



Exeter City Council

To the Chair and Members
of the Scrutiny Committee - Community

Please ask for: Howard Bassett

Direct Dial: 01392 265107

Email: howard.bassett@exeter.gov.uk

Our ref:

Your ref:

**AGENDA FOR
EXETER CITY COUNCIL
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY**

The Scrutiny Committee - Community will meet on **TUESDAY 28 MAY 2013**, commencing at **5.30 pm**, in the Rennes Room, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter to consider the following business. If you have an enquiry regarding any items on this agenda, please contact Howard Bassett, Democratic Services Officer (Committees) on **Exeter 265107**.

Entry to the Civic Centre can be gained through the Customer Service Centre, Paris Street.

Pages

Part I: Items suggested for discussion with the press and public present

**THE MEETING WILL BE PRECEDED AT 4.30 PM BY A PRESENTATION FOR MEMBERS
ONLY ON A SMART METER TO MAXIMISE ENERGY USE IN THE HOME**

1 **APOLOGIES**

To receive apologies for absence from Committee members.

2 **MINUTES**

To sign the minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2013.

3 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Councillors are reminded of the need to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests that relate to business on the agenda and which have not already been included in the register of interests, before any discussion takes place on the

Office of Corporate Manager Democratic & Civic Support

Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter, EX1 1JN

Tel: 01392 277888

Fax: 01392 265593

www.exeter.gov.uk

item. Unless the interest is sensitive, you must also disclose the nature of the interest. In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, you must then leave the room and must not participate in any further discussion of the item. Councillors requiring clarification should seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer prior to the day of the meeting.

4 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 -
EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It is considered that the Committee would be unlikely to exclude the press and public during consideration of the items on this agenda, but if it should wish to do so, the following resolution should be passed:-

RECOMMENDED that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting of the particular item(s) on the grounds that it (they) involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

5 **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDER 19**

A period of up to 15 minutes will be set aside to deal with questions to the Committee from members of the public.

Details of questions should be notified to the Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support at least three working days prior to the meeting. Further information and a copy of the procedure are available from Democratic Services (01392 265107) also on the Council web site.
<http://www.exeter.gov.uk/scrutinyquestions>

6 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER STANDING
ORDER 20**

To receive questions from Members of the Council to appropriate Portfolio Holders.

7 **WELFARE REFORM**

Verbal update by the Housing Benefits Manager.

8 **HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

To welcome David Black, Devon County Council Head of Planning and Transport and Tony Matthews, Neighbourhood Highway Group Manager.

9 **PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' PRIORITIES FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR**

Councillors R.M. Hannaford (Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Involvement) and Councillor G.N. Sheldon (Portfolio Holder for Environment and

Leisure) will present a verbal report on the priorities for the forthcoming year in light of the Committee's work programme.

10 **APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO WORKING GROUPS**

To appoint to the following working group. Existing Membership is shown:-

Parkwood Leisure Contract Working Group

Councillor Shiel (Chair), Councillors Mitchell and Morris and Sheldon as Portfolio Holder.

<u>MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE EXECUTIVE</u>
--

11 **REVISION OF ENVIRONMENT ENFORCEMENT POLICY**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Environment – *report circulated* 7 - 8

12 **DOWNSIZING INCENTIVES FOR COUNCIL TENANTS**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Housing and Contracts – *report circulated* 9 - 18

13 **COMMERCIAL AND ENVIRONMENT SUPPORT TEAM STATUTORY SERVICE PLAN 2013/14**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Environment – *report circulated* 19 - 22

<u>MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY</u>

14 **HRA BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Housing and Contracts – *report circulated* 23 - 44

15 **2013 REVIEW OF RECYCLING PLAN (2011- 2016)**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Environment – *report circulated* 45 - 50

- 16 **UPDATE ON RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY - 2012/15**
- To consider the report of the Assistant Director Housing and Contracts – *report circulated* 51 - 60

- 17 **COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**
- To consider the report of the Corporate Manager 61 - 62
Policy/Communications/Community Involvement - *report circulated*

<u>PERFORMANCE MONITORING</u>

- 18 **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - FINAL ACCOUNTS 2012/13**
- To consider the joint report of the Strategic Directors and Assistant Director Finance. 63 - 74

- 19 **COMMUNITY SERVICES FINAL ACCOUNTS 2012/13**
- To consider the joint report of the Strategic Directors and Assistant Director Finance. 75 - 84

- 20 **PARKWOOD LEISURE CENTRE CONTRACT**
- Minutes of the meeting of the Parkwood Leisure Services Working Group of 11 March 2013 attached. 85 - 88

21 **MINUTES OF THE DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE AND CRIME PANEL**

The minutes of Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel meetings are circulated after each meeting to Members of this Committee. Members are requested to confirm that they have no queries on the latest set of minutes circulated (those of 9 April 2013).

They are circulated in advance to enable Members to raise, **before** Scrutiny Committee meetings, any issues of concern or interest which they may wish to have discussed at the Scrutiny Committee.

<u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u>

The next **Scrutiny Committee - Community** will be held on Tuesday 3 September 2013 at 5.30 pm

FUTURE BUSINESS

The schedule of future business proposed for this Scrutiny Committee and other Committees of the Council can be viewed on the following link to the Council's website: <http://www.exeter.gov.uk/forwardplan>
Councillors can view a hard copy of the schedule in the Members Room.

Membership -

Councillors Shiel (Chair), Mitchell (Deputy Chair), Bowkett, Branston, Bull, Choules, Clark, Crow, Macdonald, Morris, Mottram, Payne and Spackman

Find out more about Exeter City Council services by looking at our web site <http://www.exeter.gov.uk>. This will give you the dates of all future Committee meetings and tell you how you can ask a question at a Scrutiny Committee meeting. Alternatively, contact the Democratic Services Officer (Committees) on (01392) 265107 for further information.

Individual reports on this agenda can be produced in large print on request to Democratic Services (Committees) on 01392 265111.



Please remember to recycle. If you would prefer not to receive paper copies please let us know. Contact Democratic Services (Committees) 01392 265197 or email committee.services@exeter.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY 28 MAY 2013

EXECUTIVE
18 JUNE 2013

REVISION OF ENVIRONMENT ENFORCEMENT POLICY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Office of the Assistant Director Environment has revised the Enforcement Policy to reflect changes created by Government guidance and the revised structure of the directorate. The proposed revised policy ensures that enforcement actions are fair, consistent and transparent.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Local authorities are required to publish a policy setting out their approach to compliance and enforcement by the Regulators Compliance Code. This is an important document for regulators in meeting their responsibility under the statutory principles of good regulation to be accountable and transparent about their activities.
- 2.2 The Council has signed up to the Enforcement Concordat; staff within the Office of the Assistant Director Environment will seek to secure compliance with the law, both informally by information, advice and support and by enforcement where appropriate.
- 2.3 This revised policy is intended to provide guidance on the principles and processes that will apply when enforcement action is taken. The policy is available in the Members' Room, on the Council's website linked to the agenda and also available on request.
- 2.4 The Council believes in firm but fair enforcement of environmental legislation. This policy is based on the following five guiding principles:
- **consistency** - to ensure that similar issues are dealt with in the same way;
 - **proportionality** - to ensure that the action taken relates directly to the actual or potential risk to health and safety;
 - **targeting** - to ensure that resources are targeted where activities give rise to the most serious health risks;
 - **transparency** - to ensure that people easily understand the action expected of them and that clear distinctions are made between legal requirements and guidance; and
 - **accountability** - officers are accountable to citizens, Parliament and the Council for their actions, and the Council has an effective mechanism for dealing with complaints and comments.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1 Once adopted the policy will be published on the Council's website.
- 3.2 We will monitor compliance with the Policy by a number of methods:
- **Inter-authority audits** - parts of the service (namely the Commercial Section which regulates over 3500 local businesses) are subject to periodic inter-authority audits. These consist of a consortium of other regulatory authorities reviewing the procedures and practice of the service to promote best practice.

- **Business satisfaction surveys** - we conduct an ongoing business satisfaction survey which assesses business operators' perceptions of the quality and professionalism of the officers they dealt with. We will develop performance standards around the survey outcomes which will be used to measure individual officer performance.
- **Peer reviews** - we will peer review with other local authorities to establish how the numbers of enforcement actions our officers take compare with national averages.

4. BETTER REGULATION

- 4.1 The purpose of this Policy is to secure effective compliance with legislation while minimising the burden to the Council, individuals, organisations and businesses.
- 4.2 Regulatory Services have been the subject of considerable review in recent years, and the conclusions of influential reports are now being interpreted and applied to regulatory services by their respective governing bodies overseen by the Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO).
- 4.3 The Enforcement Policy embraces the principles of better regulation and will continue to safeguard the health of the local population and contribute to the economic vitality of Exeter by targeting resources effectively and innovatively to assist food businesses in compliance.

5. REVIEW

- 5.1 We are committed to the principles of good enforcement and continually seek to improve our standards. This policy is subject to regular annual review.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Policy in itself does not create any financial or resource implications.

7. RECOMMENDED

- 1) That Scrutiny Committee - Community supports the Enforcement Policy
- 2) That Executive approves the Enforcement Policy

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT

S:PA/LP/Cttee/513SCC2
9.5.13

ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

- 1) Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006
- 2) Food Law Code of Practice
- 3) Standard for Health and Safety Enforcing Authorities
- 4) HSC Enforcement Policy Statement
- 5) The Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008
- 6) Regulator's Compliance Code

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY 28 MAY 2013

EXECUTIVE
18 JUNE 2013

DOWNSIZING INCENTIVES FOR COUNCIL TENANTS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Members' agreement to amending the existing downsizing scheme for tenants to help mitigate the impact of the recent welfare reforms.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In March 2007, Members agreed a policy to encourage tenants who were under-occupying their Council home to downsize to more suitable accommodation. The policy outlined a number of incentives that would be provided, including cash payments, help, advice and support services.
- 2.2 In the first few years following its implementation, the policy proved popular with tenants seeking to transfer to smaller properties and since its introduction a total of 210 tenants have taken advantage of the scheme. These moves have released around 260 bedrooms for use by families with a housing priority. At the beginning of the scheme it was very popular, but interest has levelled off over the last few years. Appendix 1 gives details of the number and incentives paid to tenants over the period of the current scheme.
- 2.3 The downsizing budget is currently £50,000 per year. Under the present scheme, a tenant moving from a three bedroom to a one bedroom property receives a maximum payment of £2,000, including any removal fees. A tenant downsizing by one bedroom receives a maximum payment of £1,500.
- 2.4 The total amount actually paid to the tenant will depend on any rent arrears or any repairs recharges on the property after the tenant has moved. However, there is an element of officer discretion in order to facilitate appropriate family accommodation being made available.
- 2.5 Currently any tenant downsizing into new purpose built accommodation – such as the new Council own-build properties - is not eligible for a cash incentive payment but does qualify for removal costs of a maximum of £500 and advice and assistance from housing staff.
- 2.6 Tenants wishing to downsize within Devon must be registered with Devon Home Choice. They are automatically banded in B Band (high need) and properties are advertised with priority for downsizers.
- 2.7 There are currently 131 Exeter City Council tenants registered as having downsizing priority on Devon Home Choice:
- 101 wish to downsize by one bedroom
 - 27 wish to downsize by two bedrooms
 - 2 wish to downsize by three bedrooms
 - 1 has four extra bedrooms.

The recent STAR survey showed that 20% of the respondents wanted to move. Of these, 14% wanted to move to smaller accommodation. If this is applied across all Exeter City

Council homes, we could anticipate that approximately 140 current tenants wish to downsize.

- 2.8 In light of the Welfare Reform changes, 326 families of working age renting Council properties will be subject to benefit deductions for every spare bedroom over and above their needs. Social tenants under-occupying by one bedroom will see a 14% reduction in their Housing Benefit and those under-occupying by two or more bedrooms will lose 25% of their Housing Benefit. It is predicted that those affected by this policy will lose, on average, £14 per week.
- 2.9 The Welfare Reform will not impact on tenants who are not of working age. However, it is possible that there will be an increase in the requests to downsize and that greater stress will be put on this budget and the staff responsible for carrying out these duties. It could be argued that the need to provide an incentive to downsize is no longer required, although the deductions in benefit will only impact on those of working age.

3. OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, in conjunction with officers, has considered a number of options to address what changes are required to the downsizing scheme to mitigate the impact of the welfare reforms. These options are as follows:
- 3.2 **Option One.** Larger financial incentives are removed completely and the £50,000 downsizing budget is used to fund a post dedicated to helping tenants downsize. This post would provide proactive approaches to those affected by the changes, help them find a new property, deal with removals and guide them through the process. Work could also be done to approach those of pensionable age living in family-sized homes to free up larger accommodation.

This would be an additional post dedicated to downsizing and could be trialled initially for one year to assess service demand and its success. There would not be an additional cost to the Council as the money currently used as incentive payments would fund the post. This new post would have comparable responsibility and skills required as a Neighbourhood Assistant within the Housing Service paid at grade 5. The start of the grade 5 salary scale is £17,585. With on-costs based on 29.5% of salary, this would work out to be around £22,773 per annum on a full time basis.

The remaining £27,227 could be used to fund removals at £500 a time, funding approximately 54 removals (excluding rent arrears and rechargeable repairs).

- 3.3 **Option Two.** Reduce downsizing incentives to £500 towards removal costs for tenants of working age but retain the downsizing support as provided currently by the Voids Coordinator. The annual £50,000 budget would fund 100 tenants to move home (excluding rent arrears and rechargeable repairs).

Remove all incentives for anyone of pensionable age wishing to downsize as they will not be affected by the changes, but retain the downsizing support as provided by the Voids Coordinator.

- 3.4 **Option Three.** Offer incentives at the same levels as the current scheme to people of pensionable age. Tenants of this age may not have enough savings to enable them to move to more suitable accommodation. This will help to free up family-sized homes for those on the Devon Home Choice register.

Exeter City Council would be able to help 25 tenants at £2,000, 33 tenants at £1,500 each, 100 tenants at £500 each or a combination of the above.

General needs tenants of working age would not receive any incentives except downsizing support as provided by the Voids Coordinator.

- 3.5 **Option Four.** The downsizing budget to be increased to £75,000 to account for the 326 Exeter City Council tenants of working age who have extra bedrooms.

Reducing the financial incentive to £500 would enable the service to help 150 Exeter City Council tenants. If the current incentive rates remained in place, Exeter City Council would be able to help 25 tenants at £2,000 each, 33 tenants at £1,500 each, 100 tenants at £500 each or a combination of the above.

In all cases the downsizing support will be retained as provided by the Voids Coordinator.

- 3.6 The benefits and potential negative impacts of each of the options are set out in Appendix 2 of this report for Members to consider.

4. PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Option one is recommended. In order to reduce any potential negative impact to this policy change, officers would wish to introduce the changes from 1 October 2013 on a trial basis for 12 months. Officers would report back to Members in September 2014 with the outcomes. This will allow time to publicise the changes directly with those it would potentially impact upon before the changes come into force and help to ensure all tenants are notified of the changes. It will also allow time to recruit to the temporary post and ensure all systems are in place to be effective from the start of the scheme.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An annual budget of £50,000 will continue to be made available within the Housing Revenue Account to assist in ensuring we continue downsizing and maximising best use of our housing stock. Failure to take any action may result in a higher demand for downsizing and the budget being overspent.

6. RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that Scrutiny Committee – Community supports and Executive agrees to:
 - Implement an amended downsizing incentive scheme for Council tenants to improve the management of the housing stock, taking into account the Governments changes to tenants who have additional bedrooms which are not occupied.
 - 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.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HOUSING AND CONTRACTS

S:PA/LP/ Committee/513SCC13
22.4.13

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)
Background papers used in compiling this report:

None

This page is intentionally left blank

Downsizing Figures 2007-2013

Appendix 1

Year	Budget	Tenants Downsizing	Tenants D/Sizing to an RP Property	Tenants giving up ≥ 2 Beds	Tenants giving up 1 Bed	Total Spend on Incentive Payments	Total Spend on Rent Arrears & Repair Costs	Total Spend on Removals (Incl. carpets)	Total Spent
2007-2008	£100,000	60	8	18	42	£92,964.41	--	£25,275.31	£118,239.72
2008-2009	£50,000	41	9	2	39	£47,300.53	--	£16,060.15	£63,360.68
2009-2010	£35,000	33	6	5	28	£31,635.85	--	£10,879.30	£42,515.15
2010-2011	£50,000	15	2	7	8	£9,274.33	--	£7,162.05	£16,436.40
2011-2012	£50,000	33	11	11	22	£34,194.70	£9,866.31	£1,358.00	£45,419.01
2012-2013	£50,000	28	9	9	19	£24,718.63	£17,832.45	£4,602.50	£47,153.58

This page is intentionally left blank

	Benefits	Potential negatives
<p>OPTION 1 – Remove larger financial incentives and fund downsizing post, with an option to help with removal costs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If 140 current tenants wish to downsize (see 2.10 of the report) then there is no need to offer financial incentives as these tenants are already looking to downsize. More targeted support will improve the process, enable tenants to downsize faster and increase satisfaction. <p>Organisations such as Hull City Council and Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council focus on the support element of downsizing (directly matching properties in the correct area, home visits, disconnecting and reconnecting white goods etc.) Financial incentives are lower, with Hull’s equivalent to two weeks average city rent and Oldham’s between £500-£1,000 (depending on size). Both schemes are award winning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reduces level of work currently carried out by Voids Coordinator to enable them to concentrate on successfully letting over 300 properties each year. This will potentially cut down refusal levels, shorten void times and increase customer satisfaction. ● Tenants of all ages will benefit from one single point of contact to guide them step-by-step through the process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If take up of downsizing incentives continues to be low, despite the Housing Benefit reductions for extra bedrooms, there may not be enough work for the new member of staff (this could be mitigated with work in areas such as older persons support and pre-void inspections). ● Without the available financial incentives, tenants may find it too expensive to move, especially if they have rent arrears or substantial recharges. Eight out of the 16 tenants (50%) downsizing so far this year had repair recharges deducted from their incentive payment and six tenants were in arrears (38%). ● The contract would be fixed term so there is the possibility that ECC may not get the quality of staff required to do the job effectively. ● Some tenants have used the downsizing scheme to clear rent arrears and pay for recharges on repairs that were their responsibility at the end of the tenancy (see appendix 1). This would no longer be possible. ● This change has not been fully consulted on with tenants and may not be well received by those who have anticipated using the scheme at some point in the future.

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The service will be tenant-focussed and time can be taken to explain the more complicated parts of the process, such as recharges.• The pro-active work completed to free up larger accommodation would outweigh the cost of taking on a new staff member.• Residents affected by reductions in their benefits for extra rooms will receive targeted support.• Those currently waiting to downsize through Devon Home Choice can be offered one-to-one help.• The service can be more pro-active in identifying downsizers using census and STAR information.• A staff member will be able to promote the benefits of the service, producing information on the cost savings of downsizing.• A staff member dealing specifically with downsizing will be able to encourage tenants to leave their previous property in good condition by promoting the £150 incentive• There is more scope to successfully identify and follow through chain lettings, increasing the satisfaction of multiple tenants. | |
|--|--|--|

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the potential for over 300 extra people wishing to downsize, there may be double the amount of void properties coming through during 2013. This will increase the work of the Void Coordinator; therefore having an extra member of staff dealing with downsizing would remove the pressure from the Voids Coordinator so they can concentrate on effectively letting homes. 	
<p>OPTION 2 – Reduce financial incentives to £500 for working age tenants. Remove financial incentive for tenants of pensionable age</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By reducing the incentives and restricting them to tenants of working age, the money will go further and will be targeted specifically at those who are negatively affected by the new legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council would need to prove that restricting financial incentives to one age group over another was a proportionate means to deliver a legitimate aim or the Council runs the risk of falling foul of the Equality Act 2010, Section 13 (Direct Discrimination) and Section 29 (Provision of Services). • By removing financial incentive for tenants of pensionable age to downsize this becomes less attractive to the group of people more likely to under-occupy their property. Less family-sized homes may become available. • Older tenants may have minimal savings and may not be able to afford the costs associated with moving, especially if there are rechargeable repairs or rent arrears.
<p>OPTION 3 – Keep financial incentives for those of pensionable age but remove financial incentives for those of working age</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retaining financial incentives for people of pensionable age will help free up more family-sized accommodation for applicants on Devon Home Choice. Older tenants may have fewer savings and may not be able to move without financial aid. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council would need to prove that restricting financial incentives to one age group over another was a proportionate means to deliver a legitimate aim or the Council runs the risk of falling foul of the Equality Act 2010 Section 13 (Direct Discrimination) and Section 29 (Provision of Services).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We do not need to provide an incentive to tenants of working age whose Housing Benefit will be reduced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant Census details from those who volunteered their income information suggests that many tenants have a household income which is significantly below the Exeter average wage of £22,000 (nearly 1,700 households). It may therefore be cheaper for them to remain in their homes and take a benefit deduction if financial incentives are removed.
<p>OPTION 4 – Increase downsizing budget and either reduce financial incentives or keep at the current levels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money would be available to enable 150 tenants to downsize (reducing financial incentive to £500). This could significantly reduce the number of Exeter City Council tenants waiting to downsize on Devon Home Choice. • If financial incentives remained the same as the current scheme, more tenants will be able to access these funds. • Some tenants have used the downsizing scheme to clear rent arrears and pay for recharges on repairs that were their responsibility at the end of the tenancy (see appendix 1). This would no longer be possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the budget for downsizing will have a knock on effect on the budget for other housing related services the Council provides or is looking to provide within the next financial year. • Anecdotal evidence from across the country suggests that tenants may prefer to take a benefit deduction than relinquish their spare room(s). The take up of downsizing may therefore not increase by any significant margin. <p>In a recent Welfare Reform event held by the National Housing Federation, the Government has predicted that only around 20% of social tenants will seek to move to avoid benefit deductions for under-occupation. The remaining 80% will attempt to make up the shortfall in order to keep their spare bedroom.</p>

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY 28 MAY 2013

EXECUTIVE
18 JUNE 2013

COMMERCIAL AND ENVIRONMENT SUPPORT TEAM STATUTORY SERVICE PLAN 2013-2014

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for the adoption of the Commercial and Environment Support Team Statutory Service Plan 2013/14. The statutory Service Plan sets 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. A draft copy of this is available in the Members' Room, on the Council's website linked to the agenda or available on request.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement requires the Council to produce a Food Law Enforcement Plan (referred to as the Enforcement Plan). The key aim of the plan is to demonstrate how the Council will fulfil its regulatory obligations in respect of its food safety service.
- 2.2 Section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974 places a duty on the Council to make adequate arrangements for enforcement of health and safety. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE), requires the Council to produce an annual Health and Safety Service Plan. Responsibility for Health and Safety at Work enforcement lies with the HSE and Local Authorities (LAs). Councils are generally responsible for enforcement at premises in which non-industrial activities are undertaken (eg retail premises, warehouses, offices etc) whilst HSE is responsible for industrial activities.
- 2.2 The Statutory Service Plan incorporates:
- the service aims and objectives;
 - information about all enforcement and related services provided by the Council's Commercial and Environment Support Team
 - the Intervention Plan for 2013/14 detailing the actions and improvements for the service in an effective, risk based, proportionate & consistent way over the forthcoming year; and
 - the financial arrangement for providing the service.

3. KEY AREAS OF THE STATUTORY SERVICE PLAN 2013/14

Programmed Interventions

- 3.1 The service inspected 571 food businesses of a targeted 572 food businesses, and used self-inspection questionnaires (SIQ's) as an alternative regulation strategy for low risk businesses and to ensure resources are directed towards high-risk activities. SIQ's are a cost-effective means of maintaining contact with this group as well as providing the business with a useful means of keeping up to date with changes in law and other related issues affecting their business.

Service Requests

- 3.2 The Commercial and Environment Support Team is responsible for investigating complaints relating to food safety, health and safety regulation, infectious disease control, air quality, environmental permitting, contaminated land, statutory nuisance and also for providing health promotion and training activities for businesses.

Sampling

- 3.3 The authority participates in national and local food-sampling initiatives to monitor the quality of food on sale in the City which is classified as satisfactory, unsatisfactory or unacceptable. Additional samples are taken in response to food complaints and where it is alleged a premises or foodstuff is implicated in a food poisoning incident.
- 3.4 The service continues to use our ATP meter which is a simple, rapid method for monitoring cleanliness, hygiene and risk. Local experience in Exeter has demonstrated that businesses find the use of the ATP meter beneficial because it has brought poor hygiene and cleaning practices to the attention of Food Business Operators, head chefs and staff that the effort they put into cleaning is not wasted.

Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Diseases

- 3.5 The service is responsible for the investigation of outbreaks and food related infectious diseases in the city. Although the service has investigated a large number of cases, there have been no direct links to food businesses within the city.

Education and Awareness

- 3.6 A key component of the Government's drive on better regulation is assisting business compliance through education and awareness. The service runs a number of accredited training courses as well as informal workshops to allow business to access the information that they need to operate safely without being an expensive burden to the business. In addition the service looks to innovative ways of engaging with business to bring about compliance such as through an annual curry chef competition, advice visits accompanied by translators and a joined up approach to health and safety, occupational health and public health with businesses throughout the city.

4. BETTER REGULATION

- 4.1 Regulatory Services have been the subject of considerable review in recent years. The conclusions of influential reports are now being interpreted and applied to

regulatory services by their respective governing bodies overseen by the Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO).

- 4.3 The Statutory Service Plan embraces the principles of better regulation and will continue to safeguard the health of the local population and contribute to the economic vitality of Exeter by targeting resources effectively and innovatively to assist food businesses in compliance.
- 4.4 The service is actively embracing the government's primary authority programme. We currently have one established partnership with a regional butchers chain and we are finalise two further partnerships with a national hotel chain and regional childcare provider.

5. PROPOSED KEY ACTIVITIES FOR 2013/14

- 5.1 In addition to the traditional intervention methods the following key activities will shape the food service for the forthcoming year:

Intervention Strategy

- 5.2 The strategy to improve compliance with all regulatory areas and maintain a high level of compliance will be further developed following release of the Food Law (Code of Practice) England, and include:
- programmed inspections or interventions of 548 food premises and 75 health and safety premises, based upon risk;
 - targeting non-compliant business with effective use of appropriate enforcement tools;
 - continue to promote, enhance and drive improvement through the National Food Hygiene Rating System, in particular through the promotion of the scheme by consumers by harnessing the power and influence of the local media, health promotion initiatives and public events;
 - collaborating with forums/focus groups to target specific businesses to enable an exchange of information and gain an understanding of the obstacles some businesses face in complying with regulation;
 - using innovative approaches beyond traditional education and awareness methods to engage with businesses that are new and non compliant.; and
 - promoting the use of the Safer Workplace Better Business pack that has been designed by officers across Devon to make health and safety less of a burden in small and medium businesses.
- 5.3 The Enforcement Policy has been revised to encompass all aspects of the Environment Directorate and to reflect new government guidance.

Better Regulation

- 5.4 As a regulator of businesses in the City, it will be important to recognise the impact of the continuing economic downturn on businesses' capacity to comply with regulation, and to work with businesses to ensure that compliance is achieved through a wide range of intervention strategies. These will include greater engagement with business representatives and the joint development of advice/education interventions to bring about compliance. Over 95% of business surveyed stated that they felt that they were treated fairly by the service and that the contact that they had was useful to their business.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Intervention Programme will be carried out within the existing resource allocation as detailed in both the Statutory Service Plan and Revenues and Estimates for 2013/14.

7. RECOMMENDED

- 1) That Scrutiny Committee - Community supports the Statutory Service Plan 2013/14
- 2) That Executive approves:
 - a) the Statutory Service Plan 2013/14; and
 - b) the Assistant Director Environment being authorised to change the Statutory Service Plan in the light of centrally issued guidance and/or to meet operational needs.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT

S:PA/LP/513SCC1
8.5.13

ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

- 1) Service Plan for Food Law Enforcement 2013/14
- 2) The National Local Authority Enforcement Code issued by the Health and Safety Executive

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY 28 MAY 2013

HRA BUSINESS PLAN 2012-2042 UPDATE

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members on the activity of the Housing Revenue Account for the financial year 2012/2013 and summarise the progress being made on the HRA Business Plan (2012-2042).

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members approved the 30 year HRA Business Plan in March 2012. The attached report sets out what has been achieved against the plan over the past 12 months and our position in terms of delivering the aspirations of the 30 year business plan.

3 2012/13 HIGHLIGHTS

- 3.1 The main highlights of activity over the last 12 months include:
- Commencement of a three-year major kitchen and bathroom replacement programme to provide 1,032 new kitchens and 736 new bathrooms
 - Sign off of the Right to Buy Retention Agreement
 - Significant changes by way of the Government's welfare reforms and action undertaken to try to mitigate the effects of such reforms
 - Commencement of the Council Own Build Wave 2 Development Programme and the identification of four sites for a Wave 3 Programme
 - The retention of Laing Easiform Council homes and their renovation/refurbishment
 - The acquisition of 17 new homes from S106 transfer opportunities
 - The publication of a new Downsizing Strategy
 - The production of a Garage Sites Report to help identify new sites for housing development
 - Two buy-back purchases from the proceeds of sale of two former Council homes
 - 104 major disabled adaptations (389 minor adaptations)
 - Production of new Tenancy Strategy and Policy ahead of the introduction of new flexible tenancies
 - Energy efficiency measures in the form of solar panels on 284 homes, 518 new high efficiency gas condensing boilers and 40 homes with increased levels of loft and cavity wall insulation.
 - The commencement of a £1.8 million project to refurbish Rennes House.
 - Twenty-three Right to Buy Sales

4 SUMMARY

- 4.1 The first year of HRA self financing has been an ambitious programme of work, with all the revenue raised from Exeter City Council tenants available to be used for the benefit of current and future tenants for the first time. Right to Buy has reduced the overall level of stock but the acquisitions that we have made both through s106 negotiations and "buy back" has limited the impact to a net loss of 4 properties. The welfare reforms have not as yet had a significant impact on the ability of our tenants

to pay their rent, although prudent provision has been made within future years' budgets to account for any longer-term impacts. Despite significant unplanned investment in kitchen and bathrooms, over £500,000 surplus has been returned to the HRA working balance for investment in future years and there is sufficient in the capital budget to begin work on the Council Own Build programme.

4.2 A revised 30-year business plan will be compiled for Member approval in 2014/15.

5 RECOMMENDATION

That the progress on the HRA business plan 2012-2042 be noted.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HOUSING AND CONTRACTS

S:PA/LP/ Committee/513SCC10
10.5.13

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)
Background papers used in compiling the report

None



Exeter City Council

HRA BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE
REPORT
2012 / 2013

HRA BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE REPORT

This update provides information on the activity of the Housing Revenue Account for the financial year 2012/2013 and summarises the progress on the HRA Business Plan (2012-2042).

The principle highlights of activity over the last 12 months include:

- Commencement of a three-year major kitchen and bathroom replacement programme to provide 1,032 new kitchens and 736 new bathrooms.
- Sign off of the Right to Buy Retention Agreement
- Significant changes by way of the Government's welfare reforms and action undertaken to try to mitigate the effects of such reforms
- Commencement of the Council Own Build Wave 2 Development Programme and the identification of four sites for a Wave 3 Programme
- The retention of Laing Easiform Council homes and their renovation/ refurbishment
- The acquisition of 17 new homes from S106 transfer opportunities
- The publication of a new Downsizing Strategy
- The production of a Garage Sites Report to help identify new sites for housing development
- Two buy-back purchases from the proceeds of sale of two former Council homes
- 104 major disabled adaptations (389 minor adaptations)
- Production of new Tenancy Strategy and Policy ahead of the introduction of new flexible tenancies
- Energy efficiency measures in the form of solar panels on 284 homes, 518 new high efficiency gas condensing boilers and 40 homes with increased levels of loft and cavity wall insulation.
- The commencement of a £1.8 million project to refurbish Rennes House.
- Twenty-three Right to Buy Sales

The report covers the following areas:

1. Stock Profile and Stock Condition
2. Non-Traditional Properties
3. Responsive and Programmed Repairs
4. Planned Maintenance and Major Works
5. Disabled Adaptations
6. Procurement and Partnering
7. Energy Efficiency
8. Tenancy Strategy /Policy
9. Housing Resident Involvement
10. Anti-Social Behaviour
11. Welfare Reforms
12. Downsizing
13. Capital Resources
14. Income
15. Right to Buy
16. Buy-Back
17. Council Own Build
18. S106 Purchases
19. Future Funding Streams for Housing Delivery
20. Housing Service Performance Overview

1. Stock Profile and Stock Condition

- 1.1 As at 1 April 2013 the Council owned 5028 homes for rent, plus 21 sold on shared ownership leases and 937 flats sold on Right to Buy leases. In addition, the Council has 930 garages and car parking spaces available for rent. The housing stock profile by dwelling type is shown in the table below:

Council Housing Stock: (1st April 2013)

Property size (no. bedrooms)	Property Type:				Total
	Bungalow	House	Flat	Maisonette	
Bed-sit	0	0	146	0	146
1	150	5	1298	3	1456
2	103	592	971	110	1776
3	10	1445	12	88	1555
4	1	86	0	0	87
5	0	8	0	0	8
Totals	264	2136	2427	201	5028

- 1.2 With regard to the stock condition survey work progress to date includes 38% of the communal flat blocks have been surveyed and 15% of the Council houses have been surveyed. In total 955 dwellings have been surveyed.
- 1.3 Based on the historic data and current life cycles of key components it indicates 2794 homes fall below the Decent Homes Standard.
- 1.4 A £60,00 budget has been approved to appoint an external consultants to undertake stock condition surveys for 25% of the Councils housing stock to better inform asset management plans.

Type of unit	Total
Cornish	203
British Steel	33
Wimpey no- fines	75
Dorran Bungalows	32
Orlits	38
Laings Easiform	21
Total	402

Non Traditional Properties

- 2.1 The Council has a total of 402 non –traditional properties as follows:
- 2.2 Whilst not technically unfit, many of these properties require extensive renovation. Since June 2012, the Council has stopped the 'trickle-transfer' of the Laings homes to Sovereign Homes and will in future retain the remaining 21 homes and refurbish them as and when they become available. It is estimated that the refurbishment of these 21 homes will require an investment from the Council of at least £1.58 million. This expenditure will be funded from the HRA but will only be payable as and when Laings homes become vacant and require refurbishment.
- 2.3 Refurbishment works will commence on the following Laings homes in summer 2013; 57 Newman Road, 44 Merrivale Road and 40 Myrtle Road.

3. Responsive and Programmed Repairs

- 3.1 In 2012/2013, 19,605 repair orders were raised, 91% of appointments made and kept.
- 3.2 98% of routine repairs were completed on time. 97% of orders were completed within Government timescales.
- 3.3 99.29% of tenants said service was good or satisfactory, with a return percentage of 53%.

4. Planned Maintenance and Major Works

- 4.1 The Council continues to work to maintain properties to the decent homes standard. The total delivery project for the refurbishment of kitchens and bathrooms has a further two years to run and will deliver approx 1032 new kitchens and over 736 new bathrooms. In addition to this, there are programmed works to replace the communal heating system at Toronto House.
- 4.2 At Rennes House, a budget of £1.8 million has been set aside for major refurbishment works, this will include external wall insulation, structural repairs, new windows and some internal works. A project manager is to be appointed and timescales will be set once this person is appointed. At this moment it is anticipated the work will stretch over into the 2014/15 financial year.

5. Disabled Adaptations

- 5.1 493 adaptations orders were completed in 2012/13, 389 minor and 104 major. The average waiting time from referral to completion for major works was 33.28 weeks. The total spend was £404,000.00. In 2013/14 the budget has been increased to

£600,000 with the intention of reducing the current waiting list.

6. Procurement and Partnering

- 6.1 The Council's responsive and void repair contracts run from October 2010 for five years. Mears are the appointed Contractor.
- 6.2 2012/13 was the second year of a 5 year contract with Mears to provide the responsive repairs and voids service for the Council. In this year a handyman service for tenants in our older persons accommodation and vulnerable tenants was introduced. This service provides a repairs service over and above The Council's requirements within the tenancy agreement.
- 6.3 During the year work commenced on the "maintain our assets" review and Mears have agreed to work in partnership with the Council through this review.

7. Energy Efficiency

- 7.1 The Council continues to improve the energy efficiency of its homes and in 2012/13, in partnership with Eon has fitted 284 properties with Photo Voltaic (PV) panels for which the Council receive a modest income and the tenants of these properties enjoy reduced energy bills. In March 2013 Executive agreed that the allocated Energy works budget for 2013/14, any under-spend from the 2012/13 budget, Feed In Tariff (FIT) payments and any grant income received from energy efficiency works would be used to install photovoltaic arrays to as many properties at Hawthorn Road as possible, in conjunction with the re-roofing programme. It was also agreed that £40,000 from a combination of existing budgets would be used to undertake a trial retro-fit to improve thermal efficiency at two properties identified at Shakespeare Road. £31,200 from the Communal Areas budget is planned to be used this year for upgrading the window glass on 48 flats, in conjunction with the external rendering programme works.
- 7.2 In 2012/13 40 properties benefited from increased levels of loft and cavity wall insulation, 518 properties had new high efficiency gas condensing boilers to either replace older less efficient units or complete new heating systems. In 2013/14 to compliment the new roofing programme it is intended that 55 units will have photovoltaic panels fitted.
- 7.3 With regard to the overall energy efficiency of the Council's housing stock, the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating for the Council stock for 2012/13 was 70.25 compared with 69.87 in 2011/12, 68.41 in 2010/11 and 67.96 for 2009/10. The maximum SAP rating for a dwelling is 100; the higher the score the more energy efficient the property.

8. Tenancy Strategy /Policy

- 8.1 Following the approval of the tenancy strategy and policy by Members in November 2012 Officers are currently putting in place the procedures and details relating to the appeals process in order to operate flexible tenancies from October 2013. This policy will ensure the right type of tenancy is allocated to each tenant, that the under occupation of properties is addressed effectively and that the Council provide family and/or adapted housing where it is required.

9. Housing Resident Involvement

9.1 TALC's progress over the last 12 months

- 9.1.1 Over the past 12 months the Tenant and Leaseholder Committee (TALC) have 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 have also undertaken a review of all elements of the Resident Involvement Structure which has resulted in changes to make the structure more effective.

- 9.1.2 There is however, a concern that in general, tenants and leaseholders of Exeter City Council are not motivated to become involved. Work will be carried out over the next 12 months to investigate why this and put in place measures to overcome these issues.

9.2 Resident Auditor Team Update 2012/2013

- 9.2.1 The Resident Auditor Team (RAT) carried out research with the tenant population as part of the investigative work for the creation of the new tenancy policy. They have carried out a Mystery Shopping exercise to measure the performance of landlord service against local offers and have started a regular programme of inspection of void properties. This has led to changes being made to the voids procedure within the Repairs and Technical Services Team.

9.3 Repairs Partnership Board Update 2012/2013

- 9.3.1 There have been no meetings of the Repairs Partnership Board over the last 12 month. The Repairs and Technical Services Manager has brought issues where the input of residents is required to TALC meetings.

9.4 Editorial Board (insight)

- 9.4.1 The contract for the production of InSight was re-tendered in the past year which has resulted in a 25% saving in production

costs. Four editions have been produced. The newsletter is now also available as an audio download to increase its accessibility. A resident satisfaction survey found that 60% of tenants read the publication and that satisfaction with the information included is high. InSight has been used as a vehicle to inform residents of changes to the welfare benefits system. In addition to providing education and support to tenants this also seeks to protect the income of landlord services.

9.5 Performance Improvement Panel

9.5.1 The Housing and Regeneration Act (2008) introduced statutory objectives to empower tenants and ensure that they have the opportunity to shape services and standards. This approach is called co-regulation: where landlords the regulator and tenants together set, monitor and ensure that standards are met.

9.5.2 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.

10. **Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)**

10.1 The Tenancy Services Team uses all the tools available to tackle anti-social behaviour. In 2012/13 there were 694 cases opened. Many of these cases are regarded as low level ASB.

10.2 Where the case has escalated beyond a 'level two letter' the Council have carried out the following actions:

- 35 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts have been agreed and signed by perpetrators of ASB
- Notice's of Intention of intention to seek possession have been served on tenants of ECC property
- 3 Notices of Proceedings for Possession of an introductory tenancy have been served on those residents accused of committing ASB whilst their tenancy is with in the first 12 months.
- 13 Anti Social behaviour Injunctions have been obtained through the courts.
- 2 evictions were carried out during 2012/13 as a result of ASB.

11. Welfare Reforms

11.1 From April 2013, the Welfare Reform Act brought major changes to how benefits are administered and paid.

11.1.1 In summary the changes are:

- Abolition of Council Tax Benefit to be replaced with a local support scheme
- All benefits, including Local Housing Allowance, to be increased by Consumer Price Index not Retail Price Index
- Benefit reductions for working-age social housing tenants under-occupying their homes
- Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans abolished and the funding transferred to Devon County Council to use at 'local discretion'
- Introduction of Universal Credit between 2013 and 2017 that brings together separate benefits into a single, monthly payment
- 'Digital by default' for all applications for Universal Credit with an expectation that 80% of claimants will claim online by the end of transition
- Medical reassessment of all Disability Living Allowance claims and the introduction of the Personal Independence Payment
- Time limiting of contribution based Employment Support Allowance (formerly Incapacity Benefit)

11.1.2 So far the changes, while affecting some individuals significantly, have had a relatively low-level impact on benefit claimants in Exeter and their interaction with the services the City Council provides. These changes are:

- Removal of Local Housing Allowance excess of £15 from those paying less than LHA- level rent
- Removal of the Local Housing Allowance rate for a 5 bedroomed house
- Reduction of Local Housing Allowance rates from median rents to 30th percentile rents
- Increases to non-dependent charges
- Loss of extra benefit to households with children under 12 months
- Shared room rate extended to single people between 25 and 35 years old

11.1.3 The Devon Strategic Partnership have conducted an Equality Impact Needs Assessment of the wider reforms. The main findings from this assessment are as follows:

- The changes are so comprehensive that all groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act will experience some impact.
- Pensioners are largely protected from these reforms

- unless their partner is of working age.
- There will be a need to help people adapt to the change such as budget management and life skills to enable people to make the most of their income and assistance to maximise their income through work
- Groups that will particularly affected are as follows:
 - People with disabilities, especially those with mild to moderate or fluctuating health issues and their carers
 - Families with children with disabilities
 - Under 35 year old, single people, and potentially NEETS (Not in Employment, Education or Training) and care leavers
 - Women

11.1.4 Scale of changes

The table below sets out the number of people in Exeter likely to be affected by these changes. It should be noted that those figures with an asterisk(*) are crude estimates taken from national data and proportioned by population size. This is due to the fact that DWP has only released national figures. Those benefits not marked with an asterisk are based on actual case load data.

Benefit	Estimated No. of people (Exeter)	Timescale for implementation
Universal Credit	24,780*	October 2013 - 2017
Disability Living Allowance to Personal Independence Payment	7080*	April 2013 – March 2016
Incapacity Benefit to Employment Support Allowance	5900*	October 2010 – 2014
Benefit Cap	42 households	April 2013
Council Tax Support	5,400 claimants	April 2013
Social Fund	-	April 2013
Local Housing Allowance – size restrictions	329 council tenants 400 RP tenants	April 2013

11.2 In order to mitigate the uncertainty of the effect of the welfare reforms additional budgeting has been undertaken for a potential increased bad debt provision. Which has resulted in an increase bad debt provision of £140,000 to £360,000.

11.3 In addition to budgeting for an increased bad debt provision, ECC have also resolved to increase the amount retained in the

HRA working balance from £2.5m to £3m as a contingency.

11.4

11.4.1 Phased Impact of Universal Credit

The impact of Universal Credit on the level of rent arrears is expected to be gradual as it is not expected to commence until January 2014 (the target for implementation is subject to change) and will only apply to new applicants of a working age. Therefore, existing claimants and pensioners will not be affected, at least initially.

11.4.2 Accounting for Bad Debt Provision

Bad debts are provided as follows:

Current tenants

Arrears per tenant from £150 - £250 10% written off (as likely to be bad debt)

Arrears per tenant from £250 - £500 20% written off

Arrears per tenants in excess of £500 50% written off

Former tenants 90% written off

11.4.3 Next Financial Year

The impact of Universal Credit is expected to have minimal impact in 2013/14. However, the budgeted provision for voids/ bad debts has increased from £140k to £360k in order to reflect other changes to the welfare system which are also expected to impact on rent arrears/bad debts. In particular, the 'bedroom tax' where tenants who under-occupy their properties will lose a % of their housing benefit and will be required to pay rent

Under occupied by 1 bed -14% housing benefits

Under occupied by 2 bed - 25% housing benefits

12. Downsizing

12.1 At the Executive of the 18 June 2013 Members will be asked to consider a change in the downsizing policy. Officers are recommending that the financial incentives are removed completely and the current £50,000 downsizing budget be used to fund a post dedicated to helping tenants downsize and to use the remaining funds to pay towards removal fees.

12.2 Below is a table summarising the scale of downsizing and expenditure for 2012-13 and previous years:

Year	Budget (£)	Tenants				Total Spend (£)			
		Down- D/sizing to an RP Property	Giving up ≥ 2 Beds	Giving up 1 Bed	Incentive Payments	Rent Arrears & Repair Costs	Removals (Incl. carpets)	Total Spent	
07-08	100,000	60	8	18	42	92,964.41	--	25,275.31	118,239.72
08-09	50,000	41	9	2	39	47,300.53	--	16,060.15	63,360.68
09-10	35,000	33	6	5	28	31,635.85	--	10,879.30	42,515.15
10-11	50,000	15	2	7	8	9,274.33	--	7,162.05	16,436.40
11-12	50,000	33	11	11	22	34,194.70	9,866.31	1,358.00	45,419.01
12-13	50,000	28	9	9	19	24,718.63	17,832.45	4,602.50	47,153.58

13. Capital Resources

13.1 The table below shows the amount of capital resources, which are expected to be available over the years to 2016-17:

HRA Capital Resources	Balances as at 31/3/2013	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Total
		£	£	£	£	
Opening Balance, 1 April		6,895,971	4,133,896	1,284,051	5,075,842	9,932,535
HRA Working Balance - Transfer To / (From) *	3,290,297	365,159	(2,685,793)	3,344,145	4,422,341	8,736,149
Major Repairs Reserve	2,269,806	2,186,900	2,186,900	2,186,900	2,186,900	11,017,406
Capital Receipts	1,263,927	500,000	500,000	163,294	150,000	2,577,221
External Funding	71,941	0	0	0	0	71,941
RCCO		6,384,485	9,500,231	4,571,168	3,492,972	23,948,856
Accum Balance	6,895,971	16,332,515	13,635,234	11,549,558	15,328,055	46,351,573
Less Approved Capital Commitments		(12,198,619)	(12,351,183)	(6,473,716)	(5,395,520)	(36,419,038)
Available / Closing Balance, 31 March		4,133,896	1,284,051	5,075,842	9,932,535	9,932,535

* The available capital resources detailed above exclude a further £3 million, as this is the amount that the Council has

resolved to retain in the HRA Working Balance as a contingency sum.

13.1.2 Resources Needed

The reduction in available capital resources between 2013-14 and 2015 -16 reflects an enlarged HRA Capital Programme over this period which incorporates a £7.5m investment in building new council dwellings (COB Wave 2) and an additional £4.5m investment in replacement kitchens and bathrooms within existing housing stock.

13.2 Borrowing

The Government has set a Council Housing Borrowing Limit for each local authority (the cap). The HRA is currently operating up to its 'debt cap' with borrowing standing at £57.882m, which prevents the HRA from taking on any additional borrowing. The Council's policy for setting aside monies for debt repayment will be reviewed annually.

14. **Income**

14.1 The Government is keen for local authorities to continue working towards the social rent policy, whereby convergence with housing associations will be achieved by 2015-16. Rents will then follow the same formula as for housing associations; currently an increase of RPI + 0.50% per annum. Rents set in line with the Government's social rent policy remain below the 'limit rent' and ensures that maximum housing benefit subsidy is receivable by the Council.

15. **Right to Buy**

15.1 As of 2 April 2012 the Right to Buy discount has been increased to a maximum of £75,000 or 60% of the house value (70% for a flat) depending on which is lower.

15.2 In 2012/2013, the Council sold 23 homes through Right to Buy, this is a significant increase in sales when compared with the number of Right to Buy sales in 2011/2012 and reflects the interest in Right to Buy following the Government's increase in discounts.

15.3 At the budget statement made on the 20 March 2013 the Government announced its intention to lower the eligibility criteria so tenants can apply to buy their homes after three years instead of five and also pledged to simplify the Right to Buy application process. In order to do this the Government requires primary legislation which at this time has not been timetabled. It is clear that this may impact on the number of properties sold under right to buy and this will need to be assessed and modeled to see what impact it will have on the business plan.

15.4 The Retained Right To Buy Receipt Statement as at 31 March

2013 shows that the Council is on target to expend the retained receipts for re-investment in the Council Own Build Wave II Programme and to assist with the purchase of S106 Transfers.

15.5 A summary of the Receipt Statement is provided below:

<u>Retained RTB Receipts</u>		£	
Qrt 1		0.00	
Qrt 2		0.00	
Qrt 3		275,256.92	
Qrt 4		369,933.50	
		<hr/>	
Total Retained 2012/13		645,190.42	Must not exceed more than 30% of the total amount spent on the provision of social housing
		<hr/>	
<u>Required Expenditure</u>			
Total Retained 2012/13	30%	645,190.42	
Required Match Funding	70%	1,505,444.31	
		<hr/>	
Total to be spent by Qrt 4 2015/16	100%	2,150,634.73	3 year time restriction to spend retained receipts
		<hr/>	
<u>Expenditure To date</u>			
7-12 Poppin Court	Z4751	309,000.00	
COB Wave 3	Z3248	111,233.71	
St Andrews Road	Z3249	9,396.25	
		<hr/>	
		429,629.96	
		<hr/>	
Balance to be spent		1,721,004.77	
		<hr/>	

16. Buy-Back

16.1 Buy Back Policy

16.1.1 On 24 April 2012 the Council resolved to acquire suitable housing properties on the open market using receipts generated by the disposal of properties that are no longer deemed suitable for social housing, in accordance with the Housing Asset Management Plan framework.

16.1.2 During 2012/13, the Council sold two properties; 15 Church Street and 78 Hoopern Street and their disposal proceeds were used to purchase two replacement properties; 4 Gareth Crescent and 9 Stoke Hill Crescent.

16.2 Buy Back Allowance

16.2.1 In accordance with the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations, the Council is permitted to recover 50% of the cost of re-purchasing former council dwellings from its Right to Buy sale receipts, which equates to our Buy Back Allowance, before calculating the amount to be reinvested in replacement homes in accordance with the Right to Buy Retention agreement.

16.2.2 Monies retained under our 'Buy Back Allowance' can be used for any housing capital purpose, whereas monies retained under the Right to Buy Retention agreement must be spent on the provision of new affordable rented housing within 3 years.

16.2.3 To date, we have retained £44,853 under our 'Buy Back Allowance' and a further £130,512 will be retained in respect former council homes the Council has re-purchased, which include 4 Gareth Crescent and 9 Stoke Hill Crescent.

17. Council Own Build

17.1 Council Own Build – Wave One

17.1.1 The Council's first wave of 21 new Council Homes were completed in 2010 and 2011 at Rowan House and Knight's Place. These homes were part-funded from the Labour Government's 2009-2011 Affordable Homes Programme. The homes are within the HRA.

17.1.2 There have been a number of outstanding defects at Knights Place due to the main contractor ISG's lack of performance. A retention of £64,000 remains in place for this development. The Council Legal Service are currently working with the project architects and quantity surveyors to appoint external specialist contractors to complete the outstanding works and recover costs from the main contractor. It is anticipated that the remedial works will be completed summer 2013.

17.1.3 Both Knights Place & Rowan House have been subjected to rigorous post-completion monitoring. The Monitoring Project is funded by the Technology Strategy Board and involves 3 flats at Knights Place and 2 flats at Rowan House having monitoring equipment installed to monitor energy usage, air quality and internal room temperatures. The monitoring also includes a review of the design, meeting with tenants and questioning their experiences, U value monitoring, energy auditing, air testing and thermal imaging. The monitoring has been in place for 12 months with a further 12 months remaining. Initial monitoring result feedback has been encouraging supporting the low

energy credentials of the PassivHaus standard. A full report will be prepared and disseminated on completion of the monitoring programme.

17.2 Council Own Build – Wave Two

- 17.2.1 Four new Council own build sites are underway following an allocation of funds from the Housing Revenue Account. The first sites are at Bennett Square, Brookway and Newport Road. Previous Planning Permissions for over 55 homes have been superseded taking account of current housing needs and the feedback from the Wave One developments. New planning applications have been submitted updating the PassivHaus designs so that they are cheaper to deliver, provide for a generic house type design, have the capability to be easily extended within the roof space to provide an additional bedroom and better meet the current housing needs for three bed family homes. The three sites will deliver 20 three bedroom houses of which 3 will be fully wheelchair accessible. Construction works are programmed to commence summer 2013.
- 17.2.2 The fourth site in wave 2 is located on Vaughan Road, adjacent to Rennes House. The current planning consent for over 55's accommodation will be adapted and updated to reduce the construction costs and incorporate the learning from Wave One. A new planning application will be submitted later in the year, with a view to construction starting in spring of 2014. This development will deliver 20-25 apartments for over 55's with priority given to those downsizing from larger family sized homes.

17.3 Council Own Build – Wave Three

- 17.3.1 Design work has commenced on a further eight potential Council Own Build sites, of which, following consultation with Planning Officers, four will form the third wave of Council Own Build. The four sites are located at Anthony Road, Hamlin Gardens, Thornpark Rise and Bovemoors Lane, and will deliver 26 three bedroom houses, of which 3 will be fully wheelchair accessible. Resident consultation meetings have been carried out for each of the sites and planning applications will be submitted in July 2013.

17.4 Council Own Build – Future Waves

- 17.4.1 Further waves of Council Own Build will be formed out of a redesign of the four wave 3 sites that didn't make it into wave three, along with any other HRA sites identified by the Housing Development Team. An external consultant has recently been appointed to identify other potential housing sites in the City which will help constituent further Council Own Build programmes.

18. S106 Purchases

ECC Purchased units during 2012/13

Development	Address	No. of units	Type	Of which wheelchair adapted	Price per unit (£)	Total Cost (£)	Date completed
RNSD, Topsham Road	Blakeslee Drive	5	Houses	3	1	5	22/10/2012
RNSD, Topsham Road	7-12 Poppin Court	6	Flats	0	50,000	300,000*	20/12/2012
RNSD, Topsham Road	1-6 Poppin Court	6	Flats	2	1	6	31/01/2013
Total		17		5		300,011	

18.1 During 2012/2013, the Housing Development Team have secured a number of new homes through their S106 negotiations at nominal values. The table below summaries the purchases made during the year:

**£240,000 commuted sum to be paid to ECC in 2014/15 in lieu of off-site provision of three one-bed flats*

Outstanding ECC purchases

Development	Address	No. of units	Type	Of which wheelchair adapted	Price per unit (£)	Total Cost (£)	Predicted date to complete
Dean Clarke House	TBC	4	Flats	4	42507.00	170028.00*	Apr-14
Monkerton (Heywood Land)	TBC	3	Houses	3	55603.00	166809.00	TBC - have started on site
Newcourt (Dukeminster) Lower RNSD	TBC	1 x 5-bed	House	1	82414.00	152414.00	TBC - have started on site
		1 x 4-bed	House	1	40000.00		
		1 x 3-bed	House	1	30000.00		
Newcourt (Pratt)	TBC	2	Houses	2	1.00	2.00	TBC - have started on site
Total		12		12		489,253	

**Plus Commuted Sum of £112,001*

- 18.2 From 2013/14 onwards, additional S106 transfers have been earmarked as indicated in the table below. Funds have been set aside from the HRA to finance the S106 purchases which provide the most cost-effective way of acquiring new homes.

19. Future Funding Streams for Housing Delivery

- 19.1 During 2012/2013 the Housing Development Team explored and financially modelled a number of alternative funding streams for delivering new Council homes. Some of the potential models fall outside the Housing Revenue Account whilst some models could be adopted within the Housing Revenue Account. A number of models are presently being considered as well as the potential of utilising private sector finance. These include:
- Direct new build in the General Fund
 - New build Council Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)
 - Council Revenue Account Housing Company (CoHoCo)
 - Direct new build in the Housing Revenue Account
- 19.2 Further work will be carried out in 2013/2014 to ascertain which models and financing options are best suited for the Council.

20. Housing Service Performance Overview

- 20.1 Exeter City Council's Landlord Services have a good record on performance.
- 20.2 The Council maintains performance monitoring records in the Quarterly Performance Digest which is available on the Council website. The Council also benchmarks performance, satisfaction (through the biennial STAR Survey) and costs with up to around 400 different housing organisations nationwide through Housemark.
- 20.3 Performance is discussed and commented on at quarterly meetings of the Performance Review Committee which comprises residents and Councillors. The meeting receives written and verbal reports from staff and can question managers about any aspect of performance.
- 20.4 Repairs
- 20.4.1 The Council carries out many thousands of responsive repairs to council properties every year. Last year the Council undertook over 17,500 repairs, a very slight fall on the number in 2011 – 2012. Of these repairs the percentage completed on time increased from 97.7% to 98.6%.
- 20.4.2 The number of repairs to void properties remained stable at around the 390 number. However, the percentage completed on time increased dramatically from 87.4% to 97.7%.

20.4.3 The number of outstanding gas services remained at zero.

20.4.4 Satisfaction with the repairs service in nearly all areas (such as time taken to complete a repair, attitude of contractors and quality of work) has improved since 2011/2012.

20.5 Rents

20.5.1 Our figure for rent arrears as a percentage of collectable rent at 0.79% is among the lowest in the country. The Council has performed consistently well in this area for many years. It will, unfortunately, almost certainly not be possible to maintain this level of performance in the future after the introduction of the welfare benefit changes (such as the benefit cap, the 'bedroom tax' and the payment of benefit directly to tenants).

20.5.2 85% of residents found that their rent represented good value for money, an increase of 2% since the previous STAR survey in 2008.

20.6 Void Times

20.6.1 Average void times, or the period in which council properties are empty between lettings, increased marginally from 28 days in 2011/2012 to 31 days last year. This is a little above the median figure for stock retaining local authorities.

20.6.2 The number of council homes becoming void during 2012/2013 was 6%.

20.6.3 The Council are currently undertaking a review of our void management service with a view to measuring performance in line with our corporate priorities, concentrating more on outcomes rather than outputs.

20.7 Neighbourhood Management

20.7.1 The Council continue to inspect 100% of our identified housing estates on time and take appropriate action as a result of those inspections.

20.7.2 The incidence of anti-social behaviour (ASB) remains high. Almost 700 new cases were reported last year; however, the number of current cases being investigated has fallen from 132 to 104. Nevertheless, dealing with allegations of anti-social behaviour comprises much of the work of the Neighbourhood Management Team.

20.7.3 The average time taken to deal with cases has increased to 67 days, representing the increased complexity of many of these reports. However, the number of repeat reports of the same problem has fallen to only six.

20.7.4 Although satisfaction with specific aspects of the service has fallen, overall satisfaction with the anti-social behaviour service has increased from 58% in 2008 to 70% in 2012.



This page is intentionally left blank

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY 28 MAY 2013

2013 REVIEW OF RECYCLING PLAN (2011-2016)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report updates Scrutiny Committee Community on progress with the Recycling Plan since its approval in 2011 and seeks ongoing support from this committee for recycling initiatives.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Exeter City Council is the Waste Collection Authority (WCA) for Exeter and has responsibility to arrange and manage recycling and composting programmes for household waste collected in Exeter. The avoided disposal cost of material diverted from landfill by or through the recycling activities of the City Council is claimed as a recycling credit from Devon County Council (DCC) as the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA).
- 2.2 During 2012/13 just over £621,000 was claimed from the WDA for recycling of materials carried out directly by the City Council. This income was used to support the costs of recycling and waste activities.

3. RECYCLING RATE & WASTE ARISING

- 3.1 Exeter's recycling rate has dropped slightly. This is 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 has not increased despite continued growth in Exeter's population. This indicates that the trend towards reduced waste continues. There are a number of reasons for this, including a reduction in consumer purchasing and an on-going reduction in packaging.

Table 1

	06/7	07/8	08/9	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
ECC recycling & composting rate %	33.86	*35.81	*36.2	*36.2	*36.9	*36.2%	34.9% (estimated)

*From Waste Data Flow – this varies slightly from the DAWWRC statistics due to different accounting systems for the MRF stockpile.

Targets

- 3.2 There are currently no local recycling targets, but the UK as a whole is committed to achieving a 50% recycling rate by 2020 as set out in the EU revised Waste Framework Directive 2010. In addition the Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Devon sets targets of 60% by 2020 and 65% by 2025.

- 3.3 Exeter's contribution to achieving this is a local aspiration target of 39% by 2014/15 (Table 2 below).

Table 2: Recycling Plan Target for % of Household Waste Recycled

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Target	37	37.5%	38%	39%	40%

- 3.4 The 2012/13 target has been missed. The only service to show an increase in material collected for recycling was the garden waste scheme, which grew by 151 tonnes. However, this has been offset by reductions in the material collected through 'Recycle From Home', recycling banks and voluntary groups.

- 3.5 The key reasons for the reduction in kerbside dry recycling tonnages include:

- **'Light weighting' of packages** - all packaging companies are aiming to reduce their carbon footprint and one way this can be achieved is to make the packaging lighter. This saves money and carbon on transport as well as production costs.
- **Paper** represents about 60% of the total tonnage sent for recycling. There has been a strong downward trend for paper tonnages during the last three years. This could be due to increasing preference for internet news format over print, and a reduction in the purchasing of magazines, newspapers, etc. due to the economic downturn.
- **Waste Minimisation** – the effectiveness of both national and the local 'Don't let Devon go to waste' awareness campaigns to encourage reduction of all types of waste are having impact. However, there is still an ongoing need to advise residents of what materials can be recycled and the benefits to the environment and society in so doing.

Recycling centres

- 3.6 Devon County Council's recycling centres continue to recover a high percentage of waste brought in by the public. As at February 2013, recycling rates were 77% at Exton Rd and 83% at Pinbrook Rd.

Potential to improve recycling rates

- 3.7 The analysis of Exeter's residual waste, which took place in April 2012, gives some guidance on where improvements in waste reduction and recycling could be achieved.
- 3.8 Food waste accounts for 35% (by weight) of household waste sent to landfill. In other Devon districts where food waste is collected as a separate material every week, the food waste proportion is between 15% (East Devon) and 23% (West Devon). A well-used food waste collection can add several percentage points to a council's recycling rate. In the absence of a food waste collection, then this fraction can be partially reduced by educational drives to avoid food waste, and to encourage composting appropriate food waste at home.
- 3.9 More than a third of the household waste currently sent to landfill could, if properly separated, be dealt with using the Council's existing 'Recycle From Home' scheme, recycling banks or the garden waste service. Therefore, increasing participation in

existing schemes could be made more effective if education and enforcement resources were strengthened

4. SCHEME AND COMMUNICATION UPDATES

Kerbside

- 4.1 Kerbside recycling continues to be available to all households in Exeter. Wheeled bins, boxes and bags for recycling are available on request; households that are high recyclers may request additional receptacles.

Garden Waste Collection Scheme

- 4.2 In 2013, garden waste customers were able to renew their subscriptions online via the Council's web site, and this was the option used by over half our customers. The number of customers joining the Garden Waste Scheme continues to rise (See Table 3 below).

Table 3

Garden waste customer base	
Year	Number renting bins
04/05	2385
06/07	4760
08/09	6309
10/11	7020
11/12	7151
12/13	7597 *

* A further 755 customers subscribe to the service using compostable sacks.

- 4.3 A review garden waste collection rounds took place in 2012/13. As a result, more than 90% of customers have their garden waste collected on the same day as their green or grey bin, making easier to remember their collection day. The review has also reduced vehicle mileage and collection costs for the 2013 collection season.

Compost bin sales

- 4.4 The sale of cost-price home composting bins continues to slow down as the city approaches saturation point. However, three one-day composting bin sales took place during spring 2013, accompanied by an advert and editorial coverage in the Express and Echo during May. Sales figures as a result of this promotion were not available when this report was finalised.

Trade recycling service

- 4.5 The trade waste recycling service has around 500 customers, but has dropped by 30 over the last 12 months. About 400 tonnes of good quality recycling is collected per annum; 65% is card, 25% paper and 10% plastic which is processed through the MRF and bulked up with the kerbside collected materials for sale to re-processors.

Bring banks

- 4.6 Changes have been made to the Bring Bank operation with the removal of all the plastic/can banks and the paper banks from the smaller sites as these materials are collected from the kerbside city wide. However, paper banks are retained at larger sites such as supermarkets and a paper bank was newly installed at Waitrose in April.
- 4.7 There is a full range of glass banks at over 70 sites throughout the city as glass is not collected co-mingled. With the exception of book, textile and shoe banks (and small glass banks in difficult-to-access locations), all are serviced by the Council. At 18 of the 70 bottle bank sites, smaller 1100-litre banks are used due to restrictions on space and vehicular access. The arrangement for emptying these banks was taken in-house in May 2013, using the council's existing resources.
- 4.8 Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) bring banks for small electrical appliances (e.g. hair-dryers, electric toothbrushes) have been installed at four of the major supermarket sites.

Schools and students

- 4.9 A free recycling service continues to be offered to all schools within Exeter. In addition to the actual collection of materials, the Council also provides an educational support service to all participating schools and colleges, including education visits and targeted communications and use of the MRF training room.
- 4.10 The Green Team initiative set up in partnership with the Express and Echo and Gregory Distribution Company has proven to be a successful way of engaging school-children and it has sponsorship for a further year. The successful Green Team awards were held in October 2012, attended by over 200 students and staff. The next awards will be held in February 2014, to fit better with the academic year.
- 4.11 The Recycling Team has been working with the University's Community Liaison Officer in developing better tailored information for students about refuse and recycling collection, as this specific group has particular advice needs beyond that for general households.

Third Party recycling and material buy in

- 4.12 Charities, community and voluntary groups continue to collect a significant amount of recyclable materials in the City every year. In 2012/13 this was a total 865 tonnes, representing 7% of all material collected for recycling. The Council continues to purchase such material directly from groups and also pays recycling credits to reflect the saving in disposal costs. Like other recycling schemes, this figure has dropped over the last year due to likely factors such as 'light weighting' of packaging and a decline in newspaper readership.

Communications and events

- 4.13 Communicating the message on recycling and waste minimisation to residents and businesses is an important tool to engender changed behaviour. Some of the proposed and completed projects include:

- a door-knocking campaign about recycling – residents were asked in summer 2012 to respond to a series of questions about how effective the present systems of communication are. Some of the useful findings are:
 - 96% of people who said they had received a recycling calendar in the post found it useful;
 - 78% preferred receiving information as a leaflet, with email being the second most popular choice;
 - 39% of respondents said they have used the ECC web site to find out about their waste and recycling collections
- clinical waste continues to be a problem at the MRF with on-going work with the Primary Care Trust and other organisations to spread the message regarding the correct way for clients to dispose of clinical waste;
- road shows, school fetes, compost giveaways, Real Nappy Campaign, Recycling Week events and MRF tours all contribute to the continuing efforts to inform and promote recycling for residents in Exeter.
- For enquiries about waste and recycling collections, visits to the ECC web site now outnumber telephone calls by around two to one. Developing the web site enables us to improve the accessibility of the service. For example, as well as renewing their garden waste subscriptions online, by the end of 2013 residents will be able to request new containers and report a missed collection and receive an instant response to the enquiry based on our real-time waste collection data. During episodes of severe weather, householders can also visit www.exeter.gov.uk/snow to check whether their bin collection in street has been affected.

5. MAIN ACTIONS FOR 2012/13 & BEYOND

5.1 The key areas that will be focussed on for 2013 and beyond are to:

- maintain the recycling rate as the economic climate continues to affect purchasing choices and companies strive to reduce the weight of their packaging;
- continue to address the clinical waste contamination in the MRF;
- continue to encourage waste minimisation to reduce the amount of waste being produced, and focus on reducing the larger fractions in landfill waste, especially food waste;
- increase the quality of materials collected for recycling by continuing to reduce the contamination levels;
- maintain a high-quality collection service, taking into account rising fuel costs and the financial pressures on Exeter City Council;
- base education drives on sound information from surveys and collection data including using the information from the residual waste survey;
- increase the range of materials collected at the refreshed bring bank sites, and enhance customer use by attention to the cleanliness of sites.

6. RECOMMENDED:

That Scrutiny Committee Community

- 1) note the progress that the Council has made to date in implementing the Recycling Plan 20011-16; and

- 2) support the ongoing actions planned for 2013 that are described in this report.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT

S:PA/LP/ Committee/513SCC3
3.5.13

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)
Background papers used in compiling this report:**

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY 28 MAY 2013

UPDATE ON RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY 2012–2015

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update on progress made against the Resident Involvement Strategy 2012 – 2015 action plan as requested by Executive Committee on 20 March 2012.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The purpose of resident involvement is to find out the priorities of the Council's tenants and leaseholders. This helps the service to focus resources into these areas and make efficiency savings elsewhere.
- 2.2 The Housing Service manages over 6,000 properties. The Strategy specifically focuses on housing resident involvement activities that relate to the Council's landlord function. Community engagement initiatives are developed across Exeter in conjunction with residents and partner agencies by the Community Involvement & Inclusion Officer. The plan for how the Housing Service will be involved in the wider development of communities will be contained in the Neighbourhood Management Strategy.
- 2.3 Regulatory requirements for registered providers of social housing are set out by the Homes and Community Agency in its Regulatory Framework for Social Housing, which came into effect in April 2012. The framework is based on the principle of co-regulation where there is a clear role for tenants to scrutinise performance.
- 2.4 The Housing Service is expected to support co-regulation by:
- Offering all tenants a wide range of opportunities to be involved in the management of their housing, including the ability to influence strategic priorities, the formulation of housing related policies and the delivery of housing resident services
 - Consulting with tenants and acting reasonably in providing them with opportunities to agree local offers for service delivery
 - Providing tenants with a range of opportunities to scrutinise performance against all standards and in the development of the Annual Report
 - Providing support to tenants to build their capacity to be more actively involved.

3. THE STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Resident Involvement Strategy 2012–2015 is available in the Members' Room, on the Council's website linked to the agenda and also available on request. This sets out the current position with regard to resident involvement and outlines the Council's vision for involving tenants and leaseholders in all aspects of housing service and provision.

3.2 The Strategy focuses on the following areas to ensure that effective tenant and leaseholder involvement is at the heart of housing at Exeter City Council, that the different levels of involvement are accessed by a representative cross-section of residents and that all regulatory requirements are met through:

- Resident scrutiny and regulation
- Assessment of impact, structure and performance monitoring
- Increasing the numbers and diversity of residents actively involved
- Communication
- Training and support.

4. ACTION PLAN UPDATE

4.1 Action Plan attached at Appendix I.

5. RECOMMENDATION

That Members note the content of the Action Plan.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HOUSING & CONTRACTS

S:PA/LP/ Committee/513SCC17
3.5.13

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)
Background papers used in compiling this report:

None

Action Plan Update

Resident Involvement Action Plan 2012 – 2015

Action	Target Date	Feedback / Develop change / Scrutiny	Who	What will look like and how will it be measured?	Update
Resident scrutiny and regulation					
Reform the Performance Review Committee to undertake the tenant scrutiny role in the co-regulation framework	Sept 2012	Scrutiny	HRIM HPPM	Scrutiny framework in place that monitors and challenges performance.	A new panel named the Performance Improvement Panel has been developed. Training for members commences March 2013.
Review Local offers	Sept 2013	Develop change	HRIM HOM	New Local Offers produced	
Develop 'democratic filter'	April 2013	Scrutiny	HRIM HOM	Democratic filter	The Housing Ombudsman has clarified that we are not required to undertake this action. There is an expectation that we support tenants who approach us to form a panel to meet the new complaints process for

Action	Target Date	Feedback / Develop change / Scrutiny	Who	What will look like and how will it be measured?	Update
					landlords that comes into effect April 2013.
Assessment of impact, structure and performance monitoring					
Evaluate each component of the current structure to establish <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose • Effectiveness • Cost • Accessibility • Future direction • Training needs 	Tenant & Leaseholder Committee – Jan 2013	Feedback / Develop change / Scrutiny	HRIM	New RI structure in place	New constitution agreed January 2013.
	Performance Review Committee – Sept 2012	Scrutiny		Scrutiny framework in place that monitors and challenges performance	This committee is to become a sub-committee of the Performance Improvement Panel.
	Resident Auditor Team – Nov 2012	Scrutiny		Annual work plan agreed and monitored	Work plan in place
	Editorial / Insight - June 2012	Feedback		Reduction in production costs High satisfaction levels	Successful tender of the production contract has reduced production costs by 25%. High level of satisfaction recorded in STAR survey.
	Annual Conference – Sept 2012	Feedback / Develop change		Annual RI activity/activities attended by a minimum of 10% of the household.	Review completed. Welfare Reform Road Show and HRA consultation to take place in Feb 2013.

Action	Target Date	Feedback / Develop change / Scrutiny	Who	What will look like and how will it be measured?	Update
				High satisfaction levels	
	Service Specific Surveys – Oct 2012	Feedback		Standardised surveys Increased response rates	
	Leaseholder Forum – July 2012	Feedback / Develop change		Increased attendance figures	Forum replaced by an annual leaseholder workshop.
	Older Persons Housing Forum – Aug 2012	Feedback / Develop change		Framework for involvement in service established	Replaced by a constituted group named the Independent Living Forum led by Tenancy Services.
	Repairs Partnership Board – Nov 2012	Develop change		Performance monitoring framework in place	
Agree performance indicators for RI activities and develop performance monitoring database	May 2012	Feedback / Develop Change / Scrutiny	HRIM HOM HPPM	PI's benchmarked against peers PI's reported in Housing Performance Digest	PI's put in place and reported in the Housing Performance Digest.

Action	Target Date	Feedback / Develop change / Scrutiny	Who	What will look like and how will it be measured?	Update
Create an involvement database to record and evaluate involvement activity	April 2013	Feedback	HRIM	RI published quarterly in Insight TALC monitor reports	
Undertake a service review of new RI structure	March 2015	Feedback / Develop Change / Scrutiny	HRIM	New three year strategy produced	
Carry out resident satisfaction survey (STAR)	April 2014	Feedback	HRIM HOM HPPM	Survey results used to inform the Housing Service improvement Plan	
Increasing the numbers and diversity of residents actively involved					
Develop new methods of engagement to attract more residents	Jan 2013	Feedback / Develop Change / Scrutiny	HRIM	New RI structure Involved residents are representative of resident population	Tenants Voice group recruited to undertake 'Real Time' Mystery Shopping of the housing service.
Use of social media to obtain feedback on housing services	Jan 2013	Feedback	HRIM	New RI structure in place RI database records	Twitter used to promote resident involvement. Facebook as a tool for tenant and leaseholder feedback still to be developed.
Promote the need	Jan 2013	Feedback	HRIM	Resident	Continuous work

Action	Target Date	Feedback / Develop change / Scrutiny	Who	What will look like and how will it be measured?	Update
for resident involvement groups to reach 'hard-to-reach' groups and ensure all are accessible for people across the seven strands of diversity. Use tenant profiling information to target these groups.		/ Develop Change / Scrutiny		involvement groups should become more ethnically diverse and appeal across the community. PI to measure the demographics of involved residents	undertaken. PI in place to measure the demographic of involved tenants. Target set using tenant profiling information.
Produce recruitment information, utilising traditional and new media to attract more residents	April 2013	Feedback / Develop Change / Scrutiny	HRIM	Range of promotional methods in place. Numbers of involved residents increase as a result of promotional activity	

Action	Target Date	Feedback / Develop change / Scrutiny	Who	What will look like and how will it be measured?	Update
Update Equality Impact Assessment	March 2013	Scrutiny	HRIM	The different levels of involvement are accessible by a representative cross-section of residents.	Complete
Review the demographic profile of involved tenant and leaseholders. Develop new mechanisms to increase the numbers of groups which remain under-represented.	June 2014	Feedback / Develop Change / Scrutiny	HRIM	Demographic of volunteers becomes more representative of tenant and leaseholder population	
Communication					
Develop feedback mechanisms to inform involved residents and the wider resident population and staff on the impact that involvement has had on the service	April 2013	Feedback		Housing Team updates Regular article in Insight Reporting format put in place to respond to RI groups on their input	
Record RI	Sept 2012	Feedback	HRIM	Each edition of	Complete

Action	Target Date	Feedback / Develop change / Scrutiny	Who	What will look like and how will it be measured?	Update
publications and make available from Exeter City Council website and as a pod cast				Insight available in this format	
Annual Report to residents against Local Offers	Sept 2012 Sept 2013 Sept 2014	Feedback	HOM HRIM	Production of Annual report	Sept 2012 complete
Training and support					
Deliver training to all housing staff on how RI enhances service delivery and the role that they play. Training to be jointly delivered with NMT to include the wider community engagement activities undertaken by that team	Sept 2012	Develop change	HRIM NMT HOM	All housing staff trained	Action moved to Neighbourhood Management Team
Develop a residents training programme	Apr 2013	Develop change		Programme in place. Increase in individual and group capacity	
Develop a training	Sept 2013	Feedback	HRIM	Database in place	

Action	Target Date	Feedback / Develop change / Scrutiny	Who	What will look like and how will it be measured?	Update
evaluation database					
Introduce annual appraisals for residents who are part of a formal RI group	April 2013	Develop change	HRIM	Annual appraisals in place	
Review Expenses policy - fit for purpose and takes account of the new methods of involvement	Sept 2012	Develop change	HRIM	New policy in place	Target date moved to May 2013

Key to action plan abbreviations

HRIM	Housing Resident Involvement Manager
HPPM	Housing Performance and Projects Manager
HOM	Housing Operations Manager
RI	Resident Involvement
PI	Performance Indicators NMT Neighbourhood Management Team

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY 28 MAY 2013

COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members on the work of the Exeter Community Safety Partnership (Exeter CSP).

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Community Safety Partnerships exist by law (Crime & Disorder Act 1998 with a little extra added in the Police Reform Act 2002) and were established to bring statutory agencies together to reduce crime and disorder. Agencies that have to be represented within the partnership are: Police; local authorities; Probation; Fire and Rescue; NHS; and Youth Offending Teams.

- 2.2 Current membership of the Exeter CSP is:

- Exeter City Council
- Devon and Cornwall Police
- Devon County Council
- Devon Clinical Commissioning Group
- Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service
- Devon Probation Trust
- Youth Offending Service
- Exeter Council for Voluntary Service
- Police and Crime Commissioner

3. PRIORITIES

- 3.1 A Peninsula Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment (PSA) has been prepared to inform the work of the Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The PSA draws together findings of the individual strategic assessments of all the community safety partnerships (CSPs) across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

- 3.2 The document provides information about community safety priorities across the area, with supporting evidence, to ensure that the priorities are understood. It sets out what is being done to address the challenges presented to CSPs.

- 3.3 The PSA lists the four current priorities that most affect communities across the area:

- Domestic, family and sexual abuse.
- Alcohol, violence & the night time economy.
- Anti-social behaviour
- Reoffending

- 3.4 At its away day in November 2012 the Exeter CSP agreed to adopt the PSA priorities as they reflect relevant and current issues for the city. The Exeter CSP also agreed that work should be done to assess the true impact of hate crime on our communities, to improve understanding of issues for vulnerable groups and to improve reporting.

4. GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY

- 4.1 The Exeter CSP agreed that a revised governance structure would offer clear accountability and focus, with the existing Executive Group offering strategic direction and overseeing Task and Finish Groups who would take responsibility for delivery against priorities.
- 4.2 The Executive Group will be responsible for strategic direction and ensuring:
- identified priorities are driven by way of task and finish groups;
 - relationships continue to be built and maintained in order that activity and resources are shared to greatest effect;
 - funds and resources are identified where appropriate to enable positive outcomes for the CSP;
 - best practice and successes are highlighted to both the PCC and the community,
 - Exeter CSP maintains the level of funding and commitment required for progress in Exeter.
- 4.3 Task and Finish groups will be the tactical element of Exeter CSP activity with each CSP priority assigned a lead agency that will drive action on behalf of the partnership and report progress to the CSP Executive Group.
- 4.4 Where additional activity or support is required for new priorities a Task and Finish group will be set up. It is acknowledged that membership may vary depending on availability and resourcing within agencies. The lead for each current Task and Finish group is as follows:
- Domestic, Family and Sexual Abuse – Devon County Council (in consultation with ADVA)
 - Alcohol, Violence and Night Time Economy – Police with possible joint Chair of 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
 - Reoffending – Devon Probation Trust building on existing “Turnaround” group.

5. FUNDING

- 5.1 The PCC has allocated a budget of £7,200 to Exeter CSP for 2013-14 for the delivery of the Anti-Social Behaviour priority, and there is an opportunity to bid for additional funds for the other priorities.
- 5.2 The Safer Devon Partnership will administer funds and the reporting process on behalf of the PCC, which requires the Exeter CSP to make quarterly returns.

6. RECOMMENDATION

That Members note the content of the report.

CORPORATE MANAGER POLICY/COMMUNICATIONS/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

S:PA/LP/ Committee/513SCC15
29.4.13

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)
Background papers used in compiling this report:

EXETER CITY COUNCIL
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY
28 MAY 2013

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT
FINAL ACCOUNTS 2012-2013

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 REVENUE BUDGETS

To advise Members of any major differences, by management unit, between the original budget and the outturn for the financial year up to 31 March 2013 in respect of the Housing Revenue Account and the Council's new build schemes.

1.2 CAPITAL BUDGETS

A capital outturn update is now incorporated into this report, in order to improve financial reporting to this Committee and help to provide a more comprehensive financial update in respect of the Housing Revenue Account.

2. HRA FINAL ACCOUNTS TO 31 MARCH 2012

2.1 HOUSING SELF-FINANCING

This is the first financial year that the HRA has operated under the new self-financing regime.

The Government made significant reforms to council housing finance within the Localism Act 2011, which resulted in the commencement of self-financing and the abolition of the Housing Revenue Account subsidy system from 1 April 2012.

Under the HRA subsidy system rents were pooled and redistributed by central government. Exeter City Council was a net contributor to the central pot, whereby it paid more into the central pot than it received back in subsidy. Over the last few years we have paid around £4m per year to the Government and had an annual budgeted deficit on the HRA.

Self-financing enables each stock owning local authority to retain their own income collected from rents, service charges and other sources at a local level to deliver housing services to tenants and to maintain their housing stock. Under self-financing it is anticipated that local authorities will achieve a surplus each financial year, which will help facilitate service improvements, repay debt and to provide investment in the stock.

2.2 HRA WORKING BALANCE

The total budget variances for 2012-13 have resulted in a net surplus of £525,874 which will be transferred to the HRA working balance. This represents a decrease of £1,794,396 compared to the budgeted net surplus of £2,320,270. However, this is predominantly due to additional revenue contributions towards capital expenditure of £2.084 million in respect of the acquisition of 6 flats at the former Royal Navy Store site and an increase to the kitchen and bathroom replacement programmes, both of which were approved by Executive during the financial year.

After adding the surplus for 2012-13, the HRA working balance will stand at £6,290,297 at 31 March 2013.

2.3 MAJOR REPAIRS RESERVE

Under self-financing Councils are expected to set aside some of their income each year into the Major Repairs Reserve, in order to ensure appropriate provision is made towards financing future capital works or to repay debt.

After transfers into the reserve (monies set aside from revenue) and transfers out of the reserve (financing of capital expenditure) have been made in respect of the 2012-13 accounts, the balance on the Major Repairs Reserve will stand at £2,269,806 at 31 March 2013.

2.4 VARIANCES FROM BUDGET

The main variations by management unit are detailed below. Please also refer to Appendix 1.

	£
2012-2013 BUDGETED TRANSFER TO THE WORKING BALANCE	(2,320,270)
85A1 MANAGEMENT	(233,717)
Savings have been made in respect of employee costs due to a lower than budgeted pay award for 2012-13 and from the outcomes of the Senior Management Review. Further savings have been achieved in respect of a vacant Neighbourhood Manager post, as recruitment to this post is pending the outcome of the Housing systems review. Superannuation costs were also lower than budgeted due to a lower number of staff in the scheme.	
Unbudgeted redundancy costs have been incurred in respect of six posts during the financial year.	
Savings have been made in the cost of procuring new mobile working devices, as implementation of new mobile working systems in Housing Services are pending the outcome of the systems review.	
A refund was also received from South West Water in respect of water and sewerage charges at Magdalen Gardens. Water consumption levels by the 16 bungalows had been higher than usual due to a water leak, which has now been resolved.	
Additional income from solar panels installed on council dwellings was also generated. This income will be set aside to help finance future investment in energy efficient measures for other council dwellings.	
A lower than budgeted recharge from the Contracts Unit was made to this management unit for 2012-13, as more of their resources were deployed to the help deliver the HRA Capital Programme, which is therefore reflected in an increased Contracts Unit recharge to the HRA Capital Programme instead.	
85A3 SUNDRY LANDS MAINTENANCE	4,144
A minor overspend has occurred in the cost of Sundry Land Maintenance, which relates to the Garden Assistance Scheme.	

The Garden Assistance Scheme provides help to maintain the gardens of vulnerable, elderly and disabled tenants. During the financial year higher than budget initial cultivation costs were incurred, which relate to preparing gardens for transition on to the scheme, so that no gardens remained on the waiting list.

85A4 REPAIRS FUND CONTRIBUTION

2,516,468

As previously mentioned, additional revenue contributions to capital were approved during the year amounting to £2.084million and this is reflected within this management unit.

On the 18 September Executive approved an increase of £1.775million to the kitchen and bathroom replacement programmes and on the 4 December Executive approved the acquisition of 6 flats at the former Royal Navy Stores site at a cost of £309,000. Both of which were resolved to be financed by additional revenue contributions to capital.

This management unit also provides for the cost of annual repairs and maintenance to council dwellings and the remaining £432,468 overspend relates to this programme of works.

There were three main areas of budgetary overspend in 2012-13; general repairs, repairs to empty properties and legionella testing works. However, these overspends were partially compensated by savings in; electrical testing, service and maintenance of gas appliances and low maintenance of flats.

General Repairs

Compared to the previous financial year the number of day-to-day faults or problems reported by tenants in their council home rose by 24%, with the number of orders increasing from 14,154 in 2011-12 to 17,531 in 2012-13. The prolonged cold weather and extreme conditions (freezing and flooding) are believed to be contributing factors, as average repair costs and nature of repairs remained broadly constant. A projected overspend against this budget was reported to this committee in March.

Repairs to Empty Properties

The overspend in 2012-13 was largely due to two factors; the increased number of empty properties requiring major works and the impact of the new Void Standard.

It was projected that 22 kitchens and 10 bathrooms would need to be replaced in empty properties during 2012-13 however the actual replacement numbers rose to 130 and 88 respectively. Whilst some of the costs have been transferred to the capital kitchen and bathroom replacement programmes, this budget has borne the associated general repair costs such as; electrical repairs, re-plastering, re-decorations and internal carpentry. A projected overspend against this budget was also reported to this committee in March.

Legionella Testing Works

Additional legionella works to clean and disinfect showers heads in sheltered accommodation sites and to fit temporary

filters was undertaken in addition to the routine legionella testing, which resulted in an overspend.

Electrical Testing

Fewer electrical tests to council dwellings were instructed during the financial year, which has led to a budget saving. Properties requiring electrical re-wires have been identified as a consequence of the kitchen and bathroom replacement programme and also by an increase in inspections by Technical Officers, rather than through routine periodic electrical testing.

Maintenance and Servicing of Gas Appliances

The gas boiler replacement programme has resulted in a saving against this budget for 2012-13 as new boilers are installed with a 5 year warranty. Faulty gas boilers which are expected to cost more than £300 to repair are also accelerated for replacement, so fewer repair costs have been incurred. However, this approach has resulted in an overspend in the boiler replacement programme, which is explained further in this report.

Low Maintenance – Flats

This budget underspent in 2012-13, however Executive approval is being sought to carry forward the unspent balance into 2013-14 to meet outstanding commitments, such as the replacement of shed and outhouse doors.

85A6 CAPITAL CHARGES 0

There are no variances from budget to report in respect of this management unit, which comprises the depreciation of HRA dwellings, garages, IT software, vehicles, plant and equipment.

85A8 RENTS (539,205)

Over half a million pounds of additional rent has been collected during 2012-13 from council dwellings. This is due to a combination of factors, which include; acquisitions of new council dwellings, achieving earlier rent convergence on properties that have a change of tenancy and that many sales under the Right-to-Buy Scheme took place in the later part of the financial year.

In accordance with the Government's 'rent convergence' policy, the Council is required to increase its rents to guideline rent levels by 2015-16, so that council tenants and housing association tenants will pay similar rents for similar properties in similar areas. Upon a change of tenancy, the opportunity is therefore taken to amend the rent charged to Government guideline rent levels.

Additional income was also receivable from lease agreements relating to Rennes House.

85B2 INTEREST 46,706

Interest payable on the £56.884m loan with the Public Works Loan Board was higher than budgeted, due to a rise in interest rates between the time the budgets were set and the commencement of the loan on 28 March 2012.

However, the additional interest costs have been partly offset by an increase in investment interest receivable on HRA balances.

2012-2013 ACTUAL TRANSFER TO THE WORKING BALANCE (525,874)

3. COUNCIL OWN BUILD (COB) FINAL ACCOUNTS TO 31 MARCH 2013

The Council's new properties at Rowan House and Knights Place form part of the overall Housing Revenue Account, but separate income and expenditure budgets are maintained in order to ensure that they are self-financing.

3.1 COB WORKING BALANCE

The total budget variances for 2012-13 have resulted in a net surplus of £45,292, which will be transferred to the COB working balance. This represents an increase of £27,722 compared to the budgeted transfer to the working balance of £17,570.

After adding the surplus for 2012-13, the COB working balance will stand at £73,498 at 31 March 2013.

3.2 The main variations are detailed below, please also refer to Appendix 1:

£

2012-2013 BUDGETED TRANSFER TO THE WORKING BALANCE **(17,570)**

85B5 COB INCOME AND EXPENDITURE **(27,722)**

Lower than budgeted repair and maintenance costs were incurred during the financial year, as outstanding snagging issues and defects are still being negotiated with the main contractor. A more detailed update in respect of the development of Rowan House and Knights Place is provided within the HRA Business Plan Update (Paragraph 17) which is also being presented to this committee.

Reduced interest costs in respect of borrowing undertaken towards the development costs have also led to a saving.

2012-2013 ACTUAL TRANSFER TO THE WORKING BALANCE **(45,292)**

4. CAPITAL FINAL ACCOUNTS TO 31 MARCH 2013

To report the 2012-13 outturn position in respect of the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme and to update Members with any anticipated cost variances, acceleration of projects or slippage of schemes into future years.

4.1 REVISIONS TO THE HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The 2012-13 HRA Capital Programme was last reported to Scrutiny Committee – Community on 5 March 2013. Since that meeting the following changes have been made to the programme:

Description	£	Approval / Funding
HRA Capital Programme, as at 5 March 2013	9,333,880	
Budgets deferred into 2013-14 HRA Capital Programme	(628,460)	Executive 9 April 2013

Revised HRA Capital Programme	8,705,420	
--------------------------------------	------------------	--

4.2 **VARIANCE FROM BUDGET**

The 2012-13 outturn position of the HRA Capital Programme is detailed in Appendix 2. The appendix shows a total spend of £8,945,266 for the financial year compared to the £8,705,420 budgeted programme. This represents additional expenditure of £239,846, of which a net total of £90,673 relates to capital works that have been accelerated from future years and will be deducted from next year's capital programme, leaving an in-year overspend of £149,177.

Below are explanations for the main variations from the approved programme:

- **MRA Fees (Budget £342,850)**
 This budget provides for the cost of the Contracts Unit support to help deliver the HRA Capital Programme, including quantity surveying, procurement and tendering services. As mentioned earlier in this report, the Contracts Unit deployed more staff towards key HRA capital schemes including the kitchen and bathroom replacement programmes and this has resulted in a higher than budgeted recharge.
- **Programmed Re-roofing (Budget £300,000)**
 In order to save reactive repair costs the roofs of four properties have been replaced in order to resolve problems with multiple leaks. This has resulted in an overspend of £20,654, but will result in future savings in the cost of programmed works.
- **Kitchen Replacement Programme (Budget £2,663,260)**
 Kitchens were replaced in 598 properties during 2012-13 compared to a target of 589. This was predominantly due to a higher than anticipated number of empty properties requiring new kitchens prior to re-letting. The average cost per kitchen has also increased due to additional plastering and electrical repairs. Both these factors have resulted in additional expenditure of £102,000 during the financial year which will be deducted from next year's budget. The impact on the number of kitchens that can be replaced within existing approved budgets will be assessed and reported back to this committee during 2013-14.
- **Bathroom Replacement Programme (Budget £887,350)**
 Bathrooms were replaced in 390 properties during 2012-13 compared to a target of 360. This was predominantly due to a higher than anticipated number of empty properties requiring new bathrooms prior to re-letting. The average cost per bathroom has also increased due to additional plastering works and a change to the specification of bathroom hardware. Both these factors have resulted in additional expenditure of £162,000 during 2012-13 which will be deducted from next year's budget. The impact on the number of bathrooms that can be replaced within existing approved budgets will be assessed in conjunction with the kitchens and reported back to this committee.
- **Electrical Re-wiring (Budget £510,000)**
 As a consequence of the kitchen and bathroom replacement programme a higher than budgeted number of properties requiring electrical re-wires have been identified by the contractors. An additional 100 properties had electrical re-wiring compared to the planned 300 properties, which has resulted in a £56,000 overspend. As these works are necessary in accordance with Health and Safety regulations, it is considered prudent to report an overspend rather than deduct from the 2013-14 budget, so that works are not curtailed next financial year.
- **Boiler Replacement Programme (Budget £260,000)**

An extra 40 boilers were replaced during 2012-13 in addition to the 196 planned replacements. This was largely due to a higher number of boiler breakdowns during the prolonged cold weather, which were replaced rather than repaired as it was deemed more cost effective, even though a £112,000 overspend has occurred.

As mentioned earlier in this report, compensating savings are achieved in annual service and maintenance costs, especially in the early years as the new boilers come with a 5 year warranty. The Council will continue to undertake annual servicing of the boilers, but most remedial repairs will be covered by the warranty.

5. **COUNCIL OWN BUILD CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

Following the completion of the Council Own Build (COB) sites at Rowan House and Knights Place, the Council is now commencing COB – Wave 2 and COB – Wave 3. Their associated capital budgets form part of the overall HRA Capital Programme.

5.1 **VARIANCE FROM BUDGET**

Expenditure incurred during 2012-13 relates to architects fees and ground investigation work in order to take identified housing development sites to the planning stage. A more detailed update in respect COB Wave 2 and 3 are provided within the HRA Business Plan Update which is also being presented to this committee.

6. **RECOMMENDATION**

6.1 That the Scrutiny Committee – Community note the content of this report

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FINANCE

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:

None

This page is intentionally left blank

APRIL 2012 TO MARCH 2013

Code	Approved Annual Budget	2012-2013 Outturn	Variance To Budget
	£	£	£
85A1 Management	2,992,070	2,758,353	(233,717)
85A3 Sundry Lands Maintenance	262,170	266,314	4,144
85A4 Repairs Fund Contribution	9,924,020	12,440,488	2,516,468
85A6 Capital Charges	0	0	0
85A8 Rents	(17,387,550)	(17,926,755)	(539,205)
85B2 Interest	1,889,020	1,935,726	46,706
85B4 Variance in Working Balance	2,320,270	525,874	(1,794,396)
Net Expenditure	0	0	0
Working Balance	1 April 2012	31 March 2013	
	£ 5,764,423	£ 6,290,297	

COUNCIL OWN BUILD SITES

Code	Approved Annual Budget	Current Outturn Forecast	Variance To Budget
	£	£	£
H006 Rowan House	(6,450)	(8,360)	(1,910)
H007 Knights Place	(36,400)	(44,919)	(8,519)
H008 Capital Financing	15,000	7,987	(7,013)
H009 Capital Charges	10,280	0	(10,280)
Variance in Working Balance	17,570	45,292	27,722
	0	0	0
Working Balance	1 April 2012	31 March 2013	
	£ 28,206	£ 73,498	

This page is intentionally left blank

**2012-13
CAPITAL MONITORING TO 31 MARCH 2013**

		2012-13 Capital Programme	2012-13 Spend	2012-13 Budget to be Carried Forward to Future Years	2012-13 Programme Variances Under ()
		£	£	£	£
HRA CAPITAL					
7HHOME	EVERYONE HAS A HOME				
Z4212	Adaptations	450,000	400,315	30,000	(19,685)
Z4402	Rendering of Council Dwellings	260,150	214,484	45,666	0
Z4502	MRA Fees	342,850	360,969		18,119
Z4702	Communal Door Entry System	14,740	10,106		(4,634)
Z4703	Environmental Improvements - General	55,060	33,678		(21,382)
Z4705	Programmed Re-roofing	300,000	320,654		20,654
Z4709	Energy Conservation	14,000	21,297	(7,297)	0
Z4711	Asbestos Survey	180,000	166,036	13,964	0
Z4716	Plastic Windows & Doors	20,000	20,023		23
Z4718	LAINGS Refurbishments	12,470	17,196	(4,726)	0
Z4719	Kitchen Replacement Programme	2,663,260	2,765,429	(102,169)	0
Z4723	Asbestos Removal Works	325,000	336,631		11,631
Z4724	Bathroom Replacements Programme	887,350	1,049,357	(162,007)	0
Z4740	Other Works	96,870	96,679		(191)
Z4741	Repointing	43,850	20,899		(22,951)
Z4742	Fire Precautionary Works to Flats	281,050	228,718	52,332	0
Z4743	Communal Areas	98,110	136,580	(38,470)	0
Z4745	Structural Repairs	31,490	44,107	(12,617)	0
Z4746	Fire Alarms at Sheltered Accommodation	40,000	12,184	27,816	0
Z4747	Replacement Concrete Canopies	243,150	194,459	48,691	0
Z4749	472 Topsham Road Adaptations	55,000	54,634		(366)
Z4750	Acquisition of 16 Chanter Court	75,000	75,000		0
Z4751	Acquisition of Social Housing	584,730	584,930	(200)	0
Z4802	Electrical Re-wiring	510,000	565,994	0	55,994
Z4901	Central Heating Programme	705,940	700,786	5,154	0
Z4903	Boiler Replacement Programme	260,000	371,960		111,960
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT TOTAL		8,550,070	8,803,103	(103,863)	149,173
COUNCIL OWN BUILD CAPITAL					
Z3212	Merlin Crescent	250	254		4
Z3215	Newport Road	0	6,229	(6,229)	0
Z3218	Whipton Methodist Church	0	400	(400)	0
Z3219	Bennett Square	0	750	(750)	0
Z3248	Phase 3 Professional Fees	135,300	124,956	10,344	0
Z3249	Phase 2 St Andrews Road	19,800	9,574	10,226	0
COUNCIL OWN BUILD TOTAL		155,350	142,163	13,191	4

2012-13
CAPITAL MONITORING TO 31 MARCH 2013

	2012-13 Capital Programme	2012-13 Spend	2012-13 Budget to be Carried Forward to Future Years	2012-13 Programme Variances Under ()
	£	£	£	£
OVERALL HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT TOTAL	8,705,420	8,945,266	(90,672)	149,177

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY 28 MAY 2013

COMMUNITY SERVICES – FINAL ACCOUNTS 2012/13

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report advises Members of the overall financial performance of the Community Directorate for the 2012-13 financial year ended 31 March 2013.

2. INFORMATION

- 2.1 During the course of the financial year ending 31 March 2013, regular reports were made to this committee on the estimated revenue outturn.

- 2.2 The final actual outturn has now been calculated and the report below highlights the major differences by management unit from the approved annual budget after adjusting for supplementary budgets and excluding the variance on capital charges. The total variation for the year shows a deficit of £172,201 against the budget, with a final deficit of £73,494 after accounting for transfers to and from earmarked reserves.

- 2.3 During the year redundancy costs of £445,736 have been charged to the General Fund, of which £145,852 relates to Community. An earmarked reserve of £400,000 has been set aside to cover most of these costs.

- 2.4 The main variations by management unit are detailed below:

	£
2012-13 REVISED ESTIMATE AND PLANNED RESERVE MOVEMENTS	13,590,899
81A1 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	(32,832)

Support service recharges to this service were £4,000 more than the estimates.

Staff costs were £58,000 less than the estimates due to the reduced pay award, a vacancy and a secondment. There was an underspend on supplies and services, also as a result of the vacancy.

This was partially offset by an estimated reduction in income of £19,000, particularly in respect of stray dogs, litter fines and the treatment of wasp nests .

81A2 CLEANSING SERVICES	21,196
--------------------------------	--------

Support service recharges to this service were £3,000 more than the estimates. Asset Improvement and Maintenance (AIM) recharges were £51,500 less than the estimates. A redundancy payment of £22,000 will be offset by a transfer from reserves.

Pay exceeded the estimates by approximately £19,000 due mainly to high levels of long term sickness, particularly in the Refuse Collection service, and the delayed implementation of revised garden waste collection procedures, together with the continuing impact of the closure of the waste transfer station. This was partially offset by the reduced pay award and some savings in the office staffing due to vacancies. The additional staffing costs in the garden waste service are offset by £27,000 additional net income from the service due to an increase in the number of customers and quantities collected.

The final invoice for waste disposal costs in respect of the trade waste service relating to the year ended 31 March 2012 was more than estimated due to tonnages having been higher than estimated throughout 2011/12. Tonnages remain high, and these factors combined to lead to an overspend of £67,000 in 2012/13.

Income from the sale of materials collected by the Trade Recycling service was £11,000 less than estimated due to the impact of lower prices during the year.

Fleet and plant maintenance costs exceeded the estimates by £39,000, partly as a result of the continuing impact of the closure of the waste transfer station.

Water saving measures contributed in a reduction in utility costs of nearly £52,000 in public conveniences.

Additional costs for printing and stationery are offset by a reduction in those costs in Recycling (81B6 below)

- **Action points**
 - The estimated cost of trade waste disposal in 2013/14 has been increased to reflect tonnages currently being collected by the service.
 - The staffing requirements for the garden waste service have been reviewed in view of the increased take up of the service as well as the changes in the way the service is delivered, and this has been reflected in the 2013/14 estimates.
 - The estimate for water in public conveniences has been reduced in 2013/14

81A3 LICENSING, FOOD, HEALTH & SAFETY

(7,467)

Support service recharges to this service were £11,500 less than the estimates.

The Asbestos Safety Officer has been transferred into this unit from the Contracts Unit (81C6 below). His salary costs would have been recharged to the Asset Improvement and Maintenance (AIMS) service under the previous arrangements.

This was partially offset by savings arising from the reduced pay award, a saving on software costs, increased income in respect of premises licences and legal costs recovered.

The reduction in the net cost of taxi licensing will be transferred to the earmarked reserve.

81A4 PUBLIC SAFETY

(25,825)

Support Service recharges to this unit were £11,000 less than the estimates, and AIMS recharges were £1,500 less than the estimates. Redundancy payments of £32,000 will be offset by a transfer from reserves.

The reduced pay award and vacancies resulted in savings on pay in this unit amounting to £25,000.

Maintenance costs for the new home call alarm system were not included in the estimate and this has resulted in an overspend of £17,000. This is offset by a £8,000 underspend on equipment and £7,000 additional income from the Home Call Alarm service

A refund of service charges paid for the Control Room in 2011/12 has resulted in a saving. Savings also arose in respect of telephone charges, consultants' fees and SIA Licensing Costs. The total impact of these was a saving of £15,000.

Transport costs were £6,000 less than the estimates.

- **Action points**

- The way in which the service is delivered has been reviewed which should lead to reduced costs in 2013/14; this has been reflected in the estimates for that year.
- The maintenance costs for the home call alarm system have been included in the 2013/14 estimates.

81A6 PARKS & OPEN SPACES

83,270

Support Service recharges to this unit were £9,000 less than the estimates, and AIMS recharges were £23,000 less than the estimates.

Pay costs were £19,000 less than the estimates due to the change in arrangements for sports attendance and reduced levels of non productive time, partially offset by the impact of high levels of sickness. Insurance excesses exceeded the budget by £11,000.

Total costs in the Countryside service exceeded the estimates by £15,000; this will be funded from an earmarked reserve.

Increased arboricultural work led to an over-spend of £47,500, and increased costs of dealing with illegal campers resulted in an over-spend of £27,500.

The cost of processing green waste exceeded the estimates by £8,000 as a result of the wet conditions.

Maintenance costs at Belle Isle depot exceeded the estimates by £22,000.

Support Service recharges to this unit were £11,500 less than the estimates, and AIMS recharges were £30,500 more than the estimates. Redundancy payments of £6,500 will be offset by a transfer from reserves.

The rateable value for the Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM) set by the Valuation Office is 50% more than was originally estimated, resulting in the National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) for the facility being £81,000 more than was estimated.

- **Action point**
 - The council is appealing against the valuation, which may result in a refund, but it will take some time for this to be agreed. The 2013/14 estimates have been based on the best information available at the time.

The cost of utilities in the RAMM exceeded the estimates by £72,500.

- **Action point**
 - The 2013/14 estimates reflect the utility costs being experienced in the RAMM.

The AIMS overspend has been partially offset by a £9,000 saving on maintenance budgets which do not form part of the AIMS programme.

The legal costs in respect of the RAMM redevelopment have been included, this unbudgeted expenditure of £47,000 further increased the overspend.

Total pay costs across the unit were £14,500 less than the estimates due to the reduced pay award, reduced superannuation costs and a voluntary redundancy.

The high number of visitors to the Museum has resulted in income exceeding the estimates by £45,500.

The costs in respect of Rougemont House are included in this management unit; the property has been sold subject to contract.

As the property has been vacant for part of the year the expenditure on maintaining the building, National Non Domestic Rates and utilities was less than the annual budget, but rents received were also less than estimated.

Income budgets in respect of St Nicholas Priory exceeded the budget for the year. In addition, the event promotion, equipment rental and project budgets were also underspent.

The £100,000 award received for the RAMM being crowned 'Museum of the Year' has been included in the figures. This income will be transferred to an earmarked reserve.

81A8 LEISURE FACILITIES

(34,594)

Support Service recharges to this unit were £19,000 less than the estimates, and AIMS recharges were £10,500 more than the estimates.

Accounting regulations require that the cost of the discretionary element of the NNDR charge for the facilities in this unit should be allocated to the budget for Discretionary Non Domestic Rates. The budget for this is held in the Scrutiny Resources Committee which will mean that the overspend will be reported in that committee, while resulting in a reduction of £58,000 in the cost to this Committee.

- **Action point**

- The 2013/14 estimates have been amended to take account of this change.

A provision has been included for the contribution to the increase in energy costs and the Carbon Reduction Commitment which are included in the Leisure Contract. Negotiations with the contractor in respect of the contributions are ongoing.

Expenditure in respect of the new pool project has been included in this management unit. A transfer from the New Homes Bonus earmarked reserve will be made at year end to cover this expenditure.

81B2 BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

2,389

Support Service recharges to this unit were £10,500 less than the estimates, and AIMS recharges were £22,000 less than the estimates. A redundancy payment of £29,050 will be offset by a transfer from reserves.

The estimated income outstanding as at 31 March 2012 proved to be too high, resulting in reduced income being recognised in 2012/13. This, combined with reduced income levels in the year, resulted in total income being £32,000 less than the estimates.

The shortfall in income was partially offset by corresponding reductions in expenditure on items such as maintenance, equipment and hire of skips.

81B3 PROPERTIES

23,739

Support Service recharges to this unit were £2,000 more than the estimates, and AIMS recharges were £20,500 more than the estimates.

Additional income has arisen from rents. This is partially offset by expenditure on the maintenance of the properties within this management unit which has resulted in an overspend on the premises related budgets.

81B6 RECYCLING

8,702

Support Service recharges to this unit were £8,500 more than the estimates, and AIMS recharges were £5,000 more than the estimates.

Expenditure on maintenance of equipment and plant was £20,000 less than the estimates, and there were other smaller savings on utilities printing and stationery.

This was partially offset by net Income from the sale of recycled materials and recycling credits being £19,500 less than the estimates, mainly due to a reduction in the price of some materials during the year.

81B9 ADMINISTRATION SERVICE

The majority of staff from the administration teams of Economy and Community and Environment directorates were transferred to the new Corporate Support Unit with effect from 1 April 2012, to combine with what was the General Office administration team. The budget for 2012/13 for the now disbanded Community and Environment Administration Service team is held in this committee, while the costs are being recorded in 86B5 Corporate Customer Services within Resources Scrutiny.

- **Action point**

- The 2013/14 estimates reflect the new structure.

81C2 ADVISORY SERVICES

129,112

Support Service recharges to this unit were £18,000 less than the estimates, and AIMS recharges were £6,000 more than the estimates. Redundancy payments of £21,500 will be offset by a transfer from reserves.

A reduction in salary costs arose from the voluntary redundancy of a member of staff who works in this unit and Strategic Housing & Enabling (81C3 below). Additional savings have been made on the superannuation and national insurance budgets. The reduced pay award has also resulted in savings in this unit. These savings have been offset by costs incurred in respect of agency staff.

Higher than expected spend on emergency temporary accommodation has resulted in the budget being overspent at the end of the financial year. This is due to an increase in complex cases approaching the service. This overspend has been addressed by entering into additional contractual arrangements with temporary accommodation providers.

The above has also resulted in an overspend on Serviced Accommodation which covers contracted temporary accommodation. Given that the council receives additional subsidy from DWP for contracted temporary accommodation it is preferable to enter into arrangements rather than 'spot purchase' accommodation. Therefore any overspend within Serviced Accommodation is less than what would be incurred if 'spot purchasing' was undertaken.

The year end figures show an overspend within the EXtraLet, Private Sector Leased properties, Shaul Court and Glencoe budgets. The property maintenance budgets at the sites were overspent, however an element of this overspend has been recovered by recharging the costs

to either the property landlord or the tenant.

The overspend on the above mentioned sites is partially due to a number of former student Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) having being procured; these HMOs are shared houses and were not fully filled immediately. The impact on the individual budgets is a shortfall on the associated rental and housing benefit income budgets for the period the properties were void.

The above mentioned additional expenditure will be partially covered by the additional Housing Benefit received which also means the respective income budgets will be exceeded. External grant income has been received in the year. This income has been used to support the delivery of this service. The additional grant income has reduced the in year overspend.

81C3 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

(6,358)

Support Service recharges to this unit were £14,500 less than the estimates. Redundancy payments of £22,000 will be offset by a transfer from reserves.

A reduction in salary costs has arisen from the voluntary redundancy of a member of staff who works in this unit and Advisory Services (81C2 above). Additional savings have been made on the superannuation and national insurance budgets. The reduced pay award has also resulted in savings in this unit. Total savings in pay amounted to £34,500.

The previous reported anticipated savings on advertising, publications and leaflets, conference and seminar costs and transport related budgets were made. In addition, a saving was made on the budget for solicitors and legal fees.

This management unit is part funded by Section 106 money. The saving on the staffing costs and other budgets has resulted in a £42,000 reduction in the amount of section 106 funding required for this service.

81C4 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING

(50,190)

Support Service recharges to this unit were £22,000 more than the estimates.

Pay was £42,500 less than the estimates due to the reduced pay award and the secondment of an employee. Transport costs were £3,500 less than the estimates.

£26,000 additional net income arose from the licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and legal cost recovery.

An additional £35,000 for a condition survey was approved at the June 2012 meeting of the Executive. However this will now be achieved over a longer period and a supplementary budget of £8,500 for each of the next four years will be requested for 2013/14 in due course.

81C5 SUNDRY LANDS MAINTENANCE

1,300

No material variances arose

81C6 CONTRACTS, BUILDING & ELECTRICAL SERVICES

15,530

Support Service recharges to this unit were £64,000 less than the estimates. A redundancy payment of £12,500 will be offset by a transfer from reserves.

The transfer of the Safety and Asbestos Officer to Environmental Health and the transfer of the Senior Architectural Surveyor to Engineering and Construction Services resulted in savings in employee costs along with their associated supplies and services, transport and support service costs of £168,000 within this management unit.

Further savings of £72,000 in employee costs were made due to vacant posts, the reduced pay award and the senior management review.

However, these savings have been partially offset by the additional cost of contracting a temporary administrative officer and surveyor in respect of the kitchen and bathroom replacement programmes, approved by Executive in September 2012.

The net cost of this unit is recharged to other services apart from the redundancy payment which will be funded from reserves.

81C7 DIRECTOR

0

The post of Director Community and Environment was deleted from the establishment from April 2012, resulting in pay savings. The cost of the Strategic Directors is reported to Resources within 86B7 Strategic Directors.

- **Action point**
 - The 2013/14 estimates reflect the new structure.

81C9 ASSISTANT DIRECTORS

0

Following the review of senior management within the Council, the salaries for the Assistant Directors for Environment and Public Realm are now recorded in this unit; the corresponding savings are being reported within this and Economy Committees

- **Action point**
 - The 2013/14 estimates reflect the new structure.

2012-13 FINAL OUTTURN

13,763,100

**VARIANCE ON PLANNED MOVEMENTS TO / (FROM) RESERVES
UNPLANNED TRANSFERS TO / (FROM) RESERVES**

(98,706)

TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE

13,664,394

3. RECOMMENDED

- 1) That Scrutiny Committee – Community note this report.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FINANCE

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)
Background papers used in compiling this report:

OUTTURN

1.4.2012 TO 31.3.2013

ORIGINAL ANNUAL BUDGET	SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGETS	VARIANCES ON CAPITAL CHARGES	PLANNED MOVEMENTS ON RESERVES	REVISED BUDGET WITH ACTUAL CAPITAL CHARGES	CODE	OUTTURN	OUTTURN VARIANCE	QUARTER 3 FORECAST VARIANCE
£	£	£		£		£	£	£
541,870	0	(296)		541,574	81A1	508,742	(32,832)	(33,310)
3,922,760	0	10,140		3,932,900	81A2	3,954,096	21,196	65,160
345,770	0	(303)		345,467	81A3	338,000	(7,467)	15,750
840,530	0	0		840,530	81A4	814,705	(25,825)	(24,830)
2,028,910	2,000	1,898		2,032,808	81A6	2,116,078	83,270	55,040
2,268,920	38,200	14,437		2,321,557	81A7	2,365,786	44,229	(650)
909,840	0	9,462		919,302	81A8	884,708	(34,594)	(38,500)
283,050	0	158		283,208	81B2	285,597	2,389	8,500
24,740	0	1,247		25,987	81B3	49,726	23,739	(1,840)
263,560	15,000	81		278,641	81B6	287,343	8,702	0
0	0	0		0	81B9	0	0	(153,980)
1,453,490	0	(3,507)		1,449,983	81C2	1,579,095	129,112	39,400
270,740	0	0		270,740	81C3	264,382	(6,358)	20,810
317,610	0	(65,875)		251,735	81C4	201,545	(50,190)	(66,000)
80,300	0	0		80,300	81C5	81,600	1,300	0
0	0	267		267	81C6	15,797	15,530	0
0	0	0		0	81C7	0	0	(198,150)
0	0	0		0	81C9	0	0	111,640
			15,900	15,900		15,900	0	0
13,552,090	55,200	(32,291)	15,900	13,590,899	NET EXPENDITURE	13,763,100	172,201	(200,960)

VARIANCES ON TRANSFERS TO / (FROM) EARMARKED RESERVES

Redundancy reserve - various units	(145,852)	(72,170)
81A3 - Licensing, Food, Health & Safety	1,314	3,290
81A6 - Parks and open spaces	(15,331)	
81A7 - Museums Service	100,000	100,000
81A8 - Leisure Facilities	(38,837)	(20,000)

OVERALL FORECAST EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR AFTER MOVEMENTS TO / FROM RESERVES	13,664,394	(189,840)
REVISED BUDGETS	13,590,899	
ADJUSTED OUTTURN VARIANCE	73,494	

This page is intentionally left blank

PARKWOOD LEISURE SERVICES WORKING GROUP

Monday 11 March 2013

Present:-

Councillors Morris, Sheldon and Shiel

Also Present

Darren Parrott, Assistant Regional Director South West
Stephen Hughes, Exeter Contract Manager

Also Present

Assistant Director Economy, Member Services Officer (HB) and Leisure Facilities Manager

Also Present

Phil Roebuck, Wonford and Northbrook Golf Centre Manager

7

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Mitchell and James Coulton.

8

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7 JANUARY 2013

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 January 2013 were agreed.

9

WONFORD SPORTS CENTRE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Phil Roebuck, the Wonford and Northbrook Golf Centre Manager, updated the group on the progress with the improvement plan for his facilities. A tour of the refurbished changing and toilet facilities had preceded the meeting.

Signage - Foliage partially hiding current signs at Liddles and at the Bus Stop would be cut back and the County Council requested to provide additional signs in Heavitree and along Topsham Road.

Cleansing regime - The recent Quest review had praised the revised and enhanced regime with additional cleaning now undertaken on weekends.

The online booking facility was up and running and a Facebook page had commenced in January. Update reports were provided on web bookings.

Lights had been replaced in the Sports Hall.

Football, martial arts and badminton groups were keen to join Clubmark and were liaising with Michelle Murrery, the Sports Development Manager.

Part and full time staff contributed towards the centre's business plan objectives.

Regular monitoring and patrols were undertaken of the outside, particularly the rear of the Centre, with the Police and CPSO also participating given the possibility of challenging behaviour from local children and teenagers.

Staff had been on refresher courses between January and December. Staff appraisals were valuable and the next round would occur over the forthcoming months. Parkwood Leisure undertook these on a six monthly basis.

Attrition rates in membership reduction had fallen from 9.9% before Christmas to 6.8%, the target being 7.5%.

The gym would be refurbished in June/July with input from a Customer Focus Group meeting at Wonford on 15 April 2013.

In response to a Member, Stephen Hughes advised that both Clifton Hill and Wonford gyms were to be refurbished in June/July and that centre members were being targeted with invites to Customer Focus Groups on gym usage at Wonford on 15 April 2013 and Clifton Hill on 17 April. Facebook would also be utilised. For more specific, subject based Focus Groups, the relevant clubs would be invited as with the 6 March 2013 "Clubs and Club Bookings" Forum at the Pyramids (see below).

Few comment cards had been returned, the majority of feedback being verbal and through the website, the latter being monitored by head office where a 24 hour response was expected.

Nick Neale, the Quest Inspector, visiting on 26 February 2013, had been pleased with the results and his written report would follow. An upturn in performance had been evident and it was hoped that the assessment would be raised from 'satisfactory' to 'good'. The updated improvement plan incorporating the comments, would be circulated once revised.

Facebook was used as a marketing tool, although a Member remarked that the new Riverside Facebook did not appear to possess a facility for the public to respond. This would be checked as it was an important feedback mechanism. It was noted how many companies were becoming cautious in their use of social media as a disproportionate level of negative public views could lead to a downward spiral in perception not reflecting reality with the tendency for individuals to post negative experiences and not to record positive comments.

A taster spinning session was to be held at Wonford in the week commencing 18 March 2013, a programme to be launched thereafter. It would be incorporated into the Expressions Membership Scheme.

Snagging work to the changing rooms would be undertaken within the current week and a watching brief kept on the condition of the hall floor as there had been some reports of slippery conditions.

Northbrook Golf Course

The course opens between the end of March until the end of September with training for two new staff to commence shortly. The facility would operate from 9:00 am to dusk, seven days a week and the Legend booking facility would be used. Use was influenced by weather conditions, 2012 having been particularly poor with eight of the 18 holes unplayable for a number of weeks during the poor summer weather, due to waterlogging. Such conditions also hampered grass cutting.

It was noted that 'excellent' was an unrealistic target as this standard was normally attained at national sporting facilities which could also offer other attractions and

facilities. Even Exeter Arena, which had been judged as a top scoring athletics arena in the country, had not registered as 'excellent'.

Progress at all centres would be monitored with improvement plans to play a key role. These were to be regarded as on-going documents to be regularly consulted and updated and not regarded as tick box exercises. Satisfaction surveys were a key part of this process the content to remain broadly the same to facilitate benchmarking.

11

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

Customer Focus Groups

The Customer Focus Groups were subject based relating to the site, e.g. swimming, bowls, fitness, aerobics, children's' activities. The first had taken place on 6 March 2013 at the Pyramids, the focus being 'Clubs and Club Bookings'.

Given the subject, Parkwood had chosen not to circulate all individual members but had contacted the clubs who hire the facilities. Considering the previous old style customer forum attracted no attendees at the Pyramids last time, this meeting had been very successful. Nine people had attended, all representing a widespread of clubs who use the facilities including Badminton, Volleyball, Waterpolo, Street Running, Synchronised Swimming and Athletics. There were some notable absentees including the Exeter Swimming Club and the Exeter Harriers but hopefully the success of this Group would escalate. The meeting had been very positive and some interesting issues raised with some excellent networking and co-operation between the clubs using the facilities had been evident throughout the discussions.

Recurring issues were requests by clubs to have greater usage of the facilities during peak times. There had been reference to busy Friday evenings at the Riverside with large changeovers and differing requirements regarding noise levels. The ability of the booking system to identify "music courts" would be investigated. Reassurance had been sought that the Pyramids would not close before a new pool was opened. Other issues raised included floor conditions, lighting and VAT and some clubs had sought the provision of notice boards to advertise their club events within the relevant sites and this would be explored. Club representatives had generally found staff to be helpful and polite. The minutes would be published, including display on notice-boards.

It was felt that the Customer Focus Groups were a very positive step in the right direction and, hopefully, the future planned meetings would be as successful and rewarding. The next one would be on 8 April 2013 at the Riverside, Wonford and Clifton Hill to host subsequent ones. A copy of the programme of Focus Groups was presented to Members for the first half of 2013, the second half would be reviewed based on success.

Customer Comments

Issues raised included air conditioning handling units at ISCA and heating, lockers, the gym floor and staffing in respect of the Riverside. It was reported that the gym floor had been completely re-laid and would be open by Friday 15 March 2013. 75% of lockers had been replaced. Comments received over the December and January, although slightly higher than the corresponding months in the previous 12 months, were down on previous months as these were generally quieter periods.

It was noted there was also an unofficial Facebook page for the Riverside. Councillor Sheldon commented that both Facebook and the website had not shown a change in opening times for the main Pyramids pool on a Saturday afternoon when it had been booked for a children's party. Staff had advised that both should have recorded the change but this had not been the case. The learner pool, rather than the main pool was used for parties so this would be investigated. It was recognised that insect problems in the men's changing rooms had been reported and this was being monitored and addressed.

12

MEETING DIARY FOR 2013

The dates of future meetings were noted.

The next meeting would be at 2.30 pm on Monday 13 May 2013 at the Northbrook Swimming Pool, Lee Golding, the Senior Duty Manager at the Northbrook Swimming Pool and Simeon Lewry, the ISCA Centre Manager to attend to present their Service Improvement plans.

(The meeting commenced at 2.30 pm and closed at 3.45 pm)

Chair