

**BUDGET SCRUTINY – PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL**  
**Consultation with Devon and Cornwall Police – Written Submission**  
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## **Introduction**

The context for partnership working and the landscape surrounding this is rapidly changing. Underpinning substantial cuts in public spending the police and their partners are also responding to the emerging localism and devolution agenda, social innovations with the “Big Society”, significant health reforms and a changing regional and sub-regional landscape, including the development of Local Enterprise Partnerships and the introductions of community (place based) budgets.

The government’s proposals are taking shape through three principle bills which have consequences for partnership governance, accountability and delivery:

- The Policing and Social Responsibility Bill
- The Localism Bill
- A major health and social care Bill

Locally the city’s partnership arrangements have strong leadership, a robust infrastructure, excellent relationships and a proven record of responding to critical emergencies and business planning dilemmas. Whilst no one underestimates the nature of the economic challenge and its consequential impact, the city’s partnership character and pedigree should serve us well as we re-shape services across the city and work to a new financial reality.

## **City Priorities**

City priorities and outcomes have been set to visualise the 2020 vision for the city. This vision, supported by outcomes, aligned to partnership and single agency targets and driven forward by a cross-cutting work programme provides a clear route plan for the city and direction for the Local Strategic Partnership. It is acknowledged that the financial climate will require flexibility with activity designed to deliver the 2020 vision. In support of this the council’s proposed budget realignments which rationalise the performance, intelligence and consultation functions are welcomed.

There are two key over arching challenges to the city’s priorities. Firstly, cohesion across our communities and inequality in its broadest sense (not just health inequalities) is a real risk. The CSR cuts represent a potential disproportionate impact on the vulnerable and community organisations that support hard to reach groups. Secondly, the cessation of Performance Reward Grant funding challenges activity that was planned to deliver an enhanced “third sector”. The withdrawal of this funding and the absence of readily identifiable funding, post CSR, will potentially hamper the development of third sector capacity to support changes across the city. This has been picked up with the LSP Executive but is a risk to be noted at this stage.

## Impact on Partners and Partnerships

1. Policing services will have greater alignment to areas of community and individual risk, harm and vulnerability and I, therefore, welcome the high priority presented in the budget proposals afforded to Children's Services and Vulnerable Adults.
2. The loss of grant funding in areas which support violence, domestic abuse and sexual assault is a concern particularly as key service contracts in these areas are due to be renewed in April 2011. Assessment and planning to remodel the service is advanced and should sustain service provision in 2011/12. Beyond this significant remodelling and re-prioritisation will be necessary to take us forward.
3. Children and Young People  
The strategic direction on intensive prevention and early intervention and targeted work with families has clear links with the police service's work through local neighbourhood teams and specialist youth workers. The force's requirement to make £47 million savings over the next four years will necessitate a new way of working which will result in a wider more diluted remit for our neighbourhood teams than at present. It is too early to commit to detail but work with children and young people on a preventative basis will need to be integrated with the proposals as presented by Plymouth City Council's budget.
4. Children and Young People – Youth Offending Service  
The reduction in the YOS contribution across all contributory partners needs a full assessment of impact. I currently contribute posts and £75,000 to support the Youth Offending Service in the city. Although a force decision on this area has not been made, I am considering a proposal to remove the funding and re-distribute to other priorities.
5. Development and Regeneration  
The loss of grant funding (£682,000) for family intervention and anti social behaviour over the next three years will be keenly felt within the city given the community facing work and relief that their work contributes to. Anti Social Behaviour remains a key neighbourhood priority (despite significant reductions in recorded anti social behaviour incidents). A greater focus on repeat victimisation and vulnerable victims (disabled) should form the core service if this is achievable within the constraints presented.
6. Safer Communities  
The introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners and Police and Crime Panels in 2012 will present challenges both in terms of managing the transition over the next two years with the current Police Authority arrangements as well as preparing for the introduction of new accountability measures that the Commissioner will bring. How this will dovetail with current partnership arrangements (Community Safety Partnership, Local Criminal Justice Board, LSP) is unclear. I do recognise that the force wide remit of the Police and Crime Commissioner will be a demanding role given the localised nature of much of the work that we do on a local partnership basis.

The BCU Commander's Fund grant which was distributed previously via Government Office and equated to £167,000 in 2010/11 has now been removed. During the last year this fund has commissioned drug treatment services, counter terrorism work, work within anti-social behaviour and the Sexual Assault Referral

Centre to name but a few. I will be working through the full impact of this funding loss with Directors of Service within Plymouth City Council.

## **Opportunities**

### 1. Governance

There is an opportunity to review the current partnership governance structure and processes in order to empower leaders and focus on key activity which makes a difference. The relaxation of top down performance targets should help provide a greater space for leadership and innovation across the city.

### 2. Locality working

The locality structures and locality working should be maximised during this period of change. Greater emphasis should be placed across the partnership to share information, priorities, engagement activity and delivery of services across the six locality areas. This is where individual members of the community have the greatest sense of services actually being delivered in support of their needs.

### 3. GP Consortia

There is an opportunity to begin to shape the alignment of GP Commissioning services to areas such as domestic abuse, sexual assault and alcohol harm. Whilst it is recognised there is no template for this way of working, leaders in the city should maximise the opportunities that this new arrangement presents.

### 4. MASH (Multi Agency Strategic Hub)

Devon has implemented a MASH which co-locates partners focused on the Safeguarding Children agenda. There is the potential for greater efficiencies, prioritisation of work and ownership of risk across all agencies which could be realised within the area of Children's Services should the partnership assess this as a viable model for the way forward.

### 5. Shared Services

There is opportunity to look with greater determination at sharing more services locally across partner agencies including admin support, vehicle maintenance and management, call handling, training. The proposed Public Services Board, championed by the Assistant Chief Executive of Plymouth City Council, should provide the forum to explore new ways of collaboration.

## **Conclusion**

The budget planning process adopted by the Plymouth City Council is focused, highlights key strategic drivers, risks and deliverables. Integrated business planning which was adopted by the LSP during 2010 has further enhanced the ability of the partnership to break down "silo working" and look at impacts across the communities of Plymouth.

I am sorry I am not available to the Scrutiny Committee in person but I trust that this submission addresses the areas that you would wish to explore. Please be assured of my commitment and support to all aspects of partnership work in the City as we move forward.

**A. Bickley**  
**Chief Superintendent**  
**Plymouth**