

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY

28 May 2013

Present:

Councillor Shiel (Chair)

Councillors Mitchell, Bowkett, Branston, Bull, Choules, Clark, Crow, Macdonald and Spackman

Apologies:

Councillors Morris, Mottram and Payne

Also present:

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Assistant Director Environment, Assistant Director Housing and Contracts, Acting Assistant Director Finance, Principal Accountant (SR), Housing Needs Manager, Housing Benefit Manager, Exeter Vision Partnership Support Officer and Democratic Services Officer (Committees) (HB)

In attendance:

Councillor Rob Hannaford - Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Involvement

Councillor Greg Sheldon - Portfolio Holder for Environment and Leisure

Representing Devon County Council

Dave Black - Head of Planning and Transport
Tony Matthews - Neighbourhood Highway Group Manager

23 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2013 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as correct.

24 **Declaration of Interests**

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made.

25 **Welfare Reform**

The Housing Benefit Manager and the Housing Needs Manager provided a comprehensive update on the latest position in respect of Welfare Reform. They set out the position in respect of Council Tax Support, the Benefit Cap, Local Welfare Support and Discretionary Housing Payments and social sector size criteria. Responding to Members' queries. The former confirmed that regular meetings were held with the Department for Work and Pensions and that explanatory leaflets to help claimants to cope had been issued with letters explaining the changes. The Council

also maintained a list of support agencies to which claimants could also be referred if necessary and that this list would also be circulated to Councillors for them to advise officers of any additional bodies they were aware of.

The number of downsizing enquiries had doubled with over 90% giving the reason for their enquiry being the changes to housing benefit. 45 Council and Housing Association tenants had downsized in the last 12 months. Virtually all one and two bed properties were advertised as priority for downsizers except adapted ones.

A further report on the impact of the changes would be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee on 3 September 2013.

26 **Highways and Traffic Management Issues**

The Chair welcomed Dave Black, Devon County Council's Head of Planning and Transport and Tony Matthews, Neighbourhood Highway Group Manager.

The latter detailed the managing of roadwork's covered by the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and the Traffic Management Act 2004. Over 43,000 works were planned for 2013 by South West Highways and over 24,000 by utility companies. The greater the disruption the longer the notice period required. The co-ordination of works was undertaken at both a regional (Structured Regional Co-ordination Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee) and local meeting level. Enforcement of work included a legal requirement to notice works accurately, fixed penalty notices of £80 and £120 per failure and over-run charges. He highlighted the following up-coming works

- Bridge Road - the addition of an extra lane to increase capacity - mid July 2013 for two years;
- Blackall Road/Howell Road - separation of clean and foul water - mid June to mid July 2013;
- Mount Pleasant Road - gas mains replacement - mid July to early September 2013; and
- High Street - £200,000 of footway works.

Dave Black explained the Transport Strategy for Exeter which set out the current road capacity, the housing and job growth anticipated for Exeter and East Devon which would impact on the network and the planned improvements for pedestrians and cyclists, the roads, rail, bus and Park and Ride facilities.

Exeter's Cycling Strategy included a flagship facility - the new bridge over the M5 - and a hierarchy of cycle routes. Four new railway stations were planned – Marsh Barton, Monkerton, Newcourt and Cranbrook which he suggested was probably unique in the UK and consultations were ongoing with Network Rail to improve the Central Station forecourt. Improvements to the bus service included a City wide smart technology, real time passenger information and personalised travel planning and bus shelter replacements. New Park and Ride sites were planned for Cowley Bridge and Alphington to complete the circle of Park and Ride sites around the City. Other road improvements included Junctions 29 and 30, the Clyst Honiton by-pass and the Tithebarn Lane Link Road

Responding to Members, he explained both the consultation process in respect of the Alphington Park and Ride and the difficulties of increasing the capacity of the Countess Wear roundabout in comparison with the Middlemoor Roundabout. Referring to the developments to the east of Exeter, he advised why a northern

Exeter by-pass had serious logistic difficulties. He reported that special praise had been given by Department of Transport representatives to the overall plans for the Exeter Growth Point area.

The Chair thanked Messrs Black and Matthews for their presentation.

27 **Portfolio Holders' priorities for the forthcoming year**

Councillor Hannaford presented the annual report for 2012/13 and the priorities for 2013/14 within the Housing and Community Involvement Portfolio for the forthcoming year. The reports are attached to these minutes.

The following responses were given to Members' questions:-

- consideration was being given to the introduction of a voluntary licensing scheme for houses in multiple occupation similar to that operated by Oxford. Ideally, Parliamentary legislation was required to introduce a national scheme and it was hoped that this would be progressed in the same way that the Mobile Homes Act 2013 has been introduced to tighten up the operation of mobile home parks;
- the intention was to introduce 150 extra care bedspaces across the City which would be undertaken in conjunction with Devon County Council, the primary provider. The City Council would assist with facilitation and development;
- a more joined up approach to property management would be developed to increase savings; and
- changes to the housing allocations system would be considered as a result of the flexibility offered by the Localism Act.

Councillor Sheldon presented the priorities within the Environment and Leisure Portfolio for the forthcoming year. The report is attached to these minutes.

The following responses were given to Members' questions:-

- because of budgetary restraints there is no schedule of improvements for play areas. Works are largely funded by Section 106 Agreements;
- a start date for the replacement of the Arena track will be known after the receipt of tenders. The Council will work further with regional bodies to attract more regional events to the City once refurbishment is completed;
- drainage works are being undertaken to the Higher Cemetery Children's burial area but not a general upgrade at this stage;
- building on the 'looking good' redesign pilot, the potential for place-based service delivery, including partnerships with the County Council to deliver services on their behalf would be explored;
- there will be proactive work with businesses to increase the number engaging with the City Council as their Primary Authority. There will also be work with Trading Standards to enhance the Primary Authority offering to businesses;
- Marsh Barton was chosen for an 'Estates Excellence' initiative focussing on health, safety and welfare of employees as it had a greater critical mass and possessed better economies of scale than smaller estates such as Pinhoe;
- a project, in conjunction with Gas Safe, will be introduced to encourage and ensure regular maintenance of gas appliances using qualified gas engineers as over 46% of catering premises had been found to be lacking in some way following routine food inspections;
- the Taxi Marshall scheme, a pilot funded by the Exeter Community Safety Partnership (Baroness Newlove's "Alcohol Fund") had proved a success to date with reported incidents much reduced and with the trade noting an

increase in customer use. It was the intention to extend the scheme, potentially through the licensing regime;

- if the City Centre BID is successful, businesses will be further encouraged to opt for a single trade waste collector in order to co-ordinate collections;
- Museum attendance figures have levelled off but are substantially higher than before the re-development. The legal problems and over-run of the project are still being pursued and Members will be kept informed of progress; and
- the review of the Licensing Policy is a programme of work for the Licensing Committee Members, however, it was right to notify this Committee that this was one of the Portfolio Holder's priorities.

28 **Appointment of Members to Working Groups**

Membership of the following working group was agreed as set out:-

Parkwood Leisure Contract Working Group

Councillor Shiel (Chair), Councillors Mitchell, Sheldon and Spackman.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY EXECUTIVE

29 **Revision of Environment Enforcement Policy**

The Assistant Director Environment presented the report seeking approval to revise the Enforcement Policy to reflect changes created by Government guidance and the revised structure of the directorate. The proposed revised policy ensured that enforcement actions would be fair, consistent and transparent. In response to Members' queries, he elaborated on the tools utilised to ensure compliance with the Policy and explained that the regime was separate from that of planning enforcement.

Scrutiny Committee - Community supported the report and requested Executive to approve the Enforcement Policy.

(Report circulated)

30 **Downsizing incentives for Council Tenants**

The Assistant Director Housing and Contracts presented the report seeking approval to amend the existing downsizing scheme for tenants to help mitigate the impact of the recent welfare reforms. It was explained that the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Involvement, in conjunction with officers, had considered four options to address what changes were required to the downsizing scheme to mitigate the impact of welfare reform. Of these four options, option one was presented as the most suitable which involved an additional post to be dedicated to downsizing. Members recognised the importance of such a post. A sum of £27,227 would be allocated to fund removals at £500 a time, funding approximately 54 removals.

Scrutiny Committee - Community supported the report and requested Executive to:-

- (1) implement an amended downsizing incentive scheme for Council tenants based on option one set out in the report, the removals fund to be operated at the discretion of the Assistant Director Housing and Contracts; and

- (2) introduce a temporary fixed term Downsizing Officer post for 12 months to assist tenants downsizing by identifying the most appropriate properties and giving them support throughout the move.

(Report circulated)

31 **Commercial and Environment Support Team Statutory Service Plan 2013/14**

The Assistant Director Environment presented the report seeking approval for the adoption of the Commercial and Environment Support Team Statutory Service Plan 2013/14. The Plan set out the Council's regulatory function in respect of food safety, health and safety, licensing, Environmental Permitting and other statutory functions over the forthcoming year.

Scrutiny Committee - Community supported the report and requested Executive to:-

- (1) approve the Statutory Service Plan 2013/14; and
- (2) authorise the Assistant Director Environment to change the Statutory Service Plan in the light of centrally issued guidance and/or to meet operational needs.

(Report circulated)

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY

32 **HRA Business Plan Update**

The Assistant Director Housing and Contracts presented the report updating Members on the activity of the Housing Revenue Account for the financial year 2012/13 and summarising the progress being made on the HRA Business Plan (2012 - 2042).

Scrutiny Committee - Community noted the progress on the HRA Business Plan 2012 - 2042.

(Report circulated)

33 **2013 Review of Recycling Plan (2011- 2016)**

The Assistant Director Environment presented the report updating Members on progress with the Recycling Plan since its approval in 2011 and seeking ongoing support for recycling initiatives.

Exeter's recycling rate has dropped slightly. This was accounted for by a drop in tonnage collected for recycling of 500 tonnes and an increase in waste sent to landfill of 400 tonnes. The overall quantity of waste collected had not increased despite continued growth in Exeter's population. This indicated that the trend towards reduced waste continued. There were a number of reasons for this, including a reduction in consumer purchasing and an on-going reduction in packaging, however, the most notable impact on recycling tonnage was the big reduction in newspaper/print purchasing.

In response to a Member, he acknowledged that the incoming student populations were likely to have been brought up with a greater regard for re-cycling and the Council's Green Team initiative worked closely with schools on this issue in order to

encourage the next generation of recyclers. The fact that different local authorities had widely varied recycling regimes meant that many students were unfamiliar with what could be recycled in Exeter. Therefore, the Council would be seeking to broaden the Green Team Partnership and explore greater collaborative working with the University.

In response to a Member, he agreed that, when the Exeter Energy from Waste Plant came on stream in 2014, it would be important to discourage residents from thinking that they no longer needed to recycle. The value of the re-cyclates for re-processing was far greater than the energy out-put that would be derived from the plant and the gate fee per tonne of waste would be more than landfill initially.

Scrutiny Committee - Community:-

- (1) noted the Council's progress to date in implementing the Recycling Plan 2011-2016; and
- (2) supported the ongoing actions planned for 2013, as set out in the report.

(Report circulated)

34 Update on Resident Involvement Strategy - 2012/15

The Assistant Director Housing and Contracts presented the report updating Members on progress made against the Resident Involvement Strategy 2012/15 Action Plan as requested by the Executive on 20 March 2012.

A Member referred to the importance of increased engagement with the private sector.

Scrutiny Committee - Community noted the report.

(Report circulated)

35 Community Safety Partnership Update

The Exeter Vision Partnership Support Officer presented the report updating Members on the work of the Exeter Community Safety Partnership (Exeter CSP).

A key element of the CSP work was that of Task and Finish groups with each CSP priority assigned a lead agency that would drive action on behalf of the Partnership and report progress to the CSP Executive Group. It was acknowledged that membership may vary depending on availability and resourcing within agencies. The lead for each current Task and Finish group was as follows:

- Domestic, Family and Sexual Abuse - Devon County Council (in consultation with Against Domestic Violence and Abuse - ADVA);
- Alcohol, Violence and Night Time Economy - Police with possible joint Chairing with the City Centre Manager;
- Anti-Social Behaviour - Exeter City Council. The existing ASBAT (Anti Social Behaviour Action Team) will be expanded to include the Fire and Rescue Service; and
- Re-offending - Devon Probation Trust building on the existing work of the "Turnaround" group.

A Member was advised that information on the effectiveness of restorative justice in respect of youth offenders would be obtained from the Youth Offending Team and passed to him. With regard to the Domestic, Family and Sexual Abuse Task Group, this group would cover a wide range of activity and would focus on crime affecting adults as well as child protection. Crimes such as sexual assault would be considered by this group, which Superintendent Chris Eastwood and the CSP regarded as a priority.

Scrutiny Committee - Community noted the report.

(Report circulated)

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

36 Housing Revenue Account - Final Accounts 2012/13

The Corporate Finance Manager advised Members of the overall financial performance of the Housing Revenue Account for the 2012/13 financial year ended 31 March 2013. He updated Members on the HRA working balance, major repairs reserve and of the settlement payment to implement the HRA self-financing scheme.

The total budget variances for 2012/13 had resulted in a net surplus of £525,874 which would be transferred to the HRA working balance. This represented a decrease of £1,794,396 compared to the budgeted net surplus of £2,320,270. However, this was predominantly due to additional revenue contributions towards capital expenditure of £2.084 million in respect of the acquisition of six flats at the former Royal Navy Store site and an increase in the kitchen and bathroom replacement programmes.

Scrutiny Committee - Community noted the report.

(Report circulated)

37 Community Services Final Accounts 2012/13

The Principal Accountant advised Members of the overall financial performance of the Community Directorate for the 2012/13 financial year ended 31 March 2013. The total variation for the year showed a deficit of £172,201 against the budget, with a final deficit of £73,494 after accounting for transfers to and from earmarked reserves.

The rateable value for the Royal Albert Memorial Museum set by the Valuation Office was 50% more than was originally estimated, resulting in the National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) for the facility being £81,000 more than was estimated. The Council was appealing against the valuation, which might result in a refund, but it would take some time for this to be agreed. The cost of utilities in the RAMM exceeded the estimates by £72,500 as a result of the very high standards necessary to ensure air quality was at the correct level.

A Member raised concerns regarding staffing reductions in respect of the parks service and the Strategic Director (KH) responded by explaining that this was in line with the on-going work in respect of systems thinking.

The Scrutiny Committee - Community noted the report.

(Report circulated)

38 **Parkwood Leisure Centre Contract**

The minutes of the meeting of the Parkwood Leisure Services Working Group held on 11 March 2013 were received.

(Minutes circulated)

39 **Minutes of the Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel**

The minutes of Police and Crime Panel meetings had been circulated after each meeting to Members of this Committee to enable them to raise any issues of concern or interest at these Scrutiny meetings.

Members had no queries on the latest minutes circulated, those of 9 April 2013.

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 8.52 pm

Chair

**PFH Housing and Community Involvement
Cllr Rob Hannaford –Scrutiny COMMUNITY
Annual Report 2012/13**

Build communities where everyone has a home	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Continue to offer a professional and flexible approach to developers seeking to build new homes in the City and to negotiate the provision of affordable housing that meets the identified housing needs of local residents. o Provide new affordable homes across the city and in the urban extensions at Newcourt , Monkerton and Alphington. o Seek to deliver at least 5% of all new affordable housing stock to meet the Council's wheelchair design standards and we shall produce a wheelchair housing strategy for the city. o Continue to assist in the facilitation and development of 150 Extra-Care homes across the City. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 39 affordable homes negotiated and delivered 2012/13: o RNSD Upper Site 17 social rent o Cranbrook Wave One 13 social rent o Western Way Petrol Station 9 affordable rent o Negotiations have commenced for new affordable homes at Newcourt and Monkerton o Affordable Housing SPD has increased wheelchair accessible homes from 5% to 10%. In 2012/2013 6 wheelchair accessible homes were delivered. o St Loyes Extra-Care awaiting Registered Provider interest and funding ahead of development. New Extra-Care home at Monkerton under consideration with Devon County Council.
Use a range of measures to solve housing problems	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Accessing funding and land for more social, shared ownership, affordable and shared equity housing after massive government cuts to grant funding and the abolition of the SWRDA and regional spatial strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Private Sector and Public Works Loan Board finance opportunities investigated and presented to Members. Further work required to ascertain preferred finance models in line with development pipeline potential. o Site survey of potential ECC owned land available for new affordable housing in hand using external consultants. Once this survey is complete a pipeline of future housing schemes can be determined which will dictate the financial funding models most applicable.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Review and monitor the pressures on the council's existing housing stock and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) from the new discounted Right to Buy proposals. o Ensure that we make best and prudent use of any funding that becomes available through the new HRA, to maintain existing stock and build new units. o Maintain and enhance our existing good work through the Tenants and Leaseholders Committee, Exeter Homes Partnership and Performance Review Committee. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Manage additional pressures and work loads from the cuts and changes to housing benefit, government imposed reductions in council tax benefits, and the Coalitions back to work agenda. o Work with the Environmental Health staff to monitor and drive up standards in private sector properties, especially for vulnerable groups and young people. o Look at establishing a scoring system for private sector properties to encourage landlords to improve their stock using energy saving grants etc. o Make further representations and support the private members bill to give greater rights and protection to park home owners. o Make the best use of the new funding streams from the revised planning systems for both 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 23 homes were purchased from the Council under Right to Buy and 19 new homes have been acquired so that the net loss is minimal and we will be using the RTB receipts to fund further new affordable build in the HRA o Budgets have been approved to build 40-45 new affordable homes using HRA funding at Bennett Square, Newport Road, Brookway and Vaughan Road o Over the past 12 months the Tenant and Leaseholder Committee (TALC) has made recommendations that have led to a change in the window cleaning schedule, changed the way in which we measure performance of some Sustainable Lettings Team KPI's and resulted in changes to the policy in place for recharging the estates of deceased residents. The TALC has also undertaken a review of all elements of the Resident Involvement Structure which has resulted in changes to make the structure more effective. o A prudent risk-based approach to managing the impact of these changes has been successfully adopted o The inspection regime for licensed HMOs has been extended to ensure that non licensed HMOs are also being inspected o The first group of 15 landlords underwent Accreditation training provided in partnership with the National Landlords Association. A further 9 landlords have been accredited by UNIPOL, the university accreditation scheme o The Bill has now been enacted as the Mobile Homes Act 2013
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<p>housing and community initiatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o We will also commit to Exeter being a city where no-one needs to sleep out on the streets for a second night. o Ensure that a hotline number is available on behalf of all Devon districts and ensure appropriate provision is made to cope with extreme cold weather periods o Continue to grow the Private Sector Leasing and EXtralet schemes to provide a wider pool of affordable accommodation in conjunction with the private sector o Maintain our Council properties well and continue to meet the Decent Homes Standard or similar standards o Provide up to £400,000 in renovation grants to those most in need to make private sector homes fit for habitation o We will build upon recent work to cut down the time it takes to install Disabled Facility Grant adaptations in private dwellings by use of approved builders lists and modular pricing of standard works. o We will work to strengthen to Protocol all the Devon Councils have with Registered Providers (Housing Associations) through which they undertake to contribute to the cost of disabled adaptations to their homes. o We will continue to work in partnership with Wessex Home Improvement Loans to develop innovative loan products, and improve marketing in order to encourage greater take up. We will also seek to expand the work of Wessex to include debt advice to clients in need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o We were the first Council in South West to operate “No Second Night Out” from June 2012 and we are the “DCLG lead” for the roll out across Devon and Cornwall which is currently the biggest area nationally operating “No Second Night Out”. 84 people have been prevented from spending a second night out since July 2012. o Hotline number in place: 0800 151 3441. – 258 phone calls in last 12 months o 4% reduction in numbers in temporary accommodation in the last 12 months, bucking national trend of a 9% increase o Kitchen and bathroom replacement programme doubled to over £3m a year for three years to increase DHS (o Funding for renovation grants has ceased with the removal of the private sector renewal funding awarded by CLG o New practices have been introduced to achieve the time savings which will be continually reviewed o Revised governance arrangements have been put in place with the result that most RPs with properties in Exeter have signed up to the protocol o A marketing plan has been introduced which, hopefully, will improve the take up rate of loans
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Provide homes for rent that people can afford	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Ensure that we continue to take a lead role on the issue of homeless in Exeter and neighbouring areas, and when needed advocate for more funding, resources, and understanding of the often complex issues that are affecting people. o Facilitate the reuse of privately owned empty homes and properties ensuring they are fit for habitation o Build on our existing good work with the private sector to expand our portfolio of private properties which we manage on behalf of private landlords and use to proactively prevent homelessness. o Following the enactment of the Localism Act there will be considerably more flexibility offered to Local Authorities to decide how we allocate affordable housing in Exeter. o A group of senior officers and members are looking at how we can use increased flexibilities to adapt the allocations policy to ensure our social housing always goes to those most in need with a strong local connection to Exeter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Robust empty property enforcement approach agreed in January 2013 and being implemented o 33 new PSLs taken on and 38 EXtraLet properties. o Allocations policy reviewed and is fit for purpose. A new Tenancy Policy was adopted to allow for flexible 5 year tenancies in the council's housing stock
Retain current system of setting council rent	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Set Council rents in line with the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Rent increases of x% agreed in January. Rental income is c£500K in excess of budget with arrears at only 0.79%
Provide 35% of all new build development as social housing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Where viable, make 35% of all new homes built across the City affordable o Provide advice and a range of affordable housing options designed to help local people solve their housing needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Due to viability, in light of the Council's CIL evidence base and other market indicators there is presently no need to prove lack of viability on schemes of between 3 and 14 dwellings, where not part of a wider development; and ECC accept the provision of 25% (or more) affordable housing. o Housing advice services are included in the help me with my financial and housing problem system review. Current figures show that 85% of all housing and financial queries made in the Customer Services Centre are resolved immediately and 87% people

	have their problem solved without any need to return.
Introduce a co-operative and mutual model of home ownership where people are given stability and equity while retaining housing stocks	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o We are working with the CDS Co-operative to introduce a cooperative and mutual model of home ownership, where people are given stability and equity while retaining housing stocks. This is an imaginative solution to meeting a need, and we are keen to support what would be one of the first scheme of its kind in the country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Work with CDS Co-operative has been inconclusive. A report has been prepared for Members on the Co-operative housing options available. Housing Development Team considering the possibility of a Co-operative housing scheme being possible through a S106 site allocation for affordable housing.
Install solar panels on council houses	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Identify and maximise opportunities to increase the Council's own housing stock to high energy sustainability standards. Install 249 solar panels this year. o We will continue to work in partnership with E.on to deliver energy efficiency grants and loans to ensure a smooth transition into the Green Deal and Energy Commitment Obligation (ECO). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 284 homes fitted with solar panels with budget approval to do up to 55 more during the roof replacement programme in Hawthorn Road. £71K for other energy efficiency works also approved o An 'ECO pilot' offering energy efficiency grants wholly funded by an energy company is to take place in 6 areas of the City, beginning in June 2013
Empower residents to have a greater say	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Build upon the new community grants system that has been recently set up and ensure new homes bonus funding empowers community groups. o Work to support more joined up cost effective work between the city and county councils through the new Exeter Board on community and housing issues , where there is over lap , such as supporting people funding , community facilities etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Community Grants ward scheme supported 114 groups across the city including Exeter Young Carers, Exeter Panthers, Whipton Luncheon Club. 20 city wide initiatives supported incl. HomeStart, Carousel, Exeter Pride. New Homes Bonus supported 5 groups in 12/13 incl. Exeter Community Centre for landscaping of garden, contributions to Newtown CA for new community centre, also Countess Wear and Newcourt. o £97,500 joint funding (£8,600 ECC) from ECC and DCC to support community initiatives in Exeter. Groups supported include Nightstop Devon – emergency accommodation for young people, Volunteer co-ordinator at St Sidwells Community Centre, Age UK for volunteering project, Turntable, Devon United women. o The Exeter St James Neighbourhood

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work within the localism agenda in terms of community consultations and neighbourhood plans. ○ Continue to support existing joint work with community groups, the voluntary sector, charities, community associations and faith groups across the city. ○ Ensure through the council’s community strategy that we continue to support and encourage with other partner organisations social inclusion, tolerance and diversity in Exeter, and also work to tackle poverty. ○ Working to develop the new scrutiny role for our existing TALC committee in line with new government legislation. ○ We will further develop the Residential Park Forum in order to support those many Exeter householders who have additional housing challenges to deal with as park home residents. 	<p>Plan received support from 91.6% of electors in the recent referendum. This is the first Neighbourhood Plan to be adopted in an urban area. The group are now planning to take forward some of the community priorities for the area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Joint work is taking place in numbers of areas including the Community First initiative in Priory, also in supporting the development of new residents/community associations – most recently the Newcourt Community Association who are preparing to take on the management of a new community centre at the new development. Plans for roll out of community meetings across city to enable statutory and voluntary sector partners to meet and identify joint work. ○ The Community Safety Partnership and the Social Health Inclusion Partnership have both reviewed their purpose and structures to align with changes to health and policing within Devon and the peninsula to be able to give a stronger focus on Exeter’s priorities within the county context. ○ A Performance Improvement Panel has been set up to meet this need. The Performance Review Committee that was in existence has been absorbed into the panel. The role of the panel is not to act as a consultation group, advising on policy and procedure, but as a scrutiny panel to challenge performance and the way in which services are provided and can be improved. The panel will regularly review performance, actively challenging the way in which services are delivered to assist in continuous improvement. ○ The membership of the forum has been strengthened and now includes representatives of all of the sites, police, Age UK and trading standards. The membership of the forum will be continually reviewed.
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**Cllr Rob Hannaford
Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Involvement
May 2012
Updated May 2013**

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Portfolio Holder Priorities 2013/14 Housing and Communities

Help me find somewhere suitable to live

Build communities where everyone has a home

- o Continue to offer a professional and flexible approach to developers seeking to build new homes in the City and to negotiate the provision of affordable housing that meets the identified housing needs of local residents.
- o Provide new affordable homes across the city and in the urban extensions at Newcourt , Monkerton and Alphington.
- o Seek to deliver at least 5% of all new affordable housing stock to meet the Council's wheelchair design standards and we shall produce a wheelchair housing strategy for the city.
- o Continue to assist in the facilitation and development of 150 Extra-Care homes across the City.

Use a range of measures to solve housing problems

- o Continue to investigate and encourage innovative schemes to deliver affordable housing without public subsidy
- o Review and monitor the pressures on the council's existing housing stock and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) from the new discounted Right To Buy proposals.
- o Ensure that we make best and prudent use of any funding that becomes available through the new HRA, to maintain existing stock and build and acquire new units.
- o Maintain and enhance our existing good work through the Tenants and Leaseholders Committee, Exeter Homes Partnership and Performance Review Committee.
- o Manage additional pressures and work loads from the cuts and changes to housing benefit, government imposed reductions in council tax benefits, and the Coalitions back to work agenda.
- o Work with the Environmental Health staff to monitor and drive up standards in private sector properties, especially for vulnerable groups and young people.
- o A partnership has been developed with the National Landlord's Association to provide accreditation training to Exeter Landlords. Training sessions will be run up to 4 times per year. The first 15 landlords were accredited in April 2013.
- o The private members bill to give greater rights and protection to park home owners has now been enacted as the Mobile Home s Act 2013.
- o Make the best use of the new funding streams from the revised planning systems for both housing and community initiatives.
- o Continue to grow the Private Sector Leasing and EXtralet schemes to provide a wider pool of affordable accommodation in conjunction with the private sector
- o Provide advice and a range of affordable housing options designed to help local people solve their housing needs

- o Transform how the council works with people to help them with their housing and financial problems
- o Develop our approach to reducing street begging including the introduction of an alternative giving scheme, improved access to accommodation and treatment services and more robust enforcement
- o Transform how the council maintain its properties and provide a better service with improvement value for money
- o Provide up to £400,000 in renovation grants to those most in need to make private sector homes fit for habitation (this was cut some time ago)
- o We will build upon recent work to cut down the time it takes to install Disabled Facility Grant adaptations in private dwellings by use of approved builders lists and modular pricing of standard works.
- o We will continue to work to strengthen to Protocol all the Devon Councils have with Registered Providers (Housing Associations) through which they undertake to contribute to the cost of disabled adaptations to their homes. New governance arrangements have been put in place to maximise sign up.
- o Wessex Home Improvement Loans have employed a marketing manager in order to encourage greater take up. We will also seek to expand the work of Wessex to include debt advice to clients in need.

Provide homes for rent that people can afford

- o Ensure that we continue to take a lead role on the issue of homeless in Exeter and neighbouring areas, and when needed advocate for more funding, resources, and understanding of the often complex issues that are affecting people.
- o Implement the recently approved Empty Homes Enforcement Policy to return privately owned empty homes to use and ensure they are fit for habitation
- o Build on our existing good work with the private sector to expand our portfolio of private properties which we manage on behalf of private landlords and use to proactively prevent homelessness.
- o Use increased flexibilities with allocations policies to ensure our social housing always goes to those most in need with a strong local connection to Exeter.
- o Introduce flexible tenancies in our own stock to optimize the potential for council-owned homes to be available for people in most housing need

Retain current system of setting council rent

- o Set Council rents in line with the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan

Provide 25% of all new build development as social housing

- o Where viable, make 25% of all new homes built across the City affordable

Introduce a co-operative and mutual model of home ownership where people are given stability and equity while retaining housing stocks

- o Continue to explore opportunities for introducing cooperative and mutual models of home ownership.

Install solar panels on council houses

- o Identify and maximise opportunities to increase the Council's own housing stock to high energy sustainability standards.
- o Install solar panels on up to 55 council-owned homes in Hawthorn Road
- o We will continue to work in partnership with E.on to deliver energy efficiency grants and loans schemes to maximise take up of Green Deal and Energy Commitment Obligation (ECO) measures. A pilot ECO scheme is to be launched, in the 6 most deprived wards, in June 2013 to pilot ECO delivery

Enable me to have my say and be heard

Empower residents to have a greater say

- o Build upon the community grants scheme and ensure new homes bonus funding enables community groups to provide activities and resources to build strong and sustainable communities
- o Work to support more joined up cost effective work between the city and county councils through the new Exeter Board on community and housing issues, such as supporting people funding, community facilities etc.
- o Work within the localism agenda to give communities powers to do things for themselves, such as neighbourhood planning.
- o Work in partnership with resident and community groups to ensure communities have the opportunity to influence services and new resources for their neighbourhood.
- o Ensure that we continue to work with and support other partner organisations to promote social inclusion, tolerance and diversity in Exeter, and also work to tackle poverty.
- o We will further develop the Residential Park Forum in order to support those many Exeter householders who have additional housing challenges to deal with as park home residents
- o Develop a new Housing Strategy in consultation with our residents, communities, tenants and wider stakeholders.

**Cllr Rob Hannaford
May 2013**

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Portfolio Holder Priorities 2013/14 Environment & Leisure

Provide great things for me to see, do and visit	
1	Upgraded play facilities (31 July) to be provided in St Thomas Pleasure Ground and a new splash play feature installed (end 2013). We will also complete the redesign and refurbishment of Flowerpot Skatepark (September 2013).
2	We continue to work with Parkwood Leisure to maintain and improve sporting and leisure facilities operated on behalf of the Council. We will monitor implementation of the agreed site by site improvement plans focussing on maintaining and improving the customer experience. Work will start on replacing the surface of the Arena running track so that regional events can be attracted to the city, that experienced and aspiring athletes in the city can train and improve their performance and to provide facilities for supporting those seeking to improve their fitness and well being.
Help me run a successful business in Exeter	
1	Proactively work with businesses to increase the number engaging with ECC as their Primary Authority. In addition, work with Trading Standards to enhance the Primary Authority offering.
2	Proactively work with businesses to reduce negative impacts on the public/public realm through the use of licensing and regulatory tools, and greater engagement with them over: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Hygiene Rating System; • Waste management; • Business litter; • Flyposting; • Customer nuisance (eg smokers congregating outside clubs)
Keep my city safe and looking good (Keep me/my environment safe and healthy)	
1	We will continue the 'looking good' systems redesign (now operating in seven Wards), with a view to introducing a new operating model for green space management, grounds maintenance and street cleansing in early 2014 based on more integrated working, greater empowerment of frontline staff to do what needs to be done and basing service delivery around the concept and demands of 'place' rather than traditional functional silos.
2	We will take action to improve the appearance of the children's burial area in Higher Cemetery, recognising that this is a place that has great sensitivity and strong emotional significance for many people. Initially, we will be focusing our efforts on making sustainable improvements to the drainage in this area which has an enormous impact on appearance during periods of prolonged wet weather.
3	Building on the 'looking good' redesign pilot, we will explore the potential for place-based service delivery, including partnerships with the County Council to deliver services on their behalf and place-based budgeting.

4	In partnership with HSE, Public Health, D&SFR, CoC and Trading Standards, launch an 'Estates Excellence' programme in Marsh Barton, focussing on health, safety and welfare of employees.
5	In light of concerns over 46% of catering premises surveyed for gas safety in 2013/14, implement a project in conjunction with Gas Safe, to encourage and ensure regular maintenance of gas appliances using qualified gas engineers.
6	In preparation for a revision of Licensing Policy due 2014, work with Licensing Committee Members on 4 key elements to enhance outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pool of conditions (control of nuisance, CCTV, plastic glasses, etc); • Special licensing tools (e.g. EMRO, CIP, LNL, DPPO); • Voluntary schemes (Best Bar None, Purple Flag, Challenge 21 and 25, training staff, public health agenda) • Late night economy (late night refreshment, flexible opening hours).
7	Exeter Alcohol Violence & Night Time Economy (EAVNTE) – progress multi-agency actions to reduce alcohol-related violence, disorder and nuisance through the introduction of schemes such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taxi marshals; • Safe Zones; • Taxi rank provision & siting; • Under-age sale of alcohol testing.
8	Introduce and co-ordinate a multi-agency Events Safety Advisory Group (ESAG) to ensure that public safety is appropriately safeguarded.
9	Comprehensively review the key factors contributing to Exeter's recycling rate and seek to re-invigorate recycling by a variety of actions including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • targeted interventions at those communities where recycling rates are lower than the norm, including working with public sector and private landlords to facilitate appropriate arrangements to encourage greater recycling; • broadening the Green Team partnership along with other educational programmes; • broadening the garden waste customer base.
10	Following a successful bid for DECC funding, progress development of a low emissions strategy which will contribute to the Air Quality Action Plan for Exeter.
11	Explore the use of licensing tools available to allow the management of concentration of gambling premises in a locality.
12	Conduct a review of the purposeful system of keeping people and the environment, safe and healthy.
Run the Council well	
1	In recognition of the continuing pressures on local government finance, I will be asking officers to review the opportunities for greater income generation and increased commercial awareness across my portfolio, using the principle – where it is appropriate to do so – that those services that are capable of generating income should at least be covering their costs.

2	In partnership with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development & Transport, I will be reviewing the management arrangements for car parking assets that fall within my portfolio to explore whether a single management and enforcement regime can be introduced for all Council car parks to ensure that charging and other policies are consistently and fairly applied.
3	Joint Waste Management Board – proactively engage with exploring the potential for joint working in clusters across Devon in partnership with other councils.
4	Materials Reclamation Facility – in light of the development work for a Joint Waste Management Board and opportunities in terms of regional/national provision for recycling, a review of the MRF operation over the medium to longer term will be carried out to identify potential benefits.

Cllr Greg Sheldon
May 2013

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