

Plymouth City Council

Scrutiny Annual Report

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Foreword

This year has been a challenging year for Overview and Scrutiny, having to respond to the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic alongside the impact of the Ukraine war and the Cost of Living Crisis upon the City.

In response to feedback from last year we changed our approach to the Leader and Cabinet's Budget development for 2023/2024 and I am pleased our recommendations had a direct impact on the final budget proposals agreed by the Council. In addition to the budget, the scrutiny function has investigated a number of issues and I believe has made a notable difference in some areas of decision making at the council.

Following the Local Government Association Peer Review process which recommended an external review of our scrutiny function, the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny was commissioned to undertake a review of the scrutiny function. The Scrutiny Management Board will put forward a series of recommendations for consideration through the relevant governance processes in the new municipal year to address their findings.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has played a part in contributing towards the work of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Select Committees.

This report gives details of the work which has been undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny over the course of the 2022/2023 Municipal Year.

Councillor Chris Penberthy

Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

Key information about Overview and Scrutiny

The operation of overview and scrutiny

- I.1. Councillor Penberthy has chaired the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board since May 2022 in addition to chairing the Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Three other Committees complete the scrutiny function, these are -
- Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee chaired by Councillor Jemima Laing
 - Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee chaired by Councillor Mary Aspinall
 - Growth and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee chaired by Councillor John Riley.
- I.2. Committees meet regularly and are underpinned by a system of Select Committees which are single item focused.
- I.3. Residents and stakeholders can get involved by:
- Attending public meetings;
 - Giving evidence to one of the Panels or Boards; and
 - Sending in comments about a review.

Scrutiny's Role

- I.4. The aims of the Overview and Scrutiny process are to-
- add value to Council business and decision-making;
 - hold the Cabinet to account;
 - monitor the budget and performance of services;
 - assist the Council in the development of policy and review the effectiveness of the implementation of Council policy;
 - review relevant central government policy development and legislation to assess the impact on the City and make recommendations to Cabinet¹.

Meetings

- Are open to the public to attend.
- Typically last 2-3 hours.
- Meet regularly (during the daytime and evenings).
- Have a formal structure, but are run in an accessible way.
- Papers are published on the Council's website.

¹ Part D of the [Constitution](#)

Snapshot of scrutiny development in 2022/2023

Focusing on the issues which matter

- 2.1. The Performance Finance and Customer Focus Committee has continued to receive regular reports on the Council's revenue and capital budgets, culminating in a select committee review in January 2023. The committee has also regularly reviewed the bereavement service and the leisure contract throughout the course of this municipal year.
- 2.2. The Education and Children's Social Care Committee closely monitored the performance of Children's Services both in terms of outcomes for children and the costs of the service and have received briefings on the outcome of an Ofsted focused visit.
- 2.3. The Health and Adult Social Care Committee continued to undertake its health scrutiny duty in the context of the NHS pressures, providing oversight of health services in Plymouth and clinical services across the peninsula.
- 2.4. The Growth and Infrastructure committee has remained focused on the Climate Action Plan, the city's cultural offer and regeneration taking place across the city.
- 2.5. A full list of the topics considered by scrutiny are available at appendix I.

Complementing the work of the Cabinet

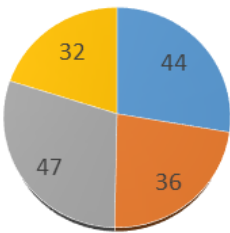
- 2.6. The Overview and Scrutiny Board continue to seek to complement the work of the Cabinet and has received positive engagement, particularly over the budget setting process.

Pre-Briefings and Work Planning

- 2.7. Monthly briefings have enabled better member engagement and more focussed debate and key lines of questioning. We are thankful to the Members and Officers that have taken part in briefings on –
 - The new Integrated Care Bodies charged with the delivery of healthcare across our city.
 - West End Health Hub.
 - Corporate Parenting.
 - Domestic Abuse.
 - Site visit to the Crematorium.
 - Habitat Banking Vehicle and Chelson Meadow Solar Farm.
 - Thrive Plymouth and Community Empowerment Training.
 - Performance Management Framework

Overview and Scrutiny in Numbers 2023/2024

Reports

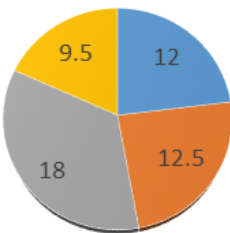


- Education and Childrens Social Care
- Health and Adult Social Care
- Performance, Finance and Customer Focus
- Growth and Infrastructure

In total 159 reports have been provided to scrutiny from Council Officers and Partners.

Members have spent 52 hours at Scrutiny Business meetings, including call-in, with an additional working week spent in Select Committee reviews.

Hours



- Education and Childrens Social Care
- Health and Adult Social Care
- Performance, Finance and Customer Focus
- Growth and Infrastructure

Snapshot of some Key Achievements 2022/2023

Budget Scrutiny

- 4.1. The Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge, which was reported to the Cabinet in July 2022, made recommendations concerning the scrutiny of the budget –

Continue to embed rigour and transparency in budget setting and monitoring – both revenue and capital – to ensure that financial challenges and risk are consistently understood and mitigation across the organisation.

- 4.2. The scrutiny response to this recommendation was to review the Budget Scrutiny Process.
- 4.3. As a result the budget scrutiny process was amended in order to focus on the portfolio of individual cabinet members, rather than a departmental focus.
- 4.4. In January 2023 the Budget Scrutiny process was undertaken over three days by a proportional panel with representation from all political parties.
- 4.5. Members were provided with significantly more information that has previously been provided, including budgets at service delivery level. Members also considered risk, performance and audit recommendations as part of the process.
- 4.6. Initial feedback from members was that the budget process was much improved from previous years, discussion was positive and valuable with respectful, constructive criticism shared with Cabinet Members.
- 4.7. All of the recommendations from Scrutiny were accepted by Cabinet when considered in January 2023, and amendments have been made to the budget reports as a direct result of the scrutiny process.

Bereavement Services

- 4.8. The new Plymouth Crematorium will provide the citizens of Plymouth with a new, purpose built crematorium with associated facilities off Haye Road, Plympton. Investment will deliver quality facilities that meet 21st century customer expectations and capacity to meet future demands.
- 4.9. This project will be the most important change to the Council's bereavement services in a generation and therefore it was deemed a significant scrutiny input was required. Members considered –
- Funding mechanisms for the project
 - Tender specification
 - Impact of inflation
 - Project risks
 - Contingency Planning
- 4.10. Members agreed to recommend that:
- Cabinet were encouraged to act swiftly in signing a design and build contract for the construction of the Crematorium works;

- an updated business case for the Crematorium project was submitted to the Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be discussed under part 2;
- a governance board was established by Cabinet with cross party membership as a matter of urgency for the Crematoria project.

4.11. All of the recommendations were welcomed and actioned by the Cabinet.

School Uniform – presented by Plymouth’s Youth Parliament

4.12. The Education and Children’s Social Care Scrutiny Committee invited Scarlet, who was elected to the youth parliament, to provide view from Plymouth’s young people on school uniform policy and highlighted the following key points:

- Pupils had commented that schools had been too strict with their dress code and a more relaxed approach would suit most pupils;
- Scarlett’s campaign showed what schools could do to change their policies in order to allow more freedom with their uniforms. If implemented this would improve mental health of students across the city;
- Scarlett’s campaign had 24 responses from teachers stating that they had heard the issues raised and how their responses would be implemented at the schools;
- There were concerns about the cost of living crisis and how this had been affecting families. The campaign had been attempting to raise awareness of the school uniform shop and would be encouraging families to donate school uniforms.

4.13. Following discussion at the committee and a motion on notice at Council the Cabinet Member provided a response as recommended.

The Box and British Art Show

4.14. The Box opened on 29 September 2020 and had celebrated its second anniversary. Since its opening The Box had received over 350,000 visitors, despite the venue being closed due to COVID19 pandemic measures between 31 December 2020 to mid-May 2021.

4.15. The investment in The Box had been significant and the project was hugely ambitious supported by several funders including the Arts Council of England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

4.16. The update report to the Growth and Infrastructure Committee allowed members to ask questions in relation to –

- Awards won and submissions made
- Footfall
- Income revenue – including gift shop, café concession and venue hire
- Ambassador programme
- British Art Show

4.17. There was also significant discussion on the accessibility of The Box to school children across the city. The committee recommended that a report was to be provided on schools (by ward) that had been engaged with, so that Councillors could consider using their Community Grant funds to

assist local schools that might not have engaged due to funding for transport. This was provided to members within 14 days of the meeting.

West End Health Hub

- 4.18. The plan for the hub is for a three-storey building in Colin Campbell Court, located in a ward with the highest levels of health inequalities and deprivation in Plymouth. The intention is to house GPs as well outpatient services provided by University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust including diagnostics and x-ray and community services delivered by Livewell SouthWest such as mental health, community health and wellbeing services alongside a pharmacy, community kitchen and dining area, café and bookable interview and meeting voluntary sector rooms.
- 4.19. The delivery of the Health Hub has been a major concern for the Health and Adult Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Not only as it would improve access to a suite of health services but it would also have improved access to dentistry services which are desperately needed in the city.
- 4.20. The committee has challenged NHS Devon on the delivery of the scheme. At a meeting held on the 16 November 2022 the committee was informed that –
- Plymouth's planned West End Hub formed part of the national Cavell programme.
 - Plymouth was one of the largest and most advanced of the 6 pilot projects.
 - The National Cavell Board had been informed that there was no capital funding available within the current spending review.
 - A full business case was awaiting approval from the Devon Integrated Care Board, and NHS South West region. Initial responses had indicated that the business case met all criteria, except the acquisition of funding.
 - Significant resources had already been committed to the project, including the demolition of buildings and clearance of land. The Committee questioned the organisation and communication surrounding the project, which had not previously featured doubt of completion.
- 4.21. The Committee expressed significant disappointment that funding for the project had not been allocated, despite several assurances this was a NHS flagship programme. The committee –
- reaffirmed its strong support for the West End Health Hub project, part of the national Cavell Centre Programme and recommended that the ICB should consider funding the project through their capital programme unless this risks the maintenance of critical health infrastructure.
 - That at a future meeting of the committee, the ICB reports on the use of capital funding in Plymouth.
- 4.22. The committee further reviewed this project in March 2023 and was let down and angered to learn that capital funding from NHS Devon would not be made available to complete the project despite the strong business case and significant need for the population. A series of recommendations have been made and are included in the digest of key recommendations at appendix ii.

Risk Management

- 4.23. In line with recommendations at the Audit and Governance Committee, Scrutiny Committees have maintained a regular overview of key risks facing the city council at every business meeting.
- 4.24. This has ensured that scrutiny is able to keep under review strategic risks through consideration of the risks and mitigation as part of their ongoing work programme.
- 4.25. This approach has further strengthened our overall risk approach and is progressing the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge recommendation to promote and embed risk awareness across the organisation and continue to address and report progress against key financial risks and external audit requirements.

Select Committees

5.1. Three select committees were delivered in the 2022/23 municipal year. These concerned –

- Budget Scrutiny (see section 4.1)
- Mental Health Services
- Armed Forces Covenant

Armed Forces Covenant

5.2. This select committee was undertaken as post-decision scrutiny following the renewal of the Armed Forces Covenant at Cabinet in June 2022. The committee received evidence from a number of sources including –

- Cabinet Members and Officers
- Royal Naval Association
- Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity
- Naval Families Federation

5.3. In addition to the above the Committee also commissioned a public survey and received contributions from members of the public during the course of the review.

5.4. The committee made ten recommendations, all of which the Cabinet member agreed or partially agreed.

Mental Health Select Committee

5.5. This select committee took place after being postponed in previous municipal years. The committee heard evidence from a number of sources including –

- Public Health
- Healthwatch
- Livewell SW
- Devon Mind
- Improving Lives Plymouth
- Elder tree Befriending
- Memory Matters
- NHS Devon

5.6. Of particular note was the evidence session provided by the several young people from the youth parliament, who provided their views on mental health and provided advice on how outcomes for young people could be improved.

5.7. A full list of the recommendations from these session is including in the digest of key recommendations in appendix ii.

Call-in of decisions

- 6.1. The call-in process is one of the mechanisms which can be used to hold the Cabinet to account.
- 6.2. The purpose of call-in is to examine the decisions reached by the Cabinet (or other decision makers) and the reasoning behind those decisions. The process enables further public debate to be held on the subject. The Scrutiny Committee can then consider whether the decision was appropriate and make recommendations accordingly.
- 6.3. Over the course of the year, the scrutiny function has considered two call-ins.

Changes to the Contact Centre

- 6.4. The first concerned a decision by the Leader on changes to the contact centre. The decision was to review the Contact Centre service offer and staffing resources to only meet the needs of priority/statutory Council services or customers who will be digitally excluded, support those wishing to make payments and promoting online services for all other services.
- 6.5. The decision was called in by Councillors Haydon, Mrs Aspinall and Coker. The call-in was based on the grounds that that the telephone lines could have been prioritised in a different way and this alternative action had not been considered by the decision maker.
- 6.6. The Committee agreed to refer the decision back to the decision maker and made the following recommendations –
 - That The Leader and Cabinet use the latest census data from 2021 when reviewing the decision;
 - Enquiries regarding bus passes should be included on the priority list;
 - Prioritisation should be given to residents who were calling about .Gov systems such as Blue Badges or Tell Us Once, as issues with these systems had been identified;
 - That Libraries and Councillor Casework to be included in the risk mitigation plan;
 - More clarification on how the changes would be communicated to those residents who are not on social media, online or do not read the local newspaper.
- 6.7. The decision maker considered the responses and implemented the decision without further changes. However as a result of the scrutiny process there was an undertaking that officers would work with the communications team to ensure all messages are shared both online and via other methods such as community and charity groups, social housing providers and care networks.

Lease Surrender of land at Cattewater Harbour

- 6.8. This decision was to surrender the lease between Plymouth City Council and The Cattewater Harbour Commissioners for the section of foreshore and fundus adjoining for the section of foreshore and fundus adjoining Commercial Wharf in the Cattewater Harbour.
- 6.9. This would support the Council's commitment to maintaining access to the water, to avoid future costs and financial pressures associated with the requirement to maintain the Barbican Landing Stage (BLS).

- 6.10. The decision was called in by Councillors Kelly, Mrs Beer, Hulme and Singh. The call-in was based on the grounds the decision maker did not take into account relevant factors. THE BLS is a platform that used correctly could open up the coastal waters to many more users, therefore encouraging greater participation of the National Marine Park (NMP), one of the Council's objectives for the NMP.
- 6.11. Following review and debate the committee recommended the decision maker implemented the decision.

Community involvement

7.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Boards and Panels engage with a wide selection of groups, organisations and individuals. We welcome the opportunity to hear from members of the public at our meetings and their input is important in understanding the concerns and needs from our communities.

7.2. The scrutiny committees have welcomed contributions from –

- Healthwatch Devon
- Plymouth Youth Parliament
- Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charities

How to get involved in overview and scrutiny

- **Attend meetings** – our scrutiny meetings are open to the public and you are welcome to come along and listen to the debate and discussion. *Please note that reports may be considered in private if they contain confidential information.*
- **Ask a question** – if you would like make a representation at a meeting, please email democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk least 5 complete days before the meeting so that we can let the Chairman know in advance. It is helpful to know what you would like to raise in order for it to be considered at the appropriate time during the discussions.
- **Request a review** – if there is something you think scrutiny could look at, then let us know [via this online form](#).
- **Consultation and participation** – you could be asked for your views on an issue or be invited to provide specialist knowledge you might have by being a witness in a scrutiny review.

Future of Scrutiny

8.1. The Management Board commissioned an external review by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS). The review focused on –

- Organisational commitment and clarity of purpose
- Members leading and fostering good relationships
- Prioritising work and using evidence well
- Having an impact

The review methodology included:

- Evidence gathering through conversations with members and officers during September 2022.
- A mix of in-person semi structured interviews and remote interviews.
- Group interviews with officers.
- Individual meetings with elected members and officers, including Group Leaders, Scrutiny Chairs, Members of the Scrutiny Committees, and officers supporting scrutiny
- Observed webcast recordings of scrutiny meetings and review of key documents on the Council's website.
- A survey with councillors to which thirteen members responded in total which equates to a 23% response rate.

8.2. The review resulted in 16 recommendations which were discussed at a meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board on the 29 November 2022:

- 1) Reviewing the current approach to financial scrutiny including much earlier input to the budget scrutiny process alongside consideration of the medium-term financial plan.
- 2) The Council to consider appointing a scrutiny officer. A dedicated resource would help focus the work of the function and provide the necessary support, including research and project management support to run independent scrutiny investigations such as task and finish groups.
- 3) Amendment to the terms of reference to the Scrutiny Management Board. Specifically, to meet informally, to co-ordinate Scrutiny activity and inclusion where there are cross-cutting issues, to include the Vice Chairs of Committees and to remove the requirement to follow up recommendations.
- 4) Encourage the Council to revisit the number of Scrutiny Committees to support more focused work programming and ease the resource burden.
- 5) Training to develop an appreciation of the Scrutiny function and potential at both member and officer level, looking at how to get the best from scrutiny. Including agreeing a shared purpose and questioning skills
- 6) Responsibility for items (policy, plans and forward decisions) in their portfolio which appear on the scrutiny agendas and that these scrutiny meetings are prioritised in Cabinet Member diaries. That officers attend scrutiny in a supportive capacity as information and advice providers
- 7) Building upon the approach taken to work programming by expanding the prioritisation tool and format and approaching this with dedicated time at regular intervals.
- 8) Greater pre-decision scrutiny to help shape the future proactively moving forward.

- 9) Tracking and follow up of recommendations made to each Scrutiny Committee.
 - 10) Greater visible alignment with the Corporate Plan; with clarity over lines of enquiry which in turn will lead to the ability to see Scrutiny's impact and connections.
 - 11) A dedicated programme for member training and development. This could be co-ordinated through the management board but must be Member-led to support increased awareness and understanding for each Committee. This should also reduce the need for items for information and noting at Committee.
 - 12) Visibility on items that are asked for in Committee but provided outside. These should be made publicly available.
 - 13) A more thorough methodology applied to investigative work, this applies to the selection of topics for task and finish groups and should also include more forensic lines of enquiry and a broader witness base, including benchmarking with other local authorities.
 - 14) Clear triangulation of evidence and undertaking of primary research.
 - 15) A refreshed approach to the annual report focussing upon impact of Scrutiny work.
 - 16) A general review of the approach taken for Scrutiny oversight and engagement with delegated decisions.
- 8.3. All of the recommendations were broadly supported by the Management Board at their meeting on the 15 December 2022. The Management Board directed officers to develop a proposal for consideration by the Board on the 20 March 2023 based on a single scrutiny committee.
 - 8.4. The single committee would be supported by a standing sub-committee on budget setting and a process for enabling all members to be involved in time limited task and finish groups on topics raised by councillors.
 - 8.5. It was requested that the proposal address all of the issues raised through the review process, particularly to increase public involvement in the scrutiny process.
 - 8.6. The Scrutiny Management Board will complete its work on this before the end of the municipal year and will make recommendations for change in response to the findings through appropriate governance mechanisms as quickly as possible in the next municipal year.

Topic List

- **Performance Finance and Customer Focus**
 - Corporate Plan performance Reports
 - Capital and Revenue outturn and monitoring Reports
 - Member Development
 - Leisure Services
 - Bereavement Services
 - Return to work post-covid
 - Business Support Implementation Review
 - Staff Survey
 - Election Bill Implications
 - Support for refugees from Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine
 - Licensing Cumulative Impact Policy
 - Elections Act 2022 – Voter ID
 - Appeal against the response by the Council to a petition
 - Cyber Security
 - Council Commitment to Equalities and Diversity
 - Safer Plymouth Update

- **Health and Adult Social Care**
 - Healthwatch Plymouth
 - Urgent and Emergency Care
 - Primary Care
 - Pharmacy
 - Covid and Flu Update
 - Public Health Commissioning
 - Life Expectancy and Health Expectancy
 - Thrive Plymouth & Active to Thrive
 - Children's Healthy Weight Plan
 - From Harm to Hope (Government substance misuse policy)
 - Review of Public Health Dashboard
 - West End Health Hub
 - Fair Cost of Care and Market Sustainability Plans
 - **Motion On Notice – Defibrillators**

- **Education and Children's' Social Care**
 - Overview of the Children Social Care and Education Participation and Skills Service
 - Children Services Provisional Financial Outturn
 - Children's Services Performance Report
 - Kick Start Update
 - City wide Youth Service Provision
 - Josh MacAlister's Independent Review of Children's Social Care
 - Plymouth Safeguarding Partnership
 - National Review into the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson
 - Plymouth Education Board

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- Children Missing out on Education
- School Attainment
- School Uniform (Report provided by the Youth Parliament)
- Ofsted focused visit and response
- Recruitment and Retention Update
- Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency

▪ **Growth and Infrastructure**

- Climate Emergency Action Plan and Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan 2022
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- The Box
- City Centre Regeneration
- Plymouth and South Devon Freeport Mobilisation
- Culture Plan
- Visitor Plan
- Horizons Fund Activity Plan
- Net Zero Action Plan
- Chelson Meadow Solar Farm.

Select Committee

- Armed Forces Covenant Select Committee
- Budget Scrutiny Select Committee
- Mental Health Services Select Committee

Key Recommendation Digest

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee Recommendations

15 June 2022

- **City Wide Youth Provision**
 - The Committee agreed to:- Dave Ryland (Community Connections Strategic Manager) and Martine Aquilina (Acting Head of Service for Youth Justice and Targeted Support Service) to endeavour to produce an app for the Young People in the city of Plymouth to access which would advise them of youth services they could access.

13 October 2022

- **Josh MacAlister's Independent Review of Children's Social Care Briefing**
 - The Committee would write to Kelly Tolhurst MP, Minister of State (Education) to request no more drift on the government's response to the review and requested a response no later than the end of 2022. The letter would also endorse the recommendations from the review and endorse the calculations of £2.6 billion of required funding;
- **Financial Monitoring Report, Month 4**
 - The Committee agreed to write a letter to the Secretary of State for Education requesting more money within the government settlement to help with the costs of inflation.
- **Tracking Decisions Log**
 - To share examples of best practice, including two to three case studies in relation to school uniform policy via the head teacher's bulletin.

15 February 2023

- **Education and Children's Social Care Policy Brief**
 - For the Education, Participation and Skills service to ensure students in Plymouth are aware of the accompanying entitlements when they receive free school meals to enable better outcomes for children and young people in the city. This information would also be disseminated in Family Hubs to ensure families are aware of their entitlements.
- **Refugee and Asylum Seekers accessing education in Plymouth**
 - A letter to be sent to the relevant minister highlighting that the one-year support package for refugee and asylum-seeking families had not been enough and encouraged the government to review the support packages in place and extend those packages.
- **Early Years**
 - A letter to be sent to the relevant minister highlighting the recruitment and retention pressures on the Early Years sector and requesting the implementation of a national strategy to address this. The letter would also ask that government recognise and value the importance of the early years sector and the staff working within it

Growth and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee Recommendations

22 June 2022

- **Climate Emergency Action Plan 2022 and Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan 2022 - In Year Monitoring Reports**
 - That the Committee would be provided with a written response as to why the Council was unsuccessful in securing tranche 3 of the active travel fund once feedback was provided from the Department for Transport.
 - to accept the Cabinet Member's offer to ring-fence the money within the concessionary bus fare budget should there be a surplus (whilst being mindful that budget pressures and priorities may change moving forward);
 - to note the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) 2022 Monitoring Report, details of which are set out in Appendix A;
 - to note the Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan (CCRP) 2022 Monitoring Report, details of which are set out in Appendix B
- **Shared Prosperity Fund**
 - The Committee agreed to note the report and recommend that Officers focus upon a fewer number of projects in their approach due to the limited funding received as part of the Shared Prosperity Fund.

10 October 2022

- **Update on The Box**
 - Recommend that they were provided with a report with up to date information on visitor numbers to The Box per ward to see which wards had lower engagement levels;
 - Recommend a report was to be provided on schools by ward that had been engaged with so Councillors could consider using their Community Grant funds to assist local schools that might not have engaged due to funding for transport.
- **City Centre Update**
 - They be provided with a full report regarding the aborted start to the Old Town Street and New George Street project in due course;
 - They be provided with a report on the Armada Way sustainable transport solutions design process and how it would be implemented;
 - If any significant changes were made to the plans presented at the meeting, plans would be brought back to Committee for scrutiny.

7 December 2022

- **Culture Plan Annual Update**
 - Receive more detail on the audiences that were not being reached and proposals to reach them, in the Annual Report in 2023;
 - Receive more detail on how data on diversity had influenced cultural programs in the Annual Report 2023.
- **Horizons Fund Activity Plan Update**

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- Recommend to a future Committee that officers returned in Spring 2023 with a report that set out framework for the NMP Horizons Delivery Stage bid;

1 March 2023

- **Chelson Meadow Solar Farm**

- The Committee recommended that:-
 - The loan agreement was in the form of a legal charge that charged both the JV lease and equipment to Plymouth City Council to ensure that Plymouth City Council has security for the loan and will be able to have an unfettered right to use the equipment and forfeit the lease in the event of a default;
 - An Annual Review would be used as a mechanism to ensure necessary funds were ring-fenced to mitigate uncertainties in future years' energy prices that would require the Council to pay funds via the VPPA. An annual report would be brought to scrutiny showing:
 - the income received and the most up to date energy price projections;
 - a recommendation on the amount of money to be ring-fenced in any given yearWith any money that was not required to be ring-fenced to be used to invest in other net zero projects.

Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee Recommendations

13 July 2022

- **Healthwatch Plymouth**

- The Committee agreed to recommend that the CCG/ HNS Devon recommission Healthwatch to repeat their survey of ED attendance, at a future date.

7 September 2022

- **Primary Care**

- To recommend to Jo Turl and the Devon ICS, that the final Primary Care Strategy must include a variety of access methods to ensure inclusivity (digital, phone, & in-person), to allow Patients to access GP services in a timely manner;

16 November 2022

- **Life Expectancy and Health Expectancy**

- Recommend that the Director of Public Health continues to work to understand the issue of low female 'healthy life expectancy' in Plymouth, including analysis of further data, and seeking the latest evidence as it becomes available;
- To receive a further report from the Director for Public Health regarding life and healthy life expectancy, in one years' time;

- **West End Health Hub**

- To recommend that the ICB should consider funding the project through their capital programme unless this risks the maintenance of critical health infrastructure
- That at a future meeting of the committee, the ICB reports on the use of capital funding in Plymouth;

- To welcome the offer of Right Honourable Robert Jenrick MP to visit Plymouth and to broker a meeting. The committee requested that his successor honour this offer and visit to facilitate the meeting between the ICB, Council, effected GP services and NHS England to identify innovative or creative solutions to move the project forward.

10 March 2023

- **West End Health Hub**

- The Committee recommends that the Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee writes to the National Audit Office, expressing concerns regarding the expenditure of the Cavell Programme, which now appears to have no DHSC funding for delivery. This has led to considerable reputational damage to local authorities, which must be prevented in future.
- The Committee recommends that NHS Devon provide full financial visibility of revenue and capital budgets to the committee, to enable consideration of whether allocated funding is proportionate to the population needs of the City.
- The Committee thanks Jo Turl and Nigel Acheson for their attendance today but express their disappointment that NHS Devon's Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer were not in attendance. The Committee will be seeking a further discussion with them to ensure that all avenues for the Cavell Project have been adequately considered.
- The Committee recorded their significant concerns regarding the viability and sustainability of the 3 GP practices which were due to take up residence in the new West End Hub. In addition, concerns were also noted regarding the future accommodation for the voluntary community, and other health services which were planned for the centre.
- The Committee recommends that a Devon wide meeting with MPs be convened to ensure accountability and ongoing cooperation to improve Devon and Plymouth health outcomes, and continues to lobby to secure funding for this project.
- The Committee recommends that the ICB/ NHS England prioritises systems working and early intervention and prevention, prioritising long term need, rather than short term financial viability.
- The Committee expressed concerns regarding Plymouth's current insufficient health provision, and requests that NHS Devon provide assurances of their plan to ensure adequate health care is in place to align with Plymouth's Plan for Homes, and population growth, including seeking appropriate contributions through section 106 agreements with developers.
- The Committee recommends that NHS Devon respond within 15 working days, detailing a fully-costed plan to ensure the sustainability and viability of the 3 effected GP practises who were due to take up residence in the West End Hub. The Committee recommends that the ICB report to a future scrutiny meeting on the work being undertaken to support local GP practices and ensure health outcomes are maintained/ improved across the city.
- The Committee recommends that the Chair of H&ASC writes to NHS England regarding the potential to fund the interest payments on the capital loan offered to support the West End Health Hub project, by Plymouth City Council.
- The Committee recommends that officers work with UHP to look at the master planning of the Colin Campbell Court site, ensuring any alternative facilities, such as the Community Diagnostics Centre, are in line with regeneration proposals.
- The Committee recommends that the Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee writes to the 3 affected General Practise managers, seeking their views on

delays to the Cavell Programme, and brokering a meeting between parties involved. This is to include the Cabinet portfolio holder, shadow portfolio holder, ward councillors, and public health.

- The Committee recommends that the Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee writes to Amanda Pritchard providing an overview of the Plymouth Cavell Project, this Committee's findings, and recommendations, and continues to drive to secure the required capital funds.

8 February 2023

- **Motion On Notice – Defibrillators**

- The committee would be provided further information and the issue would be considered at a future meeting.

Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny Committee Recommendations

29 June 2022

- **Leisure Services Contract**

- Officers consider the feasibility of bringing all of the Council's leisure facilities into one contract to enable better management and potential cost saving opportunities

- **Bereavement Service Update**

- Cabinet were encouraged to act swiftly in signing a design and build contract for the construction of the Crematorium works;
- an updated business case for the Crematorium project was submitted to the Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be discussed under part 2;
- a governance board was established by Cabinet with cross party membership as a matter of urgency for the Crematoria project.

10 October 2022

- **Work Programme**

- Write to the relevant chair of the Local Government Association Board regarding the panel's concerns in the Government's delay in publishing guidance relating to the Elections Bill

30 November 2022

- **Return to Work Safely – The Big Listen Update**

- to recommend that prior to the next staff survey, additional thought was given to how those without computer access were given support to be able to complete the survey (to feel confident in doing so), that all staff should be allowed the opportunity to complete the survey within working hours, and that the process was agreed with the trade union representatives in advance to enable them to support the delivery of the survey.

14 December 2022

- **Support the Council is Providing to Refugees from Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine**

- to recommend to Cabinet that the Council explores with the Local Government Association how pressure could be put on the Government to provide additional funding for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) in support of the three schemes in order that people are more able to quickly access it;

- to recommend to Cabinet that work to communicate the schemes to the city was undertaken on a regular basis, specifically focusing upon the following: the numbers involved in the schemes, definitions of terms, what the city was gaining from the schemes, case studies and stories;
- **Cumulative Impact Policy**
 - The Committee agreed to recommend that the Cumulative Impact Policy is considered by Cabinet so that the Cumulative Impact Assessment can then be submitted to Full Council so that it is maintained and the revised assessment contained in Appendix C is adopted and published.
- **2022 Elections Act – Voter ID**
 - to recommend to Cabinet that the Trans Community, EU citizens, homeless people, the disabled and looked after young people are specifically considered in terms of identifying ways of enabling them to vote and how this is communicated to them, that action plans are developed for these five areas of potential voter vulnerability, and that an update on this issue is provided to a future Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny Panel;

22 February 2022

- **Appeal Against Petition Response**
 - The Committee agreed:
 - to mandate the Monitoring Officer to work in conjunction with the Audit and Governance Committee to establish a sub group to review the petitions process as contained within the Council's Constitution in order to learn lessons moving forward;
 - to recommend to the Audit and Governance Committee, as part of their overall review of the Constitution, consider specifically the consultation and engagement approach and processes linked to petitions so that they were clearly defined and understood;
 - that the Cabinet Member for Transport write to the Parliamentary Minister for Transport requesting an extension to the programme of works/ funding for the Armada Way Development Scheme
- **Our Commitment to Equality and Diversity**
 - The Committee agreed:
 - that a written response would be provided to Members on the numbers of Councillors that had completed the LGA Equality and Diversity training course;
 - a written response would be provided to Members as to if there was an industrial diseases register maintained by the Council for local residents where those with disabilities were registered;
 - a written response would be provided to Members as to if the public sector equality duty extended to the Council's commissioning of services, partnership working and commercial arrangements;
 - in terms of the decline in percentage of residents from different backgrounds that considered they got on well together in Plymouth from 55% in 2021, to 42% in 2022 (as detailed in the Corporate Plan Performance Report), a breakdown of Plymouth's demographic and at Ward level would be provided to Members.
- **Safer Plymouth Update**
 - that a workshop upon the Prevent draft action plan and risk assessment (in response to the Independent Review of Prevent by William Shawcross) is scheduled for all Members to accommodate wider engagement in its development;

- that the Chair writes to the Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Leisure and Sport requesting that he lobbies Government for more funding to specifically help with the prevention of drug abuse for under eighteen year olds in Plymouth;
- that the Chair writes to the Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner regarding funding levels for Plymouth requesting that the money obtained by the Commissioner as a result of the increase in council tax levels is specifically dedicated to tackle hate crime in the city.

Select Committees

Select Committee – Budget Scrutiny 2023/24

SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	CABINET RESPONSE
<p>Equalities Impact Assessments (EIA)</p> <p>The Committee is aware of the requirements of legislation in respect of Equalities Impact Assessments.</p> <p>The Committee recommends that EIAs in support of the budget should –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the most recent census data available where appropriate to the EIA • That the impact of potential council tax increases upon those with protected characteristics should be more clearly defined. • Include the potential opportunities to improve the understanding of and foster good relationships between different groups in the community <p>Whilst the budget itself contains proposals, rather than decision on service, the executive is recommended to consider carefully its public sector equality duty, in particular that <i>“Due regard is fulfilled before and at the time a particular policy or operational activity, that will or might affect people with protected characteristics is under consideration, as well as at the time a decision is taken.”</i></p>	<p>Census Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The latest available census data has been used in the preparation of the EIA, which was updated shortly before papers were collated for budget scrutiny. • However, much of the census 2021 data is still being published nationally and the report for Cabinet/Council will have further updates. <p>Council Tax</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Tax is a progressive tax and those on the lowest incomes will pay less if they qualify for Council Tax support. • Socio-economic impacts are covered by the Equality Act but the relevant section has never been given statutory force through secondary legislation and guidance referred to in the Act has not been published. • As such the Council does not require mitigation of these impacts within EIAs. Nevertheless we do through our careful consideration and scrutiny of budget setting proposals seek to minimise the impact on essential services for the most vulnerable. <p>Duty to promote good relations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We fully recognise our statutory Public Sector Equality Duty and the forthcoming Welcoming City Scrutiny Review may identify new opportunities to promote good relations. <p>Assessment of Future Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to note that a detailed assessment can only be undertaken on specific savings proposals when business cases are available. Further consideration will be given to reflect the

	impact of high level budget proposals with the EIA.
<p>Home Building</p> <p>The Committee recommends that the Executive should set out an ambitious, significant and sustainable home building programme to ensure that the City's housing stock keeps pace with its social economic and environmental ambitions.</p>	<p>There remains a significant focus on providing more homes, building on the achievements of successive Plan for Homes programmes.</p> <p>The Cabinet would welcome the outcome of any specific, detailed work on this issue that scrutiny may wish to undertake to ensure the Council's ambitions are achievable within the context of a challenged construction industry.</p>
<p>Working Balances</p> <p>The consequences of not keeping a minimum prudent level of balances can be serious and in the event of a major problem or a series of events, the council would run a serious risk of a deficit or of being forced to cut spending during the year in a damaging and arbitrary way. The External Audit report provided to the Audit and Governance Committee highlights that the current level of reserves is insufficient.</p> <p>The Committee recommends that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Section 151 Officer should undertake a review of the level of the working balance. As part of this review the 151 should consider best practice as advised by Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, Local Government Association (LGA) and reviewed against our CIPFA comparator group. <p>The output of the review should be included in the draft budget when presented to council and the productions of a robust and transparent plan to cover the future contributions working balances as set out in the MTFS.</p>	<p>The 2023/24 budget is based on the principles and objectives of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), as agreed by Council.</p> <p>The MTFS sets out a financial objective (10) to retain a general fund revenue balance of at least 5% of net expenditure.</p> <p>The Section 151 Officer will undertake a review of the level of working balances as part of the MTFS review and will submit for consideration to Council in September.</p> <p>In addition, the Working Balance will be reflected within the statement on reserves which will form part of the Section 151 Officer's budget robustness statement included in the final budget proposals on 27 February 2023.</p>
<p>Medium Term Financial Plan</p> <p>The Committee recommends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> that a three year Medium Term Financial Plan is prepared and considered at full council in September. This reflects similar recommendations made through the LGA 	<p>The Section 151 Officer will undertake a review of the MTFS and will submit for consideration to Council in September 2023.</p> <p>A detailed response to the recommendation of external auditors will be provided to the Audit and Governance Committee, the outcome of that discussion will form part of the Chair's report to a future Cabinet meeting.</p>

<p>corporate peer challenge and external auditors report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee expects the effect of this recommendation to reduce reliance of one offs in the annual budget setting process. • Recommendations from external auditors are endorsed by the budget select committee. The Committee recommends that the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee addresses these recommendations in their next report to Cabinet. 	
<p>Climate Emergency Assessment</p> <p>The Committee believes that climate impact should be adequately reflected in the budget papers or those supporting decision making. The committee were made aware that decision making processes would include an assessment of climate impact and a tool had been developed for implementation.</p> <p>The Committee recommended that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An assessment of climate impact is included in the budget report presented to Council; • That the tool for assessing climate impact of decision making is implemented with urgency and appropriate resource is identified to quality assure such assessments. 	<p>An assessment of climate impact will be provided in the budget report for Council, this will be against proposals which are enabled by way of Council approval of the budget.</p> <p>The assessment tool for climate impact is being developed. Given the complexities and resource requirements involved in developing and supporting such a tool, further time is required to finalise the processes. Once completed climate impact assessments will be included at business case development stage.</p>
<p>Fleet Decarbonisation Programme</p> <p>The Committee recommends that the Executive set this as a high priority for the Council and explores further opportunities for decarbonisation of the fleet through the Capital Programme.</p>	<p>As described at the scrutiny sessions, there has been a significant and sustained focus on decarbonising the all vehicles within the Council's fleet.</p> <p>However there are limitations and the decarbonisation of larger vehicles, such has Heavy Goods Vehicles, which are cost prohibitive in the context of the budgetary challenges being experienced by the authority.</p> <p>The Cabinet would welcome the outcome of any specific, detailed work on this issue that scrutiny may wish to undertake.</p>
<p>School Transport</p> <p>The Committee recommends that the Executive review options for school transport, in particular how young</p>	<p>An Independent Review is underway.</p>

<p>people may be supported to travel independently where appropriate.</p>	
<p>Children's Services Budget</p> <p>The committee is not assured that the proposed budget for 23/24 is sufficient. As such Committee recommend that the draft budget is developed to include further information so as to assure Councillors of the robustness of the Children's Services Budget as will be proposed to Council. This should take in to account all relevant future impacts e.g. impact of cost of living crisis / output of OFSTED inspection and the success of the drive to increase the number of in house fostering provision.</p>	<p>The budget for Children's Services has four key areas of planned reduction. These are relating to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Savings achieved from remodelling Children's Centres into Family Hubs. 2. £673K based on a reduction of externally commissioned assessments realised through the creation of an internal team and a reduction of vacant posts within the Targeted Support Service. 3. a reduction of £1.627m in the current placement budget. This will be realised through a reduction of the use of unregistered places and the use of residential care for children and young people in care. 4. to reduce the number of entrants into care and therefore realise a £2.27m reduction in the planned growth for the placements budget. <p>We are now working closely to review all high cost packages and our Edge of Care service to prevent care admissions where it is possible and safe to do so.</p> <p>The pressure on the placements budget has derived from the use of unregistered placements and placement breakdowns leading to higher cost packages.</p> <p>Our placement stability this year has increased with only 8.6% of our children in care having 3 or more placement moves compared to 12% three years ago. This will continue to be an area of development and will review all placement breakdowns so that we can understand how best to support earlier and prevent such breakdown</p> <p>With regards to the Education Budget we have right sized the SEND Transport budget and Short Breaks budget which has seen a £1.3m overspend over the last year. This money has been allocated to Children's Social Care as these are established pressures for statutory services. This should also support the realisation of the proposed budget for Children.</p> <p>It remains the case that this is a statutory service and the Local Authority is legally responsible for meeting</p>

	<p>statutory need and if children need to be supported we have a legal duty to do so.</p> <p>The Council conducted a thorough review of its cost base in July 2022 using CIPFA comparator data. This demonstrated that the Children's Services budget for Plymouth is within the low/median area of spend; with the majority of services being in the low spend area.</p> <p>As part of the final Budget proposal to Council, which closes the gap to a balanced position, a £1m allocation has been set-aside for social care. This provides a contingency sum to be drawn down if required.</p>
<p>Work Experience</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Council significantly increases the availability of work experience and apprenticeships placements for Care Experienced young people to help them into employment and review the Social Value Policy to reflect this.</p>	<p>As part of our commitment to promoting equality we offer guaranteed interviews to those if they meet the essential criteria and are considered disabled, or have been in Plymouth City Council care.</p> <p>Through our work on the Care Leavers Covenant we remain committed to our aim to make Plymouth the best place for care experienced children and young people to live, to grow up and be supported for when they are ready to leave care.</p> <p>As a council we are offering a number of work experience placements to students in years 10 and 12 who meet at least one of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live in Plymouth • Attend a Plymouth School • Looked after young person/Care leaver <p>There will be an opening and closing event each week, which will induct the cohort of students to their week at the Council, as well as celebrating their achievement of successfully completing the scheme.</p> <p>Details are available in the "Jobs" section of the Council's website. https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/work-experience</p>
<p>Alliance Contract / Local Care Partnership</p> <p>The Committee recommends to the Local Care Partnership that the principles which have driven the alliance contact are embedded within the development of the Local Care Partnership.</p>	<p>The Local Care Partnership and integrated commissioning arrangements for Plymouth will ensure that the principles and learning from Alliance commissioning arrangements are considered as part of future service redesign and procurement of health and care services.</p>

<p>NHS Capital Funding</p> <p>The Committee recommends to the Health and Wellbeing Board that it should use all of the levers available to it to ensure adequate capital and revenue resources are directed to Plymouth. The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked, as a first step, to require NHS Devon (ICB) to provide the ICB joint capital resource plan at the next meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure planned capital resource is being aligned against local priorities.</p>	<p>The recommendation to the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board is noted and will be included for consideration at a future meeting of the Board.</p>
<p>Elections</p> <p>The Committee recommends that adequate resources for the delivery of new burdens in relation to the election process (e.g. Identification Requirements) are clearly identified within the draft budget.</p>	<p>The Section 151 Officer will ensure the resources are identified in the draft budget report.</p>
<p>Take up of free school meals</p> <p>The Committee recommends a communications campaign is implemented to increase uptake awareness of free school meals.</p>	<p>Relevant officers will make arrangements for further communications in support of the annual communication campaign to improve uptake.</p>
<p>Corporate Property</p> <p>The Committee discussed corporate property and the potential of alternative use of the estate, and recommends a review of the corporate estate to meet the Council's corporate objectives, and specifically -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify if there are any potential buildings capable of being developed to provide residential care homes for young people in the care of the local authority. <p>And</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where buildings are found to be surplus to the requirements of the Authority, ensure that overage agreements are agreed, where appropriate, with buyers / developers. 	<p>Residential Care Homes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This process is underway. <p>Overage Agreements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This recommendation accords with the current position. Restrictive covenants are used to limit future uses to accord with value received on disposal or overage provisions are included for future change of use to a higher value in order to protect the Council's position.
<p>Balancing</p> <p>The committee expresses its concerns that savings within the draft budget are still subject to public consultation and may not be delivered.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

<p>Councillor Community Grant Scheme</p> <p>The committee recommend that the community grant fund to remain at its current level.</p>	<p>When the Council set its budget for 2022-3 in February last year, an amendment was agreed that set up a Community Improvement Fund, allowing a capital allocation of £50k for each three Councillor Ward, and £33k for each two Councillor Ward, adding up to a total of £950k across the city for Councillors to invest in their communities on a discretionary basis.</p> <p>It is clear from feedback from Councillors that the ability to make “revenue” contributions to community projects is highly valued. As a result of this feedback the draft budget will include a fund of £3,000 per Councillor for the coming year. While this is a reduction on previous years, it is substantially more than the original proposal of £1,250 per Councillor and has been made possible by a small windfall from the Government</p>
<p>Residential Disabled Parking Bays</p> <p>The committee recommend that the relevant Cabinet member reviews the fees and charges for residential disabled parking bay.</p>	<p>The relevant portfolio holder will review the fees and charges with officers.</p>
<p>Footpath Maintenance</p> <p>The Committee recommend that the relevant Cabinet Member review the level of funding within the budget for footpath maintenance and resurfacing</p>	<p>The relevant portfolio holder will review the level of funding with officers.</p>
<p>Ring-fence Council Tax on empty homes or homelessness</p> <p>Additional empty homes premium is ring-fenced to deliver ambitions to bring empty homes back into use.</p>	<p>The premium from empty homes is included within the core resources of the council, forming part of the Business Rates calculation.</p> <p>As stated previously in relation to home building, the Cabinet would welcome the outcome of any specific, detailed work on this issue that scrutiny may wish to undertake to include bringing empty homes back into use.</p>

Select Committee – Armed Force Covenant

	Select Committee Recommendations	Cabinet Response
1.	To recommend to the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee to include Armed Forces Friendly GPs and Dental Surgeries to their work programme, specifically	Cabinet lead for Armed Forces and Plymouth’s Armed Forces Champion welcomes any scrutiny which seeks to improve and enhance services to the Armed Forces Community and their families. Over the last 18 months the

	Select Committee Recommendations	Cabinet Response
	with regards to the number of surgeries that have signed up to the initiative, the impact of long waiting list timescales upon serving personnel and their families when frequently moving to a new area, and the importance of prioritising those affected by the armed forces covenant so as not to be disadvantaged;	team, together with Plymouth's Armed Forces Partnership, have focused on working with both GP's and Dental Surgeries. And we've already seen progress in this areas with 9 more than a year ago. I'm happy to support the recommendation for the H&ASC scrutiny committee to incorporate this into their work plan.
2.	To write to NHS England highlighting issues identified in Plymouth with regards to access to healthcare provision (including dental access) in the city for armed forces personnel and their families, and highlighting NHS England's duty, as supporters of the covenant, to provide appropriate services for the armed forces;	Locally we know that the NHS has been proactive in a number of these areas, and relationships with local stakeholders are developing. However, there are areas which we know needs further work. A letter will be written to NHS England highlighting these issues, with an option to write jointly with the chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee if it is agreeable.
3.	To recommend to Cabinet that the wording of the current Armed Forces Covenant is reviewed to stress the importance of a trauma informed approach across all areas of the covenant in line with city policy, and specifically that due regard is given by the Council to the mental health of children and young people of service families, is appropriately considered in line with the Council's covenant duties;	<p>Plymouth is already a Trauma Informed City, and the City Council takes a trauma informed approach in everything it does. This is especially prevalent across Children's services, and particularly in relation to mental health. The City Councils approach has a number of overarching objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review and reflect upon the emerging evidence regarding trauma informed approaches & Adverse Childhood Experiences, and continue to define an approach that envisions Plymouth as a Trauma Informed city. • To promote the Trauma Informed Plymouth approach (Envisioning Plymouth as a Trauma Informed City), within city communities, agencies and partnership systems. • To promote the Plymouth Trauma Lens as a consistent, universal and transformational narrative for a trauma informed city, that aspires to be courageously prevention focused. • To work alongside & support communities, agencies, and partnership systems in becoming trauma aware and trauma responsive. • To promote a system level response to the Trauma Informed approach and to support system change as a critical friend. • To target three key service areas across the partnerships, namely school exclusions, criminal justice and mental health diagnosis. <p>The Armed Forces Covenant, as a Plymouth City Council specific agreement sets out how the City Council will "Champion the needs of service and veterans' children and their families in Plymouth" and all that this encompasses and as set out in the Council approach to being a Trauma informed Council. The Armed Forces Champion will seek reassurances from the Partnerships Children's theme group that this approach is being embedded.</p>
4.	To recommend to the Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee to add the Armed Forces Covenant to their work	As Cabinet lead for Armed Forces and Plymouth's Armed Forces Champion, I welcome any scrutiny which seeks to improve and enhance services to the Armed Forces

	Select Committee Recommendations	Cabinet Response
	programme, specifically with regards to the Council's legal requirement under the covenant to provide education to service children, and that information on the pupil premium affecting service children, and how many service children were also young carers was also to be provided so that support could be managed;	Community and their families. Over the last 18 months the team, together with Plymouth's Armed Forces Partnership have focused on working with schools and specialised partners. We've already seen much progress in this areas. Information regarding school's use of Service Pupil Premium appears within the wider Pupil Premium statement for individual schools and is displayed within their individual websites. (This information does not have to be shared with the Local Authority). We have recently given CPD sessions to the Young carers and Service Family Leads Hub, regarding how Service Pupil Premium should be utilised and also the benefits of working collectively across Multi-Academy Trusts to utilise this funding most effectively. This activity forms part of the AFC CYP&F Theme Group Action Plan. I'm happy to support the recommendation for the E&CSC scrutiny to incorporate this into their work plan.
5.	To recommend to the Cabinet Member responsible for the Armed Forces Covenant, and the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People that the feasibility of amending Plymouth's School Admission Code is considered so that service children applying for a school place in the city were given priority status;	Service Children are already given priority when applying for school places, however, we know that for 'in year' moves/admissions, there is some confusion in relation to the Department for Education's admission code and prioritisation of service children. The removal of this prioritisation classification from the national code means a local agreement will need to be considered. Further work will be done with the Strategic Director for Children's Services and the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.
6.	That Councillor Penberthy, as Chair of the Select Review Committee, would write to the Royal British Legion (RBL) highlighting the panel's extreme disappointment that the RBL written submission made no reference to MKC Heroes resulting in the voice of children and young people in the covenant being absent, and that work surrounding MKC Heroes should be appropriately led by RBL as was their responsibility;	RBL are a significant partner in Plymouth's Armed Forces Partnership and relationships are good and cover a large and varied range of activities. Most recently in this particular area, the Children and Families Theme group lead has met with the RBL and other interested parties, regarding the voice of young people and a Choir, where a plan is being developed. The voice of children in young people in Plymouth is a fundamental element of the dedicated Children and Families Theme group of the Partnership, as it is with other key city partners on the group.
7.	To recommend to the Cabinet Member responsible for the Armed Forces Covenant and the Cabinet Member responsible for housing that:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an Armed Forces Champion is created in the housing team as a single point of contact and support for armed forces queries; 	An identified Senior Community Connections Officer (CW) is the identified Armed Forces champion for the service.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a greater understanding of the veterans cohort in the complex needs assessment in terms of the impact of drug and alcohol rehabilitation upon homelessness is sought so that appropriate support is provided; 	The latest available census data has been used in the preparation of an assessment of the Armed Forces Community across the city. However, much of the census 2021 data is still being published nationally but when it is, will be reported back to the Plymouth Armed Forces Partnership. The latest Homelessness data indicates that

	Select Committee Recommendations	Cabinet Response
		there are currently 12 homeless veterans in the City. However, they are all being supported through the homelessness pathway. They aren't street homeless and will be in temporary accommodation awaiting move to permanent.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> social landlords are encouraged to sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant and work in partnership with the Council in housing veterans and ex-services personnel; 	The Plymouth Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Business Theme Group works closely with Wessex Reserve Forces' & Cadets' Association, with the aim to encourage as many organisations to sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant as possible. They have been successful in this area over the years but more can be done. This is one of the reasons why the Skills and Employment task and finish group was created to tap into the additional contacts and knowledge in this area. This recommendation will be put to the Business theme group for action.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the links between the Council and Alabare are strengthened in terms of support provided to ex-services personnel in their transition out of supported accommodation; 	The link and relationships between the Plymouth Armed Forces Covenant Partnership and Alabare is strong. Indeed Alabare are members of the Covenant in Plymouth. November 2022 saw the completion of the first houses which form phase one of the Stirling House project in Plymouth, where the first veteran self-builder and his family moved into their new home, along with two local families who were in housing need. The Stirling Project, based on the site of a former residential care home on Honicknowle Green, has seen nine previously homeless veterans involved in the construction of 25 self-contained affordable homes to rent.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an approach is made to the Ministry of Defence regarding their surplus housing stock in Plymouth in order to explore the feasibility of using it specifically to support veterans and ex-forces personnel; 	Plymouth City Council, in late 2022 made an approach to the Ministry of Defence regarding surplus housing stock and were informed that the current stock were already being repurposed. However, the Cabinet Member will write to the relevant MOD department to ascertain whether there is any other surplus stock and its potential future use.
8.	To recommend to the Cabinet Member responsible for the Armed Forces Covenant and the Cabinet Member responsible for HR to:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> promote the Armed Forces Community Covenant to employers in the city; 	This is part of the Business Theme groups terms of reference, but also the task and finish group led by EPS in relation to skills and workforce.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> request that a data mapping exercise of the Council's staff is undertaken to establish the numbers of veterans, reservists, cadets and families of serving military personnel so appropriate support is given; 	This is currently being undertaken as part of wider employee data mapping exercise.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> establish a network within the Council to specifically advise on issues affecting the Armed Forces Community and inform the work of the covenant within the Council; 	This network is in place. First meeting set up for the 10 th March

	Select Committee Recommendations	Cabinet Response
9.	To recommend to the Cabinet Member responsible for the Armed Forces Covenant and the Cabinet Member responsible for employment, skills and training:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> that work is undertaken by the Council specifically with regards to the skills of ex services personnel and how they could be interpreted and translated into employable skills in the city, and that performance coaching is developed and encouraged; 	A Plymouth Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Skills and Employment Task and Finish group is in place to address this. For example, Military Tuesday is a successful project in this area.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to ensure that appropriate support is provided by the Council to spouses and partners of serving personnel in accessing training and finding employment on arrival to the city; 	A Plymouth Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Skills and Employment Task and Finish group is in place to address this. For example, Military Tuesday is a successful project in this area.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> that the Council feeds into the Ministry of Defence transition service in order to develop an offers and needs assessment and criteria with the intention of helping personnel move out of the forces and into employment within the city; 	This is part of the work of the Skills and Employment Task and Finish Group.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> that partnership working is further considered and strengthened to the benefit of the covenant; 	The Plymouth Armed Forces Covenant will further consider this recommendation.
10.	To recommend to the Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny Panel to explore further opportunities to support employment and development for veterans, ex-personnel and service families in the city; for scrutiny to consider if improvements could be made as to how the armed forces covenant is communicated in the city; and that the structures of the city's covenant are reviewed in light of legislative changes.	Cabinet lead for Armed Forces and Plymouth's Armed Forces Champion, I welcome any scrutiny which seeks to improve and enhance services to the Armed Forces Community and their families. I'm happy to support the recommendation for the Performance, Finance and Customer scrutiny committee to incorporate this into their work plan.

Select Committee – Mental Health

1. The Committee recommends that the Devon Integrated Care Board explore the provision of dedicated mental health professionals for schools / academy groups in Plymouth and beyond, for specialist mental health support.
2. Based on evidence submitted by the Plymouth Youth Parliament, the Committee recommends to the Plymouth Education Board, that a 'place-based' teaching approach of the physical health and mental wellbeing section of the statutory relationships, sex and health education curriculum be developed in the city, which must address social media, exams, drugs, alcohol and vaping.

3. The Committee recommends that the Plymouth Education Board strongly encourages schools to participate in Plymouth's Youth Parliament and ensures that links between Youth Services and schools are developed and strengthened.
4. The committee is not assured that sufficient progress toward parity of esteem has been achieved over the past decade. The committee recommends that the Mental Health Provider Collaborative, re-evaluate the funding streams for Public Health Initiatives in the City to ensure that programmes are aligned, and that funding is adequate, fair and efficient and make recommendation for further resource to the ICB to achieve parity of esteem in the future. To this end, the Committee recommends that NHS Devon ensures Plymouth receives its fair share of funding for Health, helping reduce the regional variation currently experienced.
5. The committee is aware that the access point to healthcare for most residents is their General Practitioner. The committee therefore recommends that residents are re-directed to mental health services, which do not require referral, at initial contact with health care services (through e-consult pop-up / telephone advice), and that service signposting is improved, including on the Councillors Hub, and Plymouth City Councils' public website.
6. The Committee welcomes the current provision of 22 Wellbeing Champions, trained in Mental Health 1st Aid and recommends the relevant Cabinet Member seeks to promote this approach within the Plymouth business community, and through our existing networks.
7. The Committee recommends that the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider adding an update on the Qwell programme to its work programme to examine targets, performance and future opportunities
8. That Livewell SW and NHS Devon ICB work more closely with the Voluntary and Community Sector, ensuring the voice of those with lived experience remains central to the development, improvement and redesign of services, led by the Mental Health provider collaborative in the city.
9. In line with our commitments as a Dementia friendly City, the Committee recommends that:
 - a. Livewell Southwest prioritises Dementia diagnosis waiting times to ensure patients receive support in sufficient time;
 - b. the potential for a dementia one stop shop is seriously explored and reported to committee at a future date;
 - c. Resources are sought for the provision of an MRI scanner to assist in the reduction of diagnostic waits;
10. The Committee recommends that the Memory Café and other voluntary and community enterprises are communicated to Councillors, so that they can promote their services.
11. The Committee recognises the progress and achievement of CAMHS service performance and recommends that Livewell SW undertake a communication engagement project to ensure awareness of the self-referral system and that Livewell consider rebranding of the service.
12. The Committee notes with concern, a 90% increase in Hospital admissions for eating disorders since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. The committee supports the Provider Collaborative's creation of a business case for the establishment of a specialist eating disorder unit within the South West region. The committee recommends this unit is centrally located within the region.
13. The Committee notes with concern, the prolonged waiting times for neurodevelopmental assessment, and the negative impacts on all those involved. The Committee recommends that the provider collaborative produces an action plan to tackle waiting times, and reports to a scrutiny session in the early part of the next municipal year.
14. The Committee recommends that Livewell SW provide a report to the Children's OSC regarding the number of Care experienced people using mental health services, and lists which services are in demand, and how they are being accessed.

15. The committee believes that social prescribing, which connects people to activities, nature, groups, and services in their community, can have significant positive impacts on physical health and mental wellbeing. The committee recommends to the LCP that work is undertaken to ensure existing provision is coordinated and fully understood, and any gaps in provision are shared so that financial support, if available, can be profiled for these initiatives.

16. The Committee is not adequately assured that the mental health support for veterans in Plymouth is sufficiently coordinated or communicated. The Committee therefore recommends that at a future Armed Forces Covenant meeting, the support for veteran's mental health and wellbeing is evaluated, and findings fed back to this Committee. The Committee also:

- a. Pledges its support and gratitude to all Veterans across the City;
- b. Recommends that NHS England engages with the Defence Medical Services to ensure a suitable plan is arranged for service personnel when leaving the military, and that this is followed up on post discharge.
- c. Recommends that the Plymouth online directory is more widely communicated to ensure that all residents and elected members have a centralised point to access support.
- d. The role of veterans mental health champions and improved support be considered within the City
- e. Healthcare Services within the City seek to achieve Veteran Aware Status.
- f. The Chair writes to Johnny Mercer MP advising that the Armed Forces Covenant will be undertaking a review of existing health and wellbeing support for veterans across the city, and urges him to continue to work cooperatively to boost communication and signposting for veterans.

17. The Select Committee provides its full support and appreciation to the Voluntary and Community Sector mental health and dementia charities and enterprises, which perform a crucial role in alleviating pressure from other NHS services.