

**QUESTION BY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC**

Please return your completed question form to Democratic Support, Plymouth City Council, Ballard House, West Hoe Road, Plymouth, PL1 3BJ or email:

[democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk)

Question to be submitted no later than 5 clear working days before the meeting.

**Question submitted by:** Mr Black

**To the Cabinet Member or Chair for:** Cllr Aspinall

**To be asked at the next (Council, Cabinet or Planning Committee) Meeting: Council**  
**Date:** 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023

**Question (to be no longer than 50 words):** Some residents in this city are on the cusp of being considered mentally competent to make decisions and care for themselves. Meaning these people are very vulnerable and at risk of harm or self neglect. How does the council support these people and what support is there?

**Will you be attending the meeting in person to ask your question?** No

**Response:** (for completion by City Council officers and Cabinet Members / Chairs)

We understand that it is a worrying time for families and individuals when a loved one appears to become unwell or seem unable to make decisions for themselves. This can be caused by many factors, including their physical or mental health. It can mean they struggle to make decisions about their health or care needs, or their finances. We know that having the capacity to make decisions is not fixed and for some people does change and fluctuate depending on how well they are at the time.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (known as the MCA) is the legislation that sets out how we should approach assessments in these circumstances. The MCA starts with the assumption that people have the capacity to make decisions for themselves and sets out the process when there is a need to challenge that fundamental assumption.

There are a range of health and social care professionals that carry out Mental Capacity Act Assessments (MCA). These are grounded in our best understanding of people's needs and wishes.

Often people are supported by family and friends through this process. We do also have support for people who are going through this process via advocacy services like those provided by the Highbury Trust. We have support for the family or friends of the person via our carers services, which are provided by Improving Lives Plymouth and also support and advice available from other VCSE partners including Age UK.