

City Council

Monday 25 November 2024

PRESENT:

Councillor Tuohy, in the Chair.

Councillor Murphy, Vice Chair.

Councillors Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Bannerman, Mrs Beer, Blight, Briars-Delve, Mrs Bridgeman, Coker, Cresswell, Cuddihee, Dann, Darcy, Dingle, Evans OBE, Finn, Freeman, Gilmour, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Holloway, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Lowry, Lugger, McCarty, McLay, McNamara, Moore, Morton, Ney, P.Nicholson, S.Nicholson, Noble, Penrose, Poyser, Raynsford, Reilly, Ricketts, Simpson, M.Smith, R.Smith, Sproston, Steel, Stephens, Stevens, Taylor, Tofan, Ms Watkin and Wood.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Loveridge, Penberthy and Tippetts.

The meeting started at 2pm and finished at 6.17pm.

Note: The full discussion can be viewed on the webcast of the City Council meeting at www.plymouth.gov.uk. At a future meeting, the Council will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

34. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

35. Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were made by councillors in accordance with the code of conduct in respect of items under consideration at the meeting -

Name	Item Number	Reason	Interest
Councillor Taylor	10e	Employer mentioned	Private
Councillor P. Nicholson	10d	President of Gables Farm Dogs & Cats Home.	Private

36. Appointments to Committees, Outside Bodies etc

The Council agreed to note the changes to committees and outside bodies for November 2024.

37. Questions by the Public

There were two questions from members of the public, attached as an appendix.

38. **Announcements**

The Lord Mayor made the following announcements:

- a) Jane Elliott Toncic had won the 2024 National Safeguarding Adults Board ‘Lifetime Award’, recognising Jane’s long standing and significant contribution in support of the people and communities of Plymouth;
- b) Two of the city’s most prominent new developments have been shortlisted for three awards in the national RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence;
 - I. InterCity Place had been shortlisted in the Health and Wellbeing category;
 - II. Melville Phase I, in the Royal William Yard, had been shortlisted in the Heritage and Culture category and Successful Economy category.
 - III. The Council's Net Zero Team’s innovative “Climate Decision Tool” was also announced as a finalist.
- c) At a recent ceremony, the Local Council Road Innovation group presented a special life-time achievement award to Councillor Mark Coker. He had demonstrated unwavering dedication, leadership, and a relentless commitment to improving our community's infrastructure. His innovative approaches and tireless efforts not only enhanced the safety and efficiency of our roads but set a benchmark for excellence in public service. The award was a testament to his contributions to the community and supporting others in the Local Government Family.

Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) made the following announcements:

- d) 19 November had marked 1000 days since the start of the War in Ukraine;
- e) The Ukrainian Flag had been raised outside the Guildhall and the Ukrainian Consulate Assembly for Citizens had been hosted as a show of commitment and support;
- f) The Homes England Board was to be hosted 27 November 2024 and was an opportunity to show the ambition for growth and regeneration in the city;
- g) There had been numerous successes during the previous 205 days in respect to the completion of growth and investment projects across the city. More than £120 Million had been committed, including:
 - I. £23 Million in port facilities at Millbay;
 - II. £25 million into the Community Diagnostics Hub in the City Centre;
 - III. £18 million had been handed over to the Derriford district centre;
 - IV. All £25 Million seed capital for the Freeport project had been committed
 - V. £7 Million pound had been committed for innovation bonds at Oeansgate;
 - VI. Planning permission had been secured and procurement completed on the £8 million Beaumont Way development;
 - VII. Demolition had commenced on Tavistock place to enable future cultural investment;
 - VIII. £10 million Waterfront Regeneration Scheme had commenced at Tinside;
 - IX. Contracts had been awarded for the Mount Batton Centre Improvement Scheme.

- h) The City Centre Company had voted to renew its business improvement district plans following a ballot of all business the previous week. The ballot yielded a 91% majority in favour of the plans and represented a major endorsement for the Council's plans for the City Centre;
- i) The draft Port Strategy had been completed and would be brought before City Council in 2025. The Port Strategy was integral to the facilitation of growth as Plymouth possessed the greatest marine employment within the UK: 20,100 Jobs and £1.2 billion of Gross Value Added (GVA) in the sector, with the potential to grow another 2,600 jobs directly, 4,200 jobs indirectly before 2030;
- j) The Marine Steward Council had been hosted in the City within the last Month, provided a boost to the Fishing industry.

Councillor Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change) made the following announcements:

- k) Significant progress had been made regarding food waste collections across Plymouth;
- l) Commitment to the project had been formalised in the most recent iteration of the Net Zero Action plan in February. In March recruitment had initiated for a Senior Project Manager and, during the previous week, Councillor Evans OBE had signed an Executive Decision to approve the purchase of food waste collection vehicles and household containers;
- m) The intention was to award Supply Contracts in 2025.

Councillor Laing (Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications) made the following announcements:

- n) Plymouth City Council's in-house fostering team had enhanced the financial support and retention offers to existing Foster carers and revitalised the approach to Foster care recruitment;
- o) Foster Plymouth had joined a growing partnership of Councils across the country to produce a short film promoting local authority fostering, which launched on 17 October 2024.

Councillor Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Sport, Leisure & HR, and OD,) made the following announcements:

- p) Money had recently been invested into Plymouth Active Leisure, in order to promote active lifestyles and overcome inequalities in the City;
- q) Plymouth Active Leisure were to launch, during the upcoming Spring, a new strategic plan intended to support people to be healthy and active, a key element of the Councils strategic development;

- r) In partnership with Plymouth Football Community Trust and Brickfields Football Club, the £22 million new grounds had been built, this had been named “Foulston Park”, celebrated the architect who developed iconic Plymouth landmarks.

Councillor Cresswell (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Apprenticeships) made the following announcements:

- s) Examination results had been returned from the academic year 23/24, providing a strong indication of achievement within the city.
- I. The Year One phonics check indicated 81.2% achieved the standard score, up by 1% from last year and 2.2% above last year’s national average;
 - II. Children in their final year of primary school achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics had improved on last year’s result. Last year, Plymouth was level with the national benchmark of 60%, early data indicates a 1.6% increase in 23/24;
 - III. Key Stage Four results early indications displayed that Plymouth will draw closer to the national benchmark, if not matching, with 46% achieving these benchmarks compared to 45% the national average.
- t) A pioneering programme had been launched for the City’s children led by the Plymouth Sound National Marine Park. The programme will engage 970 children in the first year, reaching 2500 over the lifetime of the project.

Councillor Stephens (Chair of Scrutiny Management Board) made the following announcements:

- u) The Scrutiny Management Board, as well as various members, had received complaints regarding bicycling within the City Centre from the Plymouth Senior Citizens Forum;
- v) The numerous dubious and dangerous behaviours expressed by bicyclists would be investigated by the Scrutiny Management Board early in 2025.

39. **Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 - 2028/29**

The report was introduced by Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) and seconded by Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council).

After contributions from Councillors P. Nicholson, McLay, Wood, Dann and Finn, the Council agreed to:

- I. Approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

For (39)

Councillors Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Bannerman, Blight, Briars-Delve, Coker, Cuddihee, Cresswell, Dann, Dingle, Evans OBE, Freeman, Gilmour, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Holloway, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Lowry, McCarty, McNamara, Moore, Morton, Murphy, Ney, Noblerose, Raynsford, Reilly, Simpson, M. Smith, Sproston, Steel, Stephens, Stevens and Taylor.

Against (2)
Councillors Poyser and McLay.

Abstain (12)
Councillors Mrs Beer, Mrs Bridgeman, Darcy, Finn, Luggier, P. Nicholson, S. Nicholson, Tofan, Ricketts, R. Smith, Ms Watkin and Wood.

Absent/ Did Not Vote (1)
Councillor Tuohy.

40. **Capital Monitoring Report September 2024 (Quarter 2)**

The report was introduced by Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) and seconded by Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council).

That Council agreed:

1. To note the revised Capital Budget 2024-2029 £372.669m as shown in Table I.
2. To note the Prudential Indicators Q2 2024/25.

For (39)
Councillors Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Bannerman, Blight, Briars-Delve, Coker, Cuddihee, Cresswell, Dann, Dingle, Evans OBE, Freeman, Gilmour, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Holloway, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Lowry, McCarty, McNamara, Moore, Morton, Murphy, Ney, Noble, Penrose, Raynsford, Reilly, Simpson, M. Smith, Sproston, Steel, Stephens, Stevens and Taylor.

Against (0)

Abstain (14)
Councillors Mrs Beer, Mrs Bridgeman, Darcy, Finn, Luggier, McLay, P. Nicholson, S. Nicholson, Poyser, Ricketts, R. Smith, Tofan, Ms Watkin and Wood.

Absent/ Did Not Vote (1)
Councillor Tuohy.

41. **Urgent Decisions**

The item was introduced by Councillor Tuohy (the Lord Mayor) and seconded by Councillor Murphy (the Deputy Lord Mayor).

The Council noted the report.

42. **Motions on notice**
43. **Achieving Value For Money From Council Assets**

The motion was introduced by Councillor P. Nicholson and seconded by Councillor Ricketts.

Contributions were received from Councillor Briars-Delve, Lowry, Mrs Beer and Mrs. Bridgeman.

Councillor Laing, seconded by Councillor Stephens, proposed a closure motion to refer the item to the Scrutiny Management Board.

The council agreed to refer the motion to committee.

For (46)

Councillors Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Bannerman, Mrs Beer, Blight, Briars-Delve, Mrs Bridgeman, Coker, Cuddihee, Cresswell, Dann, Dingle, Evans OBE, Freeman, Gilmour, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Holloway, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Lowry, McCarty, McLay, McNamara, Moore, Morton, Murphy, Ney, P. Nicholson, S. Nicholson, Noble, Penrose, Poyser, Raynsford, Reilly, Ricketts, Simpson, M. Smith, Sproston, Steel, Stephens, Stevens and Taylor

Against (7)

Councillors Darcy, Finn, Luggier, R. Smith, Tofan, Ms Watkin and Wood.

Abstain 0

Absent/ Did Not Vote (1)

Councillor Tuohy.

44. **White Ribbon Day**

The motion was Introduced by Councillor Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Events, Cemeteries and Crematoria) and seconded by Councillor M. Smith.

Contributions were received from Councillors Mrs Beer, Reilly and R. Smith.

The Council agreed to:

1. Ask Cabinet to include the Primary Prevention of violence against women and girls when agreeing new and updated policies and strategies across all departments, alongside responses to gender-based violence.
2. Ask the Leader to write to Jess Phillips MP, Minister for Safeguarding & VAWG to request an increase in government investment and statutory sources of funding for specialist organisations working on Primary Prevention initiatives aimed at addressing the underlying factors contributing to violence against women in the workplace

For (53)

Councillors Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Bannerman, Mrs Beer, Blight, Briars-Delve, Mrs Bridgeman, Coker, Cuddihee, Cresswell, Dann, Darcy, Dingle, Evans OBE, Finn, Freeman, Gilmour, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Holloway, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Lowry, Luggier, McCarty, McLay, McNamara, Moore, Morton, Murphy, Ney, P. Nicholson, S. Nicholson, Noble, Penrose, Poyser, Raynsford, Reilly, Ricketts, Simpson, M. Smith, R. Smith, Sproston, Steel, Stephens, Stevens, Taylor, Tofan, Ms Watkin and Wood.

Against (0)

Abstain (0)

Absent/ Did Not Vote (1)
Councillor Tuohy.

*(A 45 minute break was called at the termination of this motion)
(Councillor Holloway exited the meeting at end of this item)*

45. **Capital Funding for the Plymouth Airport Site**

The motion was Introduced by Councillor Lugger (Leader of the Opposition) and seconded by Councillor Darcy.

A closure motion was introduced by Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) to refer the motion to the Scrutiny Management Board. This was seconded by Councillor Dann.

The Council agreed to refer the motion to committee.

For (47)

Councillors Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Bannerman, Blight, Briars-Delve, Coker, Cuddihee, Cresswell, Dann, Darcy, Dingle, Evans OBE, Finn, Freeman, Gilmour, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Lowry, Lugger, McCarty, McLay, McNamara, Moore, Morton, Murphy, Ney, Noble, Penrose, Poyser, Raynsford, Reilly, Simpson, M. Smith, R. Smith, Sproston, Steel, Stephens, Stevens, Taylor, Tofan, Ms Watkin and Wood.

Against (4)

Councillors Mrs Beer, S. Nicholson, P. Nicholson and Ricketts.

Abstain (1)

Councillor Mrs Bridgeman.

Absent/ Did Not Vote (2)

Councillors Holloway and Tuohy.

46. **Gables Farm Dogs & Cats Home**

The motion was introduced by Councillor Steel and seconded by Councillor Taylor.

Contributions were received from Councillors Mrs. Beer and P. Nicholson.

The Council agreed to the motion.

For (52)

Councillors Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Bannerman, Mrs Beer, Blight, Briars-Delve, Mrs Bridgeman, Coker, Cuddihee, Cresswell, Dann, Darcy, Dingle, Evans OBE, Finn, Freeman, Gilmour, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Lowry, Lugger, McCarty, McLay, McNamara, Moore, Morton, Murphy, Ney, P. Nicholson, S. Nicholson, Noble, Penrose, Poyser, Raynsford, Reilly, Ricketts, Simpson, M. Smith, R. Smith, Sproston, Steel, Stephens, Stevens, Taylor, Tofan, Ms Watkin and Wood.

Against (0)

Abstain (0)

Absent (2)

Councillors Holloway and Tuohy.

(Councillor Mrs Bridgeman exited the meeting at the conclusion of this item)

47. **Urging Plymouth City Council to support the Climate and Nature Bill**

The motion was introduced by Councillor McLay (Leader of the Green Group) and seconded by Councillor Poyser.

Amendment proposed by Councillor Briars-Delve and seconded by Councillor Raynsford.

After contributions speaking to the amendment from Councillors McLay and Darcy, the amendment was passed.

For (48)

Councillors Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Bannerman, Mrs Beer, Blight, Briars-Delve, Coker, Cuddihee, Cresswell, Dann, Darcy, Dingle, Evans OBE, Finn, Freeman, Gilmour, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Lowry, Lugger, McCarty, McLay, McNamara, Moore, Morton, Murphy, Ney, Noble, Penrose, Poyser, Raynsford, Reilly, Simpson, M. Smith, R. Smith, Sproston, Steel, Stephens, Stevens, Taylor, Tofan, Ms Watkin and Wood.

Against (0)

Abstain (3)

Councillors P. Nicholson, S. Nicholson, and Ricketts.

Absent/ Did Not Vote (3)

Councillors Mrs Bridgeman, Holloway and Tuohy.

The Council agreed to:

1. Support the Climate and Nature Bill;
2. Inform local residents, and inform local press/media, of the motion;
3. Ask the Leader to write to Luke Pollard MP, Rebecca Smith MP and Fred Thomas MP, to inform them that the motion had been passed, urging them to sign up to support the Bill, and requesting that they vote for the Bill at its second reading on 24 January 2025;
4. Ask the Leader to write to Zero Hour, the organisers of the cross-party campaign for the Bill, expressing official support.

For (47)

Councillors Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Bannerman, Blight, Briars-Delve, Coker, Cuddihee, Cresswell, Dann, Darcy, Dingle, Evans OBE, Finn, Freeman, Gilmour, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Lowry, Lugger, McCarty, McLay, McNamara, Moore,

Morton, Murphy, Ney, Noble, Penrose, Poyser, Raynsford, Reilly, Simpson, M. Smith, R. Smith, Sproston, Steel, Stephens, Stevens, Taylor, Tofan, Ms Watkin and Wood.

Against (0)

Abstain (4)

Councillors Mrs Beer, P. Nicholson, S. Nicholson, and Ricketts

Absent/ Did Not Vote (3)

Councillors Mrs Bridgeman, Holloway and Tuohy.

(A five minute recess was called during this item from 17:15 to 17:20)

(Councillor Mrs Bridgeman left the meeting at 17:15)

(Councillor S. Nicholson left the meeting at the conclusion of this item at 17:30)

48. Proposed Post Office Closure

The motion was introduced by Councillor Penrose and seconded by Councillor Aspinall.

The Council agreed to

- I. Ask the Leader the Council to write to Nigel Railton, Post Office Limited’s Interim Chair, expressing the Council’s dismay and request that the decision to close Mutley Plain Post Office is reversed.

For (50)

Councillors Allen, Allison, Aspinall, Bannerman, Mrs Beer, Blight, Briars-Delve, Coker, Cuddihee, Cresswell, Dann, Darcy, Dingle, Evans OBE, Finn, Freeman, Gilmour, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Krizanac, Laing, Lawson, Lowry, Luggier, McCarty, McLay, McNamara, Moore, Morton, Murphy, Ney, P. Nicholson, Noble, Penrose, Poyser, Raynsford, Reilly, Ricketts, Simpson, M. Smith, R. Smith, Sproston, Steel, Stephens, Stevens, Taylor, Tofan, Ms Watkin and Wood.

Against (0)

Abstain (0)

Absent/ Did Not Vote (4)

Councillors Mrs Bridgeman, Holloway, S. Nicholson and Tuohy.

49. Questions by Councillors

#	From	To	Subject
I	Luggier	Evans	4,000 public buildings were sold to developers every year. Had the best prices been achieved for the disposal of land within Plymouth and would it be possible to have a register for disposals?
	Response: There was a register maintained.		

	Supplementary: The Registry Office was sold for £295,000. Was this the best value that could have been achieved?		
	Response: This was related to knowing the price of everything and the value of nothing. Whereas £900,000 was the sale price, the particular property that was sold was sitting idle for seven years.		
2	Gilmour	Coker	Regarding bus services and local transport infrastructure, a recent announcement from the secretary of transport publicised a tranche of funding. What was the initial funding proposal in reference to the PCC and residents?
	Response: £4.5 million was granted for the 25/26 municipal year. This would be looked into by the Bus Champion (Councillor Sproston) and Ward Councillors. Final clarification was being awaited upon as funding was allocated in three tranches.		
3	Steel	Haydon	Did the Cabinet Member for Safety support the recent establishment of Uber into the City?
	Response: Yes. Support would be given to any operator that applied in the City.		
4	Bannerman	Laing	There had been recent reforms to Children's social care. Was it possible to outline how these would affect Plymouth?
	Response: The change was welcomed by the Council. A three year transformation plan had been put in place with clear plans for residential children's home. The recent reforms would assist in managing the ongoing precarious budget deficit within Children's Services.		
5	Poyser	Coker	Would a review of the bus shelter installation be presented in a report to the relevant scrutiny committee?
	Response: Yes, if requested by scrutiny.		
6	Stephens	Cresswell	The Department for Education had produced a report which indicated suspension rates had doubled in school. What actions were Children's Services taking to address this?
	Response: This issue had been discussed in detail. Collaboration with schools had taken place to avoid exclusions when possible. Robust escalation procedures had been produced. Offers for schools regarding vaping and substance abuse campaigns had taken place. The SEND strategy was ongoing and "inclusion" was the fundamental theme of these strategies. Free primary school breakfast clubs had begun to be established which would generate "gentle and right start to the school day"		
7	Ricketts	Coker	In regards to the Community Infrastructure Levy, Should £750,000 have been spent on electric buses?
	Response: Yes.		
	Supplementary: Would the ongoing funding be an ongoing concern for the Council, in reference to subsidising the rolling stock?		
	Response: A substantial amount of money had been brought in and net-zero		

	had been a prime concern cross-party. Electric buses had proved immensely popular and were better for the environment.		
8	Wood	Lowry	Grant Thornton Auditor's Annual Report of South Gloucestershire outlined usable reserves as a proportion of net cost of services across 38 comparators. Councillor Lowry had stated PCC reserves were 200% of revenue which did not equate to usable reserves as a proportion of net cost of services. Could a version resembling this be created and compared against such comparators?
	Response: This would be arranged in principle. Approximately £111 million represented around 50% of reserves and had done for years. Comparisons to South Gloucester were unfair. These figures would be published as a percentage but against our own comparators.		
9	Finn	Coker	What was being done to address access problems as a result of bus shelters installation?
	Response: Moving Traffic Offences had been implemented to address the issue. Further options would be looked at, including talks with city centre companies.		
10	Steel	Laing	What progress had been made regarding Residential Children's Homes?
	Response: The process had moved ahead at pace. The business case had been approved, delivery plan to be completed this week. This had been done in partnership with Health and Education Departments. Properties had been viewed and staff recruitment had been initiated for the first two homes.		
11	Poyser	Briars-Delve	In conjunction with food waste collection, was there an opportunity to promote composting?
	Response: There were currently examinations of options by Street Services.		
	Supplementary: Was there a grant scheme in place to purchase a composter instead of a collection?		
	Response: Unfortunately, national legislation would not allow this.		
12	Ricketts	Briars-Delve	Was the ongoing central park ground investigation programme due to be completed as expected?
	Response: The programme was to investigate private company damage to the park and was still ongoing. The outcomes were not yet available. Officers would be reminded of the importance of the case and reports issued as soon as possible.		
13	Wood	Evans	How much did the report cost for Electoral Cycle review and what amount of people voting for reform would have been sufficient for action from the Leader?
	Response: The cost was absorbed by the state and was not a referendum, to that extent 180,000 Plymouthians allowed the Council to make the decision on their behalf.		

14	Finn	Coker	In reference to parking and dangers to life outside school. Could a campaign be put together with schools to alleviate the dangers?
	Response: There were four schemes for school safety in place in conjunction with walking and cycling schemes. If schools did not want to take part, they were not obligated to do so. It was difficult to get more schools on board.		
15	Ricketts	Briars-Delve	Pathway running adjacent to Central park Avenue, the work that had been carried out had made it unpassable when flooding and the flooding had reportedly been a made worse.
	Response: Please could this be referred to me through casework or Emailed to me, greater clarity was required on the location and to decipher responsibility. Please feel free to Email.		
16	P. Nicholson	Lowry	The record in the past in regards to quality pavements was not great. What contingency was being put into place and were a certain quantity of pavers being retained?
			Response: Yes. Please refer to the pavement manual. A much enhanced maintenance regime had been put into place.
			Supplementary: Was the regime currently in place?
			Answer: In terms of installation, yes. In terms of Maintenance, no.

Please note that questions, answers, supplementary questions and supplementary answers have been summarised.