

To the Chair and Members
of the Scrutiny Committee - Community

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AGENDA FOR
EXETER CITY COUNCIL
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY

The Scrutiny Committee - Community will meet on **TUESDAY 12 NOVEMBER 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

1 **APOLOGIES**

To receive apologies for absence from Committee members.

2 **MINUTES**

To sign the minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 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 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 (Committees) (01392 265115) 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.

<u>ITEMS FOR SCRUTINY COMMITTEE DISCUSSION</u>

7 **KEY PROPOSITIONS FROM THE LGA'S PUBLICATIONS - "RE-WIRING
PUBLIC SERVICES"**

Following on from the visit of Councillor Sir Merrick Cockell, Chairman of the Local Government Association to Exeter to address Local Chief Executives and Leaders a paper has been prepared for consideration setting out key propositions arising from the LGA's publication - "Re-Wiring Public Services" – *paper circulated*

5 - 6

Below is a link to the Rewiring of Public Services Campaign which includes the Ten Key Propositions.

<http://www.local.gov.uk/campaigns/>

8 **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET MONITORING TO SEPTEMBER
2013**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Finance - *report circulated*

7 - 20

COMMUNITY BUDGET MONITORING TO SEPTEMBER 2013To consider the Assistant Director Finance - *report circulated*

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ITEMS FOR EXECUTIVE

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IMPROVING HOUSING RESIDENT INVOLVEMENTTo consider the report of the Assistant Director Housing and Contracts – *report circulated*

31 - 34

11

ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCETo consider the report of the Assistant Director Environment - *report circulated*

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ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

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DEVON HOME CHOICETo consider the report of the Assistant Director Customer Access – *report circulated*

51 - 62

13

UNIVERSAL CREDIT UPDATETo consider the report of the Assistant Director Customer Access - *report circulated*

63 - 68

14 **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 11 October 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.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next **Scrutiny Committee - Community** will be held on Tuesday 14 January 2014 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.



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EXETER CITY COUNCIL
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY
12 NOVEMBER 2013

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
RE-WIRING PUBLIC SERVICES

THE TEN KEY PROPOSITIONS

1. Give people a meaningful vote on local tax and spending issues: a local treasury in every place. *(Community and Resources)*
2. Cut red tape: bring local services and decisions together in one place. *(Community, Resources and Economy)*
3. Reduce bureaucracy and Whitehall silos: merge six government departments and create an England Office. *(Community, Resources and Economy)*
4. Share money fairly across the UK: replace the Barnett formula with a new needs-based funding model. *(Resources)*
5. Take financial distribution out of ministers' hands: replace it with agreement across English local government. *(Community, Resources and Economy)*
6. Strengthen local say: reduce ministers' powers to intervene in local decisions. *(Community)*
7. End flawed, tick box inspections by bureaucrats: create local service user champions. *(Economy and Community)*
8. Boost investment in infrastructure: create a thriving market in municipal bonds. *(Economy and Resources)*
9. A multi-year funding settlement tied to the life of a Parliament. *(Resources)*
10. Protect local democracy: give the local government settlement formal constitutional protection *(Resources)*

KARIME HASSAN

CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND GROWTH DIRECTOR

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Agenda Item 8

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY 12 NOVEMBER 2013

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET MONITORING TO SEPTEMBER 2013

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

To advise Members of any major differences, by management unit, between the approved budget and the outturn forecast for the first six months of the financial year up to 30 September 2013 in respect of the Housing Revenue Account and the Council's new build schemes.

1.2 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING

Budget monitoring updates in respect of the HRA Capital Programme are also incorporated into this report in order help provide a comprehensive financial update in respect of the Housing Revenue Account to this Committee.

1.3 AREAS OF BUDGETARY RISK

In addition to the budgetary over/under-spends reported to this committee, Appendix 1 also highlights further areas of risk, so that Members are aware that certain budgets have been identified as being vulnerable to factors beyond the control of the Council, which may result in potential deviations from budget, and are therefore subject to close monitoring, by officers.

2. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2013

2.1 PROJECTED SURPLUS / DEFICIT

During this period the total budget variances indicate that there will be a net surplus of £36,885 in 2013-14. This represents a decrease of £1,525,275 compared to the revised budgeted surplus of £1,562,160 for 2013-14; the main deviations from budget are set out below. Please also refer to Appendix 2.

Movement	2013/14	Note
Original Budgeted HRA Surplus	£1,712,160	Transfer to HRA Working Balance
Supplementary Budget for the Low Maintenance and Painting to Flats	(£150,000)	Executive approved 1 October 2013
Revised Budgeted HRA Surplus	£1,562,160	
Forecast overspends – as at June	(£978,922)	Reported to Scrutiny Committee – Community 3 September 2013, which mostly comprised: <u>Resolved by Executive</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• £170k acquisition cost of flats at Dean Clarke House for use as social housing (approved by Executive 18 September 2012). A supplementary budget is being requested for incorporation of the associated financing into the HRA revenue budgets.

		<p><u>Resolved by Executive</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £555k financing required in 2013-14 towards the next phase of building new council homes, COB Wave 2 (total funding of £7.5m approved by Executive 5 February 2013). A supplementary budget is being requested for incorporation of the associated financing into the HRA revenue budgets. <p><u>Repairs and Maintenance Programme</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £175k net overspend in respect of the repairs and maintenance programme comprising; £300k additional cost of repairs to empty properties driven by higher void standard and £125k saving in electrical re-wires and remedial repairs due to extent of electrical works undertaken within the capital programme.
Forecast overspends – as at September	(£546,353)	<p>Additional overspends reported to this committee, which mostly comprise:</p> <p><u>Repairs and Maintenance Programme</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further £200k forecast overspend in respect of repairs to empty properties. Options to mitigate this overspend are being investigated including a review of the void standard. £400k forecast overspend in respect of reactive repairs to council dwellings in order to meet current patterns of demand. This was highlighted as an area of budgetary risk in June. <p><u>Resolved by Executive</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A saving of £42,507 will be made in 2013-14 as the acquisition of one of the flats at Dean Clarke House will not be completed until 2014-15 as it forms part of the site not scheduled for conversion until later this year. This reduces the amount of revenue financing required towards the HRA capital programme.
Total forecast overspends	(£1,525,275)	
Forecast HRA deficit	£36,885	Transfer to the HRA Working Balance

2.2 IMPACT ON HRA WORKING BALANCE

The HRA Working Balance represents amounts set aside to help facilitate service improvements, repay debt or to provide investment in the stock in future financial years.

The forecast balance, as at 31 March 2014, is set out below. Please also refer to Appendix 3 which sets out the total HRA capital resources over the next 3 years, of which the HRA working balance forms a significant part.

Movement	2013/14
Opening HRA Working Balance, as at 1/4/13	£6,290,296
Projected HRA Surplus for 2013/14	£36,885
Balance resolved to be retained (HRA contingency)	(£3,000,000)
Total Forecast Balance Available, as at 31/3/14	£3,327,181

3. COUNCIL OWN BUILD (COB) BUDGET MONITORING TO SEPTEMBER 2013

The Council's own build 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 PROJECTED SURPLUS / DEFICIT

During this period the total budget variances indicate that there will be a net surplus of £33,390 achieved in 2013-2014, which will be transferred to the COB working balance. This represents a minor decrease of £680 compared to the budgeted transfer to the working balance of £34,070.

3.2 The main variations are detailed below, please also refer to Appendix 2:

MU Code	Management Unit	Forecast Overspend / (Underspend)	Explanation
85B5	COB	£680	Rental income has been lost this financial year as properties have remained empty at Knights Place whilst snagging issues are resolved. This will form part of a claim to the main contractor and is highlighted as an area of budgetary risk. However, savings are expected to be made in respect of revenue repair and maintenance costs, as most works relate to the snagging issues.

4. CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING TO SEPTEMBER 2013

The 2013-14 HRA Capital Programme was last reported to this Committee on 3 September 2013, since that meeting the following changes have been made that have reduced the programme. Please also refer to Appendix 4.

Description	2013/14	Approval / Funding
HRA Capital Programme, reported as at 3 September	£11,951,680	
Budgets deferred to future financial years	(£1,190,000)	Executive 1 October 2013
Savings declared	(£57,520)	Executive 1 October 2013
Refurbishment of 1 Elaine Close to bring into condition suitable for use	£13,180	Delegated powers 14 February 2013

Acquisition of 28 Mortimore Court	£46,710	Delegated powers 23 July 2013
Revised HRA Capital Programme	£10,764,050	

4.1

BUDGETS DEFERRED TO FUTURE FINANCIAL YEARS

It is forecast that £1,669,617 of the revised HRA Capital Programme will need to be deferred into 2014-15, as set out below:

Scheme	Budget to be deferred to 2014/15	Explanation
Smoke Detector Replacements	£200,000	Replacement of smoke detectors will form part of new gas servicing contract which is due to commence in April 2014
LAINGS Refurbishments	£75,000	Refurbishment works to these defective properties are undertaken upon the end of a tenancy with the instruction of further works pending a further property being vacated
Acquisition of Social Housing	£42,507	The acquisition of one out of the four flats at Dean Clarke House is unlikely to be completed until 2014-15 as it forms part of the site not scheduled for conversion until later this year
COB Wave 2 – Rennes Car Park	£155,080	Major works are pending the outcomes of an options appraisal for the optimum long-term provision of social housing on a site-wide basis incorporating Rennes House
COB Wave 2 – Newport Road	£290,950	The capital budgets have been re-profiled in accordance with the latest cash-flow forecasts for the development of new social housing at these sites, with contractors now forecasted to start on site in January 2014
COB Wave 2 – Whipton Methodist Church	£294,660	
COB Wave 2 – Bennett Square	£291,190	
Development at St Andrews Road	£10,230	
COB Land Purchase	£300,000	Budget set aside for land purchase but currently prioritising development of Council owned land for the provision of new social housing

4.2 EXPENDITURE VARIANCES

A net overspend of £454,000 is currently forecast in respect of the HRA Capital Programme, as set out below.

Scheme	Forecast Overspend / (Underspend)	Explanation
Energy Conservation	(£40,000)	Planned works include installing solar panels at Hawthorn Road the remaining budget is declared as a saving
Replacement Concrete Canopies	(£25,000)	No further spend against this budget is required in respect of these cosmetic replacements
Electrical Re-wiring	£128,000	Additional electrical re-wires identified through the kitchen and bathroom replacement programmes required to be undertaken in accordance with health and safety regulations
Central Heating Programme	£168,000	Increased number of system replacements as recommended through routine inspection regime
Boiler Replacement Programme	£223,000	Increased number of boiler breakdowns and lower than anticipated life expectancy of certain models

5. RECOMMENDATION

5.1 That the Scrutiny Committee – Community give officers their views on 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

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AREAS OF BUDGETARY RISK

APPENDIX 1

Although no budget variances are being reported at this stage, a number of areas of budgetary risk have been identified within the HRA, as follows:

Budget Title	Approved Budget	Risk
Rental Income from Dwellings	£18,140,000 (revenue)	Right to Buy sales, number of new tenancies set at convergence rent levels, number of days lost through major works, rent lost in respect of void properties and welfare reform changes (for which an increased bad debt provision has been made) all impact on the annual rental income.
Asbestos Removal	£359,000 (revenue)	Potential under-spend as delays experienced when original contractor went into administration. Contractual issues regarding the removal of low level asbestos also being resolved.
Kitchen Replacement Programme	£2,297,830 (capital)	The number of kitchens which can be replaced within approved budgets may vary dependent upon the cost of associated works such as electrical repairs and re-plastering, which varies per property. For 2013-14 it was planned that 499 kitchens would be replaced.
Bathroom Replacement Programme	£867,990 (capital)	The number of bathrooms which can be replaced within approved budgets may vary dependent upon the cost of associated works such as re-plastering, which varies per property. For 2013-14 it was planned that 322 bathrooms would be replaced.
Communal Areas	£161,530 (capital)	Potential under-spend as planned works to enhance flooring, doors and glazing to communal areas of flats are currently lower than budgeted
Repointing	£50,000 (capital)	Potential under-spend as re-pointing works are subject to referrals following inspections by Technical Officers
Acquisition of Social Housing	£866,268 (capital)	The completion of acquisitions is dependent upon the progress on site by private developers as adverse weather, changes in the housing market etc may impact on the schedule of works
Knights Place	No budget (capital)	Significant works have been required to resolve water penetration issues at Knights Place and the costs and associated lost rental income will form part of a claim from the main contractor.

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HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNTS BUDGET MONITORING 2013-14

APRIL 2013 TO SEPTEMBER 2013

Code	Approved Annual Budget	Actual Income / Expenditure to date	Current Outturn Forecast	Variance To Budget
	£	£	£	£
85A1 Management	2,758,140	1,150,970	2,791,424	33,284
85A3 Sundry Lands Maintenance	265,330	124,539	268,330	3,000
85A4 Repairs Fund Contribution	9,916,710	2,802,995	11,364,111	1,447,401
85A6 Capital Charges	2,186,900	0	2,213,490	26,590
85A8 Rents	(18,624,000)	(9,783,873)	(18,609,000)	15,000
85B2 Interest	1,934,760	968,088	1,934,760	0
85B4 Variance in Working Balance	1,562,160	-	36,885	(1,525,275)
Net Expenditure	0	0	0	0
Working Balance 1 April 2013	6,290,297		31 March 2014	6,327,182

COUNCIL OWN BUILD SITES

Code	Approved Annual Budget	Actual Income / Expenditure to date	Current Outturn Forecast	Variance To Budget
	£	£	£	£
H006 Rowan House	(6,260)	(5,464)	(6,260)	0
H007 Knights Place	(45,620)	(27,383)	(43,620)	2,000
H008 Interest	7,530	0	7,530	0
H009 Capital Charges	10,280	0	8,960	(1,320)
Variance in Working Balance	34,070	0	33,390	(680)
Working Balance 1 April 2013	73,498		31 March 2014	106,888

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APPENDIX 3

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	TOTAL
	£	£	£	£
CAPITAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE				
Usable Receipts Brought Forward				1,263,927
Major Repairs Reserve Brought Forward				2,269,804
Other HRA Sales	211,229	0	0	211,229
RTB sales	700,000	500,000	163,294	1,363,294
Major Repairs Reserve	2,213,490	2,186,900	2,186,900	6,587,290
Revenue Contributions to Capital	5,719,881	9,336,220	5,765,905	20,822,006
External contributions from utility company	183,536	0	0	183,536
Commuted sums	0	0	0	0
Total Resources available	9,028,136	12,023,120	8,116,099	32,701,086
CAPITAL PROGRAMME				
HRA Capital Programme	10,764,048	12,718,638	7,668,453	31,151,139
Overspends / (Savings)	454,000			454,000
Slippage	(1,659,617)	1,659,617		0
Total Housing Revenue Account	9,558,431	14,378,255	7,668,453	31,605,139
UNCOMMITTED CAPITAL RESOURCES:				
Usable Receipts Brought Forward	1,263,927	1,500,456	449,102	1,263,927
Major Repairs Reserve Brought Forward	2,269,804	1,313,781	0	2,269,804
Resources in Year	9,028,136	12,023,120	8,116,099	29,167,355
Less Estimated Spend	(9,558,431)	(14,378,255)	(7,668,453)	(31,605,138)
Uncommitted Capital Resources	3,003,436	459,102	896,748	1,095,948
WORKING BALANCE RESOURCES:				
Balance Brought Forward	6,290,296	6,327,181	3,805,399	6,290,296
HRA Balance Transfer - Surplus/(Deficit)	36,885	(2,521,782)	2,149,408	(335,489)
Balance Carried Forward	6,327,181	3,805,399	5,954,807	5,954,807
Balance Resolved to be Retained	(3,000,000)	(3,000,000)	(3,000,000)	(3,000,000)
	3,327,181	805,399	2,954,807	2,954,807
TOTAL AVAILABLE CAPITAL RESOURCES	6,330,617	1,264,501	3,851,555	4,050,755

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**2013-14
CAPITAL MONITORING TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2013**

		2013-14 Capital Programme	2013-14 Spend	2013-14 Forecast Spend	2013-14 Budget to be Carried Forward to Future Years	2013-14 Programme Variances Under ()
		£	£	£	£	£
HRA CAPITAL						
7HHOME	EVERYONE HAS A HOME					
Z4212	Adaptations	630,000	229,307	630,000		0
Z4402	Rendering of Council Dwellings	305,670	136,522	305,670		0
Z4502	MRA Fees	389,030	17,025	389,030		0
Z4702	Communal Door Entry System	10,000	2,791	10,000		0
Z4703	Environmental Improvements - General	41,000	19,564	41,000		0
Z4705	Programmed Re-roofing	300,000	77,436	300,000		0
Z4709	Energy Conservation	160,960	13,634	120,960		(40,000)
Z4717	Smoke Detector Replacements	200,000	0		200,000	0
Z4718	LAINGS Refurbishments	365,280	2,490	290,280	75,000	0
Z4719	Kitchen Replacement Programme	2,297,830	988,685	2,297,830		0
Z4724	Bathroom Replacements Programme	867,990	471,803	867,990		0
Z4740	Other Works	86,670	18,040	86,670		0
Z4741	Repointing	50,000	11,434	50,000		0
Z4742	Fire Precautionary Works to Flats	302,330	174,058	302,330		0
Z4743	Communal Areas	161,530	0	161,530		0
Z4745	Structural Repairs	147,380	5,853	147,380		0
Z4746	Fire Alarms at Sheltered Accommodation	127,820	67,381	127,820		0
Z4747	Replacement Concrete Canopies	73,690	45,944	48,690		(25,000)
Z4751	Acquisition of Social Housing	866,268	211,485	823,761	42,507	0
Z4752	Flood Prevention Works	10,000	0	10,000		0
Z4753	Property Entrance Improvements	20,000	0	20,000		0
Z4755	Rennes House Structural Works	10,000	2,328	10,000		0
Z4802	Electrical Re-wiring	460,000	219,033	588,000		128,000
Z4901	Central Heating Programme	245,150	149,495	413,150		168,000
Z4903	Boiler Replacement Programme	260,000	147,234	483,000		223,000
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT TOTAL		8,388,598	3,011,542	8,525,091	317,507	454,000
COUNCIL OWN BUILD CAPITAL						
Z3214	COB Wave 2 - Rennes Car Park	205,080	25,453	50,000	155,080	0
Z3215	COB Wave 2 - Newport Road	600,940	59,149	309,990	290,950	0
Z3218	COB Wave 2 - Wiptoist Methodist Church	654,670	62,359	360,010	294,660	0
Z3219	COB Wave 2 - Bennett Square	594,190	57,097	303,000	291,190	0
Z3248	Phase 3 Professional Fees	10,340	0	10,340		0
Z3249	Phase 2 St Andrews Road	10,230	0		10,230	0
Z3250	COB Land Purchase	300,000	0		300,000	0
COUNCIL OWN BUILD TOTAL		2,375,450	204,058	1,033,340	1,342,110	0

**2013-14
CAPITAL MONITORING TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2013**

	2013-14 Capital Programme	2013-14 Spend	2013-14 Forecast Spend	2013-14 Budget to be Carried Forward to Future Years	2013-14 Programme Variances Under ()
	£	£	£	£	£
OVERALL HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT TOTAL	10,764,048	3,215,600	9,558,431	1,659,617	454,000

Agenda Item 9

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY 12 NOVEMBER 2013

BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2013

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

This report advises Members of any material differences by management unit to the revised budget.

1.2 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING

Budget monitoring updates in respect of the Community Capital Programme are incorporated into this report, which is prepared on a quarterly basis, in order to improve financial reporting to this Committee and help to provide a more comprehensive financial update in respect of the Scrutiny Committee – Community budgets.

1.3 AREAS OF BUDGETARY RISK

Potential areas of budgetary risk are also highlighted in this report, so that Members are aware that certain budgets have been identified as being vulnerable to factors beyond the control of the Council, which may result in potential deviations from budget, and are therefore subject to close monitoring by officers.

2. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2013

2.1 The current forecast suggests that net expenditure for this committee will increase from the revised budget by a total of £84,520 after transfers from reserves and revenue contributions to capital, as detailed in Appendix 1. This represents a variation of 0.76% from the revised budget. This includes supplementary budgets of £30,880. Capital charges have been deducted from this to provide the total budget for management accounting purposes.

2.2 The current forecast variance represents an increase in expenditure of £84,520. The significant variances are:

MU Code	Management Unit	Over / (Underspend)	Detail
81A1	Environmental Protection	87,430	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Redundancies
81A4	Public Safety	10,380	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Redundancy partially offset by additional income
81A6	Grounds Maintenance	48,340	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Cost of dealing with illegal campers partially offset by additional income and cost savings.Area of Budgetary Risk – see paragraph 4 below
81A7	Museums Service	20,250	<ul style="list-style-type: none">NNDR in respect of RAMM - appeal with Valuation Office.Utilities at RAMM anticipated to exceed the budget.

MU Code	Management Unit	Over / (Underspend)	Detail
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offset by backdated NNDR refund – RAMM Central Library and S106 funding transfer. Area of Budgetary Risk – see paragraph 4 below
81C2	SHS - Advisory Services	19,910	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Void and reactive repairs costs expected to exceed budget, partially offset by recharge of costs. Salary budgets – savings due to vacancies Area of Budgetary Risk – see paragraph 4 below
81C3	SHS – Housing Development	21,140	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional consultants' fee expenditure offset by a transfer from earmarked reserves
81D4	Street Cleaning	(44,150)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Savings expected on agency costs and expenditure on replacing litter bins
81D5	Public Conveniences	(13,750)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced water costs
81D4	Cleansing Rechargeable Services	(54,000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced trade waste disposal costs
81D8	Recycling	17,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced income offset by some savings on costs Area of Budgetary Risk – see paragraph 4 below

3. CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2013

To report the current position in respect of the Community Capital Programme and to update Members with any anticipated cost variances, acceleration of projects or slippage of schemes into future years.

REVISIONS TO THE COMMUNITY CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The 2013/14 Capital Programme, including commitments brought forward from 2012/13, was last reported to Scrutiny Committee – Resources on 5 September 2013. Since that meeting the following changes have been made to the programme:

Description	£	Approval/Funding
Capital Programme, as at 5 September 2013	5,858,550	
Budget Deferred to 2014/15 & beyond at Quarter 1	(1,498,800)	Approved by Executive 1 October 2013
Overspends/(Underspends) reported at Quarter 1	(110,210)	

Private Sector Renewal	80,650	Clawback of loans
New grants funded from the New Homes Bonus	35,000	Approved by Executive 1 October 2013
Refurbishment and Upgrade of Paddling Pools	12,550	S106 funding
Children's' Play Areas	(4,860)	S106 funding adjustment
Revised Capital Programme	4,372,880	

EXPENDITURE VARIANCES

The main variances and issues concerning expenditure that have arisen since 30 June are as follows:

Scheme	Estimated Overspend / (Underspend)	Reason
Vehicle Replacement Programme	(£28,390)	All vehicles within the programme have now been ordered giving rise to an underspend.

SCHEMES WHICH MAY BE DEFERRED TO 2014/15 AND BEYOND

Schemes which have been identified since 30 June as being wholly or partly deferred to 2014/15 and beyond are:

Scheme	Revised 13/14 Budget	Budget to be Deferred	Reason
Wessex Loan Scheme	£647,840	£300,000	This budget has been reprofiled to more closely match anticipated grant expenditure.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The following schemes have been completed during the second quarter of 2013/14:

- **Play Area Refurbishments**

The refurbishment project at Chantry Meadow Play Area has been completed and improvements or final touches to larger, longer term projects at Digby (Kings Heath Play Area), Crossmead (Sylvan Height Development) and Wonford Play Area have been made. In addition the brand new facility at Rydon Park has now been provided.

- **Flowerpot Skate Park**

The old timber-framed ramps have been replaced with a new and improved concrete surfaced skate park that is expected to last for 30 to 40 years. The facility has been a huge success in its first week of opening and has gained national press coverage.

4. AREAS OF BUDGETARY RISK

4.1 The table below identifies a number of areas that have been identified as a budgetary risk within the Community revenue and capital budgets.

4.2 The revenue budget areas of risk are:

Budget Title	Approved Budget	Risk
Revenue: Parks and open spaces – cost of dealing with illegal campers	£1,665,800	The service is bearing the cost of dealing with the influx of illegal campers in the city's parks and open spaces during the recent summer months. Expenditure in the year to date is £70,000 and the outturn forecast assumes that this could reach £75,000 by the end of the year. The cost is partially covered by additional income and cost savings, but the service is unable to fully absorb costs of this magnitude.
Revenue: Recycling – income from sale of recyclates	£5,750	Income from the sale of materials and recycling credits is estimated at £937,240. This level of income is dependent on the quantities collected, the quality of the materials collected and the market price achievable for the materials. These factors are largely outside the control of the Council and can fluctuate considerably. As this is a significant source of income for the Council, it represents a budgetary risk.
Revenue: Museums – utilities and National Non Domestic Rates costs	£2,068,440	<p>The utility costs at the Museum are projected to exceed the budget.</p> <p>Officers are continually monitoring the cost of utilities and updates are being provided to the Management Team.</p> <p>The Nation Non Domestic Rates budget is projected to exceed the budget. The rateable value of the Museum increased due to the redevelopment. An appeal has been lodged with the Valuation Office and the result of the appeal should be known by the end of the calendar year.</p>

Budget Title	Approved Budget	Risk
Revenue: SHS – Advisory Services – repair costs to private Sector Leased Properties, cost of emergency temporary accommodation	£1,501,010	<p>The number of homeless cases approaching the service impacts on the budget in respect of emergency temporary accommodation.</p> <p>The council has a duty to house the homeless; if contracted accommodation is unavailable, emergency temporary accommodation will be used. High levels of usage of emergency temporary accommodation can result in the budget being exceeded.</p> <p>A large number of Private Sector Leased properties (PSL) are used for homelessness purposes. Repairs to leased properties are the responsibility of the council. If a PSL becomes void and repairs are required to return the property to the standard required significant costs can be incurred.</p>

4.3 The areas of risk for capital budgets are:

Budget Title	Approved Budget	Risk
Capital: Disabled Facility Grants	£294,720	The 2013/14 budget is nearly all committed and further substantial claims are anticipated. The Council is legally bound to approve grant applications regardless of budgetary considerations. It is considered that there is therefore a high risk that this budget will be overspent in 2013/14.

5. RECOMMENDED that

5.1 Scrutiny Committee – Community give officers their views on the contents of this report.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FINANCE

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

Background papers used in compiling this report

None

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**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY
BUDGET MONITORING**

APRIL 2013 TO SEPTEMBER 2013

REVISED BUDGET EXC CAPITAL CHARGES £	CODE	CURRENT OUTTURN FORECAST £	QUARTER 2 FORECAST VARIANCE £	QUARTER 1 FORECAST VARIANCE £
502,360	81A1 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	589,790	87,430	87,430
388,360	81A3 LICENSING, FOOD, HEALTH & SAFETY	388,360	0	0
605,160	81A4 PUBLIC SAFETY	615,540	10,380	17,330
1,665,800	81A6 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	1,714,140	48,340	0
2,068,440	81A7 MUSEUMS SERVICE	2,088,690	20,250	45,500
108,180	81A8 LEISURE FACILITIES	108,180	0	0
215,810	81B2 BEREAVEMENT SERVICES	212,810	(3,000)	(6,000)
13,460	81B3 PROPERTIES	13,460	0	0
1,501,010	81C2 SHS - ADVISORY SERVICES	1,520,920	19,910	(24,250)
131,720	81C3 SHS - HOUSING DEVELOPMENT	152,860	21,140	(58,250)
250,970	81C4 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING	246,270	(4,700)	(5,000)
82,710	81C5 SUNDRY LANDS MAINTENANCE	82,710	0	0
(7,520)	81C6 CONTRACT & BUILDING SERVICES	(7,520)	0	0
0	81C7 SENIOR MANAGEMENT - COMMUNITY	0	0	0
1,685,500	81D2 DOMESTIC REFUSE COLLECTION	1,685,500	0	0
1,326,500	81D4 STREET CLEANING	1,282,350	(44,150)	(22,500)
375,500	81D5 PUBLIC CONVENIENCES	361,750	(13,750)	0
(181,590)	81D6 CLEANSING RECHARGEABLE SERVICES	(235,590)	(54,000)	0
357,750	81D7 EXTON ROAD OVERHEADS AND FLEET	357,750	0	4,000
5,750	81D8 RECYCLING	23,250	17,500	7,000
11,095,870	NET EXPENDITURE	11,201,220	105,350	45,260
	VARIANCES ON TRANSFERS TO / (FROM) EARMARKED RESERVES			
	81C3 - SHS - HOUSING DEVELOPMENT	(22,930)		
	81A3 - LICENSING, FOOD, HEALTH & SAFETY	2,100		
		0		
	OVERALL FORECAST EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR AFTER MOVEMENTS TO / (FROM) RESERVES	11,180,390		
	REVISED BUDGETS	11,095,870		
	ADJUSTED OUTTURN VARIANCE	84,520		

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2013/14
CAPITAL MONITORING TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2013

	2013/14 Capital Programme Revised for Qtr 1 Forecast Spend	2013/14 Spend to 30 September	2013/14 Forecast Spend	2013/14 Budget to be Carried Forward to 2014/15 and Beyond	2013/14 Programme Variances Under ()
	£	£	£	£	£
COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT					
PROVIDE GREAT THINGS FOR ME TO SEE DO AND VISIT					
Play Area Refurbishments	345,060	26,468	363,410	(18,350)	0
Replace Running Track at Exeter Arena	375,000	0	375,000		0
Sports Facilities Refurbishment	39,950	9,950	45,000	(5,050)	0
Parks Improvements	25,170	13,442	25,170		0
RAMM Development	125,570	5,745	125,570		0
RAMM Off Site Store	7,050	6,859	7,050		0
Neighbourhood Parks & Local Open Spaces	10,840	6,800	10,840		0
Replacement of Flowerpot Skate Park	232,530	230,037	232,530		0
Refurbishment and Upgrade of Paddling Pools	149,720	21,750	149,720		0
Newtown Community Centre	11,580	10,472	11,580		0
Topsham Rugby Club Improvements	50,000	50,000	50,000		0
Exeter Community Centre Garden	340	336	340		0
Newcourt Community Association Centre	34,880	1,506	34,880		0
Exe Water Sports Association (Grant Towards Build)	25,000	0	25,000		0
Exwick Ark (Grant Towards Conversion)	50,000	44,478	50,000		0
Devonshire Place (Landscaping)	12,500	0	12,500		0
Bury Meadow (Landscaping)	11,500	10,915	11,500		0
Ride On (Set Up Workshop/Bike Hire)	5,000	5,000	5,000		0
Exeter Community Centre Garden - Phase 2	16,990	16,990	16,990		0
St James Forum (Queens Crescent Garden)	10,000	0	5,000	5,000	0
2nd Exeter Scouts & Park Life ('Urban Village Hall' Heavitree Park)	15,000	0	7,500	7,500	0
Citizens Advice Bureau (Building Improvements)	10,000	0	2,500	7,500	0
IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT AND MY NEIGHBOURHOOD					
Public Toilet Refurbishment	990	0	990		0
Local Authority Carbon Management Programme	66,020	9,203	66,020		0
Improvements to Cemetery Roads & Pathways	4,000	0	4,000		0
OTHER					
Vehicle Replacement Programme	459,350	392,969	430,960		(28,390)

2013/14
CAPITAL MONITORING TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2013

	2013/14 Capital Programme Revised for Qtr 1 Forecast Spend	2013/14 Spend to 30 September	2013/14 Forecast Spend	2013/14 Budget to be Carried Forward to 2014/15 and Beyond	2013/14 Programme Variances Under ()
	£	£	£	£	£
HELP ME FIND SOMEWHERE SUITABLE TO LIVE					
Disabled Facility Grants	339,720	226,114	339,720		0
Warm Up Exeter/PLEA Scheme	168,530	4,882	168,530		0
Renovation Grants	5,000	4,597	5,000		0
Wessex Loan Scheme	647,840	208,932	347,840	300,000	0
Glencoe Capital Works	4,960	0	4,960		0
St Loyes Design Fees	45,000	0	45,000		0
Private Sector Renewal Scheme	224,480	14,521	224,480		0
WHIL Empty Properties	194,000	194,000	194,000		0
The Haven	250,000	161,600	250,000		0
Temporary Accommodation Purchase	300,000	30	300,000		0
MAINTAIN ASSETS OF OUR CITY					
Council Buildings - Solar Panels	99,310	68,748	99,310		0
COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT TOTAL	4,372,880	1,746,343	4,047,890	296,600	(28,390)

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY 12 NOVEMBER 2013

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 26 NOVEMBER 2013

IMPROVING HOUSING RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Members' approval to improving the way that the Council involves its housing residents in the management and strategic direction of the services they receive.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Localism Act 2011 made changes to housing regulation in England from April 2012. These changes revolve around the principle of 'co-regulation', which requires landlords to be more proactive in self-regulation, and in involving tenants in the scrutiny process. In addition, the Act promotes a greater role for service users at a local level to influence and scrutinise service delivery.

- 2.2 The Council's existing strategy for involving its housing residents sets out to integrate it with the delivery of the Landlord service. Whilst this has had some success, Resident Involvement is predominately on performance monitoring and improvement. With the Council embracing systems thinking, performance management in the Housing Service is changing, with the focus now on real-time performance against defined purposes, rather than lagging performance measures and arbitrary targets. As a result, the Performance Digest has been radically amended. This is a welcome improvement but is not sufficient in itself to meet the new requirements for resident involvement. Residents need the ability to consider new policies, influence budget decisions and scrutinise the operation of the service to ensure that the services meet their needs, now and in the future.

- 2.3 The new regulatory framework, with its enhanced and proactive approach to economic regulation, requires landlords to demonstrate better value for money services. A greater scrutiny role for residents will improve the way that the services are planned and delivered by:

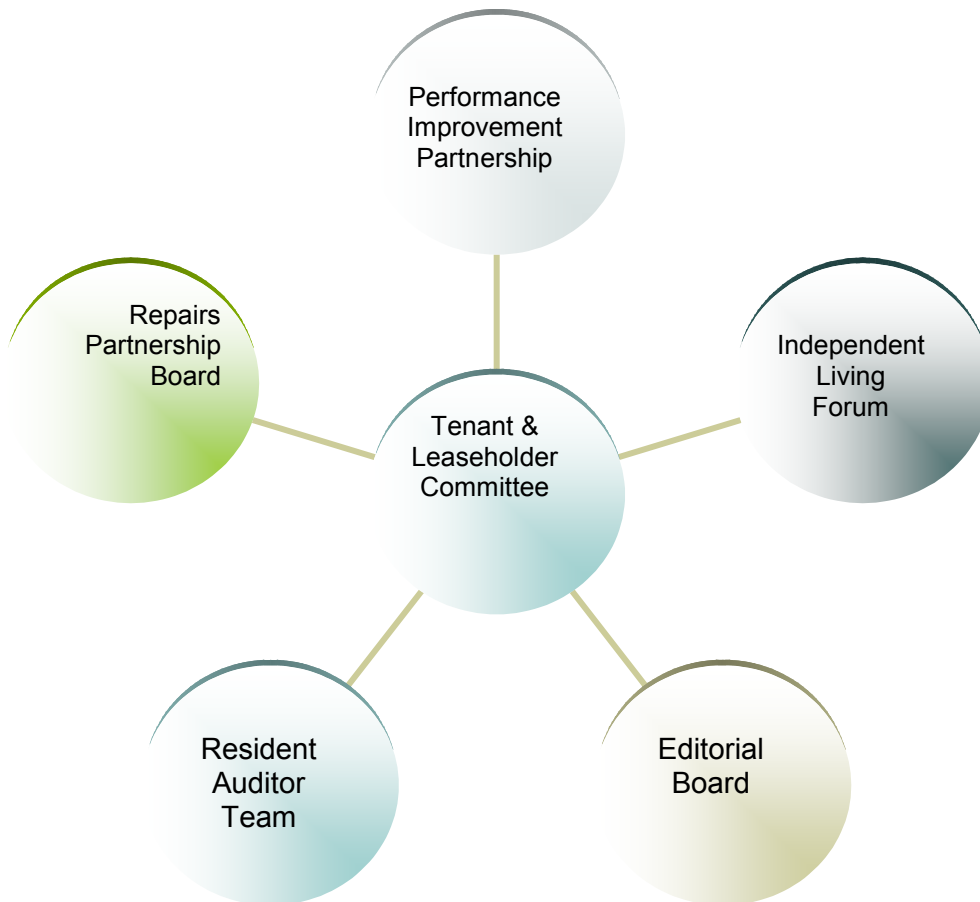
- providing a mechanism for us to deliver the services our tenants want, tailoring them to reflect local needs and priorities
- enabling us to determine how resources can be targeted where needs, wants and preferences are identified. This can lead to services which are better value for money
- improving the service experience for tenants and therefore customer satisfaction

- 2.4 The Localism Act and the new regulation framework that stems from it has prompted a review of how we involve our residents in the work of the service.

This review has concluded that, despite a plethora of meetings, resident involvement lacks proper integration with the service and proposes changes to the governance structure and management of the existing arrangements to address this.

3.0 A NEW GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE FOR RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

3.1 At present, the governance structure for Resident Involvement consists of six different groups, as per the diagram below. It is unwieldy and repetitive, with the same volunteers sitting on a number of differing panels. This results in confusion over the different areas of responsibility for each group as well as duplication when the same topic is discussed at a number of different meetings. As a result, it is also expensive and time-consuming.



It is proposed that all groups, apart from the Independent Living Forum are dismantled and replaced by a single Performance Scrutiny Partnership (PSP).

3.2 The remit of the new Performance Scrutiny Partnership will be to:

- Review and comment on service performance and consider areas that would benefit from further in-depth resident review
- Work with officers to discuss, consult on and suggest improvements to new proposals, policies and strategies to ensure they meet service purposes
- Provide residents' views on future spending priorities

- Advise on the services communications to tenants and leaseholders, including social media, to ensure content is relevant, jargon free and engaging.
- 3.3 The Partnership will initially consist of the ten existing resident members of the various groups and will meet monthly.
- 3.4 As current members leave the Partnership, new members will be recruited from our existing residents, rather than elected as at present. Currently, elections are held every other year but, despite wider advertising than in previous years, this year not a single new member put their name forward to be a TALC representative and all current members were elected un-opposed in June 2013. This formal way of standing for election is clearly no longer an attractive proposition for potential volunteers. It is proposed that future members are recruited on an *ad hoc* basis when required, with the involvement of the new PSP.
- 3.5 Exeter City Council would not be the first housing landlord to move away from a formal election process for tenant representatives. Mid-Devon District Council changed to an application process five years ago. This has enabled them to recruit volunteers with the potential skills to undertake the work required and has proved very successful. East Devon District Council has never had an elected group, preferring to recruit representatives on the skills and experience they can bring to the organisation. In addition, Peabody's new Resident Involvement Strategy has created a Resident Scrutiny Panel to implement co-regulation which is not directly elected but drawn from other resident groups.
- 3.6 Not having an elections process will also reduce the confusion that occurs between the role of Council Members' in scrutiny and decision making and the Involved Residents' role in scrutinising and making recommendations.

4 PROPOSED MANAGEMENT CHANGES

- 4.1 The Chartered Institute of Housing and the Tenant Participation Advisory Service agree that for resident scrutiny to be effective, it must integrate with the landlord's strategic and performance management framework. It is proposed that the servicing of the new Partnership would become the responsibility of the Housing Performance and Projects Manager, supported by a new part-time administrative post, with the role of Housing Resident Involvement Manager becoming redundant. The production of *InSight* will be transferred to the Council's Policy, Communications and Community Engagement team and they will liaise with the Partnership to agree and proof-read content.
- 4.2 The Independent Living Forum will initially be led by the Tenancy Services Team whilst a systems review of "Be a good landlord" is completed and clarification of the future of older persons support services in Exeter is provided by Devon County Council.
- 4.3 Housing Managers will take responsibility for involving residents in their areas of work under the direction of the Assistant Director Housing and Contracts. This involvement may take the form of task and finish groups, surveys, consultation or similar and will draw on the PSP as required. This ensures

that involving residents in decision-making is embedded in the work of the service.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 It is estimated that savings of around £33,800 will be achieved in the Housing Revenue Account.

Around £18,500 will be achieved through the deletion of the Housing Resident Involvement Manager post and replacement with a part-time Administration Assistant. The current post holder has made an application for voluntary redundancy.

5.2 A further potential saving of around £15,300 will be achieved by reducing the number of groups meeting and the use of external consultants.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Tenant and Leaseholder Committee (TALC) has been consulted on these proposals and supports both the rationale for change and the opportunity to make financial savings. In the year 2012/2013 the authority benefited from 1000 hours of work from this group of volunteers. They are keen to ensure that their time is used to improve the service and agree that aligning tenant scrutiny with Housing Performance places them at the centre of operations enabling them to meet their purpose.

6.2 Consultation has not taken place with the wider tenant body. However, the lack of interest in the elections this year demonstrates that an elected forum is not of interest to the wider body.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 That Scrutiny Committee - Community and Executive Committee:

- a) Approves the new direction for Housing Resident Involvement;
- b) Approves the proposal to dismantle the existing Resident Involvement governance structure and create a single Performance Scrutiny Partnership from 1 April 2014;
- c) Approves the redundancy of the Housing Resident Involvement Manager from 1 April 2014;
- d) Approves the creation of a new part-time administrative role from 1 April 2014.

SARAH WARD
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND CONTRACTS

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

None

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY 12 NOVEMBER 2013

EXECUTIVE 26 NOVEMBER 2013

ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To present an updated report of the environmental performance of the Council in a single document, and seek approval for a revision of the 3 strategies to one overall strategy.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Historically there have been three distinct Council strategies dealing with the Environment, Carbon Management and Climate Change respectively, and they overlap in many areas.
- 2.2 The Environment and the Carbon Management strategies each covered periods to 2012 and 2013 respectively, and are now in need of updating; it is recommended that to simplify target setting and reporting the main strands of all three strategies are drawn together into one all-encompassing document, setting out a combined strategy.
- 2.3 This report is a current state-of-play summary of relevant actions from all three strategies, with some initial proposals on future Environmental and Carbon Management initiatives. This strategy will be further developed by re-formed Climate Change Steering Group and an update presented in Spring 2014.

3. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that

1. Scrutiny Committee - Community and Executive note the attached report; and
2. Scrutiny Committee - Community supports and Executive approves the revision of the Environmental, Carbon Management and Climate Change strategies in to one encompassing strategy; and
3. requests a revised Environmental Performance Strategy to be brought before them in draft form for consultation in Spring 2014 and subsequent approval following consultation.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT

S:LP/Committee/1113SCC1
21.10.13

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Exeter City Council

Environmental Performance Report 2013

Introduction

Historically there have been three ECC strategies dealing with the environment, carbon management and climate change and they overlap in many areas.

The terms for both the Environment and the Carbon Management strategies ended in 2012 and 2013 respectively, are now need updating and it is recommended that to simplify target setting and reporting the main strands of all three strategies are drawn together into one all-encompassing document, setting out a combined strategy. It is recognised that the Council can only achieve improvements in its environmental record if it supported across all the Council's departments. To facilitate engagement and action with all departments in the Council and to provide strategic oversight an Environment and Climate Change Steering Group has been recently established. This group will set the agenda, objectives and targets for the new combined strategy.

Previous reports on the Climate Change Strategy 2008 – 2018, Environment Strategy 2007 – 2012 and the Carbon Management Programme 2008 – 2013 were made in 2010.

This report is a current state -of -play summary of relevant actions from all three strategies, with some initial proposals on future environmental and carbon management initiatives. It highlights the recent failure to significantly reduce CO₂ from council buildings and areas where progress has not been made but also positively shows that some newly implemented initiatives will save money and reduce energy use.

Background

The Council is committed to its environmental agenda, mitigating climate change and the contribution it can make in enhancing Exeter as a Green and low-carbon city. A focus on in-house energy efficiency and using fewer resources will bring financial savings and reduce harmful impacts on the Environment. The council also has a responsibility for managing its council housing and estate to ensure that energy efficiency is maximised. Other measures to encourage and support a reduction in energy use and carbon emissions in the wider community also contribute to making Exeter a greener city.

1. Energy and carbon management

Council Assets - since the last Environment/Carbon management report in 2010 the base lines have been reassessed and future reporting will use 2011/12 as the base line with new strategies and targets to mitigate climate change through carbon reduction in Council operations.

The Energy Team maintain and monitor energy consumption and carbon emissions and provide data for national targets, including all council buildings and fleet mileage. Current data shows that while CO₂ emissions from council transport have reduced those from council buildings have increased. (Appendix 1 Graphs 1 & 2). This supports the need to introduce a revised strategy with updated targets.

Emissions have mostly increased because of the museum, without the museum council buildings have used 8.5% more. The Museum uses 2.2 million kwh on its own, costing £200,000 but a 50% increase in consumption compared to a 100% larger building is a reasonable increase. (Appendix 1 – Table 1)

Recent completed projects to save money and reduce energy use and emissions include:



Solar Panels - four recently installed solar panel arrays on the MRF, Civic Centre, Oakwood House and ARK are outperforming predicted returns by 32% (October 2013). It is predicted that the project will break even in 5 years, and then continue to provide an income whilst contributing to the Council's obligations to cut carbon emissions and lessen environmental harm.

Smart meters are being installed at the Civic Centre and throughout the Council Estate (but not in Council Houses) which bring a saving through accurate billing and data management and enable better supply contracts and fuel tariffs.

A new energy strategy is to include a comprehensive programme of key projects which are vital if the council is to reduce operating costs, maintain assets and make long term financial savings and benefit from new income streams. Future projects recommended by the Energy Team range from installation of energy efficient hand driers and the removal of paper towels in the Civic Centre, to LED lighting and PV schemes for all high electricity users, such as Car Parks. Other renewable technology will be evaluated to reduce consumption and to protect against rising energy costs.

Housing

Exeter's housing stock produces 32.92% of the total CO₂ emissions in Exeter and it is one we can really influence.

Private sector

86% of housing in the city is in the private sector, either owner occupied (62%) or rented (24%). As such the Council has no direct control over them, but actively encouraging energy efficiency and reducing emissions from these private sector homes, as they represent by far the greatest proportion of city homes, must be one of the highest priorities for the Council in its bid to reduce emissions.

It is also worth noting that 5% of the private sector stock contains a Category 1 hazard for excess cold as judged on the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, leading to the possibility of residents suffering physical or mental ill health, and contributing to excess Winter deaths (i.e. deaths above normal trends attributable to low winter temperatures),

Addressing this issue is best achieved by assisting and encouraging home owners by providing accessible advice and financial assistance for energy efficiency improvements, working with private sector landlords, looking for sustainable energy options for off-gas areas, and assisting with ECO Procurement and Green Deal finance alternatives. This is directly linked to fuel poverty as according to a recent house condition survey 15% of the city's homes are fuel poor. Raising awareness of these issues with landlords and the wider community is part of the on-going involvement with tackling fuel poverty and reducing energy use.

Council Housing

The continuing drive to improve the energy efficiency of Council housing in the city with the installation of cavity wall and loft insulation has been achieved in 97% of the 5043 houses to date.

In addition to improving insulation, high efficiency gas boilers have been fitted in over 4569 (90.6%) of properties that have a gas supply. The Council owns 132 properties that only have an electric supply and improvements to the energy efficiency, and potential to cut the cost of heating in these properties is more limited in scope.

The external rendering and insulation to the British Iron and Steel Houses has been completed and 3 currently empty non-traditional construction properties are being brought back into use and will benefit from high levels of insulation.

The solar panels fitted to council houses on the rent-a-roof basis produce an income of £19,837 per annum and current projects for the current year 2013/14 include 39 properties having PV panels fitted in conjunction with a re-roof programme.

Water butts are promoted with a grant to assist purchase and it is hoped that compost bins may be included on each property with a garden for new tenants.

New homes

To increase the level of energy efficiency measures required in new homes built in Exeter, the Council's Core Strategy Policy (CP15) stipulates that from April 2013 all new homes must meet the code for Sustainable homes (CfSH) Level 4. Affordable homes with planning consents granted pre-2013 which are Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) grant funded will need to reach the minimum CfSH level 3 but this will rise to level 4 for applications in 2013. However this is currently under a national Communities and Local Government Review which potentially threatens this requirement being removed from Exeter's Core Strategy, resulting in a reduction of the energy saving aspects required of all new builds, contrary to Exeter's aims to reduce emissions.

Transport strategy

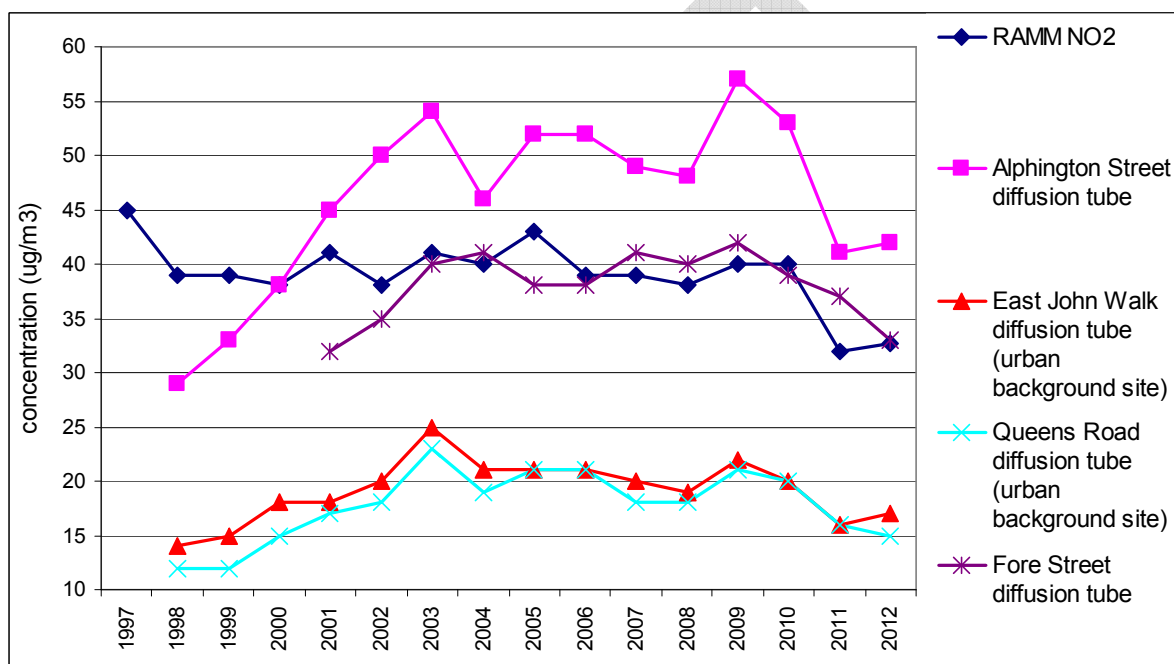
Exeter's transport produces 18.76% of total CO₂ emitted in Exeter

Exeter works closely with Devon County Council, East Devon and the Highways Agency to assess the infrastructure needed to serve the city and surrounding area, the Local Transport Plan (DCC) and other studies have informed Exeter's Core Strategy (CP18) and Sustainable Transport Supplementary Planning Document - adopted in March 2013.

Reducing emissions from transport is important for the health of all who live, work or visit Exeter and well as helping to reduce overall green-house gas (GHG) emissions. Exeter has

levels of local air pollution on some of its busy roads that are above Government objectives; air pollutants are monitored by the Council and an Air Quality Action Plan seeks to mitigate their occurrence. There is some evidence for a reduction in NO₂ concentrations in recent years, however it is not clear whether this is the start of a long-term trend or simply inter-annual variability as a result of changes in weather, or economic circumstances, etc. To address the exceedences of the Objectives, the Air Quality Action Plan was updated in 2012 and funding for a Low Emissions Strategy for the Exeter area is in place to target the problem areas. An area is considered to be exceeding the objectives if it is higher than 40ug/m³. The graph shows a selection of the monitoring locations throughout the city demonstrating a current trend of reducing annual concentrations. However there are areas that exceed the objective still, despite the recent slight reduction in levels”

Graph Showing the Change in Nitrogen Dioxide Levels at a Selection of Monitoring Locations Since 1997



Progress on reducing energy use and transport emissions by developing sustainable transport includes:

- DCC, with support from ECC, is implementing the Devon Metro project with new rail stations at Cranbrook, Newcourt and Marsh Barton. Major improvements made to St David’s and Central stations mostly funded by the rail industry (ECC and DCC contributed to Central Station forecourt)
- Future promotion of low emission vehicles



The Energy Team has successfully bid for a Government grant for electric vehicle charge points on public sector estates

- Exeter Walking and Cycling Steering Group (superseding the Walking Group and Cycle Exeter) consists of a wide range of interests to ensure a cohesive and comprehensive approach to improving walking and cycle links; this has a clear connect to the emerging priorities of the Exeter Health and Wellbeing Board, particularly in relation to promoting physical activity. The group are currently updating a new walking map and developing a Walking Strategy, and new shared use paths are being created at Wonford and Pinhoe playing fields, and other routes upgraded from footpaths to shared use include Heavitree recreation ground. The cycle network continues to expand with DCC's funding from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund; a signed route is being developed from the city centre to Redhayes bridge.
- Car Clubs - the Sustainable Transport Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) includes a section on contributions by major developers to include parking spaces for club cars.
- As an encouragement to reduce car journeys into and around Exeter the Council's Green Travel Policy offers a 30% discount on ticket prices for staff that uses public transport to travel to work, this policy is reflected in the Core Strategy (CP9).

ECC Fleet

Increasing the fuel economy and reducing the mileage driven by all vehicles in the Council's fleet will make savings and reduce vehicle emissions for both CO₂ and particulates which cause local pollution within Exeter. (Appendix 1 Graph1)

Mileage and fuel use

Reducing the amount of fuel used by the refuse and recycling collection service has been achieved by planning more efficient routes and the introduction the Bartec system of mobile technology. This allows real time reporting on issues such as non-presented bins and contamination, reducing the need to go back to a property, increasing the efficiency of the service and reducing the mileage. All refuse collection vehicles (RCVs) are now tracked and the mileage and fuel use are recorded for each crew.

GPS tracking will be rolled out to the remaining council fleet by the end of 2013/14 to enable closer monitoring of vehicle use, engine idling, mileage and vehicle utilisation. The target is to reduce fuel use by 5% and to remove 5 vans from the fleet through more efficient use. The installation of these trackers has been funded by savings achieved in the 2013/14 capital fleet replacement fund.

The latest two refuse vehicles are fitted with electric bin lifts with the aim of reducing fuel use – this is being monitored and the first three months indicates a 12% reduction in fuel used compared to standard refuse lorries that are fitted with hydraulic lifts. If these results are sustained, electric bin lifts will be the default equipment on future refuse collection vehicle purchases. The Council's current refuse vehicle supplier, Dennis Eagle, has launched an engine 'fuel saver pack' which is claimed to reduce fuel use in stop/start operations such as waste collection. This will be fitted to one of the Council's vehicles in 2013/14 to assess its potential.

Eco driving

To ensure that Cleansing Department drivers are using fuel as efficiently as possible Eco driving training courses for all drivers are scheduled for 2013/14. The GPS tracker units being rolled out across the whole fleet also record engine idling and excess speed; this information is already being used to tackle individual driver behaviour to reduce fuel use as well as wear and tear.

A new system of booking pool cars through 'Outlook' (the Council's electronic diary system) is part of a policy to encourage the use of fuel efficient pool cars instead of the 'grey fleet' of officer owned cars that may not be fuel efficient or low in emissions, (Council pool cars are selected for fuel economy and low emissions).

Electric vans and bio-fuel

Previously the Council had two electric vans in the fleet, but these have not been replaced as currently no electric vans are available on the market to suit the Council's requirements. Similarly the 5 refuse RCVs that were running on bio-fuel as a trial have now reverted to diesel as the bio fuel supplier has gone into receivership and it has not been possible to source another reliable supply of bio-fuel. Whilst this is disappointing in the short-term, it is anticipated that there will be future opportunities for replacing fleet with low emission vehicles, and sourcing reliable supplies of bio-fuel.

Hybrid fleet

From July 2013 tenders for new fleet vehicles require an option for fully electric and hybrid combustion/electric drive systems in order to ensure a comprehensive consideration of the options.

2. Waste and recycling

Reducing waste and recycling materials saves money and raw materials and the Council should be aiming to set a good example with its own practices to support the promotion of recycling and waste minimisation across the city.

In-house

Paper use – It is planned to extend the monitoring of paper usage to all council sites, not just the Civic Centre, this will give a more accurate record of effectiveness of recently introduced new technology (Electronic Document and Records Management and Duplex printers). While much of the paper purchased for the Council is made from recycled material it is hoped that in future to increase this proportion by reviewing purchasing arrangements across the organisation.

The re-invigorated Green Champions made up of staff volunteers will be monitoring waste and recycling from all offices across the council in an effort to further increase in-house recycling.

Residential and commercial recycling

Commercial recycling

The council's commercial recycling service offers businesses the opportunity to reduce their waste bills (recycling collections are less costly than sending waste to landfill) as well as increasing their green credentials. Glass and food waste have been identified as materials for which there is a demand for separate collections and the feasibility of this is being investigated. Glass collections would be in-house and a partner organisation has agreed to offer separate food waste collections. By the end of 2013/14, trade waste customers will be offered the option to present their recycling co-mingled in wheeled bins. This will help to remove one of the barriers to commercial waste recycling by tackling the perception that sorting waste for recycling is too time-consuming.

Residential

Garden waste / home composting

The collection of garden waste increases the Council's recycling rate and makes a profit. However the most sustainable system of dealing with garden waste is to encourage more composting at home.

Home composting continues to be promoted with the sale of cost-price composters, but sales have reduced (from 213 in 2011/12 to 151 in 2012/13) and a new initiative to encourage more home composting 'Community Master Composters' is being considered. Another option being considered is to provide all new council house tenants that have gardens, with compost bins and information packs.

Kerbside collections & Bring banks for dry recycling

The tonnage collected through kerbside collection and bring banks continues to fall and this is reflected in a drop in the overall recycling rate from 36.2% in 2011/12 to 34.9% in 2012/13. A similar recycling rate for 2013/14 is anticipated. A Devon Waste Partnership project has been formed by the Devon local authorities to consider opportunities for cost savings and improved waste performance. These could be achieved through harmonised service standards, shared management costs and cross-boundary working. The results of the initial feasibility study will be available by December 2013.

New opportunities to recycle other materials have been introduced with four new bring bank sites for waste electrical items and two glass/paper bring banks at Commercial Road and Waitrose. Streamlining of materials collected via banks in 2011 to only glass at most sites (6 prime sites retain paper banks) has reduced the mileage travelled and saved money and emissions.

Promotion of recycling

Schools continue to receive a recycling collection which is well supported by the efforts of the Green Teams in all the city's schools and Exeter's contribution to Don't Let Devon Go to Waste (DLDTGW) continues to raise the profile of recycling and reuse in the city.



Children from Ladysmith Junior School receive a 'leaf' for their achievements; and on completion of a branch a cheque for £50 to spend on green projects

3 The Environment and Adaptation to Climate Change

Land use and land use change produce 0.42% of Exeter's CO2 emissions

Parks and Open spaces

Energy: PV panels have been installed on the mower shed at Belle Isle, with surplus electricity feeding into the grid

Water

Water use in the parks and recreation areas continues to be monitored and sub-meters have been installed to enable consumption to be monitored from separate activities on the same site, e.g. watering flower beds. This also enables any leaks in the supply to be determined more efficiently.

There is ongoing funding for investment on new water infrastructure (£20,000 over 2 years) and low water use shower heads in changing rooms have been used where replacement has been required.

A new Splash Pool has replaced one of the two Paddling Pools in the city which will reduce water use as Splash Pools can be decontaminated without requiring emptying and re-filling.

Mulching

New Permitting Regulations for on-site composting resulted in a change of use for the ECC composting site at Water Lane. It is now only used for storage of un-shredded parks waste prior to its transfer for processing by Ecosci at Clyst St Mary. Additional shredders were purchased to enable green waste to be shredded on-site, greatly reducing GHG emissions and transporting costs. The resulting mulch is used around newly planted trees and other plants to aid establishment by conserving water in the soil and suppressing weeds.

Trees

The Exeter Tree Strategy was adopted in 2009 and is still operational, though the Tree Warden Scheme has not been continued, due to lack of volunteer commitment. Budgetary restraints have reduced opportunities for tree planting schemes, but partnering arrangements with others such as the Devon Wildlife Trust, and Exeter Wild City projects with schools and community groups continue to improve the city treescape. Wild City projects and the design philosophy of Council Owned Buildings' projects include edible species to illustrate the ease and sustainability benefits of growing fruit and nut trees for local residents to harvest the produce, and orchards continue to be planted and enlarged.

Partnering with Devon Wildlife Trust and local schools has also increased the numbers of bird and bat boxes installed and wildlife meadows have also been planted.

Allotments and Resident's Groups

Exeter's Allotments continue to flourish with St. Thomas's Allotment winning 1st prize at the Exeter Food and Drink Festival for Sustainable Food and Vegetables.

All the 14 Residents Groups', supported by ECC, won awards in the Royal Horticultural Society 'It's your Neighbourhood' achieved awards in 2013??, with Digby winning 'Outstanding'.

Future Proposals

Future proposals include supporting the use of Exeter's Green Open spaces for community composting initiatives where residents show an interest in setting up and running schemes. There is also great potential for green open spaces to play a significant part in helping to encourage improvements in the physical activity of citizens, a developing theme in Exeter's Health and Wellbeing draft strategy.

Planning

A green infrastructure study and strategy has been completed. The evidence from this informed the Core Strategy 2012 (CP16 and CP18). Further work is being undertaken to reinforce the importance of both existing and future green infrastructure.

4 Water consumption

The delivery of clean water has a significant cost both financially and in terms of the carbon used to process and deliver it. Increases in population will increase demand on water resources, and this along with changes in the rainfall patterns in the UK will put pressure on water resources nationally. It is a responsibility of the Council to continue to support initiatives that reduce water use wherever possible. The cost of water in 2012-13 was £140,000 compared to £210,000 the previous year, indicating a significant improvement for that period.

Council Assets – the Energy Team undertook a water audit and managed a project where water efficient equipment was fitted to all high-use sites, such as introducing waterless urinals at Paris Street toilets; the total saving in 2012-13 was a surprising £81,000! Future recommendation being considered includes sensor taps at the Civic and throughout the council estate and rain water harvesting at the Civic Centre.

As mentioned above the Parks Department have also undertaken water saving initiatives.

5 Environmental procurement

Currently much procurement is undertaken independently by each department; keeping track of how much purchasing is done following the sustainable purchasing guidelines are hard to determine. The proposal to introduce a new Corporate Procurement Section that would be able to coordinate sustainable procurement and develop e-tendering and e-billing would ensure that future procurement was in line with established sustainable policies, and maximise on bulk purchasing economies of scale.

The Green Accord is a sustainable supply chain tool developed by the City Council to support businesses. It meets Government requirements for sustainable procurement and enables us to ensure all our suppliers have sustainable business operations in place, as well as enabling a business to demonstrate their sustainability credentials. The scheme is a respected one, endorsed by the Audit Commission and a wide range of Industry Awards.



The Green Accord has been already been adopted by the MET Office, Exeter University, Midas and Land Securities amongst other businesses. This environmental accreditation scheme has the potential to expand its user base far beyond Exeter.

6 Exeter businesses

Exeter's Industrial and Commercial business produce 47.9% of total CO₂ emitted in Exeter

The council aims to support low carbon energy efficient businesses and the Green Accord is an Environmental Accreditation that supports businesses to introduce sustainable working practices, reduce costs and cut carbon.

The University's Centre for Business and Climate Solutions is currently using the Green Accord to help SME's improve their business operations and make environmental and cost savings, with free support until 2015. Exeter Sustainable Businesses Network is run by Zero 2050 and the Exeter Chamber of Commerce & Industry, supported by Lloyds Bank and the Environment Agency, with the aim of assisting in the creation of a low carbon economy in Exeter. The Council is represented on the board from the business and economy aspect of the environment.

LCTF and District heating - waiting for contribution

7 Community and Staff engagement

Community

As mentioned above, the Green Team in schools continues to be a successful method of engaging the community and has the potential to be expanded to include a Community Master Composter network.

The ENLITEN Project – Energy Literacy through an Intelligent Home Energy Advisor

Exeter City Council is collaborating with the Universities of Bath and Oxford on a project aimed at reducing CO₂ emissions from energy use by developing a low cost intelligent home energy advisor to provide actionable prompts to householders that they can use to save money and energy. Data from 200 ECC housing stock is being collected by sensors in the homes: temperature, relative humidity, CO₂ concentrations, room occupancy, gas and electric consumption and boiler status. This data, along with surveys on attitude, behaviour, habits and other psychological/social factors relevant to energy use will be used to develop a framework to provide insight into the most effective ways of changing energy habits and attitudes. This will inform the design of the iBERT (Interactive Behaviour-Energy Relationship Tool) which will be installed in 40 of the households.

The research will make a significant contribution to Exeter City Council's understanding of domestic energy consumption and behaviour. It will provide in-depth understanding of building properties and energy behaviour, enabling property managers to prioritise actions and effectively reduce fuel poverty."

A community energy purchasing initiative to enable Exeter residents to get a better deal on their home fuel supply called 'Exeter Together' was run throughout the city during Feb – March 2013, and an estimated total of £35,325 saving were made by residents in reducing their fuel bills. This initiative was extremely valuable in gaining experience about social marketing in an area outside of the Council's normal sphere of influence, and with an issue that is becoming increasingly important to the public.

Community Energy Fit was a pilot project in Exeter, running from March – December 2013, led by National Energy Action (NEA) and EON, chaired by ECC. It provided the opportunity for residents to receive training and skills in energy efficiency and for some their active involvement in volunteering to take the message to their local community to help residents tackle fuel poverty. As part of a continuation strategy for the project E. ON has made £20,000 available for groups to bid into to be able to continue to raise awareness of the benefits of energy efficiency and local assistance that is available to householders. Exeter CVS successfully bid for this legacy fund to be able to continue offering advice to residents

on fuel efficiency but with a particular emphasis on the private rental sector. The Community Energy Fit project highlighted that private tenants were often at risk of fuel poverty because they did not know whether they were permitted to make changes to their homes, or to switch energy tariff. This investment will mean a specific focusing of money saving and green energy advice to private tenants, and to give them a stronger voice in the local housing market about a range of issues. The new project will be called ExeTRA (Exeter Tenants' Resource Association)

The council supported Transition Exeter is running a project to increase awareness about energy efficiency and to help households cut their fuel costs. It helped run 'Energy: Save it yourself' workshops from March to June 2013 providing information about practical affordable actions to save costs and carbon in three areas of Exeter – Newtown, Exwick and St David's. The project engaged with local communities and included a survey to find out peoples' concerns and priorities about energy efficiency and fuel costs. The project was supported by a grant from the Department of Energy and Climate Change, Local Energy Assessment Fund (LEAF).

The promotion of environmentally friendly behaviour at work is being revived by a new group of in-house Environment Champions. As previously mentioned they will be monitoring recycling and waste and working with the Energy Team to promote reductions in energy and water consumption and deliver a better working environment.

The ECC intranet and the Council Website currently have outdated information but will be updated as soon as the new policies have been agreed with the Environment and Climate Change Steering Group.

Summary

Although this report highlights the Council's successes it also demonstrates the need for a sustained and focussed strategy across all Departments to Green our assets with an inspirational aim to be a carbon-neutral council. The Council has already made moves towards this goal and further developments on existing initiatives should be made a priority. These include:

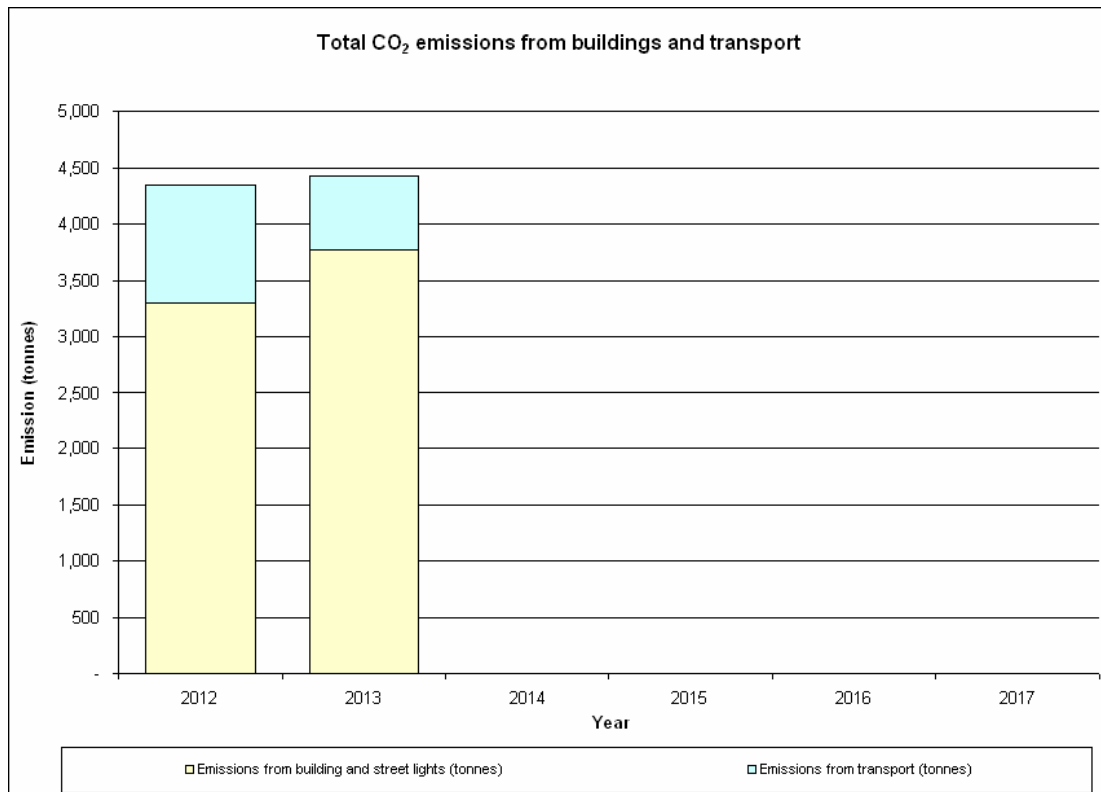
- Ensuring that all Council owned buildings are managed in the most energy efficient way
- Facilitating carbon reduction in private homes by insulation, fuel efficiency, renewable energy and behavioural change (ENLITEN)
- Assisting businesses in carbon reduction – Green Accord
- Working in partnership to prevent carbon use – Low Carbon Task Force and District Heating Networks

Appendix 1

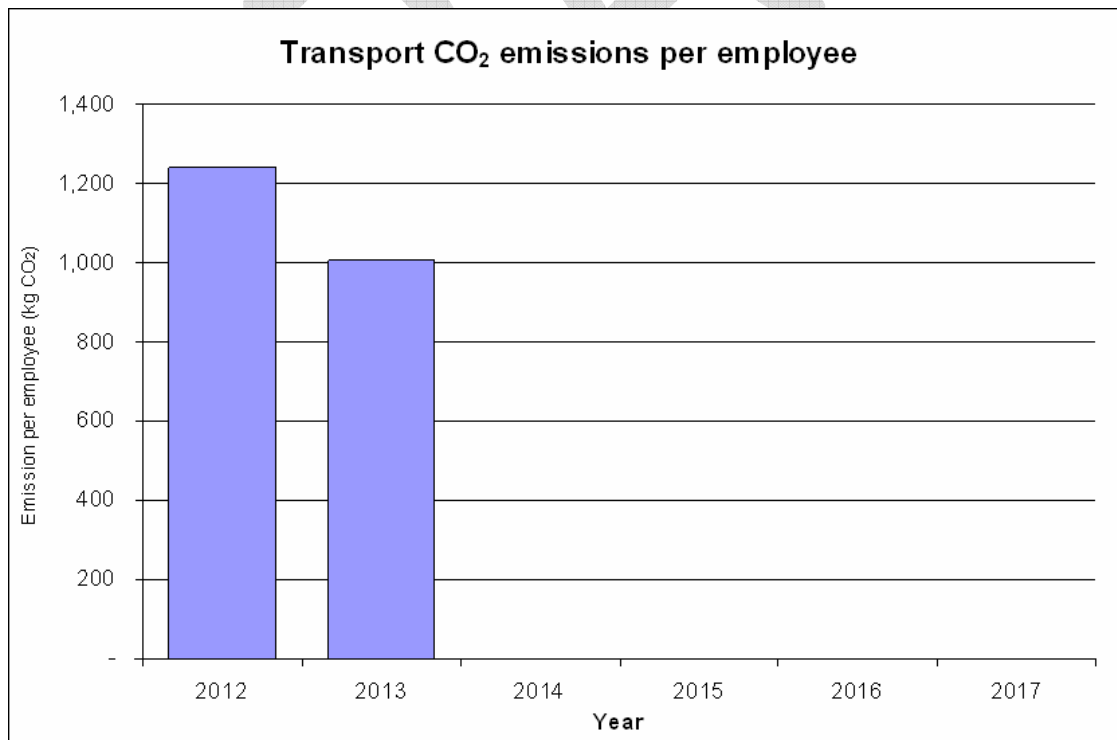
Table 1

		Consumption (kWh)	Est. Spend	Increase Consumption (2012)	Increased kWh	Increased Spend
Assets	ECC Offices/ Museum	2,573,321	£270,456.04	8%	196,113	£20,611.52
Assets	Museum	2,137,707	£181,918.87	45%	960,667	£81,752.76
Housing	Communal areas	1,842,406	£193,636.87	4%	69,258	£7,279.02
Car Parks/ Public Realm	Car Parks/ Canal/ Street lighting	1,677,396	£176,294.32	16%	271,257	£28,509.11
Estates	Landlord Supplies	509,635	£53,562.64	37%	187,445	£19,700.47
Facilities/P arks	Depot/ Cemeteries	185,689	£19,515.91	27%	50,792	£5,338.24
Cleansing	Public Convenienc es	89,314	£9,386.90	12%	10,772	£1,132.14
		9,015,468	£947,525.69	19%	1,746,304	£183,536.59

Graph 1



Graph 2



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EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY

12 NOVEMBER 2013

DEVON HOME CHOICE

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 Following a request at the Housing Performance Review Committee, this report is intended to inform members of the bidding patterns of applicants registered in Exeter with the Devon Home Choice scheme and also the rate of refusals from people offered properties.
- 1.2 For members to consider what, if any, action or further consideration needs to be undertaken.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council joined the Devon Home Choice Scheme in 2009, and have operated a Choice Based Lettings system (as opposed to a traditional points-based allocation system) since 2005. A Choice- Based scheme allows applicants to 'bid' for advertised properties and those applicants who express an interest are put in order in terms of their priority in accordance with the assessment policy. Those applicants with the same level of priority are ordered by the relative times they have waited with that priority. The person with the highest priority who has been waiting the longest with that priority and is suitable for that home (e.g. family size, mobility requirements, age criteria) will then be offered the property. They can refuse without penalty and the property will be offered the second person and so on.
- 2.2 Devon Home Choice is a partnership of the 10 Devon Local Authorities, including Plymouth and Torbay and 33 Registered Providers (Housing Associations as they were formerly known). All available affordable housing properties in Devon are allocated through the Devon Home Choice system.
- 2.3 Devon Home choice has a common IT system, application form, assessment policy and website. Applicants are able to move across Local Authority boundaries but no one authority should exceed a 2% net migration into their area. Should this occur the Authority can then restrict the adverts for their properties for local applicants only until the balance is redressed.
- 2.4 Applicants are prioritised within 5 Bands, with Band A for the most extreme cases where there is a threat to life, Band B is high housing need (severe overcrowding, severe medical need to move, those under occupying and those in temporary accommodation), Band C is medium housing need, Band D is low housing need and Band E is no housing need.

3. BIDDING PATTERNS AND REFUSALS

- 3.1 The report attached at Appendix A shows a number of statistical reports. For the purpose of this report, members will wish to consider page 5 which shows that 12% of those applicants in Band B have not accessed the system. This figure compares favourably with the figure at this point last year of 29%. The Devon Home Choice team have been focused on making contact with applicants not using the system and supporting them to access it or revisiting the priority they have been awarded. The figure also compares favourably with other areas in Devon with Exeter and East Devon having the smallest percentage of applicants not engaging in the system.
- 3.2 Members may also wish to note the overall reduction in numbers (50% from Bands A-D since April 2011) registered in Exeter (page 2) which has been achieved through the redesign of our front line services, with a focus on tackling the real demand the customer has not just providing them with a Home Choice application form. Also we have been very realistic with applicants wishing to renew their application and have discussed alternative housing options if they are in a low band.
- 3.3 With regard to refusals; since 1st April 2012, there have been 931 properties allocated to Exeter applicants through Devon Home Choice. Of these, there have been 669 separate instances of refusal (some properties have multiple refusals). Of these 476 were refusals by applicants in Band B, which is given for people in high housing need. The refusal reasons given by applicants in Band were as follows,

Reason	Number of Refusals
No reason provided	101
Did not respond to offer	82
Did not like area	75
Not accessible / suitable for health needs	61
Applicant had change of circumstances since bidding	39
Property too small	39
Lack of nearby facilities	30
Garden not suitable	9
Condition of Property	7
Applicant had rent arrears so not able to move until paid off	7
Not affordable	6
Wrong heating type	5
Didn't like neighbours	4
Area deemed unsafe by applicant	4
No Support nearby	2
Property too large	1
Applicant was refused due to public safety concerns	1
No public transport	1
No Right to Buy	1
Couldn't afford rent in advance	1
Total	476

Please note that Band B contains 641 applicants with 227 of those being under-occupiers who (unless impacted by Social Sector Size restriction) would not have an urgent need to move themselves and will be more selective over properties.

It is also important to note that the address of the property and a map is included in all property adverts.

3.4 Since April 2012 754 properties have been allocated in Exeter but 931 properties in that time have been allocated to Exeter applicants, therefore it is clear we are a net exporter of applicants and have benefitted, in that respect, from being part of the partnership.

4. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee notes this report and advises on where additional information and detail is required.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR CUSTOMER ACCESS

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

None

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Devon Home Choice Quarterly Monitoring Report Summary (October 2013)



Introduction

This report provides the latest key information from Devon Home Choice.

Households registered with Devon Home Choice

18,988 (54%) of the 35,132 households registered with Devon Home Choice in October 2013 were assessed to be in housing need (in Bands A to D – see Table 1).

Across Devon 20% of those in housing need were in Band B, 28% in Band C and 51% in Band D. There are differences between local authority areas however, with the proportion of households in housing need in Band B ranging from just 13% in West Devon to 32% in Torridge.

Devon wide 46% of the register are in Band E (No housing need) but the figures again range across Local Authorities, from 37% in Teignbridge to 61% in North Devon.

Table 1: Number of households in housing need (Bands A to D) as at 10 October 2013

	Band A		Band B		Band C		Band D		Total	Band E	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		No.	%
East Devon	0	0%	320	20%	559	34%	762	46%	1641	1011	38%
Exeter	7	0%	641	27%	594	25%	1150	48%	2392	1943	45%
Mid Devon	0	0%	158	21%	271	35%	335	44%	764	1134	60%
North Devon	5	0%	211	19%	278	25%	620	56%	1114	1725	61%
Plymouth	5	0%	1074	18%	1488	25%	3348	57%	5915	4236	42%
South Hams	0	0%	186	21%	231	26%	481	54%	898	1064	54%
Teignbridge	4	0%	601	20%	990	33%	1385	46%	2980	1737	37%
Torbay	5	0%	349	22%	456	29%	778	49%	1588	1521	49%
Torridge	2	0%	189	32%	189	32%	212	36%	592	676	53%
West Devon	1	0%	145	13%	332	30%	626	57%	1104	1097	50%
Total	29	0%	3874	20%	5388	28%	9697	51%	18988	16144	46%

Note: The percentages given for Bands A – D refer to the proportion of households in housing need who are in that Band (e.g. 20% of all households in housing need across Devon are in Band B). The percentage given for Band E refers to the proportion of households in Band E of all those registered (e.g. 46% of households registered across Devon are in Band E).

The greatest need across all Local Authority areas is for one bedroom properties, as can be seen from Table 2 below, with 57% of applicants in housing need requiring one bedroom.

**Devon Home Choice
Quarterly Monitoring Report
Summary (October 2013)**



Table 2: Bedroom need of applicants in housing need (Bands A to D) as at 10 October 2013

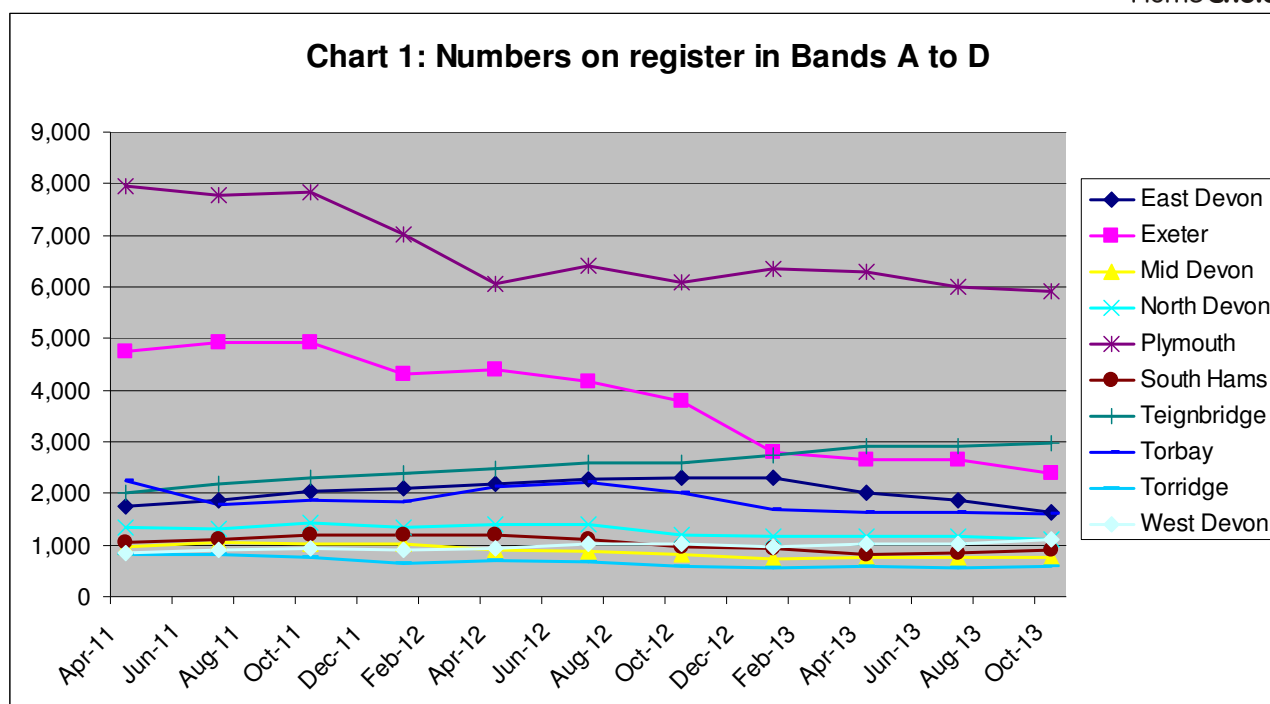
	1 Bed		2 Bed		3 Bed		4 Beds +		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
East Devon	895	54%	472	29%	176	11%	101	6%	1644
Exeter	1337	56%	655	27%	264	11%	136	6%	2392
Mid Devon	384	50%	242	32%	81	11%	56	7%	763
North Devon	636	57%	270	24%	125	11%	86	8%	1117
Plymouth	3657	62%	1396	24%	575	10%	289	5%	5917
South Hams	532	59%	237	26%	77	9%	52	6%	898
Teignbridge	1521	51%	951	32%	346	12%	163	5%	2981
Torbay	811	51%	455	29%	192	12%	121	8%	1579
Torridge	293	50%	174	30%	79	13%	43	7%	589
West Devon	673	61%	261	24%	114	10%	56	5%	1104
Total	10739	57%	5113	27%	2029	11%	1103	6%	18984

The number in housing need on the register has fallen steadily from a peak of 24,269 in October 2011 to the current figure of 18,988 (Table 3 and Chart 3). The overall trend is reflected across the majority of Local Authority areas as can be seen in Chart 1, with only Teignbridge and West Devon showing an increase in numbers over that period.

Table 3: Numbers on the register in Bands A to D by Local Authority by quarter

	Apr-11	Jul-11	Oct-11	Jan-12	Apr-12	Jul-12	Oct-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13
East Devon	1,734	1874	2030	2105	2194	2268	2288	2307	2022	1,878	1641
Exeter	4,756	4936	4921	4297	4398	4168	3778	2790	2651	2,663	2392
Mid Devon	947	1038	1025	1027	892	880	822	716	769	765	764
North Devon	1,328	1319	1418	1331	1410	1409	1185	1152	1172	1,166	1114
Plymouth	7,958	7767	7827	7031	6065	6401	6074	6349	6283	6,013	5915
South Hams	1,042	1120	1191	1191	1193	1104	947	929	825	834	898
Teignbridge	2,016	2173	2314	2387	2487	2588	2591	2736	2915	2,901	2980
Torbay	2,257	1786	1854	1839	2131	2203	2023	1690	1642	1,631	1588
Torridge	803	822	762	648	685	667	590	566	575	566	592
West Devon	836	893	927	908	925	1017	1014	949	1024	1,029	1104
Total	23,677	23,728	24,269	22,764	22,380	22,705	21,312	20,184	19,878	19,446	18,988

Devon Home Choice Quarterly Monitoring Report Summary (October 2013)



Devon wide the numbers in Band E have remained fairly consistent with the current total of 16,144 being only 5% less than the high point of 17,030 in October 2011 (Table 4 and Chart 3). There have however been more significant local variations as shown in Chart 2.

Table 4: Numbers on the register in Band E by Local Authority by quarter

	Apr-11	Jul-11	Oct-11	Jan-12	Apr-12	Jul-12	Oct-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13
East Devon	1,317	1,443	1,559	1,635	1,802	1,891	2,114	1,237	903	943	1,011
Exeter	3,159	3,310	3,338	2,705	2,836	2,802	2,367	1,722	1,890	1,926	1,943
Mid Devon	1,021	1,063	1,102	1,094	931	908	931	962	1,107	1,124	1,134
North Devon	1,424	1,376	1,483	1,405	1,472	1,379	1,320	1,370	1,646	1,654	1,725
Plymouth	4,107	4,183	4,297	3,856	3,113	3,311	3,437	3,722	4,175	4,211	4,236
South Hams	959	1,075	1,137	1,116	1,094	950	822	884	1,006	1,028	1,064
Teignbridge	1,442	1,467	1,523	1,507	1,579	1,602	1,678	1,721	1,741	1,745	1,737
Torbay	1,739	1,102	1,125	1,255	1,291	1,226	1,260	1,282	1,431	1,427	1,521
Torridge	524	544	527	498	536	540	593	599	645	652	676
West Devon	830	888	939	936	968	1,004	1,065	1,012	1,089	1,087	1,097
Total	16,522	16,451	17,030	16,007	15,622	15,613	15,587	14,511	15,633	15,797	16,144

Devon Home Choice Quarterly Monitoring Report Summary (October 2013)



Chart 2: Numbers on register in Band E

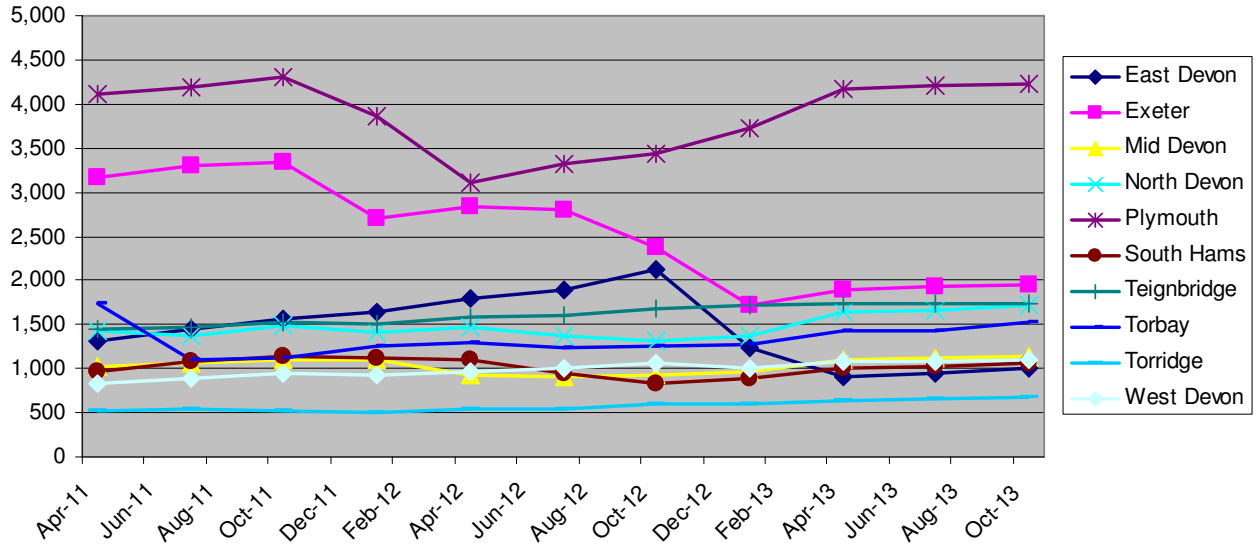
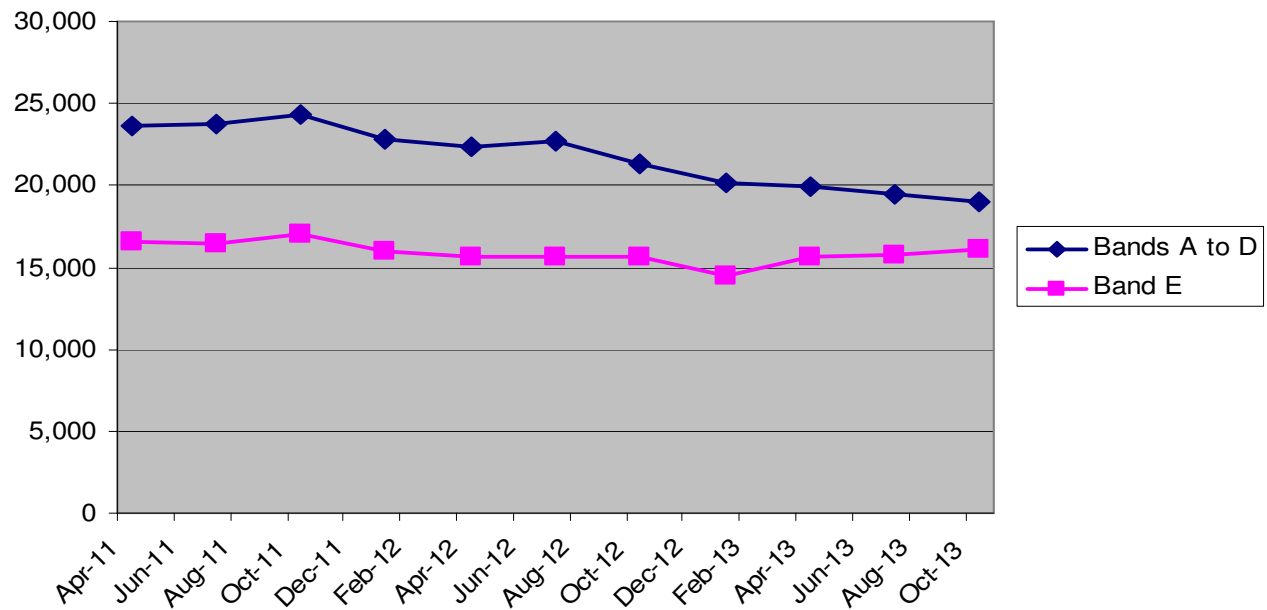


Chart 3: Devon wide register numbers



Devon Home Choice Quarterly Monitoring Report Summary (October 2013)



Are households in housing need bidding for homes?

It is important to ensure that households in housing need are actively participating in Devon Home Choice, by either bidding for homes or are at least considering the homes that are being advertised.

Table 5 provides information on households in housing need who have not bid for any homes or logged into the Devon Home Choice website, and so do not appear to be participating in Devon Home Choice.

Table 5: Households who have not bid or logged into the Devon Home Choice website

	Band A		Band B		Band C		Band D	
	No	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
East Devon	0	N/A	37	12%	65	12%	199	26%
Exeter	1	14%	80	12%	93	16%	382	33%
Mid Devon	0	N/A	40	25%	53	20%	113	34%
North Devon	1	20%	33	16%	59	21%	247	40%
Plymouth	0	0%	300	28%	264	18%	1061	32%
South Hams	0	N/A	29	16%	46	20%	146	30%
Teignbridge	0	0%	107	18%	192	19%	467	34%
Torbay	0	0%	52	15%	65	14%	245	31%
Torridge	0	0%	33	17%	44	23%	70	33%
West Devon	0	0%	37	26%	115	35%	295	47%
Total	2	7%	748	19%	996	18%	3225	33%

Note: There are no Band A households in East Devon, Mid Devon or South Hams

These figures show an improvement over the June 2013 figures which showed that the percentages who had not bid or logged into the website across Devon were:

- Band A – 18%
- Band B – 21%
- Band C – 27%
- Band D – 46%.

**Devon Home Choice
Quarterly Monitoring Report
Summary (October 2013)**



Homes let

The number of homes let in the first half of this year has risen to 2,682 compared with 1,934 in the corresponding half of 2012-13, with the number of 2 and 3 bedroom lets having increased steadily since the start of 2013 (see chart 4).

Table 6: General needs homes let (1 April 2013 to 30 September 2013)

	Band A		Band B		Band C		Band D		Band E		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
East Devon	0	0%	125	69%	45	25%	8	4%	4	2%	182
Exeter	10	4%	190	82%	21	9%	11	5%	1	0%	233
Mid Devon	2	1%	82	53%	52	33%	13	8%	7	4%	156
North Devon	1	1%	70	74%	9	9%	12	13%	3	3%	95
Plymouth	13	1%	594	69%	181	21%	61	7%	18	2%	867
South Hams	2	2%	49	43%	44	38%	18	16%	2	2%	115
Teignbridge	5	2%	128	60%	69	32%	8	4%	3	1%	213
Torbay	6	3%	113	59%	59	31%	9	5%	6	3%	193
Torridge	0	0%	68	81%	11	13%	3	4%	2	2%	84
West Devon	0	0%	46	46%	33	33%	12	12%	8	8%	99
Total	39	2%	1465	65%	524	23%	155	7%	54	2%	2237

Table 7: Sheltered homes let (1 April 2013 to 30 September 2013)

	Band A		Band B		Band C		Band D		Band E		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
East Devon	0	0%	46	65%	20	28%	4	6%	1	1%	71
Exeter	2	5%	21	50%	9	21%	10	24%	0	0%	42
Mid Devon	1	3%	15	50%	7	23%	5	17%	2	7%	30
North Devon	1	2%	16	37%	11	26%	12	28%	3	7%	43
Plymouth	0	0%	34	44%	18	23%	23	30%	3	4%	78
South Hams	0	0%	7	23%	8	27%	13	43%	2	7%	30
Teignbridge	0	0%	31	46%	24	36%	9	13%	3	4%	67
Torbay	0	0%	16	44%	11	31%	5	14%	4	11%	36
Torridge	2	7%	11	41%	7	26%	6	22%	1	4%	27
West Devon	0	0%	5	24%	5	24%	8	38%	3	14%	21
Total	6	1%	202	45%	120	27%	95	21%	22	5%	445

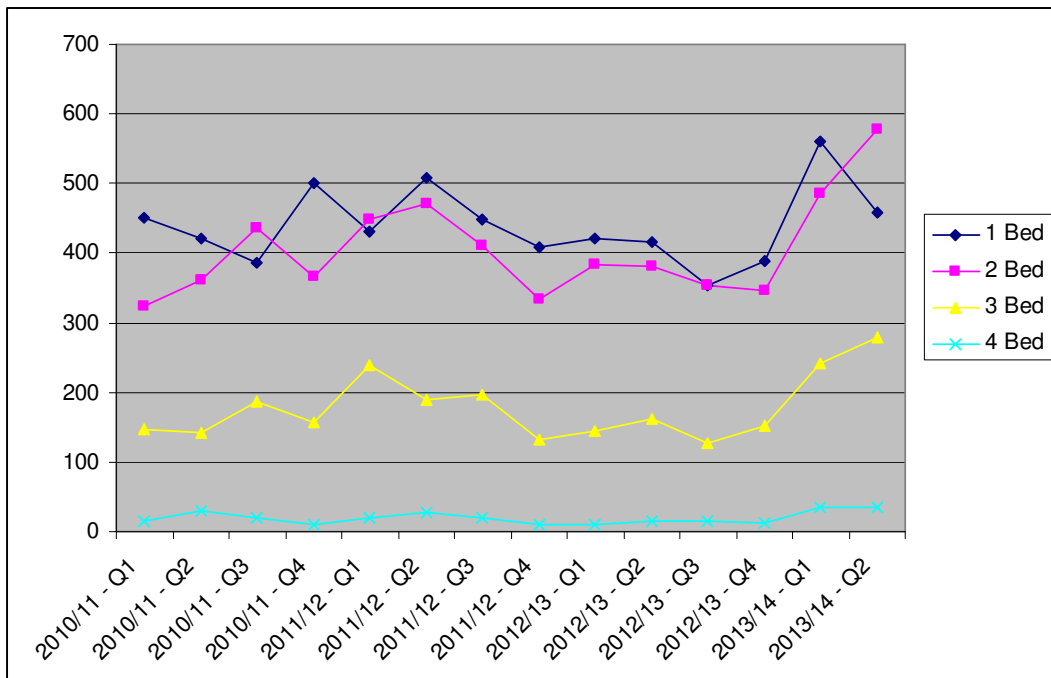
Devon Home Choice Quarterly Monitoring Report Summary (October 2013)



Table 8: Number of properties let by quarter

	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	Total
2010/11 - Q1	452	325	146	16	939
2010/11 - Q2	420	362	142	29	954
2010/11 - Q3	385	436	187	21	1029
2010/11 - Q4	501	367	158	10	1037
2011/12 - Q1	432	448	240	20	1140
2011/12 - Q2	508	472	190	27	1198
2011/12 - Q3	449	411	197	20	1080
2011/12 - Q4	409	335	131	9	884
2012/13 - Q1	421	384	144	11	961
2012/13 - Q2	416	380	161	15	973
2012/13 - Q3	354	353	128	14	849
2012/13 - Q4	388	346	153	12	900
2013/14 - Q1	561	486	241	34	1324
2013/14 - Q2	459	579	279	34	1358

Chart 4: Number of properties let by quarter



For more information please contact Rupert Warren (rupert.warren@exeter.gov.uk) or Gary Pitman (gary.pitman@exeter.gov.uk).

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EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY

12 NOVEMBER 2013

UNIVERSAL CREDIT UPDATE

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update members on the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Universal Credit (UC) project

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Universal Credit will replace the following national welfare benefits:
- Housing Benefit which is currently administered and paid by Exeter City Council (ECC)
 - Jobseeker's Allowance (Income Based), Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance (Income Related), Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit which are all currently administered & paid between DWP and HMRC.
- 2.2 DWP has started to pilot the roll out of UC in certain areas of the country & to a defined group of claimants. The first pathfinder area was Ashton-under-Lyne which commenced the pilot at the end of April 2013. During July 2013, three further pathfinder sites were introduced in Wigan, Warrington and Oldham.
- 2.3 The personal circumstances of the claimant that meet the current pathfinder criteria to claim UC are summarised as follows:
- Single people only (with no children; or pregnant women)
 - New claimants only
 - Fit for work
 - With or without housing costs (but not mortgages)
 - With no savings over £6,000

3. General Impact on the Council

- 3.1 ECC receives subsidy from DWP pound for pound on every correctly paid Housing Benefit (HB) claim. This subsidy figure is reduced by various percentages on non standard claims for example overpaid HB and supported accommodation claims (as explained below). ECC also receives an administration grant from DWP for running the Housing Benefit scheme, approximately 40% of this grant covers the cost of staff, IT systems, accommodation and other associated resources needed to administer HB. Additional one-off grants are paid by DWP when new legislation is introduced that changes the HB scheme to help with the additional IT & associated resource costs, an example of this is the additional funding to meet the costs of implementing welfare reform changes in 2013/14 to meet the new burdens incurred by local authorities.

- 3.2 Universal Credit implementation will mean that ECC's working age Housing Benefit caseload will cease to grow to a point where it may level out and then start to decrease as claims for Housing Benefit end and are not reinstated, but become new claims to Universal Credit. It is unclear over what period of time this will happen, but this conversion will be affected by changes in circumstance to our working age caseload. DWP has informed us that we will retain our supported exempt accommodation cases as these will not be rolled into Universal Credit; the caseload numbers of these claims still has to be fully evaluated.

From 1996 the HB regulations were amended, this meant that the eligible rent on accommodation could not be restricted where care, support & supervision was provided by a specified category of landlords. These cases are referred to the Rent Service (under the VOA) for a local reference rent determination. This acts as the baseline for full subsidy to be paid. However the Council is not allowed to restrict the Housing Benefit to the local reference rent figure and we have to meet the full rent charged, thus losing a larger percentage of subsidy we get from DWP on anything we pay above the rent determination.

4. Financial Impact on the Council

- 4.1 Migrating Housing Benefit into Universal Credit claims will affect the subsidy that we receive for the administration and payment of Housing Benefit. For the majority of our Housing Benefit claims, we receive 100% subsidy; however we only receive 40% subsidy on certain overpaid Housing Benefit claims and our exempt supported accommodation claims only receive subsidy on part of the expenditure. There have always been penalties on overpaid Housing Benefit to act as an incentive for local authorities to minimise their own errors and to advertise & encourage claimants to report changes in circumstance quicker to minimise overpaid HB. As we have been informed by DWP that supported exempt accommodation will not be rolled into Universal Credit, ECC will have continued expenditure in this area at a current cost of £300k per year to the authority. Losing the majority of working age Housing Benefit claims to Universal Credit will also impact the amount of Housing Benefit overpayments created for which we only receive on average 47% subsidy, but also have the capacity to increase our income by recovery of the full amount of Housing Benefit. The current Housing Benefit recovery rate on overpayments is over 80% and this generates an additional gain for the Council in the region of £270k. This is offset against the cost of resources to recover these overpayments.
- 4.2 In 2011/2012, we received £46,085,562 in subsidy across both our working age & state pension credit age caseload for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit combined. The future financial impact of losing working age Housing Benefit claims in relation to subsidy from central government is difficult to predict and the full financial impact may not be visible in the first one to two years because of the unknown speed at which Universal Credit claims will replace our Housing Benefit caseload. DWP does not appear to, as yet, have a strategy on subsidy payments, future administration grants or the financial support of our ICT systems to pay Housing Benefit claims that do not roll into Universal Credit. A letter was sent from Lord Freud on 1 August 2013 to local authorities to provide reassurance that the level of funding required to manage the full administration of Housing Benefit would be maintained for 2014/15.

3 CURRENT UNIVERSAL CREDIT NATIONAL ROLL OUT

3.1 On 10 July 2013 the DWP announced the next stage of UC roll out in six further Jobcentre areas:

- Hammersmith
- Rugby
- Inverness
- Harrogate
- Bath
- Shotton

The DWP also wrote to Chief Executives on 1 August 2013¹ to confirm this further roll out, give details about the implementation of the Claimant Commitment across all Jobcentres and an update on the Local Support Services Framework.

3.2 National roll out of UC was due to begin in October 2013, however following the National Audit Commission report² in September 2013 the Government have indicated that the roll out may take longer. The DWP expects to publish official statistics on the UC pathfinders by the end of 2013 and a further statement on national implementation of UC is expected in Autumn 2013.

4 DIRECT PAYMENT PILOT

4.1 The Direct Payments Demonstration Project is being run across six areas to pilot the direct payment of Housing Benefit and is testing the following areas in readiness for UC national roll out:

- different levels of support needed by social sector tenants to move onto direct payments of Housing Benefit
- exceptions to direct payments that need to be in place
- payment to landlords if the tenant falls into arrears
- arrears payback support needed
- arrears trigger points

4.2 The six areas are:

- Edinburgh
- Oxford
- Shropshire
- Southwark
- Torfaen
- Wakefield

4.2 Findings from the Direct Payment Demonstration Project:
In summary the report published by DWP in May 2013³ highlights the following:

4.3 The evidence and learning has been gathered from the preparatory stage of this project and only six months after some of the pilot areas went live and is deemed tentative at this stage. Input from the project areas was invaluable to implementation

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228492/uc-rollout-lord-freud-letter-aug-2013.pdf

² Universal Credit: early progress. Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General (NAO). 5 September 2013

³ Direct Payments Demonstration Projects: Learning the lessons, six months in (RR 839):report

of the demonstration project however implementation work placed significant demands on the organisations participating.

- 4.4 It was not possible to start the direct payments without direct contact with tenants first, information on customer bank accounts & support needs were vital. Engagement with tenants was more challenging than anticipated and communication methods had varying success with personal contact the preferred method, but also the most resource intensive. Data gathered on criteria designed to indicate the tenant's readiness for direct payments was not found to be effective.
- 4.5 Despite early resistance by tenants in the project areas to receive direct payments of HB the report found that the majority of tenants (88%) had a bank account and were using money management techniques to budget and meet most or all of their rent liability. The report does however state that direct payment does pose a risk to tenants. In December 2012 rent collection rates across all the project areas was lower than before the Direct Payment Demonstration Project started. Direct debit as a method of payment is preferred by most landlords, however it can result in bank charges to the tenant if any administrative errors occur. Other problems highlighted were peoples reluctance to receive payments, being able to budget on a monthly basis & also the problems existing for some in opening a bank account.
- 4.6 The resource issue to supporting tenants in all of these projects has exceeded expectations. Different methods have been adopted throughout the project areas including:
- Personalised support
 - Cooperation between HB departments & social landlords to support tenants
 - Landlords offering tenants a choice of payment methods
 - Local discretion to support those in arrears
- 4.7 On the 16 May 2013 the DWP announced that the Direct Payments Demonstration Project would be extended for a further 6 months. In a DWP press release⁴ it was explained that the extension would help to develop the further support needed by social housing tenants in readiness for moving onto UC, the projects will run until the end of the year.

5 LOCAL SUPPORT SERVICES FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 In February 2013 the DWP published the Local Support Services Framework (LSSF)⁵. This document sets out a partnership working strategy between DWP and local service partners (including local authorities) to support people claiming UC. It specifies that the framework applies to phase 2 of the UC programme from October 2013 and will be updated to create a refreshed version for 2014/15 from both the UC pathfinders, the Direct Payments Demonstration Projects and feedback invited from all local authorities.
- 5.2 On 20 May 2013, further information⁶ was issued from DWP on the LSSF, following LA feedback on areas such as partnership working, use of local services, claimant vulnerability definition, claimant support needs and LA funding to implement the LSSF.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/direct-payment-projects-extended-for-6-months>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-local-support-services-framework>

⁶ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228917/uc-lssf-freud-note.pdf

5.3 Recorded in minutes from the DWP LAA Steering Group 7 August 2013⁷, the LSSF will not be nationally applied until 2015/16, a further update to the LSSF will be issued in October 2013 and a full update in Autumn 2014.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Further impacts from UC roll out are likely to emerge once claims are paid within Exeter. Further analysis is awaited at the end of this year from the UC pathfinders and the direct payments project to predict the full impact on ECC as an employer, service provider and landlord.

7 RECOMMENDED

7.1 That the Committee notes the current update on Universal Credit and that further updates are received on a six monthly basis.

BINDU ARJOON
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR CUSTOMER ACCESS

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

Welfare Reform Act 2012

The Universal Credit Regulations 2013

The Universal Credit (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2013 (S.I.2013/386)

Universal Credit: early progress. Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General (NAO). 5 September 2013

Direct Payments Demonstration Projects: Learning the lessons, six months in. DWP May 2013.

DWP Circulars:

A13/2013

A14/2013

A19/2013

⁷ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/236706/dwp-laa-sg-minutes-aug-2013.pdf

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