



**PLYMOUTH**  
CITY COUNCIL

# **Homes and Communities Scrutiny Panel**

**Improved Public Connectivity with Plymouth City Council**

**February 2025**

# Purpose and Agenda



Purpose: To explore the following questions following motion on notice at Council:

1. Investigate current phone line system
2. Council helpline is advertised in media/ Council literature.
3. Conduct an assessment of Council contact centres and promote 'walk ins'.
4. Utilise suitable accommodation wherein face to face Communication is possible.

The agenda for this session will consider how these services are currently set up and provide the panel with relevant data to explore the provision of service

# Current phone system

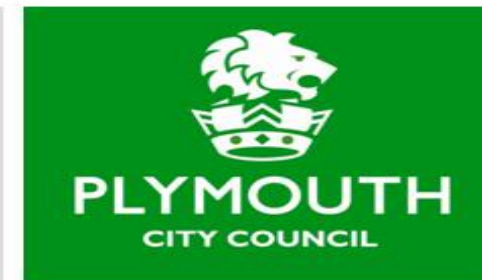


Our Contact Centre answers calls to 668000

<u>Calls into the Customer Hub - 1st April 2024 – 31st December 2024</u>	<u>Totals</u>	<u>Avg% Ans Calls</u>	<u>Avg Speed Ans (Minutes)</u>	<u>Avg Call Time (Minutes)</u>	<u>Average Wait (Minutes)</u>
<b>Total calls received:</b>	<b>58,759</b>	96.42%	0.64	4.52	0.7
Adult Social Care	18,673				
Children Social Care	10,708				
Homeless Foodbank	10,508				
Digital Inclusion - 194 Customers currently registered	10,216				
Electoral Services	4,883				
Payment Assistance	2,355				
Other lines	19,362				

The digital inclusion service has been shared with and is being promoted by PADAN to their members

# Signposting and promotion of our number



We know that many of our customers look up our phone number from either our website or other sites on the internet.

[www.Plymouth.gov.uk/contact-us](http://www.Plymouth.gov.uk/contact-us) provides this information:

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## Call us

Phone our Contact Centre on 01752 668000

- Monday: 9am to 5pm
- Tuesday: 9am to 5pm
- Wednesday: 9am to 5pm
- Thursday: 9am to 5pm
- Friday: 9am to 5pm
- Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays: closed

Council Tax and Housing Benefit is open from 10am to 4pm.

# Signposting and promotion of our number



We use leaflets and other publications to put across key messages to avoid any danger of digital exclusion for universal and other popular services. We also publish contact details on social media posts where relevant.

**Manage your Council Tax, set up a Direct Debit or sign up for paperless billing at**  
[www.plymouth.gov.uk/myaccount](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/myaccount)

## HOW TO PAY YOUR COUNCIL TAX

- 1) Pay online or set up a Direct Debit at [www.plymouth.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/counciltax)
- 2) Online Banking  
 Sort code: 20-30-54 Account number: 43667596  
 Account name: Plymouth City Council - Council Tax  
 You'll need your payment reference (it's on the front of this bill)
- 3) By phone using our 24 hour payment line on 0300 456 0519 (normal landline rate)
- 4) Cash/Card - use the barcode on the front at any PayPoint/Post Office.



Taken from our annual Council Tax billing letter to all residents. Advise to go online followed by alternative to write or call including the 668000 number.

## STRUGGLING TO PAY YOUR COUNCIL TAX?

You may be able to change your instalments from weekly to fortnightly or from 10 to 12 months (you will need to let us know by the 1st April). You may also be entitled to a discount or exemption. Visit our website [www.plymouth.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/counciltax), write to us at Plymouth City Council, Customer Services, PO Box 293, Plymouth PL5 5BZ. Alternatively, you can call us on 01752 668000. ←

## LOCAL DISCOUNTS

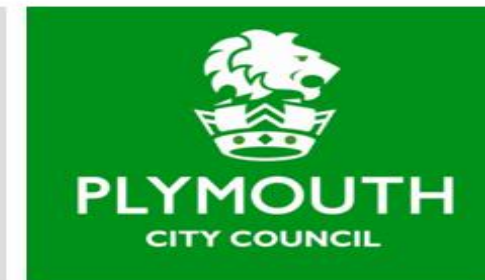
The council has the discretion to reduce Council Tax bills by way of a local discount. Any award made is paid for by local Council Tax payers. A separate Exceptional Hardship Fund is in place for those who qualify for a Council Tax reduction but still need additional help.

## COUNCIL TAX PREMIUMS

A property that has been unoccupied and unfurnished continuously for a period of more than one year will be subject to a Council Tax premium added to the bill. Certain exclusions apply.

**If there are any changes to your circumstances, or that of your property, that may affect the amount of Council Tax you pay, you must notify the council within 21 days or you may face a penalty.**

# “Walk ins”



Since April this year we have offered customers the choice of a face to face meeting with staff to support customers in our libraries

		<u>Virtual 121 support - Plymstock, Plympton and St Budeaux - pilot</u>	
<u>Pilot - Face to Face DA Service offer in Central Library</u>	<u>Central</u>		<u>Total</u>
Blue Badge face to face offer - 1st April 2024 – 31st December 2024	200	11	<u>211</u>
Bus Pass face to face offer - 1st April 2024 – 31st December 2024	422	3	<u>425</u>
Newly introduced general Digital Assistance live 18/11/24 - 10/01/2024	93	0	<u>93</u>

Feedback from customers suggests that they favour accessing face to face support in Central Library over their local community library. The data shows that community library visits account for around 2% of total face to face meetings.