and no detailed comments were made. Of those against the increase in allotment fees, there were concerns that this was an unfair increase and could potentially have a negative impact on health and cost of living pressures for those that use the allotments. This view was mirrored in the fees and charges section.

“13. Disagree. Gardening improves health and provides healthy low-cost veggies for people without gardens.”

“Proposal 13 yes definitely raise fees.”

“Is there any impact assessment of increasing allotment fees? These are hugely important to many people in providing food and in health & wellbeing. Would not want to see people being priced out.”

47 responses were received to **Proposal 15** with 17 being positive, 22 negative and 8 neutral. Where respondents indicated support for this proposal, very few specific comments were made. Those not in favour raised concerns about the cost being unaffordable with the current cost of living pressures. A few respondents also raised concerns that this will reduce footfall in the city centre and have a negative impact on local businesses.

“Proposal 15: obviously required, but there is a need to ensure it is comparable to similar cities/towns in the southwest. Too high increases are very likely to be detrimental to many businesses in Plymouth.”

“If you increase parking charges, this will reduce city centre footfall. Provide an alternative to the car i.e., cheap, clean & frequent public transport.”

“Plymouth city centre will just die if you increase parking charges. Businesses will close and you will lose business rates. Many more people will go to out-of-town shopping centres or order online.”

“Agree proposal 15 as long as increase is fair and reasonable.”

5.3 Proposals 16 – 21

Proposal 16: Highways engineering client fees through capitalisation of back-office support

Proposal 17: Re-profile highways maintenance in areas such as white-lining, gully work, barriers and ironworks as well as rationalise staffing and seek capitalisation of back-office costs

Proposal 18: Make route optimisation savings in refuse collection service

Proposal 19: Increase fees and charges in Street Services in line with fees and charges policy – areas include commercial, trade and bulky waste, MOTs, marine, playing pitches and beach huts

Proposal 20: Strategic contract optimisation

Proposal 21: Introduce new Chelson Meadow solar farm to generate savings (post feasibility works)

Question 12 asked respondents to comment generally or more specifically on the proposals outlined above. 77 responses were received to this section overall. The majority of feedback in this section related to proposals 17, 18, 19 and 21 therefore analysis was concentrated on these proposals. Several

respondents commented that they did not know enough or there was not enough information for them to form an opinion.

25 responses were received for **Proposal 17** with 17 being positive, 4 negative and 4 neutral. No themes emerged strongly from the comments, only general support for the proposal.

22 responses were received for **Proposal 18** with the majority (19) being positive, 1 negative and 2 neutral. No specific themes emerged from the feedback received.

27 responses were received to **Proposal 19** with 18 being positive, 3 negative and 6 neutral. The few respondents not in favour of the proposal were generally concerned about increases in waste charges and the potential for an increase in fly tipping. Also, a couple of respondents were not in favour of the increase in charges for playing pitches.

“Proposals seem ok generally but re. 19, beware unintended consequences - increase in waste charges will lead to more fly tipping, increases in charges for playing pitches may reduce demand, health etc.”

“Proposal 19 needs to be thought through carefully for waste so that it does not cause an increase in fly-tipping.”

“Would not want to see increases to fees in playing pitches without impacts on those who use them being fully assessed. These are an important source of community cohesion, health and wellbeing etc.”

41 responses were received to **Proposal 21** with the majority (36) being positive, 2 negative and 3 neutral.

“The solar farm is an excellent idea. Can this be done anywhere else?”

“Yes! Chelson Meadow solar farm! Wind, wave and solar community projects? Help Plymouth to become more self-sufficient and benefit from the unique location we are in. Encouraging people to look after their city and themselves will reduce costs.”

“Agree with all of the above, although I'd question the actual capital expenditure on the solar farm. Is this a project that could be delayed, and the funds better used elsewhere for now?”

5.4 Proposals 22 - 29

Proposal 22: In line with national government policy, create a habitat banking scheme to generate income from developments to improve biodiversity and offset environmental impact

Proposal 23: Maximise nature-based solutions to create additional income

Proposal 24: One off saving – reduce foreshore reserve

Proposal 25: One off saving – reduce Park and Ride reserve

Proposal 26: One off saving – reduce bad debt provision

Proposal 27: One off saving – Strategic Project Team licence fee

Proposal 28: Utilise funding allocated for food waste collection service pending Government guidance on next steps for introduction

Proposal 29: Recovery of owed land receipts

Question 13 asked respondents to comment generally or more specifically on the proposals outlined above. 49 responses were received to this section overall. The majority of feedback in this section related to proposals 22 and 28 therefore analysis was concentrated on these proposals. A number of respondents to this section commented that they did not know enough or there was not enough information for them to form an opinion.

22 responses were received to **Proposal 22** with 20 being positive and 2 being neutral and requesting more information.

“Anything encouraging more sustainable development should be implemented as a good investment in our future (22 and 23). If this saves us money, then even better!”

“Yes, maximise nature-based solutions. Is there additional funding/sponsorship for projects which protect the environment?”

18 responses were received to **Proposal 28** with the majority (16) being positive and 2 negative.

“Agree we are the only area that does not undertake food waste. But only if cost effective and costs are made back.”

“On 28, food waste collection, there should be ways to offer this cost neutral, through sale of composted material or partnership working.”

No strong themes emerged from the comments to either proposal.

SECTION 6 – FURTHER IDEAS/SUGGESTIONS

Question 14 asked participants to give any further ideas to help generate savings or increase income to the council. Of the 307 respondents, 223 took this opportunity to provide further comment. Half of respondents suggested savings, a quarter suggested ideas for income generation and a quarter had other suggestions.

Generate Savings (113 respondents)

Within the suggestions put forward for generating savings, 3 main themes emerged:

- Taking management actions such as reviewing staff numbers, working more efficiently and reviewing employee benefits
- Reducing current service provision
- Ceasing the regeneration of the city

The most common responses to generate savings centred on management actions such as reviewing staff numbers, working more efficiently and reviewing employee benefits. This included reducing both the number of Councillors and the number of elections and the reduction of senior management and staff salaries (37). This was very closely followed (35) by suggestions that the Council and its staff should work more efficiently both in its systems and workforce. This ranged from the way in which services are commissioned to getting staff back into the office. In terms of reducing current service provision theme, this included comments about withdrawing from the Devon & Cornwall Rail Partnership, cutting bus provision, turning off streetlights at night and closing libraries.

Increase Income (56 respondents)

Within the suggestions proposed for increasing income, 5 main themes emerged:

- Utilise Council assets/services to generate income
- Introduce and increase fees and charges
- Ask central Government for more money
- Find corporate funding for events/put on more events
- Better use of enforcement

Of these, the most popular theme of ‘utilise Council assets/services to generate income’ generated 22 comments. These ranged from the use of ‘Crowd Funding’ and considering a Council lottery to

introducing car parking charges at Park and Ride sites, Mount Batten, Jennycliff and Devil's Point. Also suggested was the selling off parcels of land and advertising on the side of refuse trucks. The next most common theme was 'introduce and/or increase fees and charges', which generated 15 comments. The comments ranged from 'introducing a congestion charge for motorists' to 'asking students to pay council tax', and from 'charging for visits to the Box' and 'asking passengers to contribute towards their concessionary bus journeys'.

'Other' suggestions (54)

Within the "Other" suggestions, comments were themed into 3 main areas:

- Comments that were likely to be a complaint, in particular about Armada Way
- Not an actual savings or income proposal
- Already doing these proposals

Many of the comments were specifically complaining about the regeneration of Armada Way or a specific topic. In relation to suggestions that were neither income nor savings related, these tended to be comments or statements covering a wide range of issues including comments about keeping services running.

SECTION 8 - YOUTH PARLIAMENT ENGAGEMENT

A budget engagement event on the 07 December 2022 with Plymouth's Youth Parliament explored the current situation and the savings and income options proposed. Young people were offered the opportunity to put forward suggestions for alternative savings and potential income generation and a wide range of topics were discussed, from the electrification of fleet vehicles to bringing back commissioned services into Council control. Some of the group had already responded to the online budget engagement. Some specific feedback from the session included:

- Acknowledgement that cuts do consider the environment – but concerned how that continues to be a focus when the Council has such a big deficit. Reminder that the Council is committed to the green agenda.
- Could the Council consider re-buying businesses that they have previously sold off to generate some income. The example used was whether the Council could buy back contracts from bus companies (such as Stagecoach and CityBus) to help generate money from (some) bus routes.
- Acknowledge that some services are statutory and need to be maintained/continued but asked how this can be balanced?
- When looking at cuts to social care there was an acknowledgement that some services have to continue – young people get a sense staff are leaving Council due to not being valued and/or recognised for the work they do. How can we ensure this is done?
- Agree need to replace agency staff with Council employees because costs of agency staffing are too high and causing a lot of the issues – need to look at workforce we have, skills and availability and role they undertake.
- Long term care and residential placements are not great, and their cost is an issue. How can the Council ensure value for money and best care for those young people?

SECTION 9 – BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

A meeting was held on 21 December 2022 with several of the City's key business group representatives.

Groups and organisations represented include:

- Devon and Plymouth Chamber

- Destination Plymouth
- Plymouth Growth Board
- Plymouth Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)
- Plymouth Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)
- Plymouth Social Enterprise Network

The budget issues were outlined and, with recognition of these, representatives shared their thinking on the way forward regarding economic development in the city. This was well received, and the Chair of the FSB wrote to Plymouth City Council in response to this session to recognise the achievements of the Economic Development Team to date, despite some of the challenges currently being faced.

Appendix – Demographic Breakdown

Online questionnaires submitted	307
Additional comments via email	17
Total	324

The following demographic information has been compiled from the total number of questionnaires analysed (307).

Age

Age	Number	%
25 - 34 yrs.	20	6.5%
35 - 44 yrs.	29	9.4%
45 - 54 yrs.	52	16.9%
55 - 64 yrs.	73	23.8%
65 - 74 yrs.	74	24.1%
75 - 84 yrs.	32	10.4%
85 or over	2	0.7%
Prefer not to say	13	4.2%
(blank)	12	3.9%
Total	307	100.0%

Sex

Sex	Number	%
Female	93	30.3%
Male	74	24.1%
Prefer not to say	22	7.2%
(blank)	118	38.4%
Total	307	100.0%

Gender identity – same as the sex registered at birth

Gender ID	Number	%
No	1	0.3%
Prefer not to say	23	7.5%
Yes	164	53.4%
(blank)	119	38.8%
Total	307	100.0%

Disability – day to day activities

Disability	Number	%
No	107	34.9%
Prefer not to say	21	6.8%
Yes, limited a little	36	11.7%
Yes, limited a lot	24	7.8%
(blank)	119	38.8%
Total	307	100.0%

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Number	%
Asian or Asian British	2	0.7%
Different ethnic group	2	0.7%
White	171	55.7%
(blank)	132	43.0%
Total	307	100.0%

Veterans - previously served in the UK Armed Forces

Veterans	Number	%
No	135	44.0%
Prefer not to say	21	6.8%
Yes	19	6.2%
(blank)	132	43.0%
Total	307	100.0%