



Budget Scrutiny Submission for Plymouth City Council by Plymouth University – January 2014

1. Context

Plymouth University is largest university in the city. We employ approximately 3,000 staff, most who live in the Plymouth City region, and provide higher education for some 30,000 students in partnership with our network of local and regional partner colleges.

Our main source of income is from student fees and teaching and research grant income which we prioritise to improving the student experience, research, community outreach and business engagement.

We have set out our ambitions in our [Strategy 2020](#). These guide our University trajectory and our collective drive. In doing so we focus on:

- Excellent learning in partnership with students
- World-class research and innovation
- Raising aspirations and driving engagement
- Achieving resilience, effectiveness and sustainability

As a not-for-profit higher education institution (HEI), the University is regulated by various bodies including the Higher Education Funding Council, Quality Assurance Agency and Office of Fair Access.

2. National context

The higher education sector has undergone a significant period of change over the past couple of years, with more disruption for the sector anticipated. The move from direct public funding to a student fee model has meant the HE sector is becoming increasingly marketised with greater competition among providers to attract and retain students. The location of a university is therefore also becoming increasingly important, with students taking into account to a greater extent the amenities, culture and general 'offer' of a location as well as wanting to feel safe and included in terms of diversity.

3. Plymouth University priorities and areas of support/partnership working

Our priorities are guided by our University Strategy 2020. With specific reference to partnership engagement with the city and region this includes:

- Education outreach: via enrichment and capacity building to support fair access
- Health and medicine
- Marine
- Internationalisation
- Supporting economic growth: via research, innovation, and student and graduate employability and the Growth Acceleration Investment Network
- Culture

Education outreach:

The University supports Marine Academy Plymouth, Marine Academy Plymouth Primary (MAP2), Mayflower Primary, and the University Technical College Plymouth. We are committed to helping to raise aspirations among young people from socially deprived areas and our engagement with these schools in particular is demonstrative of this. We invest significant time, people and financial resources to drive forward improvements at these schools. Our engagement with local schools more generally is a reflection of our desire to strengthen the education pipeline from primary to higher education.

Health and medicine:

We are committed to working with local health organisations including local practices, Plymouth Community Health and Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust (Derriford) to help improve health outcomes for people of the city and region and reduce health inequalities. Students and staff from our Peninsula Schools of Medicine and Dentistry (PUPSMD), School of Health Professions, School of Biomedical and Health Sciences, and School of Nursing and Midwifery have a significant impact on the delivery of health services and health-related research – both locally, nationally and internationally. PUPSMD is ranked 4th in England and 8th in the UK by *The Guardian* University League Table, and our students have been translating that excellence throughout the year by applying their expertise to help address community health needs.

For example, the Cumberland Surgery – a partnership between PUPSMD and Plymouth Community Healthcare – enables residents in Devonport to access health services in a facility that combines education, research and innovation, and direct treatment to patients. Medical students meet and hold consultations with local people, under the guidance of experienced professional doctors.

And a special Dental Education Facility in Devonport – one of four that PUPSMD runs across Devon and Cornwall – provides dental treatment, free at the point of access, to

Devonport residents to help improve their oral health while also serving as an excellent training ground for our dental students. More than 13,000 people now receive dental treatment thanks to Plymouth University.

Marine:

Our University heritage stems from 1862 and the School of Navigation in terms of higher education provision in the city. We are rooted within and proud of this maritime heritage. This is particularly reflective in the world-class expertise in marine and maritime research that we have. Our marine investment includes the Marine Innovation Centre (MaRIC) which works closely with local, regional and indeed international businesses to test marine/maritime innovations for application in the private sector. We therefore directly partner with local marine/maritime businesses to help maintain and grow further the maritime strengths of the city and region. Research in our core strengths such as marine is a core deliverable for us and we need to continue to invest in both staff and facilities to deliver on this agenda.

Internationalisation:

The University is locally rooted and globally connected. We have a growing international profile (ranked 300th in the world by the Times Higher Education rankings 2013-2014) in terms of our teaching and research partnerships, and increasing numbers of international students choosing to study here.

In an area such as Plymouth where the majority of the population is white British, it is important that the University works in partnership with the City Council and other agencies to ensure that our international students feel part of the broader local community, have access to services with appropriate support (e.g. language translation options) and are generally welcomed openly to our University and the city.

Economic growth:

The University is committed to working in partnership with the City Council, Local Enterprise Partnerships, local businesses and other partners to drive economic growth in the city and beyond. In July 2013, the University, in partnership with the City Council, secured its third award from the Regional Growth Fund (RGF), in relation to the Plymouth City Deal Partnership.

The £4 million investment from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills will be used to provide grants to high growth businesses and to enhance business support through the region's Growth, Acceleration and Investment Network (GAIN). GAIN is a network covering more than 500 businesses, employing more than 32,000 staff and turning over around £3 billion.

The latest RGF award comes in addition to two other awards each in partnership with the Western Morning News, a combined total of around £9 million. The funding is transformative to the local economy, already having realised 180 new jobs so far with a further 340 forecast.

Culture:

The University supports various aspects of the City's cultural agenda including support, for example, of the Mayflower 2020 preparations, the bid of Plymouth City of Culture, hosting of cultural events on campus and membership on the City's Culture Board. As a University that is committed to driving socio-economic development and improving life-chances, we recognise that culture has the power to transform a city and a community's fortune. Culture is everything that makes somewhere an attractive and stimulating place to live, study, work and visit. This is not just about venues and headline events but making sure the entire community is involved and creates a lasting legacy.

4. Concerns around PCC budget restrictions

Clearly the City Council is facing a significant shortfall in budget that will have a serious impact on some of the services it can provide to local residents. We will continue to work in partnership in those areas mentioned above, and others in line with our mission and strategy.

In terms of budgetary priorities, we emphasise the need to continue to invest in driving economic growth and social inclusion. In particular:

- Supporting business incubation and innovation
- Supporting social enterprise
- School improvement
- Health promotion
- Supporting capital projects through responsive planning
- Addressing issues of diversity and inclusion

We believe that continued investment in the economic growth of the city and region is key to current and future success through a robust, sustainable and resilient economic environment. With economic growth comes jobs, housing and further investment opportunities, helping to raise the profile of Plymouth within the region and across the nation, having potentially positive impacts on many aspects of the city's broader agendas.