

# Cabinet

**Monday 7 July 2025**

## **PRESENT:**

Councillor Evans OBE in the Chair.

Councillor Laing, Vice Chair.

Councillors Aspinall, Briars-Delve, Dann, Haydon, Lowry, Penberthy, Cresswell and Stephens.

Also in attendance: Paul Barnard (Service Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure), Ian Beavis (Project Manager, WSP Consultancy), Stephen Beet (Head of Adult Social Care and Retained Functions), Liz Bryant (Service Director for Legal Services), Glenn Caplin-Grey (Strategic Director for Growth), Nick Carter (Head of Housing & Regeneration), Hannah Chandler-Whiting (Democratic Advisor), Emma Crowther (Service Director for Strategic Co-operative Commissioning), Steve Flaxton (Strategic Transport Programme Coordinator), Matt Garrett (Service Director for Community Connections), John Green (Net Zero Delivery Manager), David Haley (Director of Children's Services), Rhys Jones (CEO of Plymouth Active Leisure), Louise Kelley (Head of Active Wellbeing and Sport, Plymouth Active Leisure), Tracey Lee (Chief Executive), Ian Lightley (Livewell), Prof Steve Maddern (Director for Public Health), Neil Mawson (Housing Delivery Manager), Gill Nicholson (Head of Innovation and Delivery), Dave Ryland (Head of Housing Standards), Jamie Sheldon (Senior Governance Advisor), Ian Trisk-Grove (Service Director for Finance), Gary Walbridge (Strategic Director for Adults, Health and Communities) and Andy Williams (Livewell).

The meeting started at 2.02 pm and finished at 5.05 pm.

*Note: The full discussion can be viewed on the webcast of the City Council meeting at [www.plymouth.gov.uk](http://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.*

### 1. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) welcomed two work experience students who were observing the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest made.

### 2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 09 June 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

### 3. **Questions from the Public**

The following question was asked by Mark Thomas:

**Question:** Please explain in detail, why so many improvement projects (Central Park, Royal Parade, Armada Way) are

**Response:** Under my leadership Plymouth City Council has always had an ambitious programme investing in

<p>still unfinished and over budget under your leadership?</p>	<p>jobs, housing, and the infrastructure that the city needs to grow so local people and in particular future generations of young people can thrive. As Leader, my role is to oversee the whole capital programme with individual Cabinet Members and Service Directors responsible for the delivery of specific projects.</p> <p>Our capital programme currently contains 316 projects and has a total value of just over £351 million. The overall programme is shifting constantly as new funding streams are secured from successful bids we have made, thereby reducing the costs of projects to council tax payers. Inevitably in a highly complex, multi-layered, set of sub-programmes involving many projects of varying sizes, the scope and therefore project programmes of individual schemes may change in response to delivery challenges on the ground.</p> <p>It must also be remembered that the context within which all of our projects are being delivered by dedicated city council staff is unprecedented. We continue to see the effects of COVID, BREXIT, the Ukrainian war, and global instability disrupting supply chains for materials and severely impacting on the availability of contractors and labour. This has led to contract price inflation as contractors factor in these risks to their tender prices. Those are the realities of what we have to grapple with every day. Of course we can learn lessons from how projects are delivered and we do. The Chief Executive chairs a Capital Programme Officer Group which considers all the businesses cases for individual capital projects reviewing project benefits, risks, planned spend and project timescales amongst other factors.</p> <p>Turning to the three project referred</p>
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	<p>to: in relation to Royal Parade, I am very happy to announce that early this morning the works started on site. It's taken longer than we anticipated to get contractors appointed to carry out these works for a variety of reasons. We also decided to schedule construction after two key city centre events had taken place to minimise the impact on people enjoying them – an example of flexible management of the programme to achieve wider regeneration benefits. Whilst the costs for Royal Parade are higher than the original estimate, largely due to a longer working programme, this was offset through securing extra funding from a government Bus Grant which means there is no additional funding required from the City Council. The scheme is expected to be completed in early April 2026.</p> <p>In relation to Central Park, which of course started under a previous Administration, a conflicting interpretation of the contract between the City Council and the contractor led to them leaving the site until the matter was resolved. In the meantime, we have procured an alternative contractor who had previously worked on the site and so were familiar with the park enabling them to mobilise quickly to deliver the remaining works at pace. We anticipate the project being completed in Autumn 2025 and have been providing regular updates to stakeholders and on our web site in relation to the progress so far.</p> <p>In relation to Armada Way, as Councillor Lowry said as part of his update to the Cabinet meeting held on 09 June 2025, the project is currently being delivered at pace, on time and to budget. He also reported that 10 additional trees would be planted as part of the first phase of works. Again, there have been regular web site</p>
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	updates, numerous social media posts, and a regular newsletter on progress with city centre projects sent to all councillors, alongside regular updates to the City Centre Company. The Armada Way Independent Learning Review identified the full financial implications of the events and circumstances arising from the original Armada Way decision by a previous Administration, highlighting additional costs to the project due to the interruption to the project totalling £3,323,251.
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#### 4. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

#### 5. **Cabinet Response to Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel Recommendations**

Councillor Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change) introduced the item to Cabinet and highlighted the following point:

- a) Feedback was welcomed on water quality issues;
- b) In Lipson Vale, the works are ongoing at Trefusis Park Suds to improve flooding resilience during mass rainfall.

Cabinet agreed to:

1. Thank the Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel for scrutinising this issue;
2. Support the proposed responses to the recommendations made in the report.

#### 6. **Adult Social Care Improvement Plan**

Councillor Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) introduced the item and highlighted the following key points:

- a) There was a clear focus on continuous improvement with efforts directed at addressing challenges relating to wait times for assessments, reviews, service accessibility and sustainability of the workforce;
- b) The improvement work built upon the Council's self-assessment and findings from the Local Government Association's (LGA) Adult Social Care Peer Review in January 2025, which identified both strengths and areas for development;

- c) Plymouth underwent a Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection and the experience was described as positive, with inspectors engaging with a wide range of stakeholders including staff, partners, service users and carers. Formal feedback was expected within two to three months which would further inform the Council's improvement journey;
- d) Expressed thanks to all staff across Plymouth City Council, Livewell Southwest, and care and support providers for their dedication and professionalism, particularly during the peer review and CQC inspection processes.

Stephen Beet (Head of Adult Social Care and Retained Functions) added:

- e) The improvement plan was progressing well and outlined the priority areas with targets, time scales for delivery and trajectories, monitoring of progress and management of risk.

Andy Williams (Lead for Adult Social Care, Livewell Southwest) and Ian Lightly (Senior Manager at Livewell Southwest) added:

- f) There had been a focus on reducing the wait times and the longest wait time for Care Assessments reduced from 500+ days to 300+ days;
  - i. A sustainable waiting list position would be reached by 30 October 2025, with full compliance expected by 31 January 2026.
- g) The Care Act guidance recommended reviews every 12 months, as a minimum, and performance against this had improved by 22%, with 58.5% of individuals getting reviews within the 12 months;
  - i. The regional benchmark was 60.7% and Plymouth was aiming to meet this by 01 November 2025;
  - ii. A central dedicated team has been established to manage reviews.
- h) Occupational Therapy (OT) OT demand was identified as a key issue in the self-assessment, peer review, and CQC inspection;
  - i. Demand exceeded current resource capacity, prompting a review of the wider front door offer;
  - ii. Improvements in performance data visibility have been made using System One, with reporting now available;
  - iii. A rounded plan to address OT performance was expected by end of September 2025.
- i) Waiting Well Policy had been developed to ensure individuals on waiting lists remained safe;

- i. All individuals were risk assessed and prioritised accordingly;
  - ii. Team managers maintained proactive contact with those waiting;
  - iii. An automatic text reminder system had been implemented;
  - iv. Individuals were informed of how to escalate their needs if circumstances change;
  - v. Crisis response options were available through Livewell.
- j) During the last 18 months, a practice improvement model had been developed which collated information to understand Adult Social Care (ASC) practice within Livewell and key elements included:
- i. Monthly practice-based audits focusing on referral and triage, assessments, reviews, mental capacity, and safeguarding;
  - ii. Targets of 85% of audits rated good or outstanding by end of 2025, and 90% by 2026;
  - iii. Completion of Phase One, including: Development of a practice framework, Identification of training opportunities and review and implementation of quality assurance processes;
  - iv. Phase Two was underway and included: Tracking and sharing of assessments with individuals and representatives, workforce engagement and rollout of the practice framework, and an equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) impact review assessing training and outcomes.
- k) The programme took a comprehensive view of practice, reviewing assessments, funding applications, complaints, and customer feedback, enabling the identification of trends and areas for improvement.

In response to questions, with support from Gary Walbridge (Strategic Director for Adults, Health and Communities), the following was discussed:

- l) The team welcomed the suggestion to bring a presentation back to a future meeting of Cabinet to demonstrate their positive work at Meadow View, but with an emphasis on the importance of focusing not only on the building but on the transformational impact of the services being delivered;
- m) Livewell did not hold any significant OT vacancies, and the volume OT cases had not fluctuated, but did exceed capacity and backlog clearance exercises had been invested in, in the past, which could be considered again;
- n) A broader conversation was proposed around preventative approaches, workforce modelling, and future funding needs for OT;

- o) Phase Two of the improvement plan included work on reablement, community engagement, and workforce modelling, which would inform future investment strategies;
- p) The Leader stressed the urgency of identifying resource requirements and funding opportunities, particularly in light of anticipated changes to government funding.

Cabinet agreed to:

- I. To support and monitor the Adult Social Care Improvement Plan through Cabinet and the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel.

At the conclusion of this item, The Leader expressed his gratitude to Emma Crowther (Service Director, Strategic Co-operative Commissioning) and Stephen Beet (Head of Adult Social Care and Retained Functions) for their hard work as they were both leaving Plymouth City Council (PCC).

## 7. **A38 Manadon Interchange scheme final business case development funding**

Councillor Stephens (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport) introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- a) 60,000 vehicles a day passed through the A38 Manadon Interchange and it was the busiest junction in the City and was a pinch point on the city's road network;
  - i. It was where the A386 connecting the city north to south, met the A38, connecting the city east to west;
  - ii. The A38 was the only road on the strategic road network managed by National Highways;
  - iii. It was a three-tier interchange, with the A38 running underneath, a roundabout in the middle and a flyover carrying the A386 across the top;
  - iv. The junction was at the confluence of the city's growth areas as set out within the joint local plan (JLP), and without additional capacity at Manadon, future growth would be constrained.
- b) Derriford Hospital was undergoing a major redevelopment with a £140 million pound investment into its healthcare estate, with plans for future investment;
- c) The Ministry of Defence (MoD) had announced a £4.4 billion investment at Devonport, demonstrating Plymouth's importance in defence of the country;
- d) The improvements to this interchange would complement other network improvements such as the Forder Valley Link Road, Derriford Hospital improvements and the Woolwell to the George transport scheme;

- e) The interchange was part of the adopted statutory planning framework, the JLP identified the northern corridor as one of three priority growth areas to deliver regionally significant number of homes and jobs;
- f) The scheme would also include extensive walking and cycling provisions, including;
  - i. A new cycle bridge across the A38;
  - ii. A continuous 2-way north/south cycle route;
  - iii. Improved pedestrian bridges;
  - iv. Enhanced pedestrian links to local areas of green space;
  - v. New bus priority on Mannamead Road and at Crownhill.
- g) The impact of reducing congestion on Manadon would see an overall reduction in carbon emissions long-term;
- h) The government's large local majors program provided 85% of the funding for the Manadon interchange;
- i) The scheme had program entry status, meaning that it was within the Department for Transport's national program of capital investments that it was committed to;
- j) The decision for Cabinet was to consider the remainder of the development funding, which was £12.8 million pound, into the capital program to progress the scheme to final business case, as set out in the report;
- k) Although the decision would provide authorisation to prepare the final business case, it did not provide authorisation to construct the scheme at this stage;
- l) Delivering the final scheme had an estimated cost of £156.4 million;
- m) Anticipated start for the scheme was considered to be Winter 2028;
- n) If Cabinet decided to proceed, the project team would produce a detailed scheme design, progress the submission of a planning application and refine the land and buildings that need to be acquired to allow construction;
- o) The decision would not give consent for third-party land purchases, which would be the subject of a separate decision at a later date;
- p) Councillors and officers were keen to get the results back from the recent, extensive public consultation to help guide work on the next phase of the design;
- q) Officers had been having positive discussions with potentially affected households and other stakeholders.



Councillor Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change) highlighted the following points around the Climate Impact Assessment (CIA);

- r) CIAs ensured that all projects that PCC led on considered eight different environmental aspects, both in terms of net zero but also natural infrastructure also to improving transparency with the public and improving environmental outcomes;
- s) It was his personal opinion that the CIA was not comprehensive.

In response to questions, supported by Paul Barnard (Service Director, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure), the following was discussed:

- t) The usual process with a project of this nature was to make an allowance for any property acquisitions that might be needed, but this was not part of the decision being taken at this time;
- u) The team always preferred to secure a negotiated solution to property acquisition, using compulsory purchase orders (CPOs) as a last resort;
- v) Frustration that local Councillors for the area had been misrepresenting the impact and scope of the scheme to local residents.

The Cabinet agreed to:

1. Approve the Business Case;
2. Allocate £12,808,832 for the project into the Capital Programme funded by: £8,897,042 ringfenced Department for Transport grant funding allocated specifically for this scheme. £3,911,790 un-ringfenced Integrated Transport Block grant funding that PCC was able to use to fund its transport priorities;
3. Authorise the procurement process set out in the report;
4. Delegate contract award decisions to the Service Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure, where they do not already have authority to do so;
5. Instruct officers to work with Cabinet members for planning and infrastructure and environment and climate change, in addition to relevant specialists from PCC's net zero and environmental planning teams, to develop a comprehensive climate impact assessment, following the first consultation process to be reported to Cabinet prior to the next phase of consultation.

## 8. **Plan for Homes 4 - Year 1 update**

Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) introduced the report and highlighted the following points about Plan for Homes 4:

- a) Since its launch in November 2013, more than 1,100 new homes had been built on Council-owned sites, under Plan for Homes;

- b) Over 64% of the 1,100 new homes had been affordable;
- c) The ambition was to deliver a minimum of 5,000 new homes in Plymouth over 5 years;
- d) Increased housing supply, with a focus on both social and affordable home ownership;
- e) Improved the private rented sector to ensure homes were decent, safe, and secure;
- f) Bringing empty homes back into use to maximise existing stock;
- g) Enhanced the condition and energy efficiency of homes across all tenures, retrofitting and delivering low-carbon new homes;
- h) Supported estate regeneration and renewal to replace obsolete housing;
- i) Reduced homelessness and reliance on temporary accommodation and expanded supported and specialist housing options;
- j) Maximised inward investment through partnership working, including with Homes England;
- k) Maintained flexibility and innovation in response to emerging housing challenges;
- l) There were more than 8,000 households in Plymouth awaiting homes for rent at an affordable price;
- m) Plan for Homes 4 had:
  - i. Delivered 96 new affordable homes, including 42 for social rent;
  - ii. Returned 41 long-term empty homes to occupation;
  - iii. Worked with Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) to refurbish and occupy 86 ex-MOD family homes;
  - iv. Completed 25 veteran self-build homes at Stirling House, with a third project underway;
  - v. Secured £18.44 million in government funding for 144 homes and a new skills hub at the former Civic Centre;
  - vi. Formed a long-term partnership with Homes England to deliver 10,000 new homes in the city centre;
  - vii. Achieved a 66% reduction in families in bed and breakfast accommodation;

- viii. Improved 1,029 dwellings and resolved 216 Category 1 hazards, issued 101 formal notices and 11 civil penalties to non-compliant landlords;
  - ix. Delivered 424 home adaptations and supported 280 residents to live independently;
  - x. Completed energy efficiency improvements on 234 existing homes;
  - xi. Engaged with developers to unblock 4,517 homes with planning permission;
  - xii. Developed a pipeline of future housing sites and a new market recovery plan;
  - xiii. Identified new surplus Council-owned sites for housing;
  - xiv. Working with investors and developers to establish a build-to-rent offer in Plymouth, that would capitalise the long-term investment in the dockyard and for people coming into Plymouth for dockyard employment;
  - xv. Preparing for the Renters' Rights Bill;
  - xvi. Participated in the rollout of the advanced zoning pilot for the new heat network, focusing on Plymouth City Centre.
- n) The action plan reported across all 10 of the Plan for Homes 4 initiatives and was RAG-rated with commentary;
  - o) The report would be presented to the Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel, and every 6 months a detailed report on homelessness was presented to the Housing and Community Services Scrutiny Panel;
  - p) Continued lobbying of government for the resources and powers to tackle the housing crisis in the city.

In response to questions, supported by John Green (Net Zero Delivery Manager, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure) and Dave Ryland (Head of Housing Standards, Community Connections), the following was discussed:

- q) The Renters rights bill would seek to drive tenants stability and quality, with the abolishment of section 21's and enforcement on quality of provision;
- r) There had been inspections of over 1000 dwellings in the past year, trying to ensure that housing was warm and secure to ensure everyone had a home from which they could thrive;
- s) PCC was one of 10 authorities that had been invited into the private rental sector portal, a database in which all properties that were rented now had to register through

- t) There was an expectation that civil penalties would increase;
- u) There was an expectation that there would be between £7,000-£40,000 worth of fines to landlords who failed to comply with expectations;
- v) Landlords would only be able to increase rent once a year and it had to be in line with marketable rates, and there will be a tribunal service which would sit around it;
- w) The plans were expected to receive Royal Assent in September 2025, following this, there will be secondary legislation put in place in early 2026;
- x) There were some areas of impact of the bill that had no resource because these areas had not been in legislation before, so a gap analysis was being conducted to determine requirements to make the approach consistent across the region;
- y) The team had engaged with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to understand and secure new burdens funding, there was a clear ask for funding before implementation to allow for training;
- z) There were concerns that there was an expectation that increased costs would be covered by the fines from enforcement, but the team wanted to support good landlords, who deliver good quality provision;
- aa) Important that this was a standards raising exercise, rather than a fund increasing exercise;
- bb) The Plan promoted low-carbon housing and retrofitting measures;
- cc) Partnered with Plymouth Energy Community to deliver Warm Homes grants;
- dd) Recognised energy-efficient homes as an anti-poverty measure;
- ee) Normalised sustainable development standards among developers;
- ff) Plymouth City Council were a visionary, when it set up Plymouth Energy Community a few years ago and it was recognised throughout the country, as a way forward;
- gg) Delivered retrofit on 234 homes of a target for 500 over three years;
- hh) The funding received for the warm homes local grant, was not as great hoped due to a lack of government funding;
- ii) Acknowledgement of the cross-directorate collaboration and innovation within the Council on Plan for Homes 4.

Cabinet agreed to:

- I. Note the report;

2. To maximise the impact of the South West Housing and Construction Conference to promote development opportunities, overcome challenges to delivery and secure inward investment.

9. **Active for Thrive Update**

Councillor Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Experience, Sport, Leisure & HR, and OD) supported by Rhys Jones (Chief Executive Officer, Plymouth Active Leisure) and Louise Kelley (Sports Development Manager, Plymouth Active Leisure) introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- a) Plymouth Active Leisure (PAL) worked across the city to get more people active;
- b) PAL had provided £2 million pounds worth of social value to the Plymouth in the first quarter of 2025/26;
- c) PAL linked in with several different teams across the Council to deliver a variety of services including bike and baby rides, and bike-ability, to drive shared priorities and objectives;
- d) The Active Health Program which launched in 2024, had been a huge success with referrals into the programme from health professionals to assist people who would benefit from exercise, but also for those who might not be able to afford a gym membership;
  - a. YMCA and Argyle Trust sponsored sessions for up to eight weeks, at the end of which there was an opportunity for people to get a reduced price membership for a further year, whilst still supported;
  - b. 296 people had been referred so far and had had positive reported health benefits including a significant loss in reported back pain and shoulder pain;
- e) In a recent Quest Assessment, which was an external body that assessed sport and leisure services, PAL had scored excellent within the tackling inequalities module;
- f) It was important not to underestimate the ripple effect of support from PAL's various programmes had;
- g) Some people found the social side of exercise to also be very beneficial;
- h) A video was played at this point in the meeting providing an update on the Adapt programme which supported children with SEND, getting them active, as well as providing a great social opportunity, and the chance to try new sports and activities.

In response to questions the following was discussed:

- i) The Adapt programme was being expanded and there would be more inclusive SEND opportunities provided throughout facilities, including short break family

breaks which were very popular and had a wait list;

- j) There was a Sport England grant available for new adaptive climbing equipment;
- k) The team worked in partnership with various organisations to connect people to the programme, but were open to other opportunities and connections to increase access;
- l) The team worked with home-educated children in a variety of projects such as the 'Fit and Fed' project, and offering diving and climbing facility activities at the Life Centre. There were a vast array of facilities and resources available in Plymouth, which the team worked to promote;
- m) Access to sporting facilities had been identified as a barrier, particularly travel time and cost. The Life Centre was centrally located, and had good transport links, with free public parking. Work was ongoing with Wellbeing Hubs and transport providers to reduce access barriers;
- n) The pilot of the 'Adapt' project had highlighted several barriers which had not been initially predicted, and the team had worked to ensure activities were friendly, accommodating and solution focused;
- o) Plymouth had recently submitted a bid to Sports England to encourage activity, particularly for children, young people and their families. Learning was shared across the Active Health Partnership comprised of numerous stakeholders across the city. Results of the bid would be brought back to the Cabinet for consideration;
- p) A new strategic plan for Plymouth Active Leisure was under development which would link together the key city agendas including green spaces, blue spaces, the environment, children and adults services, education, and building careers. The plan would be brought to Cabinet when complete.

#### 10. **MHCLG Consultation Overview**

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) supported by Ian Trisk-Grove (Service Director for Finance) introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- a) Two consultations had been announced on 20 June 2025 by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government;
- b) The 'Fairer Funding' review aimed to create a simpler, fairer and more transparent funding that better reflected the current needs, costs and resources of the local area. This was initiated to address an imbalance in funding allocations created under the previous government;
- c) Plymouth had a low Council Tax base, with a large proportion of houses in the A, B or C bracket. Other areas had higher bases, attracting higher revenue. It was hoped that the consultation would lead to a fairer allocation of the funds to help meet the needs of the city and its residents;

- d) The consultation ran for a period of eight weeks, up until 15 August 2025;
- e) Plymouth City Council's response to the consultation would be brought to Cabinet for awareness;
- f) The second consultation related to Council Tax, and ran for twelve weeks, from 12 September 2025;
- g) The second consultation aimed to improve the ease of paying Council Tax. This included proposals to move payments from 10 to 12 month cycles by default, enabling people to pay over a longer period of time, and improving transparency of how the monies were spent. Proposals also included changing entitlements to increase eligibility for Council Tax discounts, improving the ability for residents to challenge their Council Tax banding, and enabling the application of fairer and more flexible repayment systems;
- h) The consultations were welcomed, and were hoped to bring long-overdue reform;
- i) Cumulatively, the Council had lost approximately three quarters of £1 billion since 2010;
- j) It was important that funding allocations reflected Council Tax bases, and recognised issues such as deprivation, inequality and service demand. The new formula would take account of residents who required services but did not pay Council Tax, including students and service personnel;
- k) It was important to properly consider the proposals to ensure there were no unintended implications, and for Plymouth to feed back their support and reservations where required;
- l) Plymouth City Council were working with experts to model the proposed funding formulas prior to feeding back on the consultation;
- m) The multi-year settlement had now been confirmed (3 year). Transitional arrangements would be required in the interim period;
- n) The Government had announced plans to consolidate grants, aiming to increase transparency and streamline the process; Each year the local authority received nearly 300 separate grants;
- o) The plan set out 4 grants for initial consolidation: Homelessness, Public Health, Crisis Resilience and Children's Services;
- p) Post Local Government Reorganisation, there would be a smaller number of Unitary Authorities driving economic growth however, economic growth was not a statutory function. Combined Authorities alone could not drive economic growth;
- q) The Leader requested that the Service Director and Cabinet Member for Finance utilise their networks to ensure funding for economic growth was considered, and

understand how the Government would resource it. There was an opportunity to include growth as an additional (5<sup>th</sup>) funding pot.

The Cabinet agreed to:

1. Note the report;
2. Receive an update report at the next Cabinet meeting to outline progress.

#### 11. **Leader's Announcements**

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

- a) The Council had won three national awards and two regional awards;
- b) Minister Maria Eagle announced that Plymouth had been made the National Centre for marine autonomy and would place Plymouth on the world stage as the place to invest in new exciting technologies;
- c) On 18 June 2025, Homes England CEO Eamonn Boylan and Councillor Evans OBE signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to formally agree a new strategic partnership to build 10,000 homes focused on regenerating Plymouth's City Centre to make it a national exemplar of urban living for all;
- d) On the 23 June 2025, Plymouth was set out as a national opportunity in the Government's brand new industrial strategy scheme;
- e) The Ministry of Defence was investing £4.4 billion pounds in the dockyard over the next 10 years, highlighting the role that Plymouth played in the UK's defence and security. The Freeport status meant that the area would continue to benefit from His Majesty's Governments support and incentives;
- f) On the 30 June 2025, Babcock announced a defence dividend for Plymouth, including the following commitments:
  - i. To locate 2,000 workers to the City Centre as part of a new global capability centre;
  - ii. A new integrated logistics hub and advanced manufacturing facility in the Freeport;
  - iii. A new centre for engineering and nuclear skills.
- g) The National Centre of Marine Autonomy was all about jobs from entry level apprenticeships to some of the most technical and specialist roles anywhere in the world;
- h) Plymouth had one of the largest clusters of expertise in the world with 7,100 skilled people in marine manufacturing, 21 percent of the national employment in that field;



- i) This national recognition was attracting new investment with three large global companies talking to the council's inward investment team since the announcement;
- j) The Industrial Strategy would guide future government investments in Research & Development, business, and skills. And Plymouth businesses would be at the very heart of that investment;
- k) The MOU with Homes England was about building houses, a national mission for government. Homes England had chosen Plymouth amongst a handful of priority areas to co-invest;
- l) The Council's new partnership would focus on the city centre and was all about accelerating housing starting with the Civic Centre then Armada Way North and then the West End;
- m) Babcock's had committed to a new logistics and manufacturing hub in the Freeport and was the culmination of years of hard work by the Economic Development and Freeport team. This would not only create hundreds of new jobs, but it would also support a massive supply chain of constructions workers, professional services and drivers;
- n) Babcock had committed to a new Nuclear and Engineering skills academy which would ensure that those opportunities were accessed by kids, our adults and perhaps most importantly those not in work or able to work. This whole project was about making sure that the benefits of this unprecedented investment in the city created good growth for all our citizens.

## 12. **Cabinet Member Updates**

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

- a) David Cottrell, a filmmaker and artist, was creating the first commission for Plymouth as part of Sea for Yourself programme, a collaboration between cultural partners and the National Marine Park 'Horizons Program' helping reconnects residents to the ocean through a series of creative digital interventions. David would create the first commission for Plymouth as part of Sea for Yourself;
  - i. David, recognised for his visionary public realm and digital work would develop exciting new work that would unfold across multiple site and digital platforms throughout the city.
- b) Hello Sailor would take place at Tinside Lido, celebrating the National Gallery's 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary;
- c) Sir Gabriele Finaldi, the Director of the National Gallery, was hosted in Plymouth for a day on 26 June 2025 and unveiled a plaque for Sir Charles Eastlake, who was the first director of the National Gallery and was born in Plymouth, and then visited Tinside Lido, Council house and The Box;

- d) An event at Trafalgar Square on the 26 July 2025, named 'The Triumph of Art' organised by Turner prizewinning artist Jeremy Deller, The Box was the selected venue for England, (Made up of four parts: England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales) having so much history in Plymouth.

Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) provided the following announcements:

- e) The North Prospect Regeneration Project won two awards at the South West Royal Town Planning Institute. It won the:
  - i. The Best Project Award;
  - ii. The Overall Best in Region Award.
- f) Councillor Penberthy attended the Mitchelmores Property Awards and Broadland Gardens won Project of the Year, the '35 Homes and Under Award';
- g) Concerning the plot of land up for auction outside Gables Dogs & Cats on Merafield Road, Plymstock. National Highways chose not to sell the land on the open market, but to sell to the Council and then for that land to be sold back to Gables Dogs & Cats Home at the same price. This meant that Gables would maintain the land as a wildlife space at no cost to the Public.

Councillor Stephens (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport) provided the following announcements:

- h) The Royal Improvement Scheme had commenced;
- i) The Plymotion team had been engaging with bus user to help explain the relocation of bus stops;
- j) On the morning of 07 July 2025, a Citybus driver drove the City's first electric bus, for the number 21 service from to Plympton;
- k) Councillor Stephens accompanied ward councillors and school leaders outside Pennycross, Manadon Vale, Compton and Montpelier schools, to discuss road safety concerns during school runs;
- l) Thanked Plymouth City Council's Road Safety Team led by Suzanne Keith for their work with thousands of children in pedestrian and road safety training programmes across the city. During joint observations, it was good to recognise the good work of School Traffic Patrol people, for the work they did to engage with school communities to help them feel safe. I would urge anyone who knows anyone who had an aptitude and interest to become a school crossing patrol person to look at the Council's website as there were a few vacancies around the city;
- m) Councillor Stephens emphasised the importance of School Patrol Crossing Officers to engage with school communities and to support safety;

- n) Small infrastructure improvements had been identified to combat inconsiderate driving.

Councillor Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Events, Cemeteries and Crematoria) provided the following announcements:

- o) Armed Forces Day had been a key fixture of the National Calendar since its arrival in 2008 and the event in 2025 has seen 42,000 people in attendance. Councillor Haydon thanked everyone involved in the delivery of the event with a special thanks for the sponsors of the day;
- p) 24 schools took part in the Schools Partnership rowing challenge and feedback was positive;
- q) The Summer Reading challenge was enhanced by councillor community grant funding and would be launched on 11 July 2025 and would be free of charge with the theme of 'story garden';
- r) Simon James would share his picture book the Frog and Beaver with students from Tor Bridge primary school.

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

- s) PCC received special recognition in Environmental Services for 'Ocean City' and 'Nature' at the LGC Awards;
- t) The Blue Sparks community grant programme, as part of the National Marine Park programme, and funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund pledged that across the next three years, £60,000 would be dedicated to communities, to enhance marine citizenship in the National Marine Park. This would be through small grants of up to £2,500 pounds for grassroots community organisations, to support the development and the delivery of their ideas. They would display art to highlight Plymouth's heritage assets or improving local blue spaces and would support Britain's Ocean City to be more accessible and enjoyable for all;
- u) In the summer of 2024, Plymouth City Council organised 'The Summer of Nature', a series of public events where the council listened to local people to discuss improvements to the green and blue spaces across the City;
- v) The Council's grounds team were tasked with enhancing roundabout and gateway sites, with vibrant but also pollinator friendly flowers;
- w) The team successfully applied for a grant to commission an award-winning garden designer who created mixed species involved;
- x) Key sites for the change were: St. Budeaux Interchange down to Derry's Cross nearby to the City Centre;

- y) The flower seeds were planted earlier in the year, which were in full bloom, increasing wildlife in areas across Plymouth;
- z) 10,000 bulbs had been agreed to be planted in Spring 2026.

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

- aa) The celebration of the LGC, Diversity and Inclusion Award for the supported internships programme. The placements expanded from nine to 67 in two years and the Council's partnership with Discovery College achieved a 100% employment success rate. Plymouth's commitment to empowering young people with learning disabilities, reshaped expectations across the sector;
- bb) The On-Course Southwest team secured a silver Pearson award for the 'Your Futures' programme;
- cc) The Encore Southwest team had been nominated for a gold award, with the winners being announced in November 2025;
- dd) Other winners of the Pearson award included;
  - i. Hannah Donnelly of Ernesettle Primary, for outstanding new teacher of the year;
  - ii. The Devonport High School for Boys IT team, for their transformational youth of digital technology;
  - iii. Lisa Grinney of Torbridge Primary School, for teaching assistant of the year.
- ee) Mount Street Primary and Millbay Academy were two schools who had been recognised nationally for their 'School of Sanctuary' status, a prestigious accreditation;
- ff) Building Plymouth had announced the 'Adopt a School' programme connecting local schools with industry and construction in the built environment sector. 14 secondary schools had been adopted by 14 building construction companies, with one company adopting a primary school;
- gg) Mission Mammoth, a science, technology, engineering, arts and maths event took place at The Box in July 2025 and was in its fifth year;
- hh) This year resulted in 400 children taking part, with 11 schools and 85 construction volunteers from 30 construction employers. 10 staff from The Box and the Arts University supported during the course of the week. The help received totalled £68,000 worth of equivalent volunteer hours, over £38,000 worth of industry follow-up school visits, as well as £5,000 pounds worth of sponsorship.

*(Councillor Cresswell presented a video to the Cabinet to show the event Mission Mammoth)*

Councillor Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) provided the following announcements:

- ii) The Council had a public health assurance review, a statutory duty to provide public health services, funded by the ring fence public health grant. The Southwest of England had been chosen as a pilot in public health assurance process, overseen by the regional director of public health. The pilot had seen assurance visits carried out across the 14 local authorities of the Southwest, with the view to further national rollout;
- jj) At the end of June, Plymouth City Council undertook their assurance visit, including the regional director of public health, our own director of public health, the Council Leader, Councillor Aspinall, the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance. The visit followed submission of extensive evidence to demonstrate that, public health funds were spent in accordance to the conditions of the grant, and all opportunities were taken to maximise the improvement of public health across the City;
- kk) A letter had been received by the Regional Director that Plymouth City Council had provided excellent evidence in compliance and assurance that we have the appropriate governance and processes in place for the spending of the public health grant. The Council had spent our money appropriately to health needs, and delivering the outcomes associated with that spend;
- ll) An informal visit will be conducted in autumn 2025 for the Regional Director to view the excellent work of Plymouth City Council in improving the lives and wellbeing of its residents.

### 13. **LGA Update**

Councillor Evans OBE (The Leader of the Council) introduced the item and provided the following announcements:

- a) His visit to the Local Government Association Annual Conference and Exhibition in Liverpool alongside Councillor Laing (Deputy Leader) and Tracey Lee (Chief Executive). At the Conference subjects of discussion included;
  - i. Children's Services;
  - ii. Support for SEND;
  - iii. Renewed commitment to affordable homes programme;
  - iv. Long-term announcements;
  - v. Multi-year funding settlement statement was reinforced;
  - vi. Concerns of funding for adult social care;
- b) A powerful speech was given by Angela Rayner (Deputy Prime Minister) at the conference of her experience of local government;

- c) Wes Streeting (Secretary of State for Health and Social Care) attended the conference, discussing the vision of rebuilding the NHS, recruiting more GPs, protecting NHS staff and shifting care to communities;
- d) Various positive meeting with Plymouth neighbours including Cornwall, Torbay and South Hams to talk about next steps of Local Government Re-organisation;
- e) The rise of AI was a hot topic at the conference.