

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL
MOTION ON NOTICE No 8 2010/11
DEVONPORT DOCKYARD

This Council resolves:

(1) To note the work that has already taken place across the city to press the case for Devonport Naval Base and Dockyard and endorses the key points which the Government needs to consider when making a decision, which are:

1 Devonport is the best home for the navy, both operationally and strategically

Devonport provides an operational synergy that clearly surpasses that of any other naval base in the UK. This fact, together with its irreplaceable facilities and skills, strategic location and uncongested approaches, make it the only sensible choice as the main base for the Royal Navy. The MoD should maximise economies of scale by increasing the Naval presence in Plymouth, building upon Devonport's capacity as Europe's largest Naval Base.

It makes sense to base ships and submarines where they can be maintained at Devonport, while basing amphibious vessels here recognises the links with the Royal Marines located in the city.

2 It makes economic sense to have the Naval Base and Dockyard together

Aligning all levels of maintenance (regular and deep) of the surface and submarine fleet in Devonport would maximise efficiency and ensure economies of scale.

3 We've got the skills

The MoD cannot afford to lose the skills at Devonport. It should re-affirm existing surface deep maintenance and submarine maintenance programmes and support for apprenticeship, graduate retention and knowledge transfer programmes.

4 Devonport offers the best value for money

Devonport provides an affordable solution to support the country's naval and defence commitments. As the largest naval base in Western Europe, investment in Devonport as the UK's main naval base offers the effective way of achieving efficiencies in the defence budget without reducing national security. Furthermore, any reduction in size or capability would incur significant costs rather than savings across other government departments facing increases in benefit claims and the consequences of economic hardship. There would also be very high costs involved in making the land available for other uses.

5. Devonport is a world-class naval base and dockyard

The Government should make a long-term commitment to the Dockyard and Naval Base, maximising use of Devonport's large, flexible facilities and world class skills and underpinning Plymouth's economic resilience.

Further, Devonport's future is entwined with the city's ambitious growth plans and the ambition to create a world beating centre of excellence in the marine and engineering sectors.

(2) To support and endorse the petition that has been launched on behalf of the Devonport task group by the Trade unions which states:

"We the undersigned call on the Government to:

Protect the massive economic and strategic advantages of Devonport Dockyard and Naval Base over other options and enhance its role and maintain its skilled workforce.

Recognise that any reduction of Devonport would be counter to overwhelming evidence that it offers the best value solution to the MoD and that it would have a devastating impact on the Royal Navy and Plymouth and its surrounding area and incur significant extra cost to other Government departments in the longer term."

(3) To continue to work closely with MPs, the business community, trade unions and individuals in Plymouth to argue the case for Devonport and to show the Government the compelling evidence that Devonport offers the best value solution for the future needs of the Royal Navy.

Proposed by Councillor Mrs Pengelly
Seconded by Councillor Evans