

EXECUTIVE

Date: Tuesday 26 January 2016

Time: 5.30 pm

Venue: Rennes Room, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business.

If you have an enquiry regarding any items on this agenda, please contact Sarah Selway, Democratic Services Manager (Committees) on 01392 265275.

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

Membership -

Councillors Edwards (Chair), Denham, Hannaford, Leadbetter, Morris, Owen, Pearson and Sutton

Agenda

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 meetings held on 17 November, 1 December and 8 December 2015.

3 Declarations of Interest

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**

RESOLVED that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of items 15 and 16 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part I, Schedule 12A of the Act.

5 **Development of Council's Homelessness Strategy - Draft for Consultation**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Customer Access.

(Pages 5 - 66)

Scrutiny Committee – Community considered the report at its meeting on 19 January 2016 and its comments will be reported.

6 **Housing Rents and Service Charges 2016/17**

To consider the joint report of the Assistant Director Finance and Assistant Director Housing.

(Pages 67 - 70)

Scrutiny Committee – Community considered the report at its meeting on 19 January 2016 and its comments will be reported.

7 **Annual Review of Support for Small Businesses**

To consider the report of the Economy and Tourism Manager.

(Pages 71 - 84)

Scrutiny Committee – Economy considered the report at its meeting on 21 January 2016 and its comments will be reported.

8 **Rugby World Cup 2105**

To consider the report of the Chief Executive and Growth Director.

(Pages 85 - 112)

Scrutiny Committee – Economy considered the report at its meeting on 21 January 2016 and its comments will be reported.

9 **RAMM Digital Media Road Map and Progress**

To consider the report of the Museums Manager and Culture Lead.

(Pages 113 - 132)

Scrutiny Committee – Economy considered the report at its meeting on 21 January 2016 and its comments will be reported.

10 **2016/17 Council Tax Base and NNDR1**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Finance.

(Pages
133 - 138)

11 **Debt Collection Policy in respect of Council Tax Recovery, Rent and Former Tenancy Arrears Recovery, Housing Benefit Overpayment Recovery and Rechargeable Repairs Recovery**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Customer Access.

(Pages
139 - 154)

12 **Council Tax Penalty Policy**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Customer Access.

(Pages
155 - 168)

13 **Staffing within the Housing Development Team**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Housing.

(Pages
169 - 172)

14 **Delegated Decision - Waiver of Contract Regulations**

To note the Delegated Decision – Waiver of Contract Regulations.

(Pages
173 - 174)

Part II: Items suggested for discussion with the press and public excluded

No representations have been received in respect of the following items in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

15 **Future of Older Persons' Housing Services**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Housing.

(Pages
175 - 178)

Scrutiny Committee – Community considered the report at its meeting on 19 January 2016 and its comments will be reported.

16 **Exeter Heart of Devon Growth Board Minutes - 17 December 2015**

Members are requested to note the minutes of the meeting on 17 December 2015.

(Pages
179 - 186)

Scrutiny Committee – Economy considered the minutes at its meeting on 21 January 2016 and its comments will be reported.

Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Executive will be held on **Tuesday 9 February 2016** at 5.30 pm in the Civic Centre.

A statement of the executive decisions taken at this meeting will be produced and published on the Council website as soon as reasonably practicable.

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) 265115 for further information.

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REPORT TO Scrutiny Community

Date of Meeting: 19 January 2016

Report of: Assistant Director Customer Access

Title: Development of Council's Homelessness Strategy – Draft for Consultation

Is this a Key Decision? No

No

* One that affects finances over £1m or significantly affects two or more wards. If this is a key decision then the item must be on the appropriate forward plan of key decisions.

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

This report introduces a draft strategy for public consultation. The approval of the final Strategy is a Council function.

1. What is the report about?

This report presents the draft Homelessness Strategy for Exeter and Teignbridge which has been developed from the findings and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group convened to review homelessness in the city and to help form and shape the new Homelessness Strategy and action plan. The group is chaired by Cllr Harvey and involves representatives (both Members and Officers) from both councils.

2. Recommendations:

To agree the content and aims of the draft Homelessness Strategy 2016 – 2021 as a draft for Consultation. A copy of which will be available for members shortly.

To undertake a public consultation to gain feedback from stakeholders and other interested parties.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

The strategy has been developed follow a series of Task and Finish Group meetings highlighting different issues which impact homelessness. There is a legal requirement to consult partners about our plans, which is essential as they are key components in our successful delivery.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.

i) The proposed actions within the strategy do not commit any additional funding beyond that available to the service at present.

ii) There are implications for the use of operational resources to provide services outside of the Civic Centre where there is a clear benefit to do so as well as further investigating opportunities for integrated service delivery with key strategic partners.

ii) Financial pressures on the service and wider sector are discussed within the strategy. These include concern regarding the impact of welfare reform upon demand and viability of temporary accommodation models in the long term. The document highlights initial actions to mitigate these threats and will be reviewed annually to include relevant subsequent actions as required.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

There are no additional financial implications contained in this report.

6. What are the legal aspects?

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires local authorities to review their services and outline how they will address homelessness in their locality. A review should be conducted at least every five years. The Homelessness Strategy incorporates not only the statutory duties the council must perform for those in need but also how it will act to prevent homelessness and provide advice and assistance to those in need.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

The Council is statutorily obliged to have a homelessness strategy - in short this updates the council's existing policy. The monitoring officer cannot make a comment about detail of the proposal since the draft strategy is not attached.

8. Report details:

Despite central and local government efforts poor housing and homelessness still exist in modern Britain and continue to adversely affect the physical and mental wellbeing of many people, especially vulnerable groups.

The joint Exeter City and Teignbridge District Council Homelessness Strategy 2016 to 2021, sets out how the two councils, and their combined partners, will work together to tackle homelessness over the next five years.

Whilst there are some differences between Exeter and Teignbridge in the experience of homelessness, the causes and available solutions are the same. By working together we can establish better and more efficient services

and develop clearer, more accessible pathways for clients, stakeholders and residents. Where needed we will also be able to offer targeted coverage at a local level, from urban rough sleeping encampments in Exeter to the more isolated families facing homelessness in a rural setting in Teignbridge’s smaller villages.

The Housing Options Teams in Exeter and Teignbridge have been jointly managed since May 2015. The decision to have a shared vision for homelessness across the area further helps us to respond more evenly as issues arise, as well as a helping us to develop a more holistic conversation with partners, service providers and clients who often do not recognise local authority boundaries.

The strategy sets out both councils’ aspirations for the next five years to prevent homelessness and improve experiences of those who become homeless locally. It is also a call to action to local stakeholders to help us deliver and develop further moving forward. The themes reflect the broad range of work that we do to address homelessness.

Working in partnership is key to the success of the strategy. We will continue to engage with the larger national organisations to provide context, as well as maintain and develop conversations with local organisations to help align our values and objectives to work together in resolving homelessness.

This strategy looks to deliver our services from a client, or customer, point of view and has been themed in such a way as to break away from a purely departmental led approach. These themes have been explored by the Task and Finish group with input from local stakeholders.

The themes are:

A Place to Live	Access to Services
This theme reviews the supply of accommodation in the local area and whether it is used effectively to meet local housing need.	This theme looks at how we offer services and engage with homeless people.
Health and Protection	Money Matters
This theme outlines how health and homelessness impact upon each other as well as the importance of protecting vulnerable people from violence and abuse.	This theme considers the financial pressures on local people facing in housing need and the wider homelessness sector.

To ensure our strategic aims are linked to local needs they are framed within our themes:

Homelessness Strategy 2016 – 21 Strategic Aims



In order to achieve these aims the strategy outlines an action plan. This action plan will be reviewed and refreshed annually to keep the strategy relevant.

The proposed actions for 2016/17 are:

Project Indicator	Place to live 2016/17	Partner
HP01	Launch a referral service for private landlords to highlight when tenancies are at risk of failing to enable early intervention to save tenancies	Teignbridge Strategic Landlord Group, Exeter Landlord Forum, PATH, private landlords
HP02	Investigate role of a social lettings agency as a tool in accessing private rented accommodation for homeless people and complete an options appraisal to present to the steering group.	Teignbridge Strategic Landlord Group, Exeter Landlord Forum, PATH, CAB, private landlords
HP03	Increase access to affordable shared accommodation through direct leasing, or landlord support by 10 units across the local area	Teignbridge Strategic Landlord Group, Exeter Landlord Forum, PATH, private landlords
HP04	Develop an options appraisal report with registered partners to provide accommodation options to homeless people	Registered partners
HP05	Provide 4 crash pad units to be used as an alternative to Bed and Breakfast for families by both authorities	Registered partners
HP06	Develop emergency access accommodation options specifically for 16-17 year olds and care leavers	Devon County Council, Young Devon, Community Housing Aid, Supported accommodation providers
HP07	Produce a homelessness housing needs assessment to determine extent of gaps in current provision and report findings to steering group.	All
HP08	Develop a business case for a 'Housing First' model of accommodation for entrenched rough sleepers who refuse to access current provision	Julian House, St Petrocks, BCHA, Devon County Council, Devon and Cornwall Police
HP09	Review the impact of 'Safe Sleep' winter provision and determine whether a night shelter model is a viable option in the local area to provide emergency accommodation.	Julian House, St Petrocks
HP10	Number of cases where homelessness is prevented by client remaining in existing home (P1e data)	
HP11	2 combined training events for housing options staff in mediation and negotiation skills to help maintain existing accommodation.	

Project Indicator	Access to services 2016/17	Partner
HA01	Develop credit card sized promotional material to distribute to agencies such as letting agents, hospitals, with outline of services on offer and key contact information.	All
HA02	Produce self help guides for clients to help with basic advice needs and facilitate searches for accommodation.	Citizens Advice
HA03	Produce a cross boundary directory of housing and support resources in the Exeter and Teignbridge area	All
HA04	Pilot the completion of housing assessments in locations outside of the council offices where clients are more likely to engage.	St Petrocks, Citizens Advice, Job Centres, Health and Well Being Hub, Voluntary Sector
HA05	Develop staff specialism to provide links with key partner agencies, to attend operational meetings and provide referral contacts	
HA06	Develop data sharing agreements with partners agencies where appropriate	All
HA07	Complete 2 customer satisfaction exercises a year and review service provision as appropriate - for example mystery shopping, surveys, focus groups.	
HA08	Set up 2 annual events for front line staff to network and build relationships across statutory and voluntary organisations	All
HA09	Hold 2 training events for housing staff in motivational interviewing skills to provide positive advice that engages clients to take an active role to resolve their housing difficulties.	

Project Indicator	Health and protection 2016/17	Partner
HH01	Champion housing options inclusion in multi agency hubs to provide holistic services to vulnerable people.	Young Devon, Probation, Job Centre Plus, Voluntary Sector
HH02	Extend provision of security measures (Sanctuary Scheme) for all clients at risk of domestic violence.	Devon County Council, Devon Domestic Abuse Service
HH03	Develop housing pathways for: hospital discharge, prison release, youth homelessness, and veterans in housing need	NHS, CCGs, Working Links, Devon County Council, SSAFA and Royal British Legion
HH04	Implement recommendations from Integrated Care Exeter (ICE) programme to develop a health and wellbeing team for homeless people in Exeter.	ICE partnership
HH05	Evaluate the progress of individuals within the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) programme and use learning to influence service design.	MEAM partnership
HH06	Develop closer links with voluntary and community agencies, such as soup kitchens, food banks, and faith based organisations to promote consistency in tackling homelessness.	Voluntary Sector
HH07	Deliver 2 specialist safeguarding training event to housing staff to improve understanding and interaction with social care.	Devon County Council
Project Indicator	Money matters and employment: 2016/17	Partner
HM01	Investigate funding sources to develop money advice and budgeting services for homeless clients.	CAB, Homemaker, Voluntary Sector, Job Centre, DWP
HM02	Map current contracts relating to homelessness and their funding sources to define overlap and potential opportunities for combined commissioning	Devon County Council, Mental Health, NHS, CCG's Probation, CRC
HM03	Drive out duplication in referral and assessment processes through adoption of common forms and risk assessment.	Voluntary Sector, Devon County Council, Probation, Mental Health
HM04	Review viability of the current models of temporary accommodation and complete an options appraisal to outline proposed mitigations	
HM05	Explore ways of delivering services differently to improve value for money, including integrated services with partners	All
HM06	Increase awareness of welfare reforms with clients through the development of literature and self help guides to improve financial planning in setting up their new homes.	CAB, Homemaker, Voluntary Sector, Job Centre, DWP
HM07	Review use of council discretionary funds and agree common processes to reduce duplication and provide clarity to clients and advisers.	
HM08	Develop a cost calculator for homelessness services to effectively measure the impact of interventions and increase readiness to new public finance initiatives.	

The consultation is proposed to run from the 12 February 2016 until the 25 March 2016. It will ask respondents to consider the themes, aims and actions in the draft strategy, to advise if they believe something is missing. Also, where appropriate, stakeholders will be asked how they can help us to deliver a better offer for local residents facing homelessness in the area.

A short presentation of the key elements of the strategy will be made at the meeting.

Assistant Director Customer Access

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

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

Contact for enquires:
Democratic Services (Committees)
Room 2.3
01392 265275

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Homelessness Strategy

Working better together

Exeter City Council

Teignbridge District Council

2016 to 2021



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1. Introduction

Most people are lucky enough to have never experienced homelessness. But for those who do, it can be a traumatic experience that damages both physical and emotional wellbeing. Not having a decent home adversely affects all areas of your life, from your health, to your achievement at school and your ability to get work.

Since the Homelessness Act 2002 all local housing authorities have been required to conduct a review of their services and develop a Homelessness Strategy. Our previous plans have now come to an end and with a rapidly changing environment in the public sector it is important that we review our current position and set out plans for tackling homelessness in the future.



'Together with Teignbridge Council we have worked on the Homelessness Strategy in a slightly different way. We have engaged with, and listened to, many organisations that provide services for homeless people and have learnt a lot about the work they do, the challenges they face and the valuable role they play.'

'It is clear to me that the residents facing homelessness in the area are best served by agencies, including the City Council, working closely together in partnership. Preventing homelessness is key to our plans going forward and we must keep this central in our work.'

Cllr Heather Morris
Executive Member for Customer Access, Exeter City Council



'Taking part in the homelessness strategy meetings with Exeter City Council has been a real eye-opener. It has highlighted many aspects of homelessness that I had not previously considered, for example, I had not realised that many people are only two pay cheques away from losing their home, or that becoming homeless can happen very quickly as a result of illness, bereavement, job loss, or relationship breakdown.'

'I hope that this strategy can help people at risk of homelessness more quickly and effectively and will go some way to prevent homelessness by giving support, such as money advice, at an earlier stage.'

Cllr Humphrey Clemens
Executive member for Housing & Planning, Teignbridge District Council

2. Overview

'On any given night, there are still over 2,000 people sleeping rough and up to 40,000 living in hostels and supported accommodation in England. Too many families are still living in temporary accommodation and facing an uncertain future.'

Kris Hopkins MP, Under Secretary of State for DCLG, March 2015

Despite significant efforts and investment, poor housing and homelessness still exist in modern Britain and continue to adversely affect the physical and mental wellbeing of many people, especially vulnerable groups.

The joint Exeter City and Teignbridge District Council Homelessness Strategy 2016 to 2021 sets out how the two councils, and their partners, will work together to tackle homelessness over the next five years. The document outlines our strategic vision in addressing homelessness and sets out the actions we intend to take to help us reach our goals. It contains a review of the main challenges ahead and highlights key areas of positive work that we are currently delivering.

At the end of each theme there is a list of annual projects that have been developed in consultation with partners, members and stakeholders. It demonstrates both councils' commitment to preventing homelessness and supporting those who find themselves homeless. Plans will be monitored quarterly and reviewed annually to keep abreast of budgets, welfare reform and developing government policy.

To make sure that we have paid due regard to duties under the Equality Act 2010 we will develop an 'impact assessment', which will look at how we have considered equal access by mapping any positive, or negative, impacts upon the local community. This document will highlight any additional actions we intend to take to reduce inequality.

2.1 Exeter and Teignbridge

2.1a The local area

Exeter and Teignbridge have similar sized populations, yet they differ in density, landscape and stock profile. Exeter is a densely populated university city and is well serviced with transport links. In contrast, Teignbridge is over ten times the size, with a mix of coastal and rural areas with some larger market towns and smaller villages, where distance makes transport a challenge.

Exeter City retained its housing stock and enjoys national average levels of social housing, whereas Teignbridge has half the national average of social housing and transferred its social stock to Teign Housing in 2005. In both areas the private rented sector outstrips the social stock, with Exeter having almost 5% more private rented property than the national average.

2.1b Tackling homelessness

Whilst there are some differences between Exeter and Teignbridge in the experience of homelessness, the causes and available solutions are the same. By working together we can establish better and more cost effective services and develop clearer, more accessible routes for clients, stakeholders and residents. Where needed we will also be able to offer targeted coverage at a local level, from urban rough sleeping encampments in Exeter, to the more isolated families facing homelessness in a rural setting in Teignbridge's smaller villages.

The Housing Options Teams in Exeter and Teignbridge have been jointly managed since May 2015. The decision to create a shared vision for homelessness across the area further helps us to

respond more robustly as issues arise, as well as a helping us to develop more holistic conversations with partners, service providers and clients who often do not recognise local authority boundaries.

2.1c Working better together

Working in partnership is key to the success of the strategy. We will continue to engage with the larger national organisations to provide context, as well as maintain and develop conversations with the smaller local organisations to develop a more joined up set of values and objectives. The strategy aims to develop these values and goals in recognition of national, regional and local policy and proposes a vision for the benefit of all our residents, stakeholders and partners.

This is a wide-ranging and ambitious strategy that will require both councils to work together and continue to be open to new ways of tackling issues. . By working together with partners and stakeholders, we can better tackle homelessness and address some of its root causes, whilst maximising resources and delivering a better service.

This strategy is intended to drive improved quality and coverage and will be of interest to:

1. Residents, stakeholders and clients by setting out our intentions
2. Partners, to help share our vision and improve joined up planning and of future work
3. Service managers, members and staff to enable them to better understand, plan and deliver improvements

2.2 Themes and aims 2016 to 2021

The strategy combines both councils' five year plan to prevent homelessness and improve the experience of those who become homeless locally. It is a call to action to partners and stakeholders to help us deliver, and develop, a more joined-up service to address homelessness in the area.

This strategy looks to deliver our services from a client, or customer, point of view and has been themed to reflect the broad range of work that we do to address homelessness. In this way we hope to break away from a department led approach. Under each theme is a set of strategic aims.

2.2a Themes and aims summary

A place to live

- Increase access to good, safe and affordable accommodation
- End the use of bed and breakfast for families and young people
- Bring rough sleeping to an end

Access to services

- Work together to put customers first
- Offer help at times and places where clients need them most
- Make sure help is accessible for everyone

Health and protection

- Improve the health and wellbeing of homeless people
- Help protect the vulnerable from violence and abuse
- Support people who are released from prison, hospital, or leaving the armed forces

Money matters

- Help people manage household finances when faced with homelessness
- Target investment to reduce homelessness
- Maximise opportunities with partners and provide better value for money

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3 A place to live

'We must make sure that families who experience the downward spiral that leads to homelessness have an adequate safety net. In the long-term, we need an adequate supply of decent, affordable homes to prevent so many families being unable to find somewhere suitable to live.'

Shelter

The supply of suitable, affordable accommodation is central to tackling homelessness, as is having the flexibility to offer a range of sustainable options to meet changing need. Since 2013, we have used the powers under the Localism Act to proactively reduce the link between homelessness and social housing, by helping people into private rented accommodation. This gives households more choice over where they want to live, and can considerably reduce the experience of homelessness.

Many people facing homelessness have a variety of complex needs, which all too often prevent them getting, or maintaining a home. This theme focuses on the provision of housing for homeless people. We believe that it is the councils' role to provide and enable suitable housing products that can effectively dovetail with the support available, further discussed in Theme 3; Health and Protection. By offering flexible solutions and tailoring services and accommodation around the client, we will work to find longer term housing solutions for even the most challenging scenarios.



3.1 Increase access to good, safe and affordable accommodation

There should be life beyond temporary accommodation, the hostel system, or the streets for homeless households, including for the most vulnerable and complex clients. Not all homeless people aspire to, or can maintain secure, long term housing and we recognise that there is a need for a variety of housing options to meet people's need in the short term. If applicable, these options can provide a stepping stone towards a more sustained housing solution.

3.1a Help people stay at home

Often, when we consider the housing options for people facing homelessness there can be an over emphasis on looking for a new property. However, for many, the home in which they already live provides the best housing solution in terms size, cost, and location.

In 2014, the University of Exeter conducted a review of the local housing market by talking to residents. The research found that people were concerned about spiralling into homelessness due to debt and a lack of security in their lives. Failure to intervene when problems develop can quickly lead to crisis and the loss of a home.

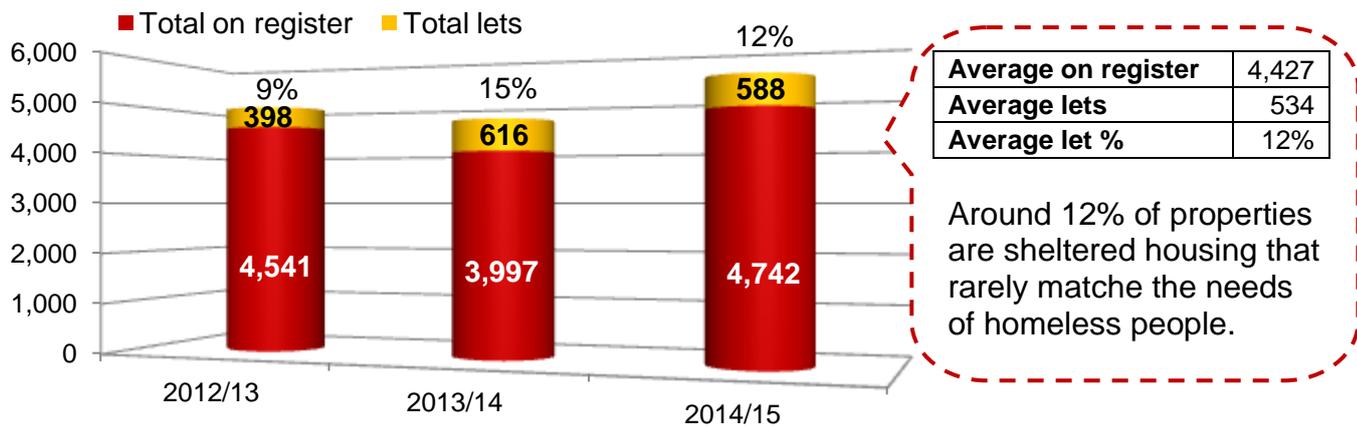
Over the last three years, 957 households were helped to stay in their own homes.

(P1e, 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15)

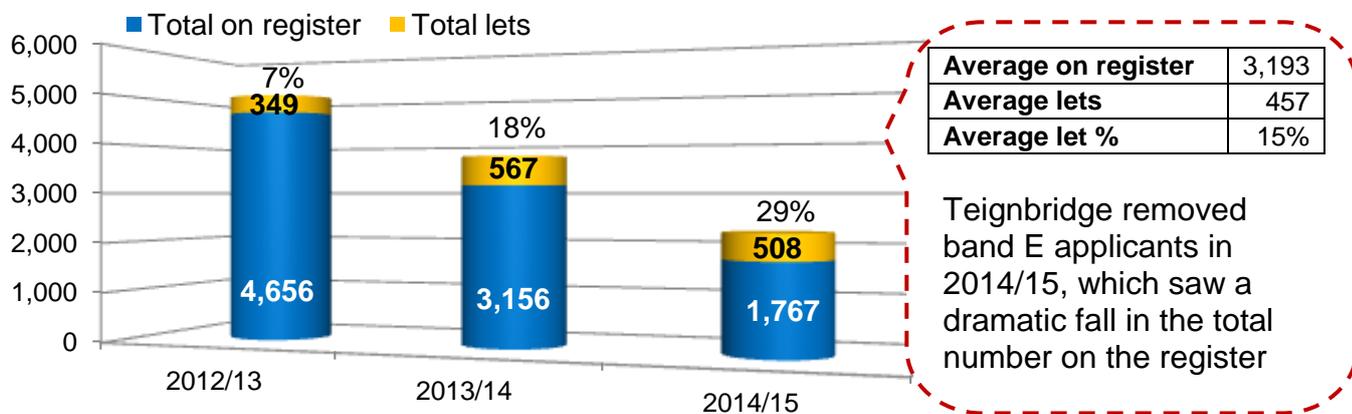
The majority of interventions happen in the private rented sector and we have a good track record of preventing homelessness through targeted intervention, such as landlord negotiation, resolving housing benefit concerns, arrears management, tenancy support, money advice and court desk representation. Furthermore, mediation with parents and the wider family is proving increasingly successful in resolving homelessness amongst younger people.

3.1b Social housing

3.1b i. Exeter housing register - Total on register by property let (%)



3.1b ii. Teignbridge housing register - Total on register by property let (%)



Source: www.devonhomechoice.com

The social housing sector is seeing significant pressure from emerging housing policy that will impact landlord income and the ability to build homes in the future. Social housing is also becoming less attractive to applicants, with many registered providers no longer offering social rents and long term security. With this additional pressure, social landlords are beginning to put measures in place to protect their business position, such as requiring rent in advance and more stringent qualifying criteria for properties. These have a detrimental impact on homeless households who often have very limited funds and a poor housing history.

Social housing is unlikely to offer an immediate resolution to homelessness due to high demand in the sector. We have removed the automatic high priority banding for homelessness in an attempt to encourage people to find a housing solution, rather than wait for social housing. The banding remains in place for people with additional needs and for those who served in the armed forces. A prevention of homelessness raised banding is also in place to assist in planned moves rather than homelessness in a crisis.

Between April and December 2015, 111 homeless households were prevented from becoming homeless as a result of accessing social housing, 45 in Exeter and 66 in Teignbridge. This was not solely through a raised banding priority, but also working to directly match households with hard to let properties, as well as giving specialist advice.

3.1c Private rented sector

Availability and affordability in the private rented sector remains challenging.

According to the Valuation Office, the amount of housing benefit, or 'local housing allowance', that helps pay for one, two and three bed, privately rented property is currently between 15% to 25% lower than the average local rent. Households needing four, or more bedrooms face a significant shortfall, with the monthly benefit allowance somewhere between £600 below average rent in Exeter and £230 in Teignbridge.



Rental affordability is also a concern for working households on low wages. Single and two bed properties in Teignbridge are around £480 and £620 pcm respectively and on average is £100 per month more expensive in Exeter. In Teignbridge, to rent a three, or four bed property costs around £760 and £1,000 respectively. In Exeter, rents are more expensive and are somewhere between £260 a month more for a three bed and £470 more for a four bed. According to the Exeter Landlords Guide, letting agents' fees to landlords are generally between 8% and 14% of the rental price and can mean the difference between an affordable and unaffordable rent.

There is pressure in the private rented market, with competition for properties high and confidence in tenants low. In Teignbridge, rural and coastal homes used as holiday lets are key competition to the usual rental stock and increases competition in the market. Whereas in Exeter, the expanding student market has significantly inflated larger family property rental prices, as a higher income and greater security from parental guarantors can be gained through shared student lets. Both areas also have high house purchase to average income ratios, meaning that potential home buyers are occupying private rented properties in the locality.

Welfare reform affecting tenants and changes to financial and legislative regulation of landlords may further hinder engagement between private landlords and the local authority looking to help accommodate homeless households.

3.1d Supported accommodation

Public spending cuts have led to the loss of over 300 units of supported accommodation across the area in the last five years. Furthermore, support and accommodation is commissioned to a market-driven model. This had led to the current availability of accommodation determining the type of support provision rather than interventions being designed to respond to the needs of the local homeless population. Lack of an alternative to the large hostel in Exeter for complex clients with multiple needs often results in rough sleeping when tenancies fail. This is not necessarily a client or service failure as hostel living arrangements are not suitable for everyone. In Teignbridge, the opposite is in place, with adult supported accommodation being solely available in independent units. Location is also a concern with all young peoples provision being based in Newton Abbot with very limited options across the wider district.

Although not the fault of any particular agency, there are currently gaps in support provision as a result of missed strategic links in service design and delivery. Traditional models of accommodation may not be the answer and by working together differently there are opportunities to develop new approaches to the following:

- High support accommodation for entrenched rough sleepers
- Specialist accommodation for victims of domestic abuse
- Female only, or young people's hostel provision
- Shared supported accommodation for adults in Teignbridge
- Provision for clients with substance misuse issues, or physical disabilities

3.1e Shared accommodation

There is a lack of affordable accommodation for homeless people under the age of 35. This group have been affected by reduced benefit entitlements, or are in low paid employment because they are at the start of their careers.

The private rented market does not appear keen to expand to meet the needs of homeless people. It prioritises low risk, young professionals, or students with parental guarantors. Shared accommodation, which is affordable to younger people, is generally unavailable for those with support needs, which can lead to difficulties in attracting suitable tenants. This is a wasted resource and a lost income for landlords.

The social housing sector does not have a track record of providing this type of accommodation unless accompanied with expensive support services for tenants.

3.2 End the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for families and young people

The use of bed and breakfast accommodation often leads to families and young people living in cramped conditions and sharing facilities with adults who may be vulnerable or have significant social problems.

For this reason government guidance for temporary accommodations states that bed and breakfast is not suitable for families or young people under the age of 18 or care leavers. If no alternative accommodation is available Councils can use bed and breakfast, but only in an emergency and for a maximum of six weeks.

3.2a Temporary accommodation

There is a continued demand on temporary accommodation and a reliance on bed and breakfast type accommodation for some households.

There are 96 units of fast access, emergency accommodation in the area, with 81 units in Exeter and 15 in Teignbridge. 14 units are bed and breakfast, offering very limited facilities, which leads to a poor experience for those staying there. According to the government, this accommodation should not be used for families, or people under the age of 18 unless in an emergency and then not for more than six weeks. We currently 'spot purchase' accommodation from private guest houses when our stock is full, or does not meet a client's needs.



We have 6 units of emergency accommodation that is adapted to help disabled clients when discharged from hospital; 4 in Exeter and 2 in Teignbridge. Whilst support is available at these locations we do not provide care packages. This often means joint working with health and social care if clients are unable to look after themselves.

We have 118 properties leased from the private sector, 106 in Exeter and 12 in Teignbridge. These properties offer longer term security to homeless households whilst they look for a more settled home. However, clients have low prospects in accessing social housing and there is no additional support to help them move on, which often leads to longer stays in this expensive accommodation.

3.3 Bring rough sleeping to an end

3.3a Shelter for rough sleepers

There is no direct access hostel accommodation for rough sleepers in the area.

In 2014, Exeter City Council opened a six bedroomed, shared house to accommodate people who had been sleeping rough. The property offers accommodation for rough sleepers who may not immediately fit into current hostel, or supported accommodation provision. Also, in Exeter, a room has been made available to accommodate up to 4 rough sleepers who have engaged with the Outreach Team and want immediate shelter whilst they look for accommodation. This hostel was used for 40 placements between April to December 2015 and provided an important stepping stone to longer term accommodation.

In December 2015 three months of 'Safe Sleep' provision was piloted by opening an additional 22 spaces of accommodation for rough sleepers. Initial reports have been positive with the prolonged engagement alongside shelter provision, leading to 5 offers of move on accommodation within the first two weeks. The project's aim is to provide shelter during the cold weather and to use the extended, winter provision to reduce the numbers of rough sleepers in the city.



Rough sleeping is less of an issue in Teignbridge. However, a small number of people continue to sleep outside. Since 2012, the 'housing options for people excluded' project (HOPE) has been very successful in helping 47 people move into accommodation who were, either rough sleeping, or at risk of rough sleeping.

Most of the people sleeping rough in the area have previously accessed accommodation locally, but have then lost it due to poor behaviour, or rent arrears. This can be seen as a failure on both the part of the individual, as well as in terms of accommodation supply, as the available options do not meet their needs.

However, the provision of more accommodation by itself will not put a stop to people sleeping rough. In addition to the supply of accommodation a combined effort is needed between partners. We need to work together to provide support and encourage engagement, as well as give a clear message that rough sleeping is not acceptable and challenge those who take the extremely harmful decision to continue to sleep rough.

3.4 Actions 2016/17

The following are suggested actions for the Councils and partners to complete in 2016/17.

Project Indicator	Place to live 2016/17	Partner
HP01	Launch a referral service for private landlords to highlight when tenancies are at risk of failing to enable early intervention to save tenancies	Teignbridge Strategic Landlord Group, Exeter Landlord Forum, PATH, private landlords
HP02	Investigate role of a social lettings agency as a tool in accessing private rented accommodation for homeless people and complete an options appraisal to present to the steering group.	Teignbridge Strategic Landlord Group, Exeter Landlord Forum, PATH, CAB, private landlords
HP03	Increase access to affordable shared accommodation through direct leasing, or landlord support by 10 units across the local area	Teignbridge Strategic Landlord Group, Exeter Landlord Forum, PATH, private landlords
HP04	Develop an options appraisal report with registered partners to provide accommodation options to homeless people	Registered partners
HP05	Provide 4 crash pad units to be used as an alternative to Bed and Breakfast for families by both authorities	Registered partners
HP06	Develop emergency access accommodation options specifically for 16-17 year olds and care leavers	Devon County Council, Young Devon, Community Housing Aid, Supported accommodation providers
HP07	Produce a homelessness housing needs assessment to determine extent of gaps in current provision and report findings to steering group.	All
HP08	Develop a business case for a 'Housing First' model of accommodation for entrenched rough sleepers who refuse to access current provision	Julian House, St Petrocks, BCHA, Devon County Council, Devon and Cornwall Police
HP09	Review the impact of 'Safe Sleep' winter provision and determine whether a night shelter model is a viable option in the local area to provide emergency accommodation.	Julian House, St Petrocks, BCHA
HP10	Number of cases where homelessness is prevented by client remaining in existing home (P1e data)	
HP11	2 combined training events for housing options staff in mediation and negotiation skills to help maintain existing accommodation.	

10.2	Statistical data: A place to live	44
10.2a	Homelessness preventions – number of households able to remain in existing home	44
10.2b	Homelessness prevented - households able to remain in existing home by measure	44
10.2c	Homelessness prevented, or relieved – number of households assisted to obtain alternative accommodation	45
10.2d	Homelessness prevented or relieved - household assisted to obtain alternative accommodation by type	45
10.2e	Housing lets (%) of total households on Devon Home Choice Exeter	46
10.2f	Housing lets (%) of total households on Devon Home Choice Teignbridge	46
10.2g	Average cost of private rent and local housing allowance 2014/15	47
10.2h	Households in accommodation leased from the private sector 2012 to 2015	47
10.2i	Households in bed and breakfast accommodation 2012 to 2015	48
10.2j	Households in temporary accommodation 2012 to 2015	48

4 Access to services

'Rather than attempting to establish that people are not eligible for assistance, all frontline staff should seek to understand applicants' circumstances and focus on addressing their housing need.'

'It is more cost effective to provide meaningful support at first contact with a local authority than to delay any assistance until an individual has developed more complex support needs as a result of their homelessness'

Crisis, Turned Away Report 2014

The challenge for this strategy, under the current financial climate, will be to make sure that people who are threatened with homelessness, or become homeless are not further pushed to the margins of society; unable to access the services that they need to improve their housing and health outcomes.

4.1 Work together to put the customer first

4.1a The customer experience

'I've always dreaded the Council; everyone has always slated them, but my experience was good. It was different to what I expected, I was treated with respect.'

Exeter Client at Trailways, 2014)

The helpful and constructive experience customers receive when they access our services is key to generating positive outcomes.

Customer feedback for the service has been very positive, with 90% of people in Exeter's temporary accommodation survey (2014) saying that they had had a positive experience. Similarly, in Teignbridge, 95% of customers were satisfied with the advice service that they had received (2015).

The level of demand upon the service is high and there is a challenge to manage waiting times. In Exeter, most clients are seen within 30 minutes and in Teignbridge most are seen within 15 minutes. Appointments are available at both locations to help manage demand.

Due to the nature of some enquiries, visits can take up to two hours, which can make engagement extremely challenging for vulnerable people, with time delays having a 'knock-on' effect on those waiting to be seen. Interviews are held at council offices, with the exception of young people, who visit the Youth Enquiry Services based in Exeter and Newton Abbot. The council environment is not always favourable to this type of work and could be better undertaken in locations where homeless people feel more comfortable and better supported. To achieve this we would need a flexible workforce whilst maintaining capacity to maintain a central service, from where we could conduct visits.

Complaints regarding homeless services are relatively low. This is partly due to the statutory review process which allows challenge to homeless decisions. In between April and December 2015, 15 statutory reviews were submitted; 40% of which saw the original decision overturned, due to new information, changes in circumstances, or an error in the original decision. In Exeter, a recent Housing Ombudsman investigation found errors in our approach, which we have now reviewed to reduce timescales and improve the quality of advice.

4.1b Consistency of advice and information

The formation of the Advice Exeter and Advice Teignbridge partnerships has helped to provide a more joined-up advice service. However, funding has now ended and whilst there is a desire to continue the good work, fragmented funding opportunities will test its longevity. The rate of reform in the welfare and housing sector has led to publications and web pages becoming out of date and partner agencies not understanding the impact upon each other.

Without continued engagement between voluntary and statutory services, duplication and confusion may increase, as customers begin to use different routes to access and check advice. The use of a combined referral form for all support and accommodation services across the area has helped maintain a consistent message to people accessing homeless advice. However, we now need to move beyond the homelessness sector and begin to build bridges with wider statutory and voluntary organisations who can help our clients with different aspects of their lives, such as addiction, or managing finances.

Currently, there is no specific homeless forum in place. We need to find an effective way of sharing messages through both strategic and operational channels, which is useful and sustainable for all those involved.

4.1c Reduce duplication

Accessing public services usually involves clients attending several interviews and filling in many forms before they receive service. Ironically, for those with the most complex needs this will happen more often, as they need to access more services.

In addition, when facing homelessness, the sensitivity of some of the information requested by officers makes interviews difficult and often distressing for clients. Currently, clients seeking advice from one council will need to repeat the whole experience if they wish to consider their options elsewhere. The distress is then multiplied when the same information is requested afresh.

This 'service duplication' is particularly common in neighbouring areas, such as Exeter and Teignbridge, where residents of one local authority may work in another and are happy to consider a wider geographical location when looking for a home. This duplication has 'time cost' for both the client and the council, when the same issues are addressed twice.

The use of a combined need and risk assessment for homeless people has helped to reduce some duplication and create a common understanding across support providers. There are, however, limits on how information can be shared and this can lead to delay and duplication.

There is a delicate balance needed, as the desire to reduce duplication should not compromise choice, or data protection. The voluntary sector provides a variety of services that benefit homeless people in the form of advice, support and advocacy; the challenge is to find a collaborative way of working where being signposted to another service should not mean starting again.

4.2 Offer services at times and places where clients need them most

Many services are designed around the provider's needs and location, rather than from the perspective of clients needing to use the service. By focusing on giving clear, timely information, in places where customers expect to find it, we can expect better outcomes for our clients, who will find services more responsive to their needs.

It should be noted however, that some of the most vulnerable people in society find engagement with council services a challenge. There are often conditions surrounding the help and support offered, which can prove too restrictive, or challenging for those struggling on the edge of society. For example, during the 2014 rough sleeping count in Exeter 10 people told us that they had no interest in accessing accommodation, or support.

4.2a The 'hidden homeless'

People who do not qualify for local authority housing assistance are not counted by any national statistic beyond rough sleeping. This group of people living outside of statutory provision are known as the 'hidden homeless'.

When discussing homelessness, it is often the images of rough sleeping that come to mind and dominate discussion. However, whilst rough sleeping is an issue in the local area, specifically in Exeter, the rough sleeping population equates to between 1% and 4% of the number of people to whom we provide homelessness services.

We have no way of knowing the true extent of people sofa surfing, temporarily staying with friends and family, or those remaining in unhealthy relationships due to a lack of alternative accommodation.

Services need to be visible enough for local people to know that help is available and tailored to allow self-help and early advice intervention to avoid crisis and homelessness. Services need to proactively shift to preventing homelessness, rather than focus on crisis management and providing outcomes for people who are imminently homeless.

4.3 Make sure help is accessible for everyone

4.3a Increasing levels of complexity

Homeless people often have a range of complex needs that makes engagement with the very agencies designed to help them difficult. Issues, such as a lack of accommodation, poor budgeting skills, trauma, limited social skills and 'anti-social behaviour' mean that some individuals get caught in a cycle of chronic exclusion, unable to get the support they need to cope with basics of everyday life.

The people approaching housing options services for help have an increasing level of need beyond that of needing accommodation. Issues are more often compounded by a high prevalence of mental and physical health problems, as well as substance misuse, and offending issues, which makes assessment and resolution more complicated. It is essential that these needs are addressed and that clients are supported to manage and sustain a tenancy.

Resolution can only be achieved by employing a well-skilled and knowledgeable workforce who are regularly trained, to not only address prevention and crisis, but who also understand emerging policy and are prepared to embrace innovative solutions. This requires careful budgeting to make sure we balance proactive prevention against service demands and target resources appropriately.

4.3b Accessibility of services

A wide variety of people are at risk of homelessness and it is important that our services are accessible to everyone who needs them.

Increasingly, diverse communities bring new challenges and opportunities in terms of service design and delivery. This has been seen through the housing options work completed with our traveller community at Haldon Forest when their encampment faced closure and when we promote our services at diversity events in Exeter.

With increasing demand on translation services, specifically in Exeter, and complexity in the rules around eligibility of services for foreign nationals and people returning from abroad, it is more important than ever to engage with wider agencies to give our services greater reach to those that need them.

The most meaningful interaction with homeless people happens face to face and is the most successful way in building rapport, understanding and trust, which is particularly important for clients in need of reassurance.

Telephone advice is available for wider advice issues, but it is not as successful in resolving acute housing need and is only available during the office hours. During an emergency, local authorities are required to provide accommodation to qualifying applicants. If outside the usual office hours, clients can get help via an 'out of hours' telephone service, but this can create difficulties in understanding client support needs and undertaking tasks, such as risk assessments.

Online information is available via the local authority websites. Whilst not suitable for statutory assessments, online self help guides and factsheets can empower people to remedy their own situation and take action to remove the risk of homelessness.

In 2014/15 Teignbridge undertook a review of its web pages, taking a more customer focussed approach. By simplifying the format and only publishing high demand information, which was relevant to clients, we saw a 53% increase in web traffic, compared with the previous 12 months. 10% of web hits were from mobile devices.



A review of the Exeter website is in progress.

4.4 Actions

The following are suggested actions for the Councils and partners to complete in 2016/17

Project Indicator	Access to services 2016/17	Partner
HA01	Develop credit card sized promotional material to distribute to agencies such as letting agents, hospitals, with outline of services on offer and key contact information.	All
HA02	Produce self help guides for clients to help with basic advice needs and facilitate searches for accommodation.	Citizens Advice
HA03	Produce a cross boundary directory of housing and support resources in the Exeter and Teignbridge area	All
HA04	Pilot the completion of housing assessments in locations outside of the council offices where clients are more likely to engage.	St Petrocks, Citizens Advice, Job Centres, Health and Well Being Hub, Voluntary Sector
HA05	Develop staff specialism to provide links with key partner agencies, to attend operational meetings and provide referral contacts	
HA06	Develop data sharing agreements with partners agencies where appropriate	All
HA07	Complete 2 customer satisfaction exercises a year and review service provision as appropriate - for example mystery shopping, surveys, focus groups.	
HA08	Set up 2 annual events for front line staff to network and build relationships across statutory and voluntary organisations	All
HA09	Hold 2 training events for housing staff in motivational interviewing skills to provide positive advice that engages clients to take an active role to resolve their housing difficulties.	

5 Health and protection

‘ Poor health is widespread amongst homeless people. Our latest research showed that 73% suffered from a physical health problem and 80% a mental health problem.’

[Homeless Link](#)

‘Most people would agree that having a home that is both safe and affordable is extremely important for your general health. If you have poor housing, or are homeless, it could increase your chances of developing a mental health problem, or could make an existing one harder to manage.’

[Mind](#)

The council’s role in combating homelessness goes beyond the provision of bricks and mortar. It is important to consider the wider situation surrounding the person who becomes homeless, so that we can work with clients to find the right solution.

Homelessness services are not alone in experiencing pressures on budgets. The current climate has seen cuts across the public sector despite increasing levels of demand. This presents an opportunity to work collaboratively with each other and improve the way front line services are delivered.

Homeless people can expect their lives to be about 30 years shorter than the average in the United Kingdom, with a likelihood of dying at around 47 years of age, according to a report by the charity Crisis. They were also nine times more likely to commit suicide than the general public, and twice as likely to die of infections. (Sheffield University).



5.1 Improve health and well being of homeless people

Keeping safe and well are key components to an individual’s welfare and when these become unbalanced, the ability to engage in everyday life is impacted. Services need to be designed to consider such circumstances and include an element of tolerance to manage clients with wider needs.

5.1a Health needs

Ensuring homeless people can access health services is vital to their recovery. The health of the local homeless population is poor. In January 2015 there were 11 hospital admissions from Gabriel House alone, and in the 12 months since there have been at least six deaths across Exeter and Teignbridge.

The health needs of homeless people are varied with the physical and mental strain of not having a secure home making many conditions worse. A 2010/11 Homeless Health Needs Audit found that 45% of the rough sleeping population had mental health problems. A new assessment is being completed at the writing of this strategy to build a current picture. The impact of hidden health needs such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) are not regularly screened in homelessness services therefore reducing opportunities to signpost to effective support services.



Substance misuse features highly as a support need for homeless people; 76% of rough sleepers in Exeter reported that they had used new psychoactive substances (NPS), or 'legal highs'. This has led to increasingly high risk situations in which accommodation and support providers struggle to safely manage services resulting in evictions and exclusions.

There is currently no joint strategic plan to support people with multiple needs. These people often experience several problems at the same time, such as mental illness, homelessness, drug and alcohol misuse, offending and family breakdown. Services are commissioned separately with an assumption upon each other, which do not always fit together. Initial indications from the Integrated Care Exeter (ICE) programme in Exeter are promising with addressing homelessness as a driver for change. Any learning can be shared with partners in Teignbridge as appropriate.

5.1b High levels of rough sleeping

5.1b i Rough sleeping figures 2010 to 2015

Area	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Exeter	21	29	30	23	34	27
Teignbridge	3	8	4	0	4	1
Devon	72	102	81	60	98	113
National	1,768	2,181	2,309	2,414	2,744	tbc

Source: DCLG and Housing Services

Rough sleeping numbers have been relatively high over the last few years with the exception of 2013 in Teignbridge where all homeless people were found accommodation. Both Exeter and Teignbridge saw reductions in 2013 due to the 'No Second Night Out' initiative and 'Homeless Transition Fund'. Unfortunately these were short funded schemes that saw temporary benefit. Further initiatives have been launched to reduce numbers through MEAM and Safe Sleep. However, most effort has been focussed towards managing rough sleeping rather than resolving the root causes of it in the first place. The snapshot figures are only an indication of the numbers on a specific night, meaning the rough sleeping population is likely to be greater than the national indicator above.

The number of people sleeping on the streets is not purely a reflection of a lack of accommodation. During the 2014 rough sleeping count, there were 11 individuals (10 Exeter, 1 Teignbridge) who did not want to be accommodated or engage in any support services. For others, barriers to accommodation are due to significant risks relating to their behaviour, especially under the influence of drugs or NPS legal highs.

Rough sleeping is bad for the individual and detrimental to the communities in which they live. There are links with anti social behaviour in terms of trespass, leaving bedding and belongings (often including needles and drug paraphernalia) in public areas such as door ways or carparks.

There is a rich network of voluntary agencies that help the rough sleepers to access items to keep them safe and warm. Exeter is perceived by some as an easy place to be a rough sleeper with readily available food, blankets and money from soup kitchens and concerned members of the public who are very generous to beggars. Without a joined up approach, there is no consistent message to the rough sleeping population regarding offers of support and being a rough sleeper becomes sustainable.

The city council is considering options available to them regarding anti social behaviour legislation to help address rough sleeping with a Public Sector Protection Order to facilitate action. We do not want to criminalise vulnerable people with no options available to them but do need to challenge the current position where rough sleeping is accepted in the area.

5.2 Help protect the vulnerable from violence and abuse

5.2a Youth homelessness

In 2014/15, 113 16 & 17 year olds approached the service because they were threatened with homelessness. In addition, 71 young people leaving care in the locality had difficulties with housing, or became homeless. Facing homelessness at a young age can have detrimental impacts upon people's life prospects, making it all the more important to have positive interventions to provide accommodation and life skills.

Homeless prevention rates are high with a third of young people successfully mediated back to family homes and a third assisted into alternative accommodation. However, this leaves a third who become homeless and who need specialist intervention. The legislation regarding young people who become homeless is slightly different as the Children's Act 1989 takes precedent in the assessment of a child's (under 18 years old) needs. Young people are supported through assessment processes and where necessary are taken into care. The relevant protocol has been under review for over 18 months, causing concern that young people may not be receiving the full services they need.



Despite positive work to resolve youth homelessness, young people have been found sleeping rough by outreach services despite ongoing offers of accommodation being made. Housing Options Teams and specialist youth advice workers have engaged with social services and the police to reduce this happening and input into the sexual exploitation meetings as necessary.

Following the 2015 Ofsted inspection of Devon County Council, we are committed to working with partners to improve the housing outcomes of this vulnerable group of people.

5.2b Domestic violence

In 2014/15, there have been two high profile domestic violence murders in, or connected to the locality. 64% of service users of specialist domestic abuse services in the locality advised that they had attempted to leave their home.

Housing advice offered is overly focused upon moving away from the risk which is not suitable for all cases. For many, this can isolate them from support networks and cause difficulties on changing children's schools etc. The need to flee a situation is not always needed and a one size fits all approach leads to poor outcomes. Alternative options are available. Additional security measures can be put into victims homes and are available through Sanctuary Scheme. This fund has been under spent and reduced in recent years with 15 cases in Exeter and 10 in Teignbridge in 2014/15. Funding is only available to high risk cases after referral from the police. This restriction means lower risk cases, where a security measure is sufficient to resolve risk, are not eligible for help.

When a violent relationship breaks down perpetrators of abuse are unlikely to be re-housed by the council. However, this approach fails to consider the family as a whole and may put the victim at more risk. The homelessness legislation is very focussed on the victim, but interventions are less effective if the perpetrators are forgotten as continued pressure to return home can lead to reconciliation and continued abuse.

5.3 Support people released from prison, hospital and leaving the armed forces

5.3a Community rehabilitation for offenders

'Transforming Rehabilitation' is the name given to the Government reform that changed the way in which offenders are managed, through the outsourcing of a large portion of the probation service in England and Wales.

Thirty five individual probation trusts were combined into a single National Probation Service, responsible for the management of high-risk offenders; and twenty one community rehabilitation companies (CRCs) were formed and made responsible for the management of low to medium risk offenders.

Devon, Dorset and Cornwall are grouped together as one rehabilitation company, managed by Working Links. This change has also coincided with greater supervision responsibilities for offenders, with 12 months of supervision for all offenders who have spent at least one day in custody. There is significant overlap between the cohort of offenders and homeless people making the rehabilitation company a key stakeholder. However, as the new provider is covering a wide area there is the potential for reduced local interaction regarding service co-design and a risk that a 'one size fits all' approach will be implemented in relation to the advice and assistance offenders receive in relation to accommodation.

As local housing markets vary this may lead to confusion and duplication in the sector. However, the CRC are key partners in the Health and Wellbeing Hub in Exeter and are keen to find a location for a similar approach in Teignbridge to ensure delivery on the front line is connected with wider services.

5.3b Leaving institutions

From April to September 2015, emergency homeless presentations from hospital discharges (26) and prison release (34) have left little scope for homeless prevention activity. Releases are often made at short notice and involve clients with complicated needs.

There is pressure for space in both prisons and hospitals, making the early identification of housing needs vital in facilitating exit from the institution. Unfortunately this is often missed with attention focused on the immediate health or detention need. Health and Criminal Justice have seen significant change that has left existing protocols out of date. Offender advice services and hospital discharge projects are in place but lack funding in the mid to long term.

The local area contains 2 prisons (Exeter and Channings Wood) that will release all prisoners with a local connection to the south west, as well as fitting within the catchment of 2 large hospitals (Exeter and Torbay). The management arrangements of each are different leading to a complicated and confusing platform for joint working,

5.3c Armed forces personnel

According to the British Legion, the profile and experiences of homeless veterans are largely the same as those of the wider homelessness population, although there are some notable differences. Homeless veterans have been found on average to be older, have slept rough for longer, be less likely to use drugs and more likely to have alcohol-related problems. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) has been found among a small number of homeless veterans although other non-military related mental health problems were more common.

There is little evidence to support the notion that military life, or institutionalisation, is a cause of veterans' homelessness. However, there is some evidence that, for a minority, military life, through

factors such as trauma of combat, mobility of the job, or the drinking culture, had reduced their ability to cope post-Service.

3.4 Actions

The following are suggested actions for the Councils and partners to complete in 2016/17.

Project Indicator	Health and protection 2016/17	Partner
HH01	Champion housing options inclusion in multi agency hubs to provide holistic services to vulnerable people.	Young Devon, Probation, Job Centre Plus, Voluntary Sector
HH02	Extend provision of security measures (Sanctuary Scheme) for all clients at risk of domestic violence.	Devon County Council, Devon Domestic Abuse Service, SAFE
HH03	Develop housing pathways for: hospital discharge, prison release, youth homelessness, and veterans in housing need	NHS, CCGs, Working Links, Devon County Council, SSAFA and Royal British Legion
HH04	Implement recommendations from Integrated Care Exeter (ICE) programme to develop a health and wellbeing team for homeless people in Exeter.	ICE partnership
HH05	Evaluate the progress of individuals within the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) programme and use learning to influence service design.	MEAM partnership
HH06	Develop closer links with voluntary and community agencies, such as soup kitchens, food banks, and faith based organisations to promote consistency in tackling homelessness.	Voluntary Sector
HH07	Deliver 2 specialist safeguarding training events to housing staff to improve understanding and interaction with social care.	Devon County Council

	Statistical data: Health and protection	49
10.3a	Rough sleeping figures 2010 to 2015	49
10.3b	Youth homelessness; presentations, 2014/15	49
10.3c	Youth homelessness; outcome of intervention, 2014/15	49
10.3d	Households accepted as homeless who experienced domestic violence (%)	50

6 Money matters

Homelessness is expensive, not just to the individual, or household experiencing it, but also to the community and the taxpayer. It has been estimated that on average each homeless person costs the public purse £26,000 per year and the overall costs of homelessness in the UK exceeds £1 billion per year.

Homeless Link, 2013

Homelessness and welfare reform are intrinsically linked. Any change to the method of payment, or the amount of benefit paid, threatens to unbalance household budgets and increases the risk of arrears in rent, or mortgage payments. The level of welfare reform introduced by the previous government, and extended by the current one, threatens to significantly increase demand on homelessness services and move more accommodation options out of the financial reach of people on a relatively low income.

These reforms also directly impact upon the provision of accommodation services to the homeless. The funding arrangements for temporary and supported accommodation are to be changed and reduced. This will put further pressure on Council budgets within which there is already a deficit between the cost of the provision of accommodation and the amount available through housing benefit payments.



6.1 Help people better manage household finances when faced with homelessness

The following sections highlight the financial challenges we face for both service provision and that faced by homeless people in the current climate of austerity.

6.1a Mitigating the effects of welfare reform

The Benefit Cap was reduced in the July 2015 budget and will see the cap lowered to £20,000 in the locality area. This will bring significant difficulties to large families in private rented accommodation as well as those in temporary or supported accommodation where rents are high.

Universal Credit will see multiple benefits, including Housing Benefit, rolled into one monthly payment. This brings concern to the homelessness sector as evidence shows household already struggle to budget with weekly or fortnightly cycles. Whilst safeguards are promised for the most vulnerable claimants, there is a significant risk that homelessness will rise through both loss of landlord confidence and inappropriate use of funds for items other than rent.

Benefit sanctions have been introduced in circumstances where people do not comply with an agreement they make at the job centre. When a person receives a benefit sanction, their Housing Benefit will be stopped. There is a danger that sanctions may lead to an increase in arrears and potentially evictions.

Further reforms have been outlined in the summer 2015 budget but without detail of implementation. The removal of automatic Housing Benefit for 18-21 year olds will impact this

client group who are already restricted due to affordability. It is anticipated that there will be exceptions for care leavers and for those where family homes are unsafe.

6.1b Discretionary funds to help those faced with homelessness

There are funds available for services to use towards individual client needs.

- **Discretionary Housing Payments** (Housing Benefit led) - combined budget £344,225
- **Spend to Save** (Exeter) - £30,000,
- **Homeless Prevention Fund** (Teignbridge) - £10,000,
- **Individual budgets for rough sleepers** - £10,000,
- **Sanctuary scheme security measures** (Housing options & Police) - £12,500
- **Benevolent funds** (various options and grants available),
- **Varied deposit bonds schemes**
- **Section 17 monies** (Devon Social care)

Source: Exeter and Teignbridge Housing Benefits; 2014/15

There is variation in the way that discretionary funds are used with the different options available. This can lead to confusion and duplication within the advice sector in relation to how and from whom to access assistance.

Local Welfare Support has been available for the past three years to assist households in emergency need and to help them to resettle into the local housing market. Local arrangements for this fund come to an end in March 2016, after which clients will be reliant on help from food banks and voluntary donations, which will no doubt result in hardship in terms of fuel poverty and limited access to goods to set up a new home.

The government has continued to provide funding within the Local Authority Budget Statement, but this is not ring fenced. Legacy projects are being developed with increased promotion of credit unions and voluntary sector partnerships to ensure some coverage for those in need in the light of local authority budget pressures.

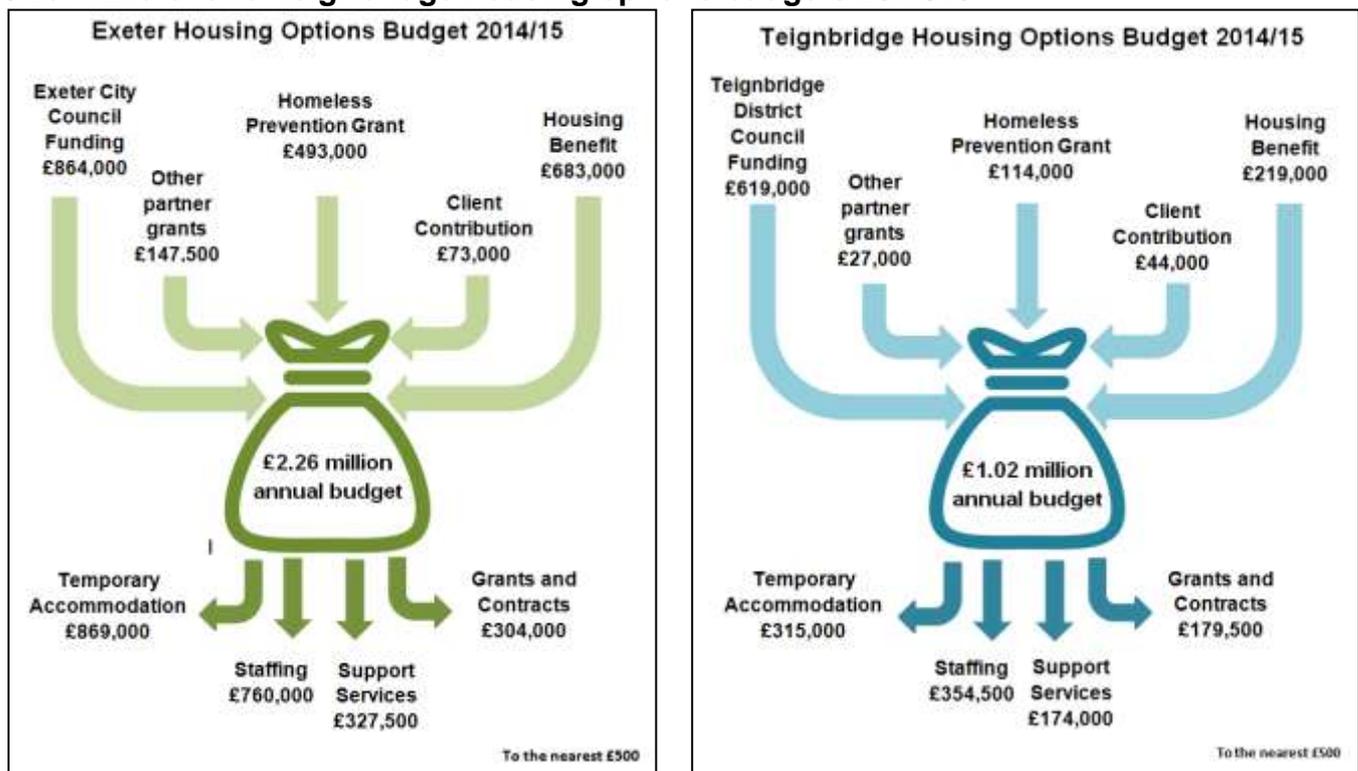
6.2 Target investment to reduce homelessness

6.2a The cost of homelessness

National reports regarding the cost of homelessness highlight very high figures, which may be dismissed as a London biased figure. Currently there is no benchmark data available to accurately determine costs in the local area. This data is currently being developed through joint work with Devon County Council's 'early help' programme and through tracking clients engaged in the 'Making Every Adult Matters' (MEAM) pilot.

The cost of homelessness is a cost beyond housing budgets alone, as it impacts health, social care and policing spending as well. There is a developing conversation about shared costs and savings through the Integrated Care Exeter (ICE) partnership in Exeter. A spend to save approach is challenging as savings may not be the service and budgets are extremely tight.

6.2a i. Exeter and Teignbridge housing options budgets 2014/15



'Payment by Results' and 'Social Investment' are being promoted by government as a future funding model, but these require a different approach to how services are commissioned and are relatively new for smaller contracts in Devon. Costing data and an approach to collaborative service delivery will be key to attract this type of external funding in the future.

6.2b Reducing public sector budgets and 'spend to save'

Since 2010, there have been a series of budget reductions to public services, specifically local government. The Local Government Association estimates that central funding for Councils has shrunk by 40% overall since 2010. This has meant a substantial reduction in the settlement to both Exeter and Teignbridge local authorities, where both front line and 'back office' services have needed to find savings.

So far, savings identified have included the implementation of a shared management structure across Exeter and Teignbridge, the loss of staff, reduced funding for homeless prevention schemes and a reduction in the use of temporary accommodation.

The statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation for qualifying applicants is absolute and is costly and there is a risk that a further reduction in spend on prevention services will cost the local authority more in the long run by reactively managing homelessness.

Had the service failed to prevent homelessness in the six months between April 2015 and September 2015 there would have been an additional cost of providing temporary accommodation. The balance between spending money on preventing homelessness and spending to reactively manage homelessness is difficult, with a delayed impact between increasing one and decreasing the other.

There is also the risk that wider influences, such as welfare reform, will increase future demand and therefore present a difficult costing argument with what the service would have cost rather than realisable savings.

Current levels of funding cover the management of the homelessness situation in the area rather than resolving it. In order to address the high cost of temporary accommodation and wider costs of homelessness investment is needed to deal with the root causes and barriers to recovery. Whilst new funding streams will be pursued, the re-profiling of expenditure from temporary accommodation to preventative services could shift attention to longer term outcomes. This 'spend to save' approach may need some initial input but this could be created from recycling any annual under spend within the existing budget.

6.2c Temporary accommodation budget pressures

£1.18 million was spent on temporary accommodation provision in 2014/15, (£869,000 in Exeter and £315,000 in Teignbridge)

Residents in temporary accommodation are required to contribute towards their stay. These charges cover utility costs and meals where applicable. However, despite this there is still a significant gap with net cost to the council between rental income and the price paid for the accommodation. Details regarding the changes to funding arrangements for temporary accommodation remain unclear. Current indications suggest that there will be a reduction in benefit levels available, direct payment made to households rather than the council and an additional discretionary scheme put in place to help cover any new deficit in income.

There are opportunities to convert capital investment into revenue savings through investing in temporary accommodation. Currently, we have three examples of local authority hostel accommodation: in Exeter and in Newton Abbot. This model manages to provide accommodation within client and benefit income levels therefore provides better value for money. However, this does require capital investment to purchase or build it. This model of accommodation presents a positive option for the future forward but lacks security until temporary accommodation funding reform is finalised.



As well as the cost of provision of temporary accommodation, it is important that it is well managed with attention on void and arrears management to ensure there is a balance between availability and support for clients alongside and cost recovery for units purchased.

6.3 Maximise opportunities with partners and provide better value for money

6.3a Value for money in commissioning services

It is vital that we gain value for money from the services we commission. By moving from grant-based funding to contracts that are driven by specification, we can enable both local authorities to measure value and outcomes. However, we must include partners in developing specifications to encourage innovation and joined up learning.

Opportunities to jointly commission services have been taken place between Exeter and Teignbridge, as well as with East Devon and Torbay Councils with differing arrangements. Youth homeless prevention workers are also joint-funded through grant agreements with Devon County Council.

There is a growing interest in moving towards an integrated commissioning model, and this will be explored through the Integrated Care Exeter (ICE) programme. .

6.3b Local authority homelessness contracts

The following contracts or grants are funded by the Homeless Prevention Grants awarded to the Councils. There is currently duplication of award and monitoring which, once addressed, will allow further efficiency and service delivery development. We remain open to considering wider collaborative contracting with partners to provide more joined up service provision in homelessness.

Service provided	Provider	Exeter	Teignbridge
Rough sleeper outreach*	Julian House	Joint Contract	
Access into private rented accommodation	PATH	✓	✓
Youth homeless prevention	Young Devon	✓	✓
Additional floating support	Sanctuary	✗	✓
Domestic violence security measures	Various	✓	✓
Prison advice service	St Petrocks	✓	✗
Court desk*	Citizen's Advice	✓	✗

* Jointly commissioned with East Devon

3.5 Actions

The following are suggested actions for the Councils and partners to complete in 2016/17.

Project Indicator	Money matters 2016/17	Partner
HM01	Investigate funding sources to develop money advice and budgeting services for homeless clients.	CAB, Homemaker, Voluntary Sector, Job Centre, DWP
HM02	Map current contracts relating to homelessness and their funding sources to define overlap and potential opportunities for combined commissioning	Devon County Council, Mental Health, NHS, CCG's Probation, CRC
HM03	Drive out duplication in referral and assessment processes through adoption of common forms and risk assessment.	Voluntary Sector, Devon County Council, Probation, Mental Health, Substance Misuse Services
HM04	Review viability of the current models of temporary accommodation and complete an options appraisal to outline proposed mitigations	
HM05	Explore ways of delivering services differently to improve value for money, including integrated services with partners	All
HM06	Increase awareness of welfare reforms with clients through the development of literature and self help guides to improve financial planning in setting up their new homes.	CAB, Homemaker, Voluntary Sector, Job Centre, DWP
HM07	Review use of council discretionary funds and agree common processes to reduce duplication and provide clarity to clients and advisers.	
HM08	Develop a cost calculator for homelessness services to effectively measure the impact of interventions and increase readiness to new public finance initiatives.	

10.4	Statistical data: Money matters	50
10.4a	Number of clients who attended money advice appointments 2013 to 2015	50
10.4b	Estimated net expenditure - homelessness x £1,000s	50
10.4c	Homelessness spend - £ per head of population	51
10.4d	Revenue expenditure, housing services - £ per head	51
10.4e	Reason for discretionary housing payment 2014/15	52

7 Ownership and governance

Homelessness was identified as a high priority topic at Exeter's Annual Scrutiny Work Programme Meeting that took place in July 2015. It was decided to use the development of a task and finish group to join together members from both councils to look at the key challenges impacting homelessness across the area. It is proposed that this group continue as a Homelessness Steering Group with 2 meetings a year.

The delivery of the actions set out in this strategy will rely upon the resources of the Council and its partners. To maximise these resources it will be important to work together, to share expertise and good practice, identify and meet gaps in provision, avoid duplication and to joint fund and combine bids to continue to help tackle homelessness in the area.

The strategy proposes that we establish an annual homelessness event to bring together partners, members and staff into a single, integrated conversation to monitor funding and projects to deliver the aims of the strategy.

7.1 Responsibility

By appointing elected members and service leads to the group it is believed that a simple and streamlined governance arrangement will be in place to best serve the people of Exeter and Teignbridge. This arrangement should ensure that there is consistency of service across both local authorities making key decisions about how we differentiate between issues that are unique to each area, for example rural and urban issues.

External guests will also be welcomed to the meetings and will be expanded to include representatives from key organisations working to tackle homelessness.

7.1a Members

Member	Responsibility	Council
Cllr Brodie		Teignbridge
Cllr Bull		Exeter
Cllr Bullivant		Teignbridge
Cllr Clemens	Executive member for Housing and Planning	Teignbridge
Cllr Ford		Teignbridge
Cllr Harvey	Chair of the Homelessness Group	Exeter
Cllr Lyons		Exeter
Cllr Morris	Executive Member for Customer Access	Exeter
Cllr Morse	Chair of Scrutiny Community Committee	Exeter
Cllr Newby		Exeter
Cllr Prowse		Exeter
Cllr Wardle		Exeter

7.1b Partner approach

Working in partnership is key in successfully addressing homelessness. There are numerous agencies that the Housing Options service works with and their contribution is both acknowledged and appreciated in combating homelessness:



In Exeter a Cultural Values Assessment has been completed as part of the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) agenda. The study investigates how relationships between partners are functioning and considers the capacity of the sector to influence system change. The housing and homelessness sector was determined as being the most effective area in terms of current input and key in moving the collaborative working agenda moving forward. This confirms the need for the Homelessness Strategy to present a clear message of intention of working together moving forward. Whilst the survey was focused on the experiences of the Exeter workforce the experiences and hopes for a more joined up approach to homelessness are valid across the area and service design will continue to grow this ethos.

7.2 Monitoring and review

With significant welfare and housing reforms underway and with uncertainty around their full impact at a local level yet to emerge, it will be prudent to review the strategy projects and resources on an annual basis.

We will use the newsletter and bi annual meetings of the Homelessness Steering Group to regularly review progress against our strategic aims and objectives to make sure we're delivering good outcomes in terms of homelessness prevention and the best use of resources.

8 Appendix A: Achievements since the previous strategies

8.1 Progress against the previous Exeter homelessness strategy 2008 to 2013

The previous Homelessness Strategy was dated 2008 – 2013 however the progress below covers achievements to 2015. Due to the lapse in time since the previous strategy and the changing environment much of the strategy is no longer relevant.

Priority	Achieved	Not Achieved
<p>1. Prevent homelessness and reduce numbers in Temporary Accommodation</p>	<p>Homelessness has been prevented or relieved for 2,322 households</p> <p>Significantly reduced use of Bed and Breakfast for families through re-profiling stock to provide self contained temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Money Advice Services co-located in Civic Centre to offer debt advice alongside housing and benefits advice.</p>	<p>Predicted reductions in homelessness acceptances and use of temporary accommodation</p>
<p>2. To reduce the need for anyone to sleep rough in the city</p>	<p>A common assessment framework for rough sleepers is in place</p> <p>Additional funding was secured through schemes for rough sleeping such as: No Second Night Out, Homeless Transition Funds and Help for Single Homeless funding streams but all were time limited without sustained funding achieved.</p> <p>Successful individual budgets pilot approach extended into ongoing commissioned approaches.</p> <p>Reconnection policy developed and travel arrangements funded through small grants. Reconnections have included return to native country.</p> <p>A property specifically for accommodating rough sleepers purchased and occupied in 2014.</p>	<p>Rough sleeping numbers have risen to 34 in the 2014 November Count.</p> <p>Maintain a multi agency street outreach team approach – although work is in progress to rebuild this.</p>
<p>3. To increase Housing Options available to all clients in housing need and to those needing to 'move on'</p>	<p>Established the Eastern Community HUB and Homeless Prevention Panel ensure consistent assessment and referral routes for supported accommodation in the city.</p> <p>Move on from supported accommodation is managed through a panel to ensure appropriate flow.</p> <p>Enhanced Housing Options Wizard added to Abris Devon Home Choice system to improve self help options. (System has since been replaced)</p>	<p>Temporary accommodation usage has not reduced as anticipated</p>

<p>4. To reduce youth homelessness</p>	<p>Protocols have been established with Devon County Council to address youth homelessness and continued funding agreed for joint specialist post</p> <p>Staff provided enhanced training in mediation skills</p> <p>Young people facing homelessness assisted through Youth Enquiry Service hub rather than at the civic centre</p>	<p>The ability to offer employment and training opportunities at prevention and move on panels</p>
<p>5. To increase access to the private rented sector</p>	<p>Extra let provided up to a maximum 74 properties. However, due to budget pressures the scheme has been scaled back.</p> <p>Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) have been included in the Extra let stock to offer options for single people under 35.</p> <p>A 'Spend to Save' fund was made available to prevent homelessness through the payment of deposits and rent in advance to access accommodation.</p>	<p>Private rented properties have not been advertised through Devon Home Choice due to concern it would cause confusion and lack of supply</p>
<p>6. To increase agency and client involvement in the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy</p>	<p>Customer feedback from temporary accommodation is high.</p> <p>'Welcome packs' for temporary accommodation developed and recognised as good practice.</p> <p>Benchmarking exercises using Shelter's Quality Standard Framework saw Exeter score highest in Devon in 2011.</p> <p>Development of Appreciative Enquiry and Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) approach to provide multi agency personalised packages of support for the most vulnerable</p> <p>Increasing amount of joint commissioning taking place with neighbouring authorities</p>	<p>An ongoing city-wide forum to share good practice around homelessness</p> <p>Leaflets and website were reviewed but need to be updated again</p> <p>Moving advice services online and out of the civic centre and into the community</p>

8.2 Progress against the Teignbridge housing options strategy 2010 to 2015

This was a Housing Options strategy and had further scope than homelessness. Only the outcomes relevant to homelessness are reviewed below.

Priority	Achieved	Not Achieved
1. Prevent homelessness wherever possible	<p>Homelessness has been prevented or relieved for 2,889 households</p> <p>Completed 19 Sanctuary Scheme installations to help victims of domestic abuse remain in their own homes</p> <p>1,294 households assisted into the private rented sector</p> <p>Implemented a pre eviction protocol to work closely with Teign Housing when tenancies fail.</p>	<p>A mediation service for young people over 18 to maintain accommodation with their family</p> <p>Develop a mortgage arrears loan scheme – this was not pursued as the national mortgage Rescue Scheme was developed.</p>
2. Make best use of existing accommodation both social and private housing	<p>Implemented a Discharge into the Private Rented Sector Policy and assisted 27 households into settled homes.</p> <p>231 empty homes brought back into use at affordable rents for the benefit of homeless households.</p>	<p>Establish a specific matching service for bringing empty homes back into use</p>
3. Promote positive lifestyle choices for those in housing need, including financial inclusion, access to employment and training and maintaining independence	<p>Housing Options for Older People (HOOP) Pilot assisted 48 people over 65 years of age threatened with homelessness.</p> <p>262 Young people facing homeless accessed additional services such as counselling, healthy relationship advice and help to access training and employment,</p> <p>Implemented Southern Hub assessment and prioritisation matrix for access to homeless related support services</p>	<p>Tenants accreditation for household in leased temporary accommodation although tenancy training has been established</p> <p>Establish links with access to work schemes</p> <p>Establish accommodation options for young parents</p>
4. Ensure that vulnerable people have access to the support they need to achieve and maintain independent lives	<p>Rough sleepers pathway was delivered and outreach services established in Teignbridge.</p> <p>The STAR (now named HOPE) helped 47 people into accommodation who were either rough sleeping, or at risk of rough sleeping between 2012/15.</p>	<p>Number of rough sleepers in Teignbridge has started to rise again</p>
5. To improve customer experience by offering good quality effective services which offer value for money	<p>Bi annual exit surveys maintain high levels of satisfaction</p> <p>Reviewed STAR project following service user feedback</p>	<p>Temporary Accommodation arrears and void levels remain above target</p>

9 Appendix B: Policy context

‘Although homelessness problems vary from district to district there is often commonality across a geographical area.’

Addressing complex needs; improving services for vulnerable homeless people, March 2015

This draft Homelessness Strategy has been developed in the context of a wide range of national, regional and local policies, strategies and plans.

9.1 Legal framework

Our legal responsibility to homeless people is set out in Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, amended by the Homelessness Act 2002. The Housing Act 1996, placed a range of duties upon local housing authorities, including the provision of advice and assistance to homeless households, as well as the provision of temporary accommodation. The main housing duty is to help eligible homeless households who are in priority need and homeless through no fault of their own. There is also a discretionary consideration of local connection to make sure local resources are prioritised appropriately.

The Homelessness Act 2002 added a focus on preventing homelessness wherever possible, an extension of priority need groups and a requirement to have a homelessness strategy to outline local needs and priorities.

The Localism Act 2011 amended the way in which the main homelessness duty could be ended by including offers of suitable private rented accommodation and therefore ending the automatic connection between homelessness and social housing.

The Care Act 2014 introduced a strong expectation of joint working between statutory agencies when helping vulnerable people. For homelessness services this has implications in terms of finding suitable living accommodation for vulnerable clients and a clear duty to co-operate with health and social care departments both strategically and operationally.

Link: www.legislation.gov.uk

9.2 National Policy

Current national housing policy direction is focused upon helping people achieve aspirations of home ownership and re-profiling the concepts of traditional social housing through the reduction in security of tenure and variable rental levels.

In 2011, the government produced ‘Laying the Foundation: A Housing Strategy for England’ that identified addressing homelessness as a key priority, with a greater focus on homeless prevention, as well as targeted work towards addressing rough sleeping. To help address these issues a cross-Government working group was established, made up of ministers from eight government departments. Two initiatives for homelessness have arisen from this group:

Link: www.gov.uk

9.2 a No Second Night Out

This was a vision to end rough sleeping and promoted the roll out of the principles of ‘No Second Night Out’ nationally to help people off the streets, and into safe accommodation, access to healthcare, and onwards into work. The principle involved reactive outreach services, streamlined assessments and to concept of a ‘Single Service Offer’ so that all rough sleepers would be offered something. For those travelling areas this included reconnection to previous area. The approach highlighted differences of approach in the statutory and voluntary sector with expectation that soup

kitchens and homeless charities would stop helping people who had an 'offer' which they refused. This did not happen in practice.

Rough sleeping numbers reduced nationally, as well as across the locality under this initiative which saw an additional funding come into the Devon and Cornwall Housing Options Partnership (DCHOP). This funding was short term and whilst initial reductions were seen in 2013, the high numbers of people rough sleeping returned once the initiative ended.

Link: www.nosecondnightout.org.uk

9.2b Making Every Contact Count (MECC)

MECC highlighted the Government's approach to homeless prevention and promoted joint work. The report also set ten local challenges that the Government has recommended local authorities should take forward. This strategy recognises the importance of these challenges and acknowledges existing work already undertaken, or underway, in response to them. Both Exeter and Teignbridge Councils have pledged to address these challenges and will ensure that they will remain key to its targeted approach in addressing homelessness.

The ten local challenges that the MECC report posed to local authorities are to:

1. Adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all local authority services
2. Actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs
3. Offer a housing options prevention service, including written advice, to all clients
4. Adopt a 'No Second Night Out' model, or an effective local alternative
5. Have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that includes appropriate accommodation and support
6. Develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both clients and landlords
7. Actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the mortgage rescue scheme
8. Have a homelessness strategy, which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually, so that it is responsive to emerging needs
9. Not place any young person aged 16, or 17 in bed and breakfast accommodation
10. Not place any families in bed and breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and then for no longer than 6 weeks

Link: www.makingeverycontactcount.co.uk

9.3 Regional policy

9.3a Devon County Council

Devon County Council's homelessness prevention contracts are worth £2.5 million; and provide a total of 3,300 support hours per week to approximately 450 people at any one time via ten independent sector providers. Devon's multi agency partnerships for homelessness prevention are organised into three locality based 'community hubs' and support hours are contracted across Devon providers in the following proportions:

1. Northern Region: defined by the combination of Torridge and North Devon housing authority boundaries – 20%
2. Eastern Region: defined by the combination of Mid Devon, **Exeter** and East Devon housing authority boundaries – 65%
3. Southern Region: defined by the combination of **Teignbridge**, South Hams and West Devon housing authority boundaries – 15%

Link: www.devon.gov.uk

The Housing Options Teams in Exeter and Teignbridge work closely with partners to make sure that the provision is targeted at those who need it through the 'community hub assessment process'. Services funded through the County Council's budget include:

Exeter: Gabriel House, Sanctuary Supported Living, YMCA, BCHA Move On properties, The Haven, ECC Temporary Accommodation

Teignbridge: Sanctuary Supported Living

Devon County Council's 2014 homeless prevention tender change the model of provision by giving providers freedom to support clients in existing homes and along pathways, rather than solely linked to accommodation. This has clear benefits for client pathways, but also difficulties in the provision of specialist high support services where housing support is needed alongside mental health, substance misuse, or offending behaviour and usual accommodation does not provide a suitable setting.

9.3b Devon and Cornwall Housing Options Partnership (DCHOP)

The DCHOP aims to improve the consistency of housing options and homelessness services across Cornwall and all 10 Devon Local Authorities. This will be achieved by developing shared policies, practices and service standards, and equality of access to these services. The partnership brings benefits of reduced price training and enables a collective review of new policy initiatives or legislative changes. On occasion one-off government grant funding has been allocated through the partnership, promoting joined up responses to rough sleeping, debt advice, youth homelessness and access to the private rented sector. The DCHOP Co-ordinator is hosted by Teignbridge District Council and leads on projects as well as building strategic links with key partners as a housing options representative.

Link: www.dshg.org.uk

9.3c Devon Home Choice Partnership

Devon Home Choice is a common social housing allocation system across Devon used by all 10 local authorities and most social landlords. A common application, assessment and advertising of properties brings transparency to how social housing is allocated in the area. This strategy does not include a review of allocations; however social housing remains a key housing option for some households facing homelessness and landlords essential stakeholders in the Councils' attempt to resolve housing need. This partnership enables clear dialogue between parties to find balanced solutions to the competing demands of finding a good tenant and helping the most vulnerable.

9.3d Devon Rough Sleeper Partnership

In December 2010, Devon and Cornwall local authority housing services worked together with providers to address rough sleeping in the region. Additional grant was awarded to the area to enhance the existing rough sleeper services throughout the county. Since the funding ended the partnership has continued to share good practice and maintain a strategic approach in addressing the needs of the most vulnerable.

Link: www.dshg.org.uk/dcrsp

9.4 Local policy

9.4a Local housing strategies

Both Exeter and Teignbridge have adopted housing strategies that set out what both Councils and their partners will be doing to improve the housing situation for current and future residents. Exeter is currently in the process of updating its strategy, whereas Teignbridge has a strategy in place until 2020.

The themes within the strategies reflect the broad range of work that the councils do to meet local need, from developing affordable housing, maintaining housing standards, supporting people to stay independent in their own homes, as well as preventing and relieving homelessness. However, it is recognised that there is a legal requirement to publish a more detailed response to our work on homelessness within a dedicated homelessness strategy.

Link: www.exeter.gov.uk/housingstrategy

Link: www.teignbridge.gov.uk/housing

9.4b Help for the single homeless

In December 2014, the service was awarded £250,000 of funding from the government's Help for Single Homeless Fund. Covering a wide geographical area of Exeter, Teignbridge, Torbay, East Devon and Mid Devon, the funding has delivered the following activities:

- i. Making Every Adult Matters (MEAM)**
Building on the approach with the development of a co-ordinator role based at Exeter CVS and resources for specialist workers to case manage complex homeless clients. The approach varies from the regular transactional one as personalised packages of support and interventions' are developed around the individual, to enable them to access and sustain accommodation and future personal development. The MEAM cohort is small with a maximum 15 people managed in this way at one time.
- ii. Offender Resettlement Workers**
HMP Exeter and HMP Channings Wood resettlement prisons have provided housing interventions and related support to improve outcomes amongst the offending population.
- iii. Delivery of Specialist Training for Front Line Support Workers**
'Appreciative Inquiry' techniques have been trialled to engage the most vulnerable rough sleepers. This approach is similar to the one used across Devon in the former Targeted Families in which an asset based client led approach is used to encourage people to achieve their own goals rather than one placed upon them by services.

9.4c Integrated Care Exeter (ICE)

Pressure on public sector funding and partners desire to work together to drive system change has led to the development of the ICE programme. This aims to deliver a reduction in demand on statutory services and to increase resilience and social action within communities recognising that the current system is not sustainable. Homelessness has been highlighted as a key area for improvement following concerns about the inequality in access to healthcare services for homeless clients and their over reliance on acute emergency interventions.

A new model of care has been used to frame service redesign within the ICE programme. This model fits very well with the developing approach to homelessness. Frailty within the model is as an alternative term to vulnerability which is more widely recognised in the homelessness sector.

There are 2 relevant work streams for the Homeless Strategy which impact service design both operationally and strategically.

The projects include:



i. A health and wellbeing team for homeless people

Key components

- The development of a virtual integrated team made up of professionals from across Assertive Homeless Outreach Team, Drug and Alcohol Services, Mental health Services, Adult Social Care, Onward Care through Hospital Team, Offender Services and Police.
- Focused interventions to prevent long term health problems by identifying problems sooner and providing rapid support rather than waiting for rough sleepers to get into crisis.
- Using health interventions to engage rough sleepers into considering lifestyle choices and moving towards accommodation.
- Developing seamless support links through the Prevention – Crisis - Aftercare journey to increase chance of health issues remaining manageable in the community.

ii. A collaborative approach to commissioning and service delivery

Key Components

- Mapping of resources and current contracts across the partnership
- Senior management and political buy in from partners to work differently.
- Investigate concept of pooling budgets to provide services tailored to individuals rather than through specific services.

There are clear strategic links between the ICE programme, delivery of front line services through MEAM and the development of the Health and Well Being Hub at Watt Tyler house. Exeter City Council is leading the projects regarding homelessness within the partnership and has advocated for the MEAM and Hub to be recognised as elements to the homelessness work stream to ensure strategic connectivity in rapidly changing times

Lessons learned from the implementation of ICE in Exeter will have implications for how services are delivered across the locality and the improved relationships being developed with strategic partners now will also benefit Teignbridge residents as the programme moves forward.

10 Appendix C: Statistical data

To keep the strategy document as brief as possible, the majority of statistical information has been kept separate in Appendix C.

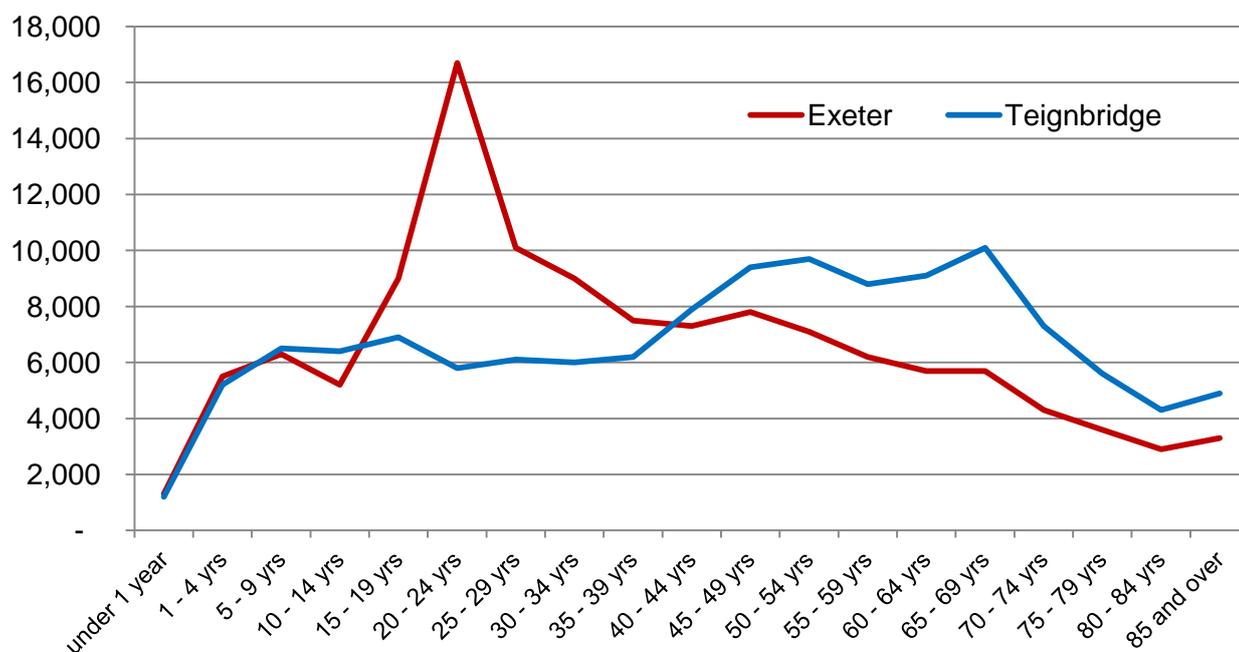
10.1 Overview

10.1a Population estimate of Exeter & Teignbridge in 2014

	Exeter	Teignbridge
Population	124,500	127,400
Female %	51%	52%
Male %	49%	48%
Area in sq miles	18	260
Density per sq mile	6,855.73	489.66

Source: [Devon facts & figures](#) + [Office of National Statistics](#)

10.1b Age demographics of Exeter and Teignbridge in 2014



Source: [Devon facts & figures](#)

10.1c Deprivation within Exeter and Teignbridge (2015)

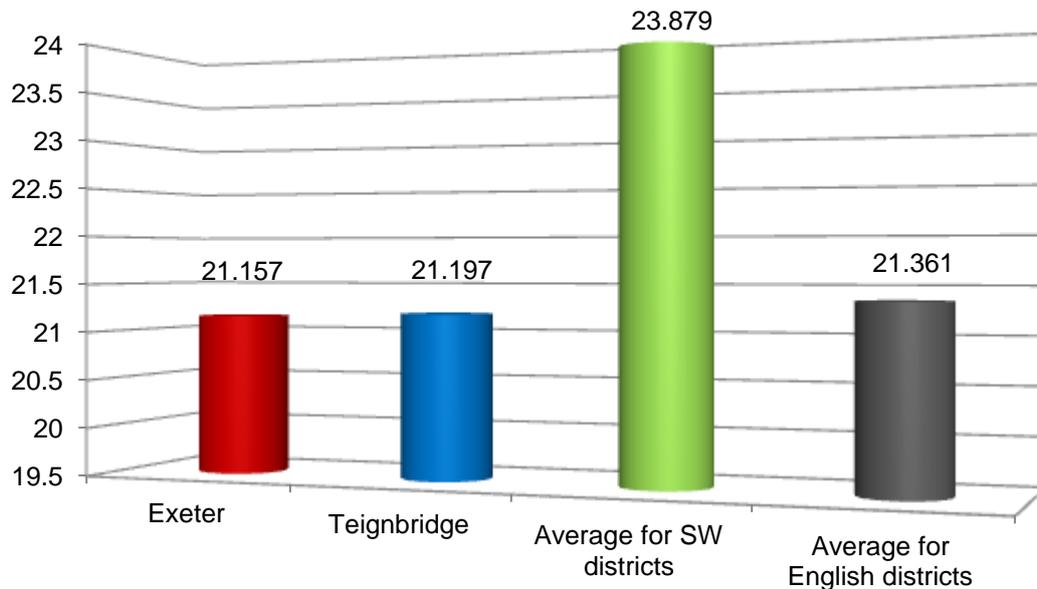
The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is a measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England. The IMD provides a deprivation score for each geographical area in England, and ranks them from 1, the most deprived area, to 32,844 the least deprived area. The scores are calculated from thirty-seven indicators grouped under seven different themes, each measuring a different type of deprivation.

	Exeter	Teignbridge
Rank out of all 201 Districts*	67	87
Most deprived wards	Priory St David's Newtown	Bushell Teignmouth West Dawlish Central and North East
Least deprived wards	Duryard St Loyes St Leonard's	Ipplepen Bishopsteignton Shaldon and Stokeinteignhead

*Higher scores represent greater deprivation

Source: www.gov.uk

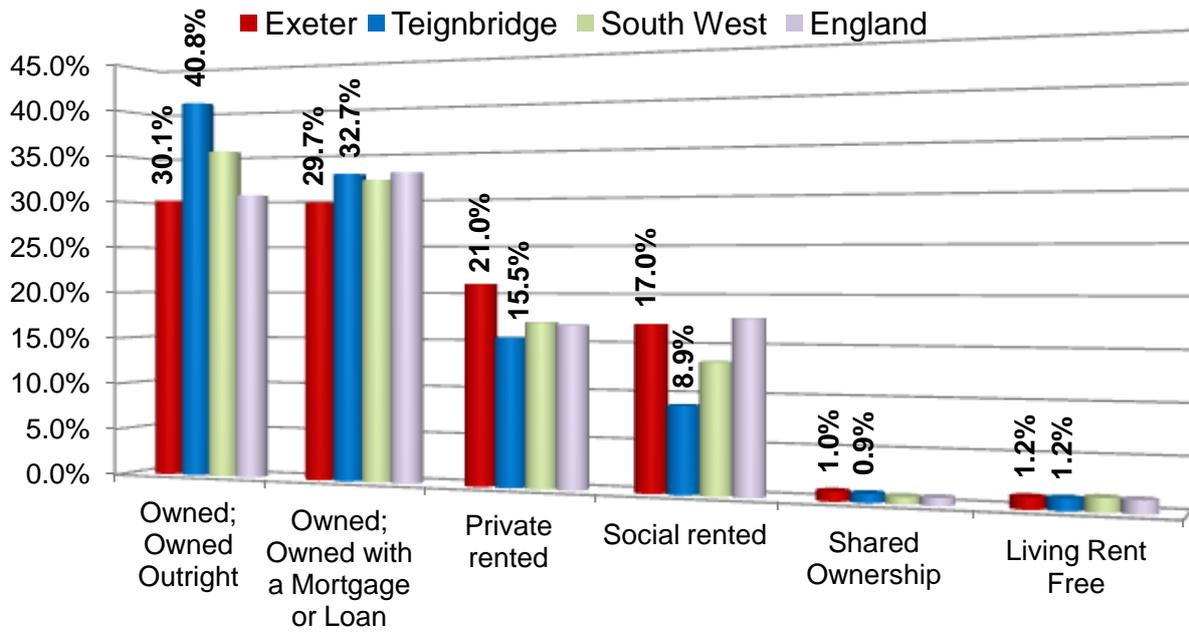
10.1d Barriers to housing and services (Index of multiple deprivation, 2015)



*Higher scores represent greater deprivation

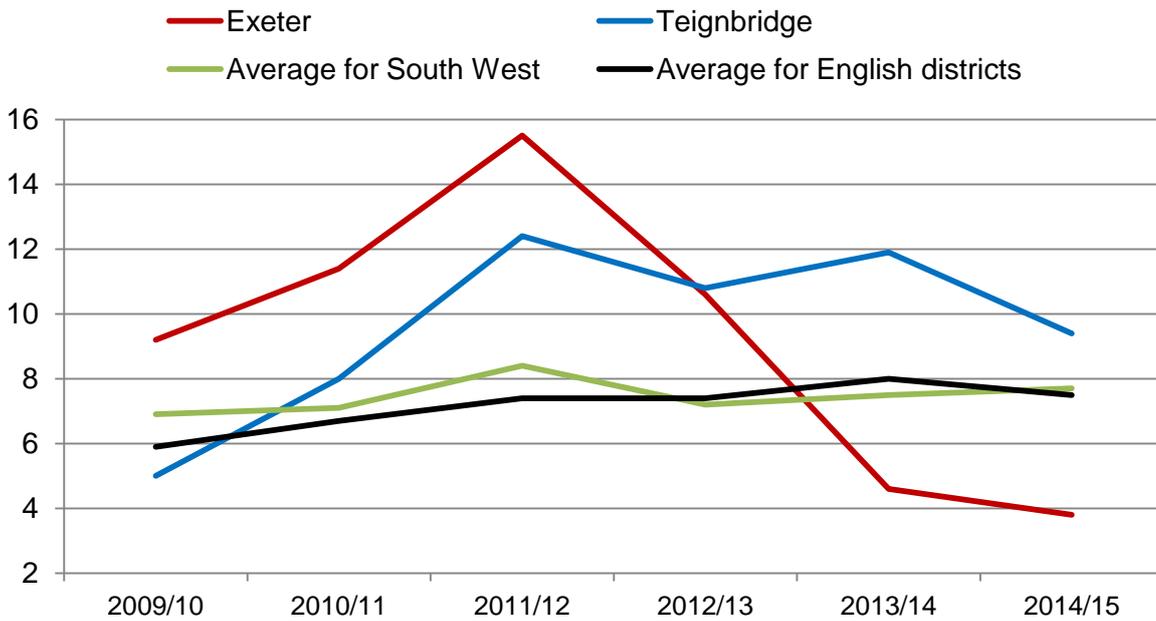
Source: www.gov.uk

10.1e Teignbridge and Exeter stock profile - Census 2011



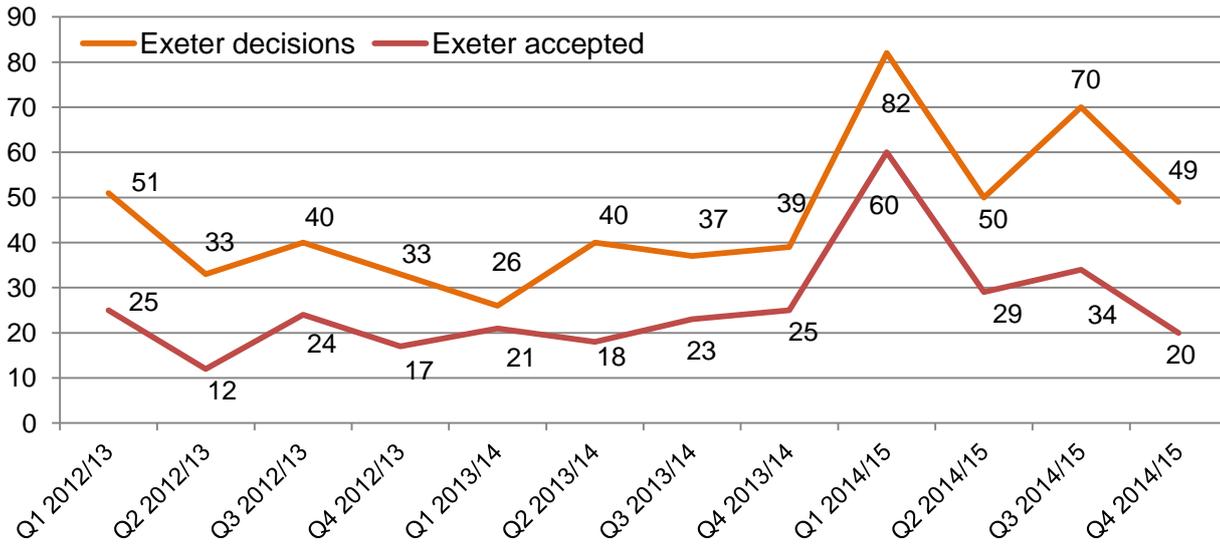
Source: [Office for National Statistics](#)

10.1f Total number of cases where homelessness was prevented and relieved - per 1,000 households



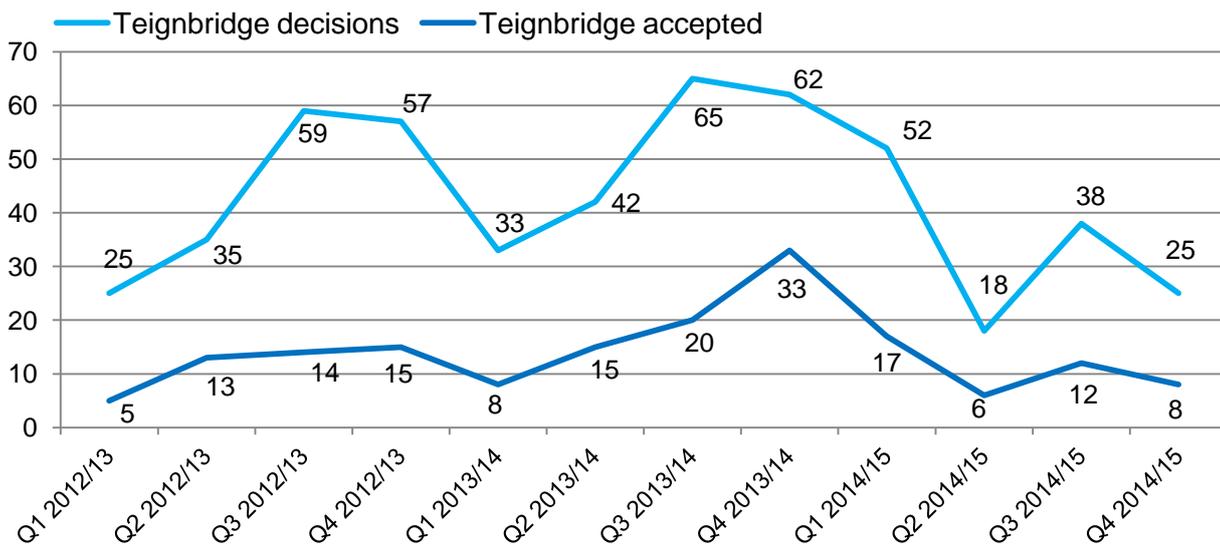
Source: [Local Government Association](#)

10.1g Exeter, Homeless decisions and accepted 2012 to 2015



Source: www.gov.uk

10.1h Teignbridge, Homeless decisions and accepted 2012 to 2015

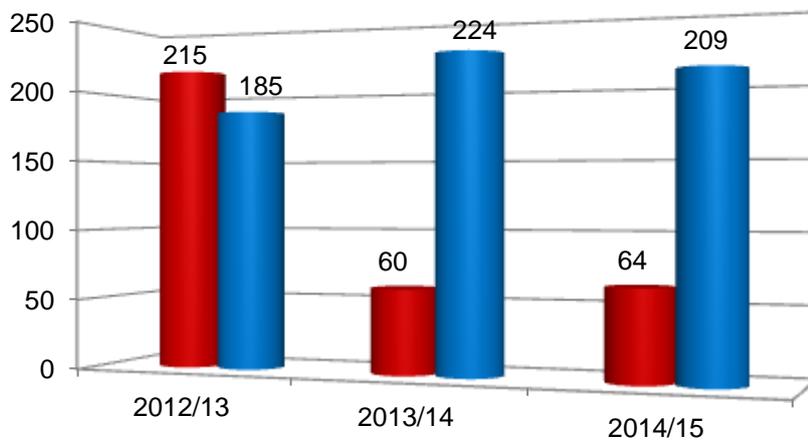


Source: www.gov.uk

10.2 A place to live

10.2a Homelessness preventions – number of households able to remain in existing home

■ Exeter ■ Teignbridge



Source: www.gov.uk

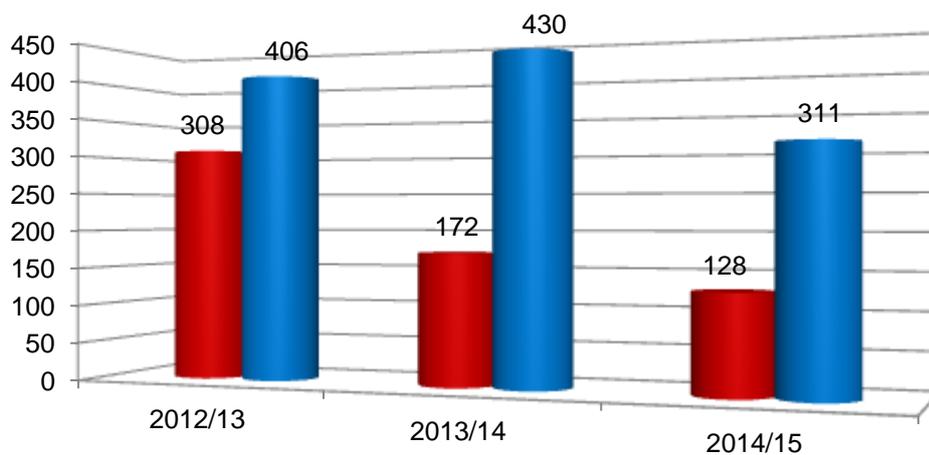
10.2b Homelessness prevented - households able to remain in existing home by measure

Homelessness prevented - households able to remain in existing home as a result of;	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15	
	Exeter	Teignbridge	Exeter	Teignbridge	Exeter	Teignbridge
Mediation using external or internal trained family mediators	26	10	7	9	0	10
Conciliation including home visits for family or friend threatened exclusions	18	6	9	3	6	1
Financial payments from a homeless prevention fund	0	5	1	3	2	2
Debt advice	22	9	0	22	2	11
Resolving housing benefit problems	7	71	0	27	1	34
Resolving rent or service charge arrears in the social or private rented sector	9	40	1	83	8	112
Sanctuary scheme measures for domestic violence	0	0	0	3	1	6
Crisis intervention - providing emergency support	0	0	0	1	0	3
Negotiation or legal advocacy enabling household to remain in private rented sector	24	11	8	12	15	8
Assistance enabling household to remain in private or social rented sector	0	17	2	41	29	18
Mortgage arrears interventions or mortgage rescue	107	12	32	20	0	4
Other	2	4	0	0	0	0
Total	215	185	60	224	64	209

Source: www.gov.uk

10.2c Homelessness prevented, or relieved – number of households assisted to obtain alternative accommodation

■ Exeter ■ Teignbridge



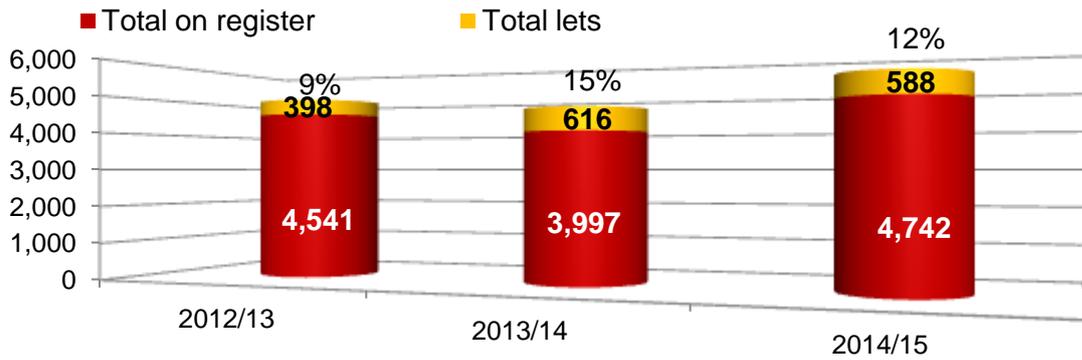
Source: www.gov.uk

10.2d Homelessness prevented or relieved - household assisted to obtain alternative accommodation by type

Homelessness prevented or relieved - household assisted to obtain alternative accommodation, in the form of;	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15	
	Exeter	Teignbridge	Exeter	Teignbridge	Exeter	Teignbridge
Hostel or House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)	49	6	6	0	0	1
Private rented sector accommodation with landlord incentive scheme	18	100	21	82	10	48
Private rented sector accommodation without landlord incentive scheme	97	184	54	188	68	180
Accommodation arranged with friends or relatives	0	0	2	6	1	7
Supported accommodation	89	41	36	51	14	24
Social housing - management move of existing LA tenant	0	0	0	6	0	3
Social housing - Part 6 offer of LA accommodation or nomination to Registered Social Landlord (RSL)	49	61	47	78	0	41
Social housing - negotiation with an RSL outside Part 6 nomination arrangement	0	11	4	18	34	4
Low cost home ownership scheme, low cost market housing solution	0	0	2	1	1	3
Other	6	3	0	0	0	0
Total	308	406	172	430	128	311

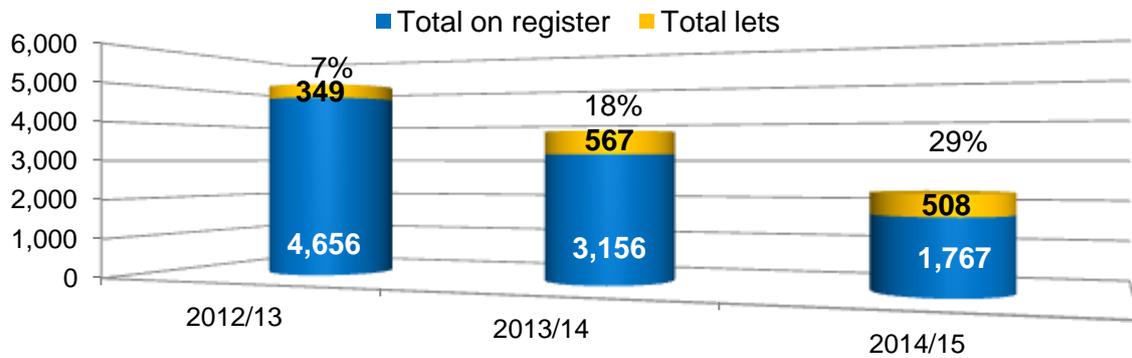
Source: www.gov.uk

10.2e Housing lets (%) of total households on Devon Home Choice Exeter



Source: www.devonhomechoice.com

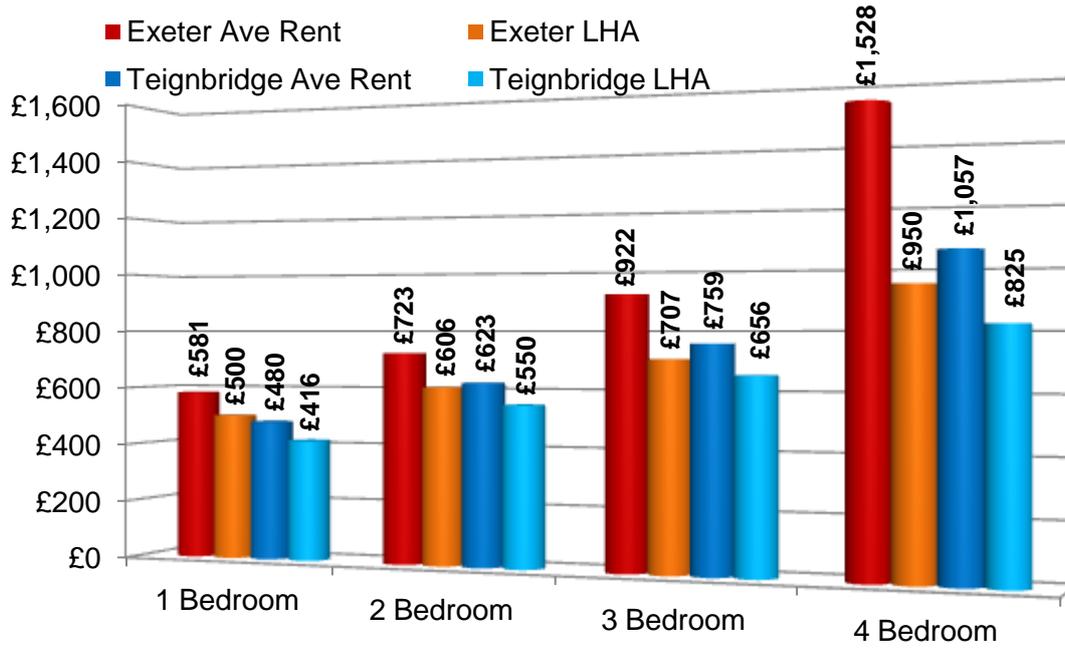
10.2f Housing lets (%) of total households on Devon Home Choice Teignbridge



Source: www.devonhomechoice.com

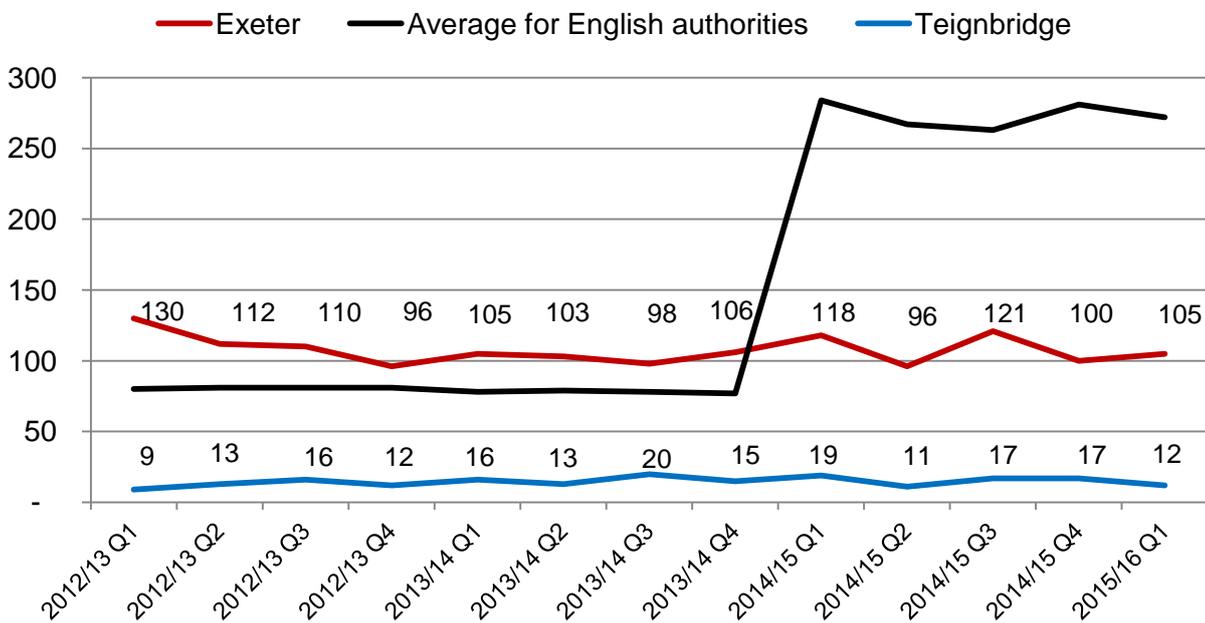
For 2014/15 there was an average of 118 applications and 49 lets per calendar month for Exeter and 83 applications and 42 lets for Teignbridge

10.2g Average cost of private rent and local housing allowance 2014/15



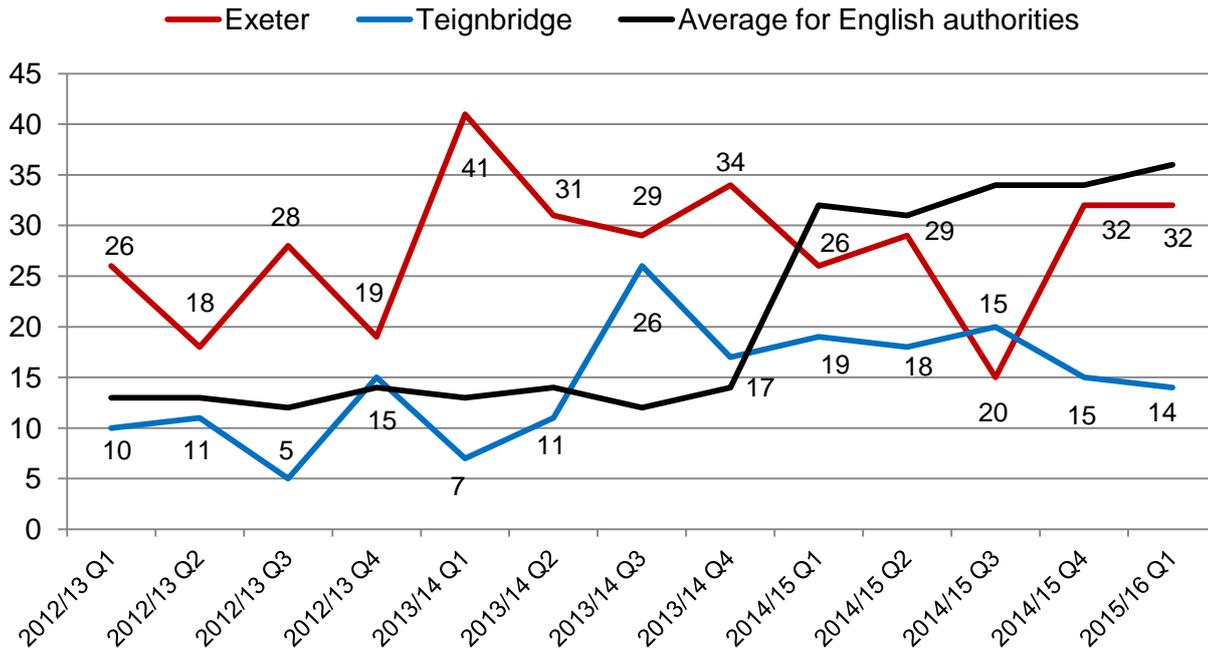
Source: www.gov.uk

10.2h Households in accommodation leased from the private sector 2012 to 2015



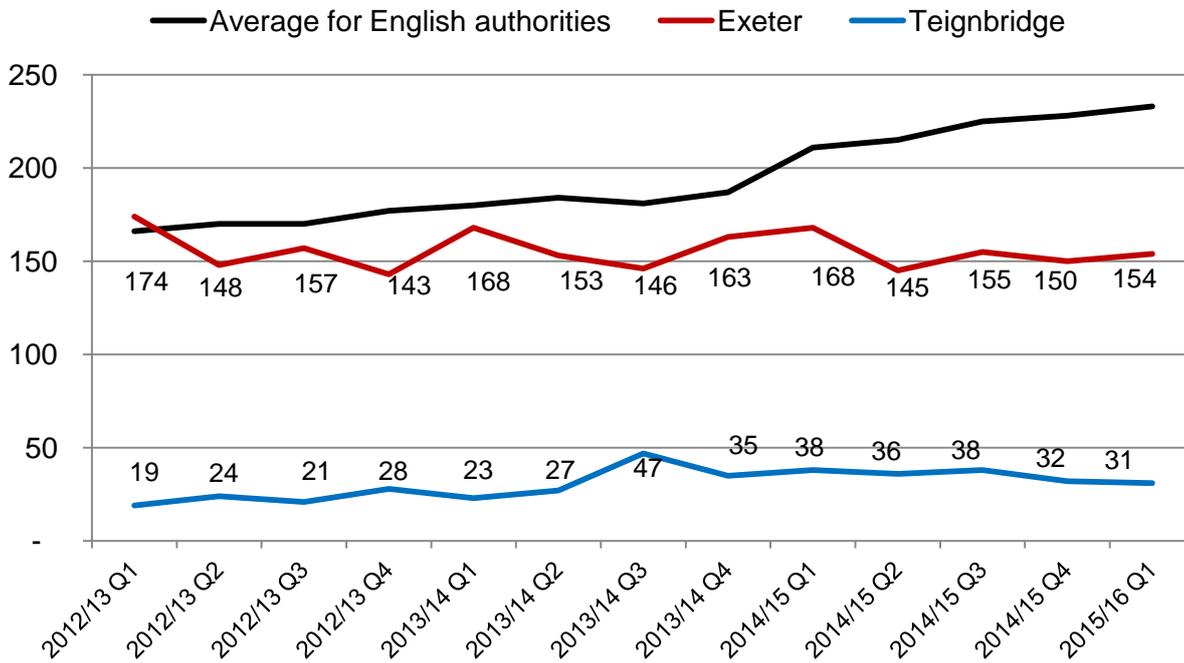
Source: Local Government Association

10.2i Households in bed and breakfast accommodation 2012 to 2015



Source: [Local Government Association](#)

10.2j Households in temporary accommodation 2012 to 2015



Source: [Local Government Association](#)

10.3 Health and protection

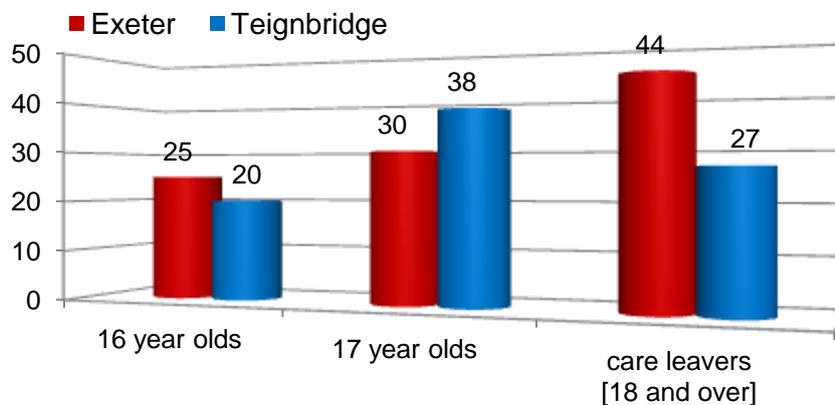
A Homeless Health Needs Audit was conducted in October and November 2015 by local housing and support providers. The data is not yet available and will be analysed for the final document.

10.3a Rough sleeping figures 2010 to 2015

Area	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Exeter	21	29	30	23	34	27
Teignbridge	3	8	4	0	4	1
Devon	72	102	81	60	98	113
National	1,768	2,181	2,309	2,414	2,744	tbc

Source: www.gov.uk and Housing Services

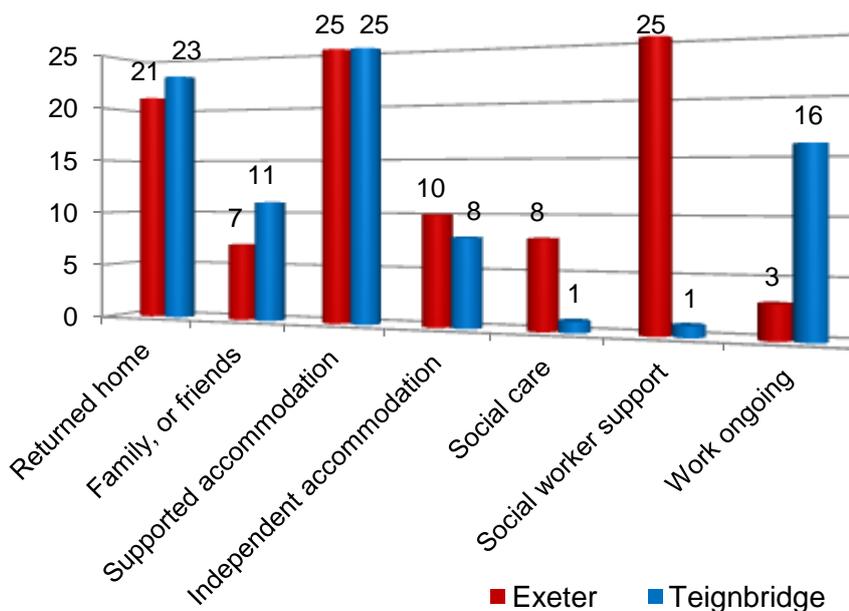
10.3b Youth homelessness; presentations, 2014/15



184 young people faced homelessness across the Exeter and Teignbridge

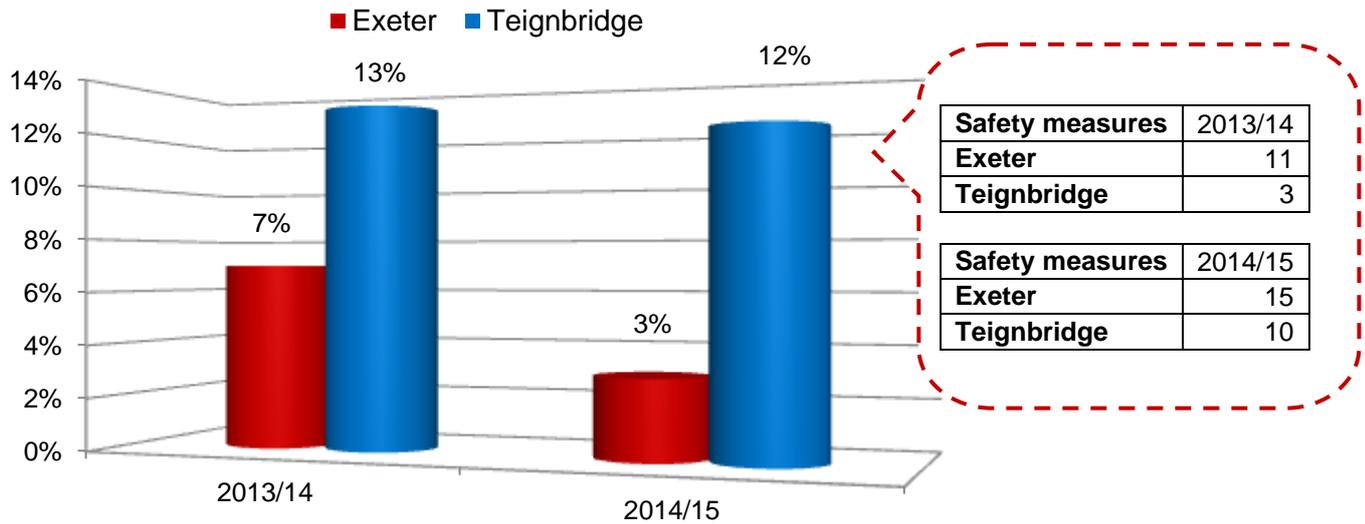
Source: Housing Services

10.3c Youth homelessness; outcome of intervention, 2014/15



Source: Housing Services

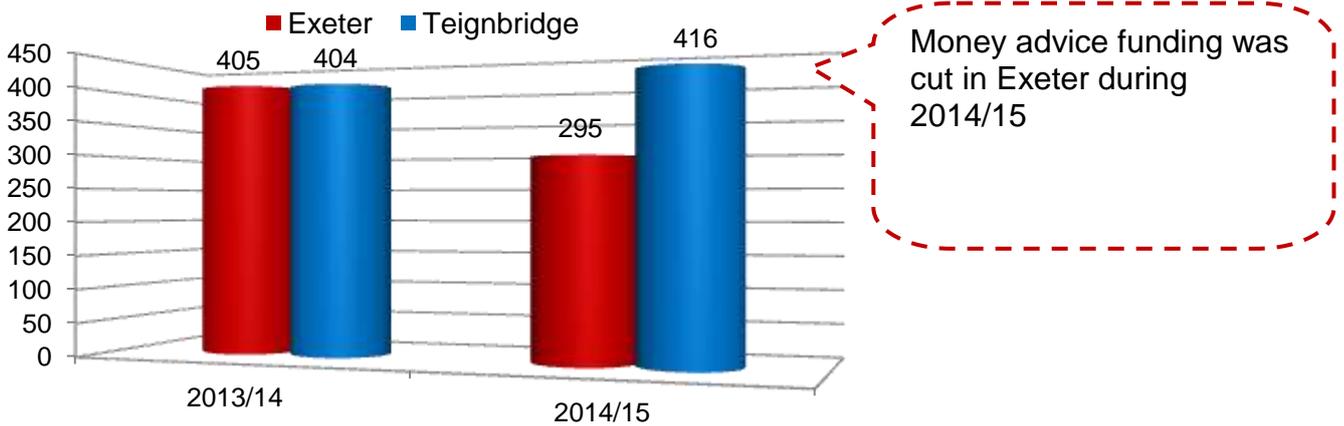
10.3d Households accepted as homeless who experienced domestic violence (%)



Source: Housing Services

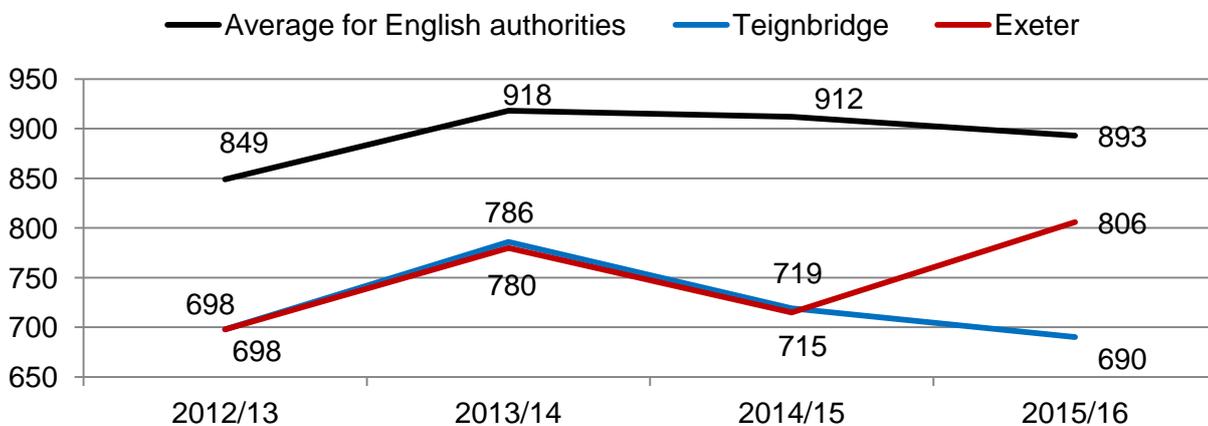
10.4 Money matters

10.4a Number of clients who attended money advice appointments 2013 to 2015



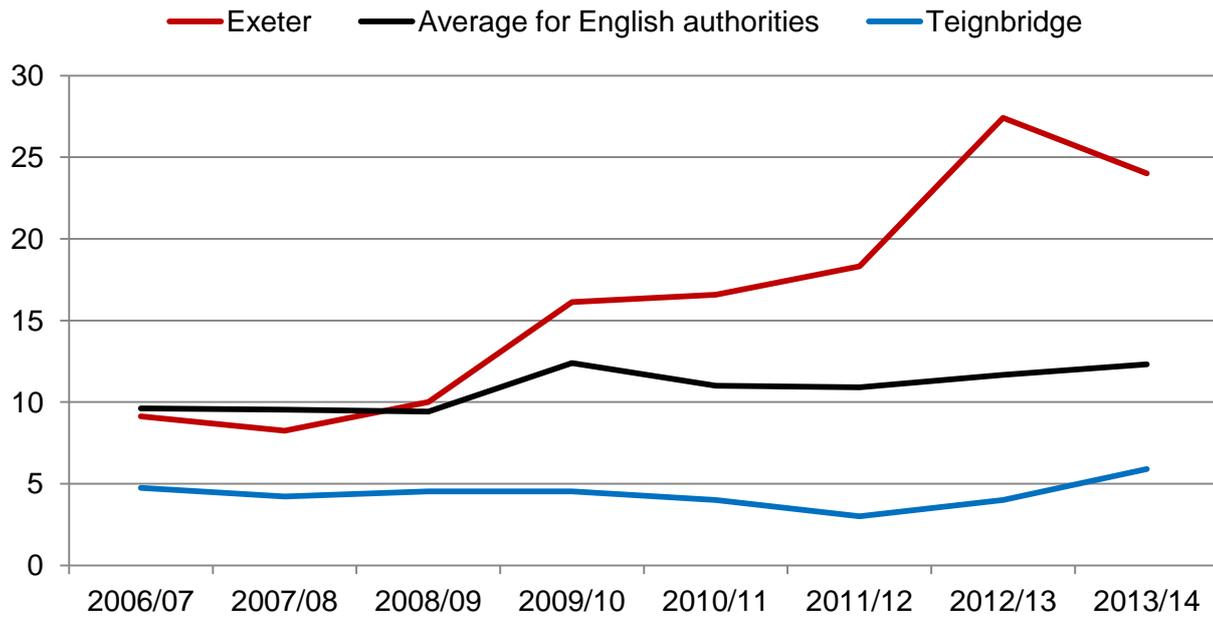
Source: www.homemakersw.org.uk

10.4b Estimated net expenditure - homelessness x £1,000s



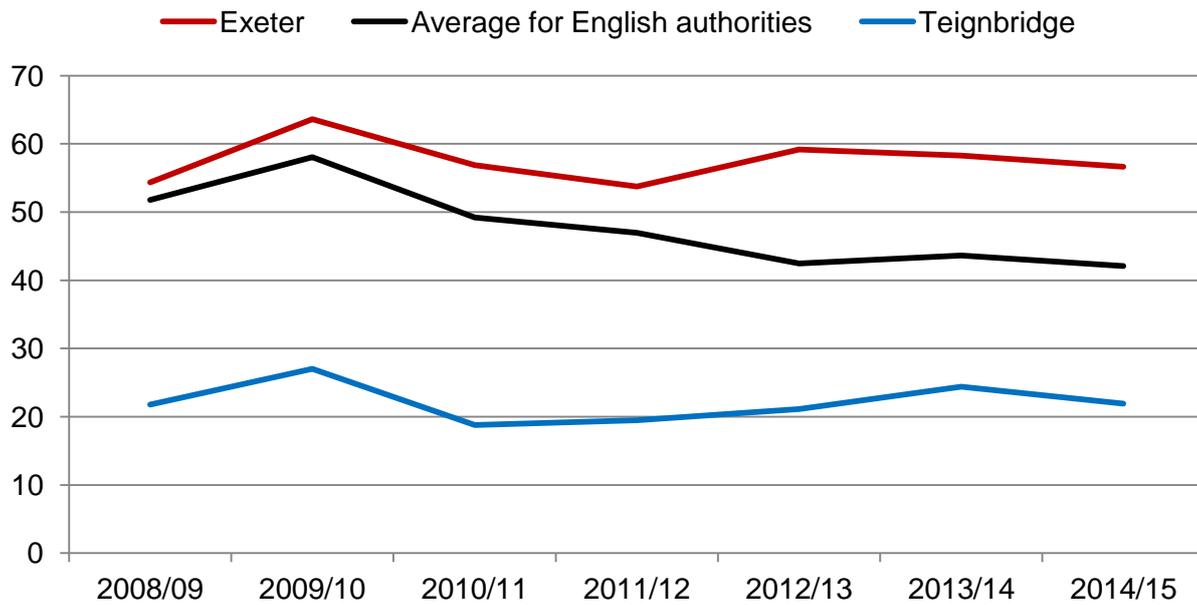
Source: Local Government Association

10.4c Homelessness spend - £ per head of population



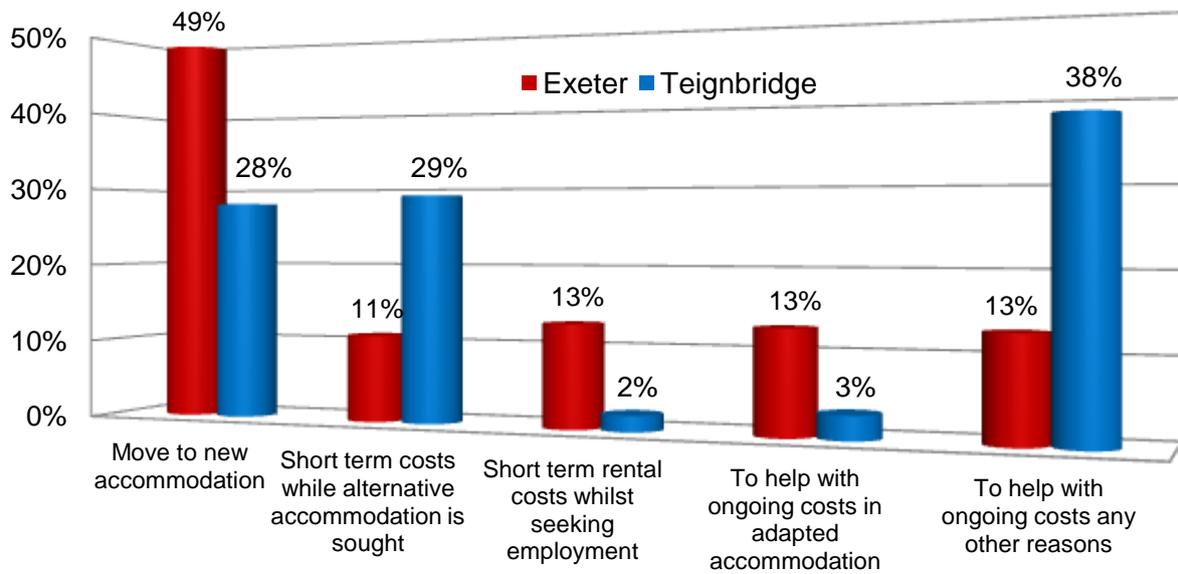
Source: [Local Government Association](#)

10.4d Revenue expenditure, housing services - £ per head



Link: [Local Government Association](#)

10.4e Reason for discretionary housing payment 2014/15



Source Exeter and Teignbridge Housing Benefits

Contact details



If you need this information in another format, please contact us.



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Civic Centre
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Exeter
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Text 07768 808 160
Tel: 01626 361 101

Teignbridge District Council
Forde House
Brunel Road
Newton Abbot
TQ12 4XX

File location:
G:\Housing\Strategy\Homelessness Strategy 2015

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY AND EXECUTIVE
DATE OF MEETING: 19 January 2016 and 26 January 2016
REPORT OF: Assistant Director Finance & Assistant Director Housing
TITLE: Housing Rents and Service Charges 2016-17

Is this a key decision?

Yes

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Executive

1. What is the report about?

This report sets out the proposed increases in respect of council dwelling rents, garage rents and service charges with effect from 1 April 2016.

2. Recommendations:

That Members of Scrutiny Committee - Community support and Executive approves:

2.1 Rents of Council dwellings are reduced by 1% from 1 April 2016

2.2 Garage rents will remain at their existing levels from 1 April 2016

2.3 Service Charges will remain at their existing levels, with the exception of charges specified in paragraph 11.3, from 1 April 2016

3. Reasons for the recommendations:

On 8 July 2015 the Chancellor announced in the Summer Budget that local authorities would be required to reduce rents in social housing in England by 1% a year for 4 years.

Rents of garages and service charges fall outside the scope of this announcement. Authorities are expected to set reasonable and transparent charges which reflect the service being provided to tenants.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources

The proposed changes in housing rents, garage rents and service charges are reflected in the proposed 2016-17 estimates for the Housing Revenue Account, which are also presented to this committee.

In overall terms, the 1% reduction in rents over the next four financial years is expected to result in a loss of £7.9 million compared to previous income projections for this period.

In accordance with the Government's previous social rent policy, which was intended to give social landlords certainty over the 10 year period, 2015-16 to 2024-25, rents were expected to rise by Consumer Price Index inflation (CPI) + 1%. The unexpected policy change has resulted in a significant reduction in the level of financial resources available for housing investment.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

This report has been prepared on behalf of the Section 151 Officer to set out the increases to rents and service charges for 2016-17 in accordance with the Government's latest social housing policy.

6. What are the legal aspects?

The requirement for social landlords to cut rents by 1% for each of the next four's years from April 2016 is contained within the Government's Welfare Reform and Work Bill. The Bill must be approved by both the House of Commons and the House of Lords before becoming an Act and this is expected to happen before 1 April 2016.

7. Monitoring Officers comments:

This report raises no concerns for the Monitoring Officer.

8. Report Details:

RENT SETTING BACKGROUND

- 8.1 Up until the Government's Summer Budget announcement, social housing rents were expected to increase by Consumer Price Index inflation (CPI) + 1 percent annually for ten years; 2015-16 to 2024-25. This was intended to give landlords certainty in order to help them plan for future investment.
- 8.2 Unfortunately, the 10 year inflation linked rent settlement was replaced with a new rent reduction policy announced in July, requiring social landlords to reduce rents by 1% annually for each of the next four years in accordance with statute (currently progressing through Parliament).
- 8.3 The rent baseline will be the rent payable on 8 July 2015, although the Secretary of State is intending to issue a general consent to enable local authorities to use an appropriate alternative 'permitted date'.
- 8.4 The underlying social rents will continue to be set on the current basis, whereby rent per property is calculated using a national formula that reflects the value of the property, number of bedrooms and local earnings. The 2015/16 'formula rent' will then be reduced by 1% in 2016/17 and so on for the following three years.

Social Rent Decreases for 2016-17

- 8.5 In accordance with the Government's revised social rent policy, it will be necessary to reduce rents by 1%. For 2016-17 this will result in an average reduction of £0.77 per week, over 52 weeks, per property.
- 8.6 Rents are collected over 48 weeks, resulting in an average reduction of £0.83 per collection week for 2016-17.
- 8.7 On a typical 2 bedroom flat the weekly rent for 2016-17 will be £76.63 (over 52 weeks). For comparative purposes, the average weekly rents for a 2 bedroom flat in Exeter are:
 - £85.21 per week with a housing association
 - £173.00 per week rented in the private sector

9. Affordable Rents for Newly Built Council Housing

- 9.1 Affordable rent allows local authorities to set rents at levels that are typically

higher than social rents, at up to 80% of local market rent inclusive of service charges. The intention behind this is to maximise returns and generate capacity for further investment in new affordable housing.

- 9.2 The requirement to reduce rents by 1% in each year for four years from April 2016 will also apply to properties let at affordable rents. For Exeter, this applies to the Council Own Build sites; Knights Place, Rowan House, Silverberry Close, Barberry Close and Reed Walk.

10. Garage Rent Increase

- 10.1 Rentals of non-dwellings, such as garages, are outside the scope of the Government's social rent policy. However, previous annual increases to garage rents have been in-line with rises in social rents at CPI + 1%.
- 10.2 With rents reducing and the rate of inflation at or around 0% for most of 2015 it is proposed that garages rents are maintained at their existing levels for 2016-17.

11. Service Charge Increase

- 11.1 These charges cover services and facilities provided by the authority to tenants which are not covered by their rent. Service charges reflect additional services which may not be provided to every tenant, or which may be connected with communal facilities. Different tenants receive different types of service reflecting their housing circumstances.
- 11.2 Service charges are limited to covering the cost of providing the services. Previous Government guidelines advised that authorities should endeavour to keep increases in-line with rent changes, at CPI + 1%, to help keep charges affordable. Increases above this may be made on rare occasions when an authority has increases in costs outside its control, such as increases in fuel costs.
- 11.3 With rents reducing and the rate of inflation at or around 0% for most of 2015 it is proposed that service charges are maintained at their existing levels for 2016-17, with the following exceptions:
- 1.2% increase in respect of cleaning communal areas in line with anticipated rises in cleaning contract costs
 - 3.5% increase in respect of fire alarm testing in line with rises in maintenance and monitoring contract costs
 - 5% increase in respect of repair costs in line with Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) rates

12. 'Pay to Stay'

- 12.1 'Pay to Stay' is currently discretionary; social landlords can charge tenants with an income of over £60,000 a market rent.
- 12.2 As part of the Summer Budget 2015 it was announced that the discretionary 'pay to stay' scheme would be made compulsory (in England) and that new lower income thresholds would be introduced. The threshold is expected to be £30,000 outside of London. Local authorities will be expected to repay the additional income back to the Government.
- 12.3 The mandatory scheme is not expected to commence until April 2017 whilst the Government consult and set out details, including how income will be calculated for those affected.

13.

High Value Homes

Under the Housing and Planning Bill (currently progressing through Parliament) Councils will be required to make payments to the Government in respect of their high-value vacant housing. The payments will be used to extend the Right to Buy to housing associations and to pay off debt attached to the sold properties. Early indications are that the first quarterly payment will be due in June 2017.

The payment will be calculated using the market value of housing owned by the authority with 'high value' housing to be defined through regulations. The impact on the Council is pending the issue of detailed guidance regarding this new legislation, but could inevitably result in a reduction in stock numbers in the event that the Council is required to sell vacant homes to recoup sufficient capital receipts. The full financial implications of the High Value Assets Levy are presently unknown but may present a further significant challenge to the HRA.

14.

How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

The Housing Revenue Account contributes to two key purposes, as set out in the Corporate Plan; help me find somewhere suitable to live and maintain our property assets.

15. **What risks are there and how can they be reduced?**

In addition to the 1% reduction in rental income over the next four years, the main risk to council dwelling rents relates to the impact of welfare reforms, in particular the move to Universal Credit and the reduction in the benefit cap.

Officers are already planning for their implementation including management techniques to support and encourage customer behaviour towards rent payment in order to help mitigate this risk.

16. **What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?**

No impact.

17. **Are there any other options?**

No other options.

**Assistant Director Finance
Assistant Director Housing**

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

Background papers used in compiling this report:

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY ECONOMY COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting: 21 January 2016
REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE
Date of Meeting: 26 January 2016
Report of: Economy & Tourism Manager
Title: Annual Review of Support for Small Businesses

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Executive Function.

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 To update Scrutiny Economy Committee as to the progress made in supporting businesses through Exeter Business Support and the Exeter Pop Up Shop.
- 1.2 To update Scrutiny Economy Committee on the progress made in expanding the contract for this service for the 2016 financial year to cover the Exeter and the Heart of Devon area.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 That members support the City Council in continuing to fund business support for embryonic, new and existing businesses in providing opportunities for individuals to secure the means of improving their financial position and promoting job creation, at a cost of £25,000.
- 2.2 Officers within Economy & Tourism be authorised to negotiate a contract for £100,000 for the financial year 2016 – 2017, following an advertisement for the continued delivery of services outlined in this report under the banner of Exeter Business Support. £25,000 has been secured from each of the neighbouring local authority areas of East Devon, Mid Devon and Teignbridge to contribute to Exeter Business Support.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

- 3.1 To ensure that there is fit for purpose business support, advice and guidance for the residents of the Exeter and the Heart of Devon to gain free advice and guidance on setting up a new business, and improving the prospects of an existing business.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources:

- 4.1 £25,000 per annum and officer time to manage the contract.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

- 5.1 There are no additional financial implications contained in this report.

6. What are the legal aspects?

- 6.1 None identified.

7. Monitoring officer Comments

- 7.1 It will be the Economy and Tourism Manger's responsibility to ensure that the Council's contract Regulations are complied with when inviting tenders for the business support contract.

8. Background

- 8.1 In January and March 2015 Economy Scrutiny Committee received reports on the City Council's funding of free professional advice and guidance to support the start up and early survival of small businesses and social enterprises in Exeter.
- 8.2 In order to sustain Exeter's economic strength, particularly as public sector employment declines and average wage levels remain low, it is important to encourage and support new business start ups to create new and better employment opportunities, and assist small businesses which are struggling.
- 8.3 Exeter Business Support is currently managed by Peninsula Innovations Limited (PIL), who are responsible for the management of the University of Exeter's Innovation Centre and the Science Park Centre.
- 8.4 The contract providing social enterprise support through the Fruit Tree for Business ceased at the end of June 2014.
- 8.5 The current range of advice and support offered by Exeter Business Support has the main benefit of ensuring expertise is available in the city across a wide spectrum of business needs which encompasses support for pre-starts, start-ups, and existing businesses; from privately owned entities to social enterprises, co-operatives, and mutuals and spans smaller 'traditional' to innovative/high growth businesses. The City Council funded element is aimed primarily at the smaller more traditional end of the spectrum, plus social enterprises. The Innovation Centre separately funds advice and support for the more technically advanced and innovative businesses.
- 8.6 As part of the City Council's contribution towards business support a range of other activity is also provided directly or in partnership with other organisations. These include:
- information for businesses on the City Council's website including the on-line Exeter Commercial Property Register
 - the Exeter Business Centre (Marsh Barton)
 - the retail shops leased by the Estate Services
 - partnership activities with the Exeter and the Heart of Devon Employment and Skills Board
 - Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership business support through the Plymouth City Deal
- 8.7 Provision across Exeter for pre-start business support is largely provided by fee charging providers. Some individuals:
- find the duration of support insufficient or the nature of it unsuitable
 - their business start-up needs are not being addressed
 - lack sufficient income to afford even a modest fee to pay for business support

9. Exeter Business Support

- 9.1 Services funded by the City Council and offered under the banner of Exeter Business

Support and deliver a range of intensive one to one support and are dependent on the client need, and includes the following:

- business viability evaluation
- business health check & recovery strategies to assist with finance and cash flow
- detailed financial analysis to help prepare strategies for survival
- marketing review, helping to develop strategies for growth
- provide detailed feedback on clients' draft submissions to various agencies and potential funders
- advice on changes to business structure, e.g. from sole trader to limited company
- independent business assessments for clients facing change
- provide reports for management on suggested priorities and remedial actions

9.2 A range of marketing material has been developed to promote Exeter Business Support, primarily to people who live and work in Exeter:

- 1000 Exeter Business Support leaflets printed and distributed to business centre, banks and organisations across the city where businesses may seek advice
- Regular business support tweets from the Twitter account @ExeBusSupport
- Updated copy on the City Council website www.exeter.gov.uk/support
- Pull up banner to promote Exeter Business Support has been used at business 2 business and networking events

9.3 The table below summarises the outputs secured from City Council funding over the previous 4 years through the contract with PIL:

Outputs secured from Council funding for business support	Apr 2012 – Mar 2013	Apr 2013 – Mar 2014	Apr 2014 – Mar 2015	April 2015 – Nov 2015	Target for 2015 – 2016
Traditional businesses supported					
Pre-start businesses assisted	121	146	131	51	130
Small businesses assisted to start-up	22	26	21	27	35
Existing small businesses supported	33	29	25	42	35
Number of new businesses set up	36	40	38	27	40
Number of jobs created	41	48	48	31	60FTE
Male	27	27	13	13	n/a
Female	14	21	35	17	n/a
Participants at workshops	207	136	0	53	200

10. Exeter Pop-Up shop

10.1 Due to the low level of vacant units and the demand for and cost of leasing prime retail units within the city, it is difficult for a new small start up retail business to set up in the city centre. A number of Exeter Business Support clients (and non clients) expressed an interest in opening up a retail unit within the city.

10.2 'Exeter Pop-Up' was created in September 2014 to assist clients of Exeter Business Support to open a retail unit. A number of vacant properties from the City Council's estate portfolio were occupied through the 'Exeter Pop-Up' scheme.

- 10.3 For businesses to use the 'Exeter Pop-Up' shop the following conditions were applied:
- A business must be a registered client of Exeter Business Support
 - The minimum rental period will be one month, with a maximum tenure of 3 months with no return for 3 months
 - The rent will be an all inclusive cost
 - Start up businesses must submit a 12 month business plan and forecast with their application before approval can be agreed
 - All applicants for an Exeter Pop-Up space must be a resident in or near Exeter, proof of residency will be required
 - No charities, institutions or good cause organisations are able to apply for an Exeter Pop Up space
 - Up to 4 businesses are allowed to trade within the 'Exeter Pop-Up' shop, with basic costs being covered through rent collected.
- 10.4 Exeter Pop-Up initiative ceased trading summer 2015 due to a lack of interest from prospective tenants. .

11. Proposals

- 11.1 The level of demand for business advice offered by the City Council and its success in creating and sustaining new businesses and jobs, particularly in the economic climate, warrant its continuation. In the ongoing difficult economic circumstances, self employment or new business formation remains an important option for some individuals to improve their financial position. One to one and face to face business support sessions should still be provided for clients.
- 11.2 Peninsula Innovations Limited have indicated they will no longer be tendering for this contract. From this, discussions are in place in the hand-over of confidential client information and the smooth transition to a new supplier. Peninsula Innovations Limited will continue to provide business support and advice to University of Exeter students and tenants of the Innovation Centre and Exeter Science Park.
- 11.3 Due to our local authority neighbours financially contributing to this contract, the City Council has reduced its financial contribution from £42,000 to £25,000 per annum. The remaining budget of £17,000 will be used to support new work around developing two 'Work Place Co-ordinators'.
- 11.4 The Exeter & Heart of Devon Business Advice and Support Contract for 2016/2017 was advertised on the City Council website, neighbouring district websites as well as the Government's free procurement portal. Submissions that reach the minimum criteria, will be interviewed early February 2016 with the successful provider being awarded the contract late February, for commencement 1 April 2016. An update will be provided to March Scrutiny Economy Committee.
- 11.5 It is proposed that the following types of small business clients are supported within the new contract going forward:
- pre-starts not supported or eligible for assistance with other providers
 - start-ups (0 – 2 years of age)
 - those which are struggling to survive but have the potential to grow and are unable to afford fees charged by other providers (0 – 5 years of age)
 - Existing businesses with growth potential but are not eligible for the new Growth Hub programme

- 11.6 Innovation Exeter is currently researching the provision of business support locally, regionally and nationally specifically or high tech innovative businesses, with the potential for high growth. If it is found there is a lack of support for this sector, a contract for business support will be provided through Innovation Exeter.
- 12. Future Position**
- 12.1 The new £100,000 combined contract, which is currently out for quotes, will be awarded April 2016 and will be for one year in length.
- 12.2 During 2016 the contract will be reviewed on a quarterly basis by all four local authority partners, with a view to retendering it for April 2017.
- 12.3 Early 2016 Innovation Exeter is researching the type and level of business support available for high growth technology and knowledge based businesses located in the city, with the potential of providing business support for these specialist businesses. This type of business support is not covered by Exeter Business Support.
- 13. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?**
- 13.1 Exeter & Heart of Devon Business Support and Advice contributes to 'Building a stronger sustainable city' and the main purpose of 'Help me run a successful business in Exeter' in promoting the city as a great place to do business and supporting the local economy and creating jobs.
- 14. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?**
- 14.1 There could be the potential that a new supplier is not contracted by April 2016, the new contract will be promoted locally and nationally to ensure a suitable supplier is contracted. Once a new supplier is contracted, quarterly meetings will be held to ensure the contract is followed and adhered to. Discussions are in place with Peninsula Innovations Limited to ensure there is a seamless handover of Exeter Business Support assets.
- 15. What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults; economy; safety and the environment?**
- 15.1 Business support and advice is provided to residents and businesses of Exeter and the Heart of Devon free of charge regardless of race, age, gender or orientation. Business ownership promotes a more balanced and versatile economy.
- 16. Are there any other options?**
- 16.1 There are a number of options available regarding the provision of business support and advice in Exeter:
- Exeter, East Devon, Mid Devon and Teignbridge Councils continue to provide business support and advice individually at a higher cost to each local authority
 - Stop provision when the contract comes to an end in March 2016 and provide a signposting service to other providers covering Exeter leaving a gap in the nature of the provision
 - Stop provision completely when existing contract comes to an end in March 2016

- 16.2 Historically Exeter has had below average business start-up and business survival rates. As can be seen in Appendix 1, the majority of business support provision in Exeter is fee paying, which some start-ups cannot afford. Without dedicated support, business start-up and survival rates could fall in Exeter.

Maureen Gori de Murden, Senior Economy & Tourism Officer

Victoria Hatfield, Economy & Tourism Manager

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

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

Contact for enquires:

Democratic Services (Committees)

Room 2.3 01392 265275

Summary of Business Support Services in Exeter

Appendix 1

Provision of business support in Exeter – type of enterprise assisted								
Provider	Pre- Start	Start-up	Existing	Technology	Hi Growth	Social Enterprise	Co-ops	Social Business/ Entrepreneurs
1. BAS (Chartered Institute of Accountants)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Notes and limitations to the service	Initial free business advice session from a member of ICAEW; charges are dependent upon the individual accountant.							
2. Business West	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Notes and limitations to the service	<p>The programme started in April 2012, and is a 3 year programme part-funded by the Regional Growth Fund, ending in March 2015.</p> <p>Monthly Ready for Business pre-start workshops are held in Exeter free of charge; a free business diagnostic is offered for all attendees to work out how viable their business idea is and to see if the programme might be supportive for them in getting started and securing funding. Follow up courses are charged for.</p>							

Provision of business support in Exeter – type of enterprise assisted								
Provider	Pre- Start	Start-up	Existing	Technology	Hi Growth	Social Enterprise	Co-ops	Social Business/ Entrepreneurs
3. Exeter Business Support	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Notes and limitations to the service	Unique provider of services to all clients regardless of status - job clubs/enterprise clubs being run successfully by the business advisor							
4. Peninsula Innovations Ltd (PIL)	√	√	√	√	√	√		√
Notes and limitations to the service	Service only available to high growth potential companies through the Innovation Centre, ExIST, or to University student entrepreneurs							
5. PRIME	√	√						
Notes and limitations to the service	Support for people aged 50 years and over. Currently, support is principally provided via on-line information on PRIME's website if they are eligible for support and have registered – see www.prime.org.uk .							

Provision of business support in Exeter – type of enterprise assisted								
Provider	Pre- Start	Start-up	Existing	Technology	Hi Growth	Social Enterprise	Co-ops	Social Business/ Entrepreneurs
6. Growth Accelerator		√	√	√	√			
Notes and limitations to the service	<p>The service provides no free support. To be eligible for support there must be high growth potential (20% growth). The offer is up to 7 days worth of business coaching supported by a programme of workshops and master classes. The investment for companies who wish to participate ranges from £600 for a business with up to 9 employees, £1,500 for a business with 10-49 staff, to £3,000 for a business with 50-249 staff.</p> <p>Each coaching intervention could last anywhere between 4 – 12 months depending on the needs of the business and their schedule. Leadership and management funding (up to £2,000 of match funded support for each person on the senior management team), an Intellectual Property (IP) Audit and a discounted membership with the Institute of Directors is part of the coaching offer. Several of these companies have already taken advantage of the IP Audit (worth £3,000) and the Leadership & Management support.</p> <p>Growth Accelerator works alongside other business support providers including UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) and the Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS). If the business is not looking to achieve high growth then Growth Accelerator programme cannot support them. In those cases, the service looks to refer them to other providers who may be able to help them.</p>							

Provision of business support in Exeter – type of enterprise assisted								
Provider	Pre- Start	Start-up	Existing	Technology	Hi Growth	Social Enterprise	Co-ops	Social Business/ Entrepreneurs
7. Princes Trust	√	√						
Notes/Limitations to Service	For 18-30 year olds only who are currently unemployed.							
8. West Devon BIP	√	√	√	√	√			
Notes and limitations to the service	<p>New Enterprise Allowance (NEA) scheme is now open to anyone signing on for JSA from day one; this includes the financial support to start up). Support duration: mentor support for NEA clients while they complete their business plan and ongoing mentor support once trading for a further 6 months. Thereafter, no support is free.</p> <p>Fees are charged post 6 month mentoring support for NEA clients; Advice 6 x 1hr sessions £400; Business Planning course 5 days @ £2,500</p>							
9. Thrive Business Hubs								
Notes and limitations to the service	Being launched at Dean Clarke House in the coming months – details yet to be released							

Provision of business support in Exeter – type of enterprise assisted								
Provider	Pre- Start	Start-up	Existing	Technology	Hi Growth	Social Enterprise	Co-ops	Social Business/ Entrepreneurs
10. Women's Development Unlimited	√	√	√			√	√	√
Notes and limitations to the service	Range of courses of personal development / business coaching for women. The only funding they have to deliver services in Exeter is "Fast Track for Growth".							
11. Local Enterprise Partnership								
Notes and limitations to the service	Not a delivery organisation but has priority sectors (Marine, Advanced Manufacturing, Social Enterprise) that it is looking to support in the future							
12. GAIN	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Notes and limitations to the service	Provide coordination and signposting / referral to all business support activities whether provided by national programmes, regional or local publicly supported projects / private sector.							

Provision of business support in Exeter – type of enterprise assisted								
Provider	Pre- Start	Start-up	Existing	Technology	Hi Growth	Social Enterprise	Co-ops	Social Business/ Entrepreneurs
13. DCC / Enterprising Libraries / Fab Lab	√	√	√					
Notes and limitations to the service	Trained library staff providing very limited business advice and support. Not currently providing support for Exeter because of existing EBS provision – this could be reviewed should EBS provision cease.							
14. Dartington School for Social Enterprise						√	√	√
Notes and limitations to the service	Provides training and opportunities that enable people with entrepreneurial ideas to achieve positive change in their community							
15. Business Doctors Exeter & Devon			√	√	√	√	√	√
Notes and limitations	Business support network helping small and medium sized businesses. Free business health check followed by a paying service.							

Provision of business support in Exeter – type of enterprise assisted								
Provider	Pre- Start	Start-up	Existing	Technology	Hi Growth	Social Enterprise	Co-ops	Social Business/ Entrepreneurs
16. Fruit Tree for Business			√	√	√	√	√	√
Notes and limitations to the service	Provide paying business advice to small businesses, social enterprises and co-operatives.							
17. Thompson Jenner LLP	√	√	√	√	√			
Notes and limitations to the service	Provide free online guides to registered business users. Free initial meeting followed by paying services for business: audit, accountancy, tax, corporate finance, business planning, payroll, IT business solutions and wealth building.							
18. Cartridges Business Hub	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Notes and limitations to the service	Paying, one stop shop for the full range of legal and business support services provided in collaboration with other local businesses: legal, accountancy, HR, business training, finance, banking, insurance, IT, H&S, web design and marketing. Have expressed an interest in providing social enterprise support.							

Provision of business support in Exeter – type of enterprise assisted								
Provider	Pre- Start	Start-up	Existing	Technology	Hi Growth	Social Enterprise	Co-ops	Social Business/ Entrepreneurs
19. IBD Business Advice Group	√	√	√	√	√			
Notes and limitations to the service	Cover business advice for start ups, growing businesses, problems in your business, exiting a business, mentoring. Free initial 2 hour meeting followed by a paying service: £250 for mentoring or £800 for four 2 hour meetings. Business adviser based in Exeter.							

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ECONOMY and EXECUTIVE

Date of Meeting: 21 January 2016 and 26 January 2016

Report of: Chief Executive and Growth Director

Title: Rugby World Cup 2015

Is this a key decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Executive

1. What is report about?

1.1 To provide a final report of the activities undertaken as the City Council's support for Exeter being a successful Host City for the Rugby World Cup 2015 tournament which took place between 18 September and October 31 2015 and the extensive legacy activities encouraged and developed as a result of being involved.

2. Recommendation:

2.1 That Scrutiny Committee – Economy comment on the content of the report, and request that Executive also welcome the wide-ranging benefits resulting from the tournament including those anticipated from the programme of legacy activities in contributing to the well-being of residents and the positive profile of the city, and express their appreciation to all the agencies and especially the volunteers and staff for all their commitment and hard work to make the event such a success.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

3.1 Involvement with the Rugby World Cup tournament provided the city with a once in a lifetime opportunity to be involved in a sporting activity on the world stage with consequent benefits from raising its profile, demonstrating its pride and ambition, and gaining confidence and experience from delivering such a wide ranging and high calibre event . The effective way the partner agencies contributed to preparing for and delivering the event and the time, enthusiasm and support given by the well organised volunteers together with long hours from key staff should be recognised. The legacy for the city in terms of the contribution to the promotion of health and well-being through sporting activities should be noted.

3.2 The City Council agreed to be proactively involved in this major event, recognising the wide benefits to be gained from hosting matches in the city and planning and organising many of the related activities which took place. Real benefits have been achieved in the short term and will be in the long term across the economy and in local communities.

4. What are resource implications including non-financial resources

4.1 The Council committed up to £300,000 towards activities relating to the city being a Host City for the three games at Sandy Park and visitors to the city during the tournament. Of this, £50,000 was to be used for supporting legacy projects. The early exit of England from the RWC tournament had a direct impact on the number of people visiting the Fanzone and the income that was generated. The summary of the financial position of the expenditure on the legacy programme, the Fanzone and marketing activity is contained within the specific appendices to this report.

4.2 A significant amount of unquantified staff time was also spent on delivering the City Council's support for the tournament.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

5.1 The overspend is noted and will be taken from reserves. The overall financial implications will be reported to Council within the Quarter 3 budget monitoring report.

6. What are the legal aspects?

- 6.1 The City Council signed a formal Host City Agreement as the lead body responsible for working with the venue – Sandy Park and for the provision of a Fanzone in the city during the tournament. The details of this have previously been reported to Committee. Other key responsibilities included being responsible for commercial rights protection, activities during the tournament supporting sponsors and the tournament organisers, England Rugby 2015 (ER2015).

7. Monitoring Officer's comments

- 7.1 This report has no issues for the Monitoring Officer.

8. Background

- 8.1 The Rugby World Cup is the third largest global sporting event and was hosted in England from 18 September to 31 October 2015. Exeter was been chosen as one of thirteen locations as an official Host City. Three games were played at Sandy Park in the stadium in the preliminary group stages. As a Host City the Council accepted responsibility for the provision of a Fanzone during the tournament and a number of the activities including supporting Sandy Park on games days. Awarding of Host City status and thereby the involvement of the city in the three games depended on both Exeter Rugby Club Ltd agreeing to the use of Sandy Park and the signing and acceptance of the Host City Agreement by the City Council.
- 8.2 The city's involvement as a Host City was a unique opportunity to use this international sporting event to have a lasting impact on the city by promoting it through the world media. The organisers of the event, based on the experience of past and similar events forecast that over 4 billion people would watch the games at some point during the tournament and that over 500,000 visitors would travel to the UK to watch or be involved in some way. It was also intended that there would also be lasting impact, a legacy from the contributions rugby can make to the development of young people.
- 8.3 Prior to the tournament, Ernst and Young (EY) were engaged by ER2015 to forecast the potential economic benefit from participating in the tournament as a Host City and nationally. They concluded that investment in staging the tournament in Exeter including in the stadium would stimulate £2.3 million in economic activity. Their forecast was that £17million would be generated in the economy from direct and induced effects and over £0.5 million in tax revenues for the UK Exchequer. The potential overall benefit was estimated as £39million.
- 8.4 EY commented specifically in relation to Exeter that longer lasting, non-quantifiable benefits would also contribute to making involvement very worthwhile. One such benefit is the improved appeal of the city to the short break and day visitor market through the benefit of media coverage with the return on investment realised for some time after the games have happened. Hosting the tournament would bring the added benefit of developing a volunteer pool for the tournament as well as creating a long-lasting pool of community volunteers for future events and cultural activities.

9. The City Council's Involvement

- 9.1 As a Host City the City Council was required to sign a formal Host City Agreement which set out the specific roles and responsibilities it had to undertake itself or by negotiation with partners. These were, in summary:
- Marketing and communication support
 - Provision of Fanzone open for a minimum of ten days, with a capacity of 5,000 showing all England games including the Tournament opening game, match days at Sandy Park, both semi-finals and the final Tournament matches stage area and an area for food and drink suppliers;
 - City Dressing Spaces

- Commercial Rights Protection to ensure that the Fanzone and the area around Sandy Park was free from unauthorised promotional material
- Volunteers Programme
- Transport Management Support
- Accommodation for ER2015 (the tournament organisers) staff
- Host City Staff Time

- 9.2 The International Rugby Board (IRB) and the Rugby Football Union (RFU) set out an objective to secure a rugby legacy from the tournament to find ways of benefiting young people in a wide variety of ways in building confidence and team working skills, commitment to meeting challenging goals and improving fitness.
- 9.3 The City Council and Exeter Rugby Club set up a broad ranging steering group, jointly chaired by the Chief Executive of the Club and the Assistant Director Economy, to drive and oversee preparations involving all the necessary agencies including the County Council, all the emergency services and representatives from the business community. This was joined by the ER2015 staff after a few meetings. Working groups were set up work on key areas of activity including marketing and communication (led by the Economy and Tourism Manager), the Fanzone (led by the Arts and Events Manager), transportation (led by the Operations and Communications Manager, Devon County Council) and legacy (led by the Programme Development Lead).
- 9.4 Each of these areas of activity is covered in detail in each of the summary reports provided by the lead officers as attached as appendices to this report. This is an unusual step to include such detail but a brief summary report would not do justice to the extent of the work put in across the various strands of the event.
- 9.5 More than 30,000 people enjoyed the Fanzone. With the England team being knocked out of the tournament earlier than expected, this resulted in many less than would have otherwise done so with consequent impact on the forecast income from food, beverage and merchandising sales. Many thousands more have enjoyed the other activities undertaken under the brand of the tournament.
- 9.6 The promotional benefit to the city has been very significant in that advertising value of more than £1.5 million was achieved through press and media coverage reaching some 34 million people nationally and internationally.
- 9.7 The Legacy Programme, as well as stimulating a range of new activities to encourage more young people to gain from participating in rugby, has increased involvement in a wider range of sports or physical activities with consequent benefits for the health and well-being of people of all ages. A programme of sports development is now being pursued working with Active Devon, an important activity which had ceased following financial cuts in recent years.
- 9.8 Also of note was the REEP programme which has directly helped 14 young people successful overcome their difficulties in gaining employment or training. More detail on the range of projects is included in the appendix.
- 9.9 The team involved received many 'informal' positive comments on the experience created around the tournament in the city. Letters of thanks were received from Tracey Crouch MP, Minister for Sport, and Stephen Brown, Managing Director of ER2015, as attached to this report.
10. **How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?**
- 10.1 Involvement in Rugby World Cup has enabled the Council to work with Sandy Park and other organisations to make a significant contribution towards the stated priority of running a

successful event aiming to bring wider economic and social benefits to the city and the region.

10.2 The Council's mission statement is to enhance Exeter as the regional capital, working with our partners to improve the quality of life for all people living, working in and visiting the city. The RWC in every sense supported this mission statement. Raising our profile on a global stage, bringing international sport to the city, attracting the leading administrators of the game has allowed Exeter to showcase the city to the world. Our purpose is to make Exeter a stronger city. The RWC has created a sporting network and infrastructure that will develop sport and health and wellbeing. We provide great things for people to see and do, this is the purpose of our cultural offering. Attracting and retaining young people in the city is vital to a successful knowledge economy. These are the wealth generators of the future and the skills base for employers. We have to use opportunities like the RWC to attract young, economically active people, encouraging them to stay in the city. We want to support business and the RWC has supported the growing reputation of Sandy Park as a stadium and conferencing venue. The European 7s coming to Sandy Park is an example of this growing reputation.

11. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

11.1 The Steering Group was aware of the risks relating to transport, crowd management, protection of VIPs, safety and security relating to a number of aspects of the tournament at and near to the venue and in the city centre. Desk-top exercises to simulate and discuss mitigation to risks and problems took place together with the police, fire and ambulance services.

12. What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?

12.1 The breadth of legacy and other activities undertaken and being planned will have extensive impact on these groups as listed and described in the attached reports.

Karime Hassan
Chief Executive and Growth Director

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

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

Appendix 1

Rugby World Cup 2015 - Marketing and Communications

Exeter became a Host City for RWC2015 just under 3 years ago. From a promotional point of view there were three main reasons/aims for being a part of this international event:

1. To promote Exeter & Heart of Devon for day visits and overnight stays
2. To raise the profile of the city nationally & internationally
3. To show that Exeter can manage and deliver events of this scale

The main delivery was through Exeter City Council and the Heart of Devon Tourism Partnership. The main vehicle was the web site www.visitexeter.com plus a range of digital channels used before and during the tournament. All of the digital channels played a key role in providing up to date information, engaging with the public and showcasing Exeter and the Fanzone for ticket and non-ticket holders.

ONLINE ACTIVITY

The Visit Exeter website was transformed to become the main focus for Exeter being a Host City for Rugby World Cup 2015, during this period of change (19 May – 1 November 2015). The website achieved some impressive results:

- Website visits - 55,354
- Pages of notable interest were:
- Rugby News: 23,833 visits
- Exeter Fanzone: 19,733 visits
- Rugby Breaks and Visiting Exeter: 11,300 visits

In order to make sure residents and visitors had interesting and engaging content to read relating to the tournament and Exeter, plus also to drive traffic to www.visitexeter.com, more than 30 blogs were posted on a wide range of events and activities – the majority being rugby related.

Social media also played its role in driving traffic to www.visitexeter.com which was also used to engage with people who are visiting Exeter for RWC2015 and the Fanzone. A dedicated twitter account was set up for all forms of communication @RWC2015Exeter using a unique hashtag #TryExeter. Activity on the account was varied on rugby and the city itself.

- Total Tweets sent: 6,359
- Tweet impressions (tweet appearance in account's profile): 2,058,400
- Twitter account profile visits: 45,048
- Mentions in Tweets: 3,643
- Followers in May: 1,507
- Followers in November: 3,264
- Total number of RT's between August and November 2015: 3,300 retweets
- Average number of RT's per day between August and November 2015

Twitter was used as a tool to instantly update on public transport issues, drive traffic back to the website and to promote event within the Fanzone. The account received praise for promoting what there is to see and do in Exeter and persuaded some ticket holders to stay overnight in the city. During the days the Fanzone was open, the account was used to promote acts on stage, stalls holders and when the site closed. There was no designated Exeter account for Facebook as all traffic was directed through the official Rugby World Cup account.

Going forward the @RWC2015Exeter account will be used to promote all things rugby in Exeter, as well as the up and coming European Rugby 7s, being held at Sandy Park in July 2016.

As a result of England being knocked out of the tournament, England 2015 contributed £10,000 for increased promotion of the Fanzone. The City Council therefore commissioned Heart FM paid for out of this contribution to produce an on-air advert to promote the days the Fanzone was open. This radio advert was aired across Exeter and Devon during 19 October through to 31 October during the breakfast, morning and afternoon shows.

Facebook advertising promoting Exeter was also paid out of this contribution, with the results being:

- Paid Advertising Rugby Breaks: 16,041 clicks
- Video Content: 6,919 view
- General post engagement: Reach 400,000 +, Shares 160. Likes 1,920

PRESS SUMMARY

The City Council appointed ROKK Media to manage press activity related to RWC2015, leading up to and during Rugby World Cup. Some 35 press releases were sent to regional and national press covering the wide range of activities related to Rugby World Cup and Exeter being a Host City.

National and international press also extensively featured Exeter, primarily based around the three matches at Sandy Park.

As a result of the media activity an estimated total of £1.5 million advertising value equivalent (ABE) was achieved in press coverage. It is very hard to determine the overall reach of press and television coverage, but this will be in excess of 34 million people, nationally and internationally, based on recognised monitoring sources.

Images were a key part of RWC2015 within the national and international press, due to the tournament being held across England and Wales. A number of newspapers ran image features on RWC2015 voting on the best images of the tournament. There were two images from matches at Exeter that featured in the top ten, due to the location of Sandy Park and the time of day (the sun was setting and provided a stunning backdrop).

MARKETING CAMPAIGN DURING RWC2015

Due to tickets for the rugby matches at Sandy Park selling out, there was no need to promote the sale of tickets. The council's interest in promoting Exeter and the wider area focused on encouraging ticket holder and non-ticket holders to stay the day before and the day after a match.

100 days to go

For the launch of 100 days to go until the start of RWC2015, Exeter launched '100 days of rugby', a marketing campaign promoting Exeter & the Heart of Devon and the areas links with rugby. 100 photos were collected showcasing and highlighting the best of the area. One photo was released each day, with a link back to www.visitexeter.com, promoting an event, an attraction to visit, an activity or a rugby fact related to Exeter. The aim was to encourage people to visit regardless of whether they had tickets for the matches at Sandy Park. As well as the photos, videos from a number of city role models were also used including Rob Baxter and Karime Hassan which provided a useful tool to talk about the economic benefits of Exeter being a Host City and the role of changing the perception of the city for attracting inward investment and visitors to Exeter.

Fly the Flag

Emirates, one of the global sponsors of RWC2015, launched a flag hunt in the eleven Host Cities, Exeter's being on 4 July 2015. A flag was hidden in Exeter with clues shared on social media as to where to find the flags. The competition was open to 14-16 year olds and give the 80 winners a once-in-a-lifetime experience of leading a team out of the tunnel at 1 of the 48 Rugby World Cup 2015 matches. Once someone had located the flag, entrants needed to upload a flag selfie onto social media, using the #EmiratesFlag to be in with a chance to win.

Rugby breaks in Exeter

As well as the rugby itself, the aim was to use rugby as a catalyst to encourage more people to visit and enjoy Exeter & the Heart of Devon. This was implemented through the development of six itineraries, to encourage people to visit and explore Exeter and the wider area. The itineraries were advertised on Facebook (paid for advertising) with links back to dedicated pages on www.visitexeter.com and attracted some 12,500 clicks. The itineraries were also promoted on Twitter, through England 2015 and Visit England and were related to the three matches being played at Sandy Park, with some aimed at families and some aimed at couples visiting Exeter. Businesses that featured within the itineraries were members of the Heart of Devon Tourism Partnership, the majority from the Exeter area but some from the wider area.

The 50 Day Challenge

With the aim of getting more people of Exeter involved and interested in what is happening in the city, a '50 day challenge' was launched to mark the final days of the countdown to the start of RWC2015. Each day an experience was uploaded onto social media encouraging people to Try, Learn or Do something new. Some of the experiences included:

- Try - A spot of sewing and create some bunting for Rugby World Cup 2015 city dressing
- Learn - Something about visiting Rugby World Cup 2015 team Tonga, at The Way of the Ancestors: The Art of Tonga exhibition at RAMM
- Do - 75% of Exeter's historic Roman wall survives, although some parts have obviously needed a bit of patching up over the years. *How many doors can you find in the wall? Don't forget the passageway between Rougemont and Northernhay Gardens.*

Exeter's Sound of Sport

To encourage people to get excited about the start of Rugby World Cup 2015 in Exeter, we wanted to bring a festival atmosphere to the city centre. Exeter is synonymous with busking and music and is a key feature of a Saturday shopping in Exeter. Exeter's Sound of Sport was aimed to bring rugby and sport to the forefront of music in the city. Buskers were given freedom of the city for one day, with the only rule that they had to play songs which are inspired by sport. The prize was a chance to sing live in Exeter's Fanzone on the final day. Throughout the day the public were encouraged to vote via Twitter and Instagram for their favorite busker using the appropriate hashtag. Sadie Horler was the winner and received much support online and within the local press and performed on the stage within the Fanzone on the final day.

VISIT ENGLAND

Visit England led on marketing RWC2015 as a whole nationally and internationally. Information on the tournament, matches held and each Host City was available on www.visitengland.com/england2015. Information was shared with the vast amount of visiting journalists visiting England prior and during RWC2015 and with the overseas travel agents. Visit England led on a national campaign promoting a wide range of English destinations called - Home of Sport. Each destination nominated a sport or venue to the Home of Sport competition. As part of the campaign Exeter was nominated as well as Sandy Park and the Exe Estuary Trail. Unfortunately Exeter failed to reach the short list, with Nottingham being voted the best place for sport by the public.

As an additional tool to promote Exeter, the city attended Confex which was held in London March 2015. This annual exhibition promotes venues and destinations to meetings and conference organisers. Visit England developed a themed area of the conference dedicated to RWC2015 and each of the Host Cities, which Exeter attended. The city attended in partnership with Woodbury Park Hotel, Sandy Park and the University of Exeter sharing leads gained. The benefit to the city and conference venues, has a long lead in time due to events being planned 1-2 years in advance.

In the lead up to the start of RWC2015 Exeter attended a number of international media days promoting what Exeter and the Heart of Devon has to offer for a visiting rugby fan. One event was held at Twickenham and a further event was held in Rugby – the home of rugby. A number of

leads (overseas journalists) were gained at each event, which will be beneficial for the city in relation to Exeter being the host for the European Rugby 7s.

A group of French and Italian journalists visited Exeter prior to the start of RWC2015 (3 June 2015 and 16 September respectively). This was led by Visit England with specific itineraries developed for each journalist group visiting the city. The purpose of the visit was to showcase Exeter and what there is to see and do in and around the city for a rugby fan. Each journalist group visited RAMM, Exeter Cathedral, cycled along the Exe Estuary Trail and visited the Jurassic Coast and Dartmoor National Park.

OBSERVER PROGRAMME

Towards the end of RWC2015 Exeter were contacted by England 2015 to be involved with the Observer Programme. This is an initiative to invite countries that are bidding to host the RWC in 2023 to visit stadiums and Host Cities across England to learn from them. The Observer Programme visited Twickenham (as the national stadium), Leicester (as a football ground) and Exeter (as a rugby ground). The presentation for Exeter was held at Reed Hall giving an overview of why Exeter chose to be a part of RWC2015, logistics and if we were to do it all again and what we would do differently. The following countries and organisations were part of the Observer Programme:

- Italy
- World Baseball
- Olympic Organising Committee
- South Africa
- America
- Japan
- World Rugby
- Georgia

As a follow up to the Observer Programme Tokyo Metropolitan Government and the Japan Local Government Centre in London visited Exeter early December 2015 to learn more about our RWC2015 experience in relation to Fanzone, transportation, commercial rights protection and legacy activities. Tokyo were particularly interested in My First Rugby Ball.

GENERAL

Magnetic signs - To help promote RWC2015 within the city, a number of magnetic signs were produced displaying the Host City logo. These magnetic signs were placed on the side of Exeter City Council fleet vehicles during the duration of RWC2015.

Rugby balls - 200 RWC2015 rugby balls promoting Exeter being a Host City for RWC2015 were purchased and sold through the Heart of Devon Tourism Partnership, with proceeds going towards marketing the area for RWC2015. 12 rugby balls were given away to local charities to auction off to raise funds. Two were given to each Lord Mayor (which held this position prior and during RWC2015) to auction off for their respective charities.

Exeter International Airport - 3 very large posters were installed at Exeter Airport in the international and domestic arrival halls promoting Exeter being a Host City for RWC2015. Exeter International Airport kindly waived the cost of having the 3 posters at the Airport.

General information on Exeter being a Host City for RWC2015 was uploaded onto www.exeter.gov.uk/invest/rugby and www.investdevon.co.uk/2015-rugby-world-cup plus additional information on opportunities for businesses looking to relocate to Exeter or expand in the city.

INWARD INVESTMENT

As a way to promote Exeter and the rest of Devon as a place for inward investment, Exeter City Council in partnership with Devon County Council produced an A5 inward investment flyer to promote sites and locations for development. The flyer was placed in bedrooms across Exeter & the Heart of Devon targeting influential business leaders who would be visiting Exeter during

RWC2015, both ticket and non-ticket holders. The leaflet will continue to be distributed across the area until early 2016. A full page advert was placed in the match day programme for the following Host Cities. The advert promoted Exeter and the rest of Devon for inward investment. A full page advert was also placed in the Official Tournament Magazine free of charge which was distributed from July 2015 onwards nationwide. This project was joint funded by Exeter City Council and Devon County Council at a total cost of £10,000.

- Sandy Park - 3 matches - PLUS one full page of editorial
- Twickenham - 10 matches
- Manchester City - 1 match

RESEARCH

GoEuro

The transport search engine which compares coach, train and flights prepared a study to understand the effect Rugby World Cup 2015 will have on the UK's tourism industry. The research focused on transport, accommodation and miscellaneous costs and did not take the cost of tickets into account. The methodology behind it involved making an average of tourist expenditure by nationality of visitors (VisitBritain and UNWTO statistics) along with their own price indexes. It was estimated that the 11 host cities will generate between £3,525,000.00 and £197,026,000.00 in terms of money spent as a result of RWC2015 with spend on inner-city transport, accommodation, food & beverages. For the tourism industry as a whole, rugby world cup is expected to generate a £957,500,000.00 in the economy. For Exeter specifically, being a Host City for RWC2015, it was anticipated to generate £3,835,000 in the local economy, with this being split down into the following categories:

£1,915,000 – accommodation
 £182,000 – inner city transport
 £591,000 – Food and beverage
 £836,000 – merchandise
 £311,000 – travel to Exeter

Ernst & Young

Ernst & Young (E&Y) were commissioned by England 2015 to produce a report on the likely economic impact of RWC2015 on England and Wales and each individual Host City, this report was issued July 2015. It was estimated that hosting RWC2015 would generate £2.2billion into the economy of England and Wales, it would attract an additional 446,000 international visitors and support 41,000 jobs. This benefit was also broken down for Exeter, as a case study for RWC2015. It was estimated that:

- 566 additional jobs would be supported
- The economic benefit would be £39m
- Being a Host City would bring an additional £17m in GVA to Exeter
- Would attract 12,000 international visitors to the area

E&Y have been re-commissioned to produce a report detailing the exact benefit to England, Wales and the Host Cities. This report will be made available during Spring 2016.

England 2015 survey

England 2015 surveyed ticket holders to gain an understanding of their travel plans and what ticket holders were expecting to visit whilst in Exeter. The headline survey results for Exeter was:

- 16% of ticket holders were travelling to Exeter by train
- the proportion of ticketed spectators, who travel by rail, that were staying in accommodation in Exeter on the night of the match was 15%

TICKET HOLDERS

Since RWC2015 finished, England 2015 has provided the City Council with a breakdown of where individual tickets were purchased for all three matches at Sandy Park. This breakdown does not include corporate hospitality and packages sold by the official travel agents:

United Kingdom	26,260
Rest of Europe	308
Asia	236
South America	13
Canada & USA	184
Middle East	11
Italy	83
Namibia	21
Romania	2
Georgia	39

Heat maps from across the United Kingdom show where people bought their Sandy Park tickets. This information was used to promote Exeter for overnight stays and to encourage ticket holders to stay longer in the city.

A wide range of corporate packages were sold to local and national businesses for all stadiums. The three corporate packages developed for matches at Sandy Park were: Corporate Box, Prestige and Club. The table below shows how many packages were sold for each match. The largest majority of corporate packages were sold within the UK with the additional of 2 bookings from Italy, 2 bookings from Monaco and 1 from Switzerland.

<i>Match Package</i>	<i>No of packages sold</i>	
Tonga v Namibia	Corporate Box	68
	Prestige	78
	Club	20
	TOTAL	166
Namibia v Georgia	Corporate Box	56
	Prestige	56
	Club	2
	TOTAL	114
Italy v Romania	Corporate Box	68
	Prestige	144
	Club	132
	TOTAL	344
Venue Series (all three games)	Corporate Box	12
	Prestige	16
	Club	2
	TOTAL	30

As part of the Travel Programme, a number of tickets were sold for each match at Sandy Park. The majority of tickets through this channel were sold through the official travel agents based in the UK, although there were a number of sales (14 in total) from official travel agents based overseas, including Argentina, South Africa, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, USA and France. The breakdown of tickets sold through this route were:

<i>Match</i>	<i>Number of Tickets Sold</i>
Tonga v Namibia	136
Namibia v Georgia	244
Italy v Romania	59

The following information has been provided by a number of hotels and B&B's located in Exeter:

Hotel – Some rooms available on 29th September. Full on the 7 & 11 October

B&B – Almost full on 29. Some vacancies on 7 & 11

Hotel – Some vacancies on all three dates, nearly full on 10 Oct

B&B – Vacancies on all three dates

Hotel – Nearly full on 29 Sept & 7 Oct. Some vacancies on 11 Oct

Hotel – Full on 29 Sept & 7 Oct. 11 Oct lots of vacancies

Hotel – Vacancies on all three dates

Hotel – Vacancies on all three dates

Hotel – 4 rooms left on 29, 5 rooms left on 7 Oct and 1 room left on 11 Oct

Hotel – Full on the 29 Sept & 11 Oct. 1 room left for the 7 Oct

Hotel – Full on all three dates

Hotel – Full on all three dates

Hotel – Full on all three dates

Self-Catering – Vacant on all three dates

The city council also received the following comments from a number of accommodation providers:

- Majority of visitors are from the UK apart from the last match when there were more visitors from overseas
- There was an increase of 35% occupancy over the RWC2015 period

Victoria Hatfield
Economy and Tourism Manager

Appendix 2

Rugby World Cup 2015 - Fanzone report

ACTIVITIES

In line with the Host City agreement with E2015, the Host City was expected to run a Fanzone with capacity for 5000 to show the Tournament game on a large screen and stage/presentation area for a minimum of 10 days. This was to be free to the public.

The Host City was to be responsible for:

- all costs associated with the staging of the Fanzone and to receive any income generated
- permissions and regulatory requirements including applications for planning permission (for temporary demountable structures); a variation to the Premises Licence to allow regulated entertainment until 23.30 and a licence for Performing Rights Society

The City Council agreed to show all England matches, host city matches in the qualifying rounds and then quarters, semis and the final games – a total of 13 days on which the Exeter Fanzone would be open between 18 September – 31 October.

Attendance: over the Tournament the Fanzone was attended by some 30,100 people. Only on 3 days did attendance not reach 1000. Peak attendance at 6,544, was on 26 September (England v Wales).

Stage programme: The Fanzone was open 2 hours before each match game and one hour post-match to add entertainment and atmosphere.

The Fanzone employed a range of comperes throughout the programme these included rugby experts and experienced comperes. A Stage Programme Manager was engaged, Laura Wright, former Head of Music at Exeter College and currently employed by the Academy of Music and Sound. A total of 58 different acts were booked to perform, of which 90% came from Exeter or the local area. The programme featured a range of music from jazz to rock, indie to reggae, big band to choirs. Each day featured one slot for young up and coming bands from schools and college and on Tuesday 29 September a Schools Music Day was held when the Webb Ellis Cup visited the Fanzone. This featured bands from Devon Music Hub, St James High School, Exeter College and the Academy of Music and Sound. Other highlights included 120 singers from Big Noise Chorus together with the choir from Rennes, Corey Baker Dance performing a Haka on the opening night, Bill Ding and the Skyscrapers, the Locked Horns.

Basement Jaxx – an external promoter used the park and the Fanzone infrastructure on Saturday 19 September, the second opening of the Fanzone, to promote a popular dance music act. Some 4300 tickets were sold – there were no major incidents, there were however some 50 complaints about noise levels.

With the support of Environmental Health the Fanzone was able to take measures to reduce noise nuisance over the remainder of the run so that no more complaints were received – setting lower levels; redirection of speakers; finishing live music at 23.00 rather than 23.30.

Sport activity – Active Devon arranged a programme of sports activity run by local sports organisations, particularly local rugby clubs. This met with varying success, a key problem being where the activity was situated in the park.

Rugby activations – E2015 and England Rugby provided a photo scrum, an inflatable line out wall and speed pass which did prove very popular. These activities were most ably managed by the Fanzone volunteers. At the end of the Tournament the Speed Pass provided by E2015 was given to Topsham RC.

Fanzone Volunteers – Caroline Winyard and her team of Fanzone volunteers provided tremendous support throughout the Tournament. There were a number on site each day helping on gates, giving directions, putting wristbands on any children entering the Fanzone, managing the rugby activations, promoting the Fanzone in the City Centre and generally being cheerful and helpful. This team should prove to be a great resource for future events.

Exeter 5 Nations Parade – £46,980 raised from Grants for the Arts and £25,000 from E2015 combined with £30,000 from the Council's Unexpected budget enabled the Arts and Events team to contract an internationally renowned outdoor arts company, Walk the Plank, from Manchester to produce a one off spectacular costumed parade with music. The parade, on Saturday 10 October, represented each nation visiting the city and worked with 250 children from 6 Exeter schools, 44 students from Exeter College's Arts and design Course and 20 students from the University's Applied Drama and the PGCE courses. Lead artists came from London, Sheffield and Bristol and worked alongside 7 local artists to create costumes and large makes. Music Director, Tim Hill, created a parade band of 25 musicians following an open call for musicians. The parade assembled on Cathedral Green and processed along the High Street, watched by thousands of people including visitors from Italy and Romania and then into the Fanzone for a short choreographed finale.

Students from Exeter College worked with local artist James Lake to create a Totem Pole which represented the five nations but also Exeter Chiefs. This Totem Pole will be installed at Sandy Park as a legacy for the project.

Traders: some 28 different traders had stalls in the Fanzone over the period of time, managed by Deborah Custance-Baker. This proved to be not an easy job as a substantial number of traders dropped off throughout the tournament as the effect of England no longer being in the Tournament meant audiences were reduced.

Bar: Bars were run by Exeter Chiefs under contract to the City Council. The basis of the agreement was 50% split on profit. On the busiest of nights the bars unfortunately ran out of the most popular beer.

Financial Outturn

The Fanzone budget, based on advice received at the time of agreeing to be a Host City from an experienced event manager was set at £250,000. Delivery of the Fanzone infrastructure and site management was tendered out and the specialist events company Whole Nine Yards was contracted. The scale and content of the Fanzone had to be planned on the basis of the agreed requirements of ER2015 and could not have anticipated the impact of the early exit of England and indeed all the home nations from the tournament. As a result of unavoidable additional costs of security measures required because of repeated attempts at theft during the event (one involving a violent incident), and the need for a second large screen based on views expressed by the emergency services on the site's capability to cope with anticipated attendance numbers, this budget has been exceeded. In particular, the forecast security budget of £52,692 increased to £74,514 and the screen costs increased from £24,100 to £58,868.

Budget summary breakdown for the Fanzone as follows:

Expenditure:	
<i>Infrastructure:</i> including stage, marquees, screen x 2, PA x 2, toilets, power, lighting, fencing, site plant	£210,514 (includes additional £34,768 for extra screen & ancillary equipment)
Operational costs: crew, security, stage management, production management, traders management, event safety, insurance, licensing	£154,625 (includes additional security £21,822)
Sundry items: meeting room hire, parking, van hire, site items: fence netting, water, print, signage, per diems etc	£18,078 (includes fee for Street Theatre of £8,985, paid by England 2015, as below)
Total	£383,227
Income:	
Exeter City Council	£250,000
England 2015 funding for Street Theatre	£8,985
Basement Jaxx income received	£7,050
Sportfolio merchandising	£1,311
Traders	£20,697
Bar profit share	£24,562
Total	£312,605
Difference	-£70,622

Val Wilson
Arts and Events Manager

Appendix 3

Rugby World Cup 2015 – Legacy Update

PURPOSE

As part of the City Council's commitment to a worthwhile and rewarding involvement with the tournament a sum of £50,000 was set aside for the development of a range of legacy projects.

Rugby World Cup 2015 offered a unique opportunity for the people of Exeter and the surrounding communities in Devon. The intention was that the city, in collaboration with the games venue, provided a memorable and exceptional experience in the lead up to and during the games and make an effective contribution to the local and national objective for the legacy from the games. As a participant in this major event the City Council recognised the benefits to be gained from hosting matches in the city. Benefits were expected to be both short term and long term across a range of economic, social and community factors engaging businesses, local residents and tourists from far and wide.

Exeter City Council, with a range of partners, expressed a commitment to securing the best possible legacy for the people of Exeter and the surrounding communities in Devon. Five legacy themes were identified. These are:

- Increased participation in Rugby for all
- More opportunities for women/girls to play Rugby
- Increasing involvement in a wider range of sports and physical activities
- Maximising economic benefits
- Promoting stronger and supportive communities

Financial Information

A budget of £50,000 was allocated to support legacy activity and has been split as follows:

Increasing involvement in sport	£12,000
Cash for Communities	£10,000
RAMM Project	£ 5,000
NEETS Project	£ 8,000
My First Rugby Ball Book Distribution	£ 5,000
Spirit of 2012	£ 2,000
Rugby Posts	£ 7,050
Total to date	£49,050

Summary of Legacy Activities

- Rugby 7's league being discussed amongst legacy partners. Opportunities being explored in how to resource a social 7's weekly league, to support and enhance our commitment to the ongoing activity at Sandy Park with the European 7's tournament for the next 3 years.
- Spirit of Rugby is an RFU legacy strand supported by funds from the Olympic 2012 legacy. Exeter has been chosen as one of only 5 cities in the UK to benefit from £30k to deliver volunteer projects linked to rugby delivery. 10 volunteers are now engaged and working within communities to support tag/touch/women's rugby programmes.
- Park Run is now fully embedded on Exeter Quayside every Saturday morning. A timed 5k run for adults of all abilities, run/jog/walk to encourage activity and social cohesion. Now approaching 70th event and attendance has reached 187 a week.
- Junior Park Run, in a similar format to Park Run, we recently launch the junior run in Heavitree Pleasure Ground. Taking place on a Sunday morning for juniors aged 4-14 over a 2k distance. The Lord Mayor launched on 1st November with 87 in attendance, this project is now led by St Luke's School.
- Tag festival taken place at Crealy park working with E&E/Radio Exe/ECC to deliver a tournament to over 500 children in the Exeter and surrounding areas involving commercial

sponsors and first time collaborative media working. Intention is to have 1 event per year to grow to include Secondary Schools using commercial sponsorship.

- Exonians ladies team are now part of a league structure and have recently grown to two full 15 teams.
- Sport and well-being festival plans for 2016 now underway. 5000 plus visitors attended event in 2015 and an increase of 215 participant sign-ups received on the day.
- REEP programme (Rugby Empowerment Employment Programme) worked with 15 young people aged 16-19 who were claiming JSA. The programme ran for 10 days and worked with strategies used in the military to build confidence/self-esteem. 14 of the young people now have either full-time employment, apprenticeship placement or an educational pathway and are therefore no longer receiving JSA.
- Exeter Hawks Wheel Chair rugby team launched with support from Westcountry Hawks. This will incorporate after school sessions from 11-16 year olds (currently 13 registered) and a community session for 11-adult. Funding from Sport England
- Distributed 'My First Rugby Ball' book to all Reception/yr1&2 pupils in Exeter schools. This included a CPD teacher's programme/assemblies package/interactive web development and links with local rugby clubs and schools to run tots programmes. Book aims to adopt the values and morals of rugby into an academic environment whilst increasing interest in the game of rugby and overall multi-skills
- Economic Business Benefits Conference took place in September 2013 including a follow-up session some months later. Bringing together all of the key players in business/industry as well as City Centre independents to encourage opportunities and engagement with travelling business. Inward Investment/Tourism/Increased visitor stay etc. Emphasis on 'doing it for themselves'. Several sub groups now up and running working on the various areas of discussion – marketing, city dressing, transport etc. All to support main steering group activity
- RAMM held a Photographic exhibition project working with local rugby clubs and promoting via a strong social media presence. The Michelle Sank exhibition and Kate Green Engage programme ran throughout the tournament.
- Cash for Communities £10k launched via the Express & Echo to City Community groups to bid for grants from Legacy fund based on detailed criteria. Ten projects funded ranging from Men in Sheds through to Alphington Community Centre and Exeter Youth Rugby Club. All projects had a Rugby twist. These programmes will be revisited over the coming three years to ensure sustainability.
- Healthy Lifestyle Initiative in partnership with DCC public health, create a Lifestyle initiative linked to RWC2015. Walking Groups. Pop-up Cooking.
- Free tickets to the community 500 Corporate Social Responsibility tickets distributed to the community across youth teams, schools and the college between three Sandy Park games;

TROPHY TOUR

Organised by City Council staff in conjunction with the local RFU, the South West leg of the Webb Ellis Trophy tour came to Devon on 8 July 2015 and began with a visit to Plymouth before being greeted by The Lord Mayor of Exeter at Haytor. The trophy then continued onto Exmouth and Crediton Rugby clubs where excellent welcomes were received.

On Friday 10 July the Trophy came to Sandy Park and was the centre piece of a Legacy schools tag tournament taking place. Saturday 11 July, Exeter gave the trophy and guests including members of RWC2015 'The Pack' a ceremonial welcome to the City. A full civic greeting took place as the Trophy was guided through the High Street by the RAF ATC (Totnes) 421 Squadron (Air Training Corps) band, received by the Lord Lieutenant and Wing-Commander, and welcomed into The Guildhall by the Lord Mayor. A full civic reception then took place.

The final stage of the tour saw the Webb Ellis Trophy outside Exeter Cathedral for the afternoon, greeted by The Dean of Exeter. Visitors from surrounding areas, tourists and residents queued to have their photos taken with the Trophy and Richard Hill, one of the players in the RWC2003 winning England team.

FUTURE

All projects have been planned to work for a minimum of 3 years as per the Legacy framework criteria. Each project has specific measurable goals to meet, as an example participation numbers, commercial outcomes and perhaps most importantly sustainability and ability to run independently of the current partners.

SUMMARY

The programme has had fantastic success as a whole; challenges have been met at times and not all projects have gone as initially planned however each individual activity is already proving successful. The City Council has been approached by both the RFU and World Rugby to work with them in using the Legacy template to assist others in implementing a lasting legacy. Japan is the RWC2019 host nation and the City Council Economy team are now working with their team to share knowledge and lessons learnt.

The importance of networking and relationship building has been vital in the success of delivering a City wide legacy within a budget of £50,000. To date the value of match-funding/goodwill resources costs from supporting organisations and stakeholders totals £125,000.

RECOMMENDATIONS

An update on the legacy programme is reported to committee annually until 2018.

Catherine White
Programme Lead

APPENDIX 4

Rugby World Cup 2015 – City Dressing

Background

The City Council was responsible for arranging the necessary infrastructure to be in place for the installation of branded signage and banners for both 'One Year to Go' and Tournament Time 'look and feel' periods.

The council worked closely with Devon County Council to identify any safety issues of proposed locations. The County Council liaised with a national installation company Bay Media regarding installation and removal of 50 lamppost banners for 'One Year to Go' and 96 lamppost banners for the tournament which was carried out with minimum disruption to transport, and included the opportunity to cut grass and litter pick on the verges of the dual carriageway outside Sandy Park. The City Council worked with local company Sky Platforms to install the cross-street banners and the bunting in the city centre.

England 2015 paid for the production and installation/removal costs (where applicable) of:

- 6,000m RWC branded bunting around the city and at rail and bus stations
- 11 cross-street banners
- 8 feather flags including frames and bases
- 13 large flags in RWC branded colours

These items were distributed among the main walking routes from the train and bus stations as well as some of the retailers in the High Street. England 2015 also provided branding packs to the main train stations.

Devon County Council contributed £30,000 to the City Dressing which included stress-testing for viability of 146 lamppost banners, hire of the fixings, and installation and removal prior to and after the tournament, 50 of which were on display during ticketing time and One Year to Go activity in September 2014. These banners were placed along the main arterial roads into the City Centre and towards Sandy Park, and alongside roads that were classed as the main walking routes to the Fanzone.

BID Contribution

The newly formed Exeter BID Company added to the impact of the branded City Dressing by purchasing additional items for other City Centre areas that were not able to be covered by the Host City plan, covering South Street, Fore Street, the lower part of the High Street (Marks and Spencer to MacDonald's), North Street, Harlequins, Guildhall Shopping Centre, Sidwell Street and Cathedral Close. These areas were dressed with the same colourful bunting and flags as the rest of the city centre which pulled all areas together and added to the festival feel.

Bunting and Yarn Bombing

In addition to the branded items, Mattie Richardson from Bunyip Buttons and Beads in Fore Street led a large-scale community project creating hand-made bunting and yarn bombing. Yarn bombing is the act of covering trees, benches and other inanimate objects with various colours of knitted shapes, to draw attention to a cause without damaging the environment in which it sits.

The 'Bunting and Yarn Bombing' project launched in May 2015 asking crafters and knitters to get involved with Rugby World Cup in Exeter, regardless of an interest in the sport, to raise awareness and pride of the city hosting a global tournament. Hundreds of mini rugby tops were knitted and donated by members of the community to create some eye-catching bunting, alongside colourful knitted panels for the yarn-bombing. Trees and street furniture in South Street, Fore Street, Princesshay and Northernhay Gardens were yarn-bombed in August which created a great deal of interest from the public, and helped to raise awareness not just of RWC coming to the city but also the Fanzone in Northernhay Gardens. A large amount of crafted bunting was used inside the

Fanzone during its operation which added to the whole experience and raised the profile of the project.

Princesshay additional support

Princesshay displayed a range of items which included a project from a local land art group, The Club on the Exe, which consisted of a giant willow rugby ball adorned with foliage and attracted a great deal of interest. It was displayed next to a group of rugby-themed scarecrows which was part of a local school project. Princesshay were also happy to display some of the rugby top crafted bunting outside Reiss and Debenhams as well as having some of their trees yarn bombed. Two pieces of 3D street art were provided by England 2015 and these were placed on the high profile pavement outside Costa Coffee. However, the weather created problems for these vinyls making them lift therefore they were removed fairly soon after installation due to health and safety concerns. Unfortunately it was not possible to replace them in time for the end of the tournament.

England 2015 also provided a 'giant hashtag' for promotional purposes, and was due to be situated at the top of Bedford Square onto the High Street. However, upon arrival it was larger and heavier than expected, so not appropriate for the planned location as it would cause a traffic and pedestrian obstruction and not be mobile enough to store it overnight. After a few days of it being on display outside Debenhams it also showed signs of wear and tear, not having been made for prolonged outside use, and the decision was made to remove it from display. A replacement was requested but not received in time for the end of the tournament.

Decals

A sub-project was run by Martin McGahey where decals were designed saying "Welcome" in the language of the five countries playing at Sandy Park during RWC. Stagecoach bought a number of these for the buses and a small number of Exeter College students on an entrepreneur course were engaged to sell packages to local businesses. Princesshay contributed towards the design cost and arranged for some floor decals to be made which were present for the whole of the tournament.

Additional items

On the first day of the tournament England 2015 provided a large display board where Host Cities could fill in the results and team names as the tournament went on. Upon delivery it was apparent that the board was bigger than anticipated and had to be situated outside the Civic Centre instead of in front of the Tourist Information Centre. Team name decals were delivered so that the scoreboard looked professional.

Issues faced

- Due to production issues the City Dressing for tournament time was delayed by approximately 4 weeks. This had an impact on the installation companies who had other work booked. It was disappointing and somewhat frustrating having met countless deadlines with England 2015 over the previous year only to be delayed at the eleventh hour
- Officers at both Councils also physically installed low-level bunting in the city centre and out at the branch line train stations near Sandy Park in mid-September, only for it to be removed before and during the tournament by enthusiastic fans wanting mementos
- The items provided by England 2015, such as the giant hashtag and 3D street art, were not of a suitable standard and did not last for more than a week. A significant amount of communication and organisation went into securing the locations for these items which in effect was wasted due to their poor quality
- Restrictions on locating branded items made it difficult to dress some parts of the city centre due to the nature of the shopping centres being enclosed or near to a conflicting brand of any sponsor (i.e. Heineken)
- Despite over a year of preparation there appeared to be a great deal of – potentially unnecessary – delays in providing the dressing and promotional items leading to last-minute issues and additional work on top of an already frantic schedule with the tournament time preparations

Summary and benefits

Overall the project came together in time for the tournament and many areas were displaying the bright colour palette of Rugby World Cup. The various aspects of the whole City Dressing project, including the yarn bombing, gave the city an air of excitement and created interest in visitors and residents alike. There were many tweets and news articles about the various dressing items. Additional thanks must go to Victoria Walsh at Devon County Council who provided a great deal of expertise and support on the project.

A number of the branded city dressing items have been donated to partners and the remaining items are being sold online by the City Council with all proceeds being split equally between the Lord Mayor's Charity - the Exeter Foundation, and BEEP - the RWC Legacy programme empowering young people who have found it difficult to get on the career ladder. The sale closes on 14 January 2016. The yarn bombing material and crafted bunting has been donated to Scrapstore who will offer it for future community use.

Caroline Winyard
Project Officer

APPENDIX 5

Rugby World Cup 2015 - Volunteer Programme

Background

The City Council nominated a Project Officer from within the Economy team to engage with the Volunteer Programme for RWC 2015 and to be responsible for liaising with England 2015 in all aspects of the Volunteer Programme, including recruitment, training and supervision of the Fanzone volunteers. A Volunteer Plan document also had to be compiled detailing the process to be taken for managing the project, identifying number of volunteers required for the Fanzone, role descriptions, training, scheduling, reward and recognition, and legacy.

Recruitment

The Volunteer Programme launched nationally in January 2013 promoting The Pack and the City Council supported England 2015 in the local area by advertising the opportunity to as many partners as possible through a variety of media channels. The City Council was offered 10 guaranteed interview places which were offered to staff within the Council who had to go through the interview process to secure a place in The Pack.

The interviews, called the Try-Outs, were held by England 2015 with the help of a number of local volunteer interviewers at the University of Exeter during July 2014. These people were trained in advance in interviewing techniques and assisted during the 7 days of 'Try-Outs'. In Exeter 900 people were interviewed for approximately 350 volunteer places which included 30 Fanzone roles. The Project Officer from the Council was one of the interviewers so obtained first-hand experience of the applicants and was able to meet potential candidates for the Fanzone team.

Funding

There was no separate budget available for the Volunteer Programme so a great deal of work was done in kind, such as support from Active Devon and England 2015. Uniform identical to the rest of The Pack was obtained free of charge from England 2015, as well as reward items and mementos for each member of the Fanzone volunteer team.

Training & Scheduling

A separate training package was created by the Project Officer as the one provided by England 2015 was not particularly relevant. It included a bespoke Red Coat Guided tour of the city centre and complimentary visits to the Cathedral, Underground Passages, Royal Albert Memorial Museum and a Red Coat Guided tour, followed by a second session covering customer care, security awareness and Exeter knowledge. This was delivered by the Project Officer with the support of David Adcock, Visitor Facilities Officer, Val Wilson, Fanzone Manager (Arts and Events Manager), and Andrew Reason of the Counter-Terrorism Intelligence Unit of Devon and Cornwall Police, at no extra cost.

Thirty people were offered Fanzone Volunteer roles and 28 were able to fulfil their minimum shifts by the start of the tournament; two had to drop out due to personal reasons, and at that stage it was too late to recruit for the two vacancies as specifically sized uniform had already been received and team training given.

The Pack in its entirety consisted of around 6,000 volunteers nationwide and they were all invited to the 'Kick-Off' event at Milton Keynes stadium in May 2015 as a team-building exercise. Some of the Exeter volunteers were engaged earlier on in the lead-up to the tournament by helping during the Domestic Trophy Tour in June 2015, and with the Bunting and Yarn Bombing City Dressing project in August and September. A Facebook group was set up specifically for communication between the team and information from the City Council was passed through this medium as well as via email.

Shift schedules were organised by the Project Officer in consultation with the Fanzone Manager and the Security team. When on site the volunteers were paired up in their roles for personal

safety and to help build team relationships. Some of the thirteen Fanzone operational dates were long shifts so these were split into two volunteer shifts where appropriate, and a maximum of 8 hours per shift was offered, although in reality some people worked longer shifts due to absence in the team or simply because they enjoyed what they were doing and wanted to be there.

Operational Review

On the whole absence in the team was very low, despite England being knocked out of the Pool stage and Fanzone attendance diminishing. The volunteers were repeatedly commended on their enthusiasm, helpfulness and knowledge throughout the tournament and they went the extra mile where possible, such as escorting people in wheelchairs around the gardens, remembering people when they returned another day, advising of places to visit while the guests were staying in Exeter and being thoroughly knowledgeable about Rugby and the World Cup.

In approximate figures, there were just under 1,000 hours provided by the team of Volunteers in the Fanzone, and 8,500 miles travelled by road and rail. Volunteers travelled from far and wide, not just inside the county but from Barnstaple, Plymouth, Truro, Saltash, Weymouth, Southampton and even Norwich. The volunteers did not claim for any travel costs and attended in their own time, using holiday entitlement and giving up their weekends and evenings for free. Tea and coffee making facilities were provided by the production team along with bottled water, and the volunteers brought in cakes and chocolates to share. A £5 meal voucher was issued to each volunteer working a shift longer than 5 hours so that they could have a meal from any of the food vendors inside the Fanzone. This cost was covered from the Fanzone budget.

The volunteers were the face of the tournament, regardless of which team or role they were in, whether it was inside Sandy Park, on the walking routes to the stadium or to the Fanzone, or within the Fanzone itself. They all gave a lasting and good impression of Exeter and visitors and residents commented on their unfailing enthusiasm. The Fanzone team in particular carried out every task asked of them with energy and dedication, including heavy lifting of inflatable games, assisting in the Five Nations Parade and standing at the entrance gates in the cold keeping smiles on their faces and greeting each and every visitor.

Reward and Recognition

As they were managed by the City Council, the Fanzone volunteer team were thanked in a small evening reception by the Lord Mayor in late November. Guests included the three England players from Exeter Chiefs, Jack Nowell, Henry Slade and Geoff Parling, accompanied by Tony Rowe OBE. A number of awards were given including Volunteer of the Year which went to a lady who had worked 11 out of the 13 days, travelled nearly a thousand miles by train to get to her shifts and continued to turn up even when she was ill. The prize of a night for two plus use of the facilities was donated by Woodbury Park Hotel and Golf Club, one of the team bases for Rugby World Cup. The event was supported by Active Devon and Join In UK, a national volunteering organisation.

Legacy

A key aspect of the Volunteer Programme was to create a lasting legacy, to engage with the volunteers to increase the amount of volunteers in rugby clubs in the region. A small database of around 200 names was collected at the Try-Outs of people who were willing to volunteer after the tournament, and messages have been sent to these people over the last year highlighting opportunities in rugby clubs and other sport organisations in the city. The RFU was provided with the database of The Pack applicants from England 2015 who had indicated they would be interested in future volunteering opportunities and the Council is working with Active Devon and Join In UK to promote roles available. A leaflet detailing non-sport, festival and event opportunities in the south west was included in a pack for the Fanzone volunteers at the Lord Mayors reception, and included events such as the Food Festival and Respect festival, and will be forwarded to the two databases. Comparison figures are not yet available however the Legacy programme will be reviewed at regular intervals over the next three years.

Caroline Winyard
Project Officer

APPENDIX 6

Rugby World Cup 2015 – Transport

Background

A transport working group was established to consider the transport issues and included representatives from England 2015, the Chiefs, the Police and other emergency services, Stagecoach, Dartline, First Great Western, Devon County Council and Exeter City Council and has been chaired by Devon County Council. The output from this group was a joint Venue Transport Plan detailing the transport arrangements for the three matches.

It was the intention from the start to base the transport operation as far as possible on the existing proven arrangements used for the regular Chiefs matches. However there were some significant differences, namely the playing of matches on a weekday, which meant that some regular local parking was unavailable, and the international focus. Of the three matches, the first was the most challenging from a transport perspective as the arrival times conflicted with the afternoon peak of traffic and the high background use of public transport towards Sandy Park both on buses and rail. Travel Demand Management was used to influence the behaviour of both background demand and encouraging spectators to arrive at the ground early. Westpoint was designated as the Park and Ride operation with ticket holders being able to book places on-line through the Chief's website and obtain a discount from just arriving on the day. Public transport operators also augmented their services to meet the expected demand and provided services up to three hours after the games finish.

Operational Review

Devon County Council's Highways Operations Control Centre (HOCC) was chosen as the coordination centre to manage the transport arrangements outside the stadium as well as hosting the Police Silver Commander and representatives from other emergency services England 2015, Highways England, the City Council and County Council. Strong communication links were established with the stadium, the Twickenham control room and transport providers.

Tuesday 29th Sept 4:45pm Tonga – Namibia

This was the most challenging match from a transport perspective with spectator arrivals coinciding with peak afternoon traffic in the city. The key points of note were:

- Effective Travel Demand Management (TDM) using variable message signs (VMS) and media to encourage early arrival at stadium and for commuters to avoid the peak arrival times at the stadium
- Radio Devon embedded within the HOCC providing regular bulletins about the travel situation
- Good awareness that Digby Park and Ride and Sowton 30 were unavailable, vehicles that did arrive being directed to Westpoint
- Some congestion built up around city and M5 J30 but relatively short-lived and very clear by 4:30pm.
- 1165 people used the park and ride facility at Westpoint with about 700 pre-booked.
- Augmented Stagecoach C service (6 per hour rather than 4) was effective
- Great Western Railway arranged for a fleet of ten coaches to support their expected shortfall in rail capacity with just over half being used
- Good egress generally on all services with some rail delays to Exmouth due to breakdowns.
- Queuing conflict for park and ride at South Stand exit required some intervention and improvements for future matches
- Some concerns about lack of lighting at Westpoint
- No traffic issues at time of egress.

Wednesday 7th Oct 8pm Namibia – Georgia

The challenge for this match was ensuring that all spectators were able to get home after the match with the late finish. It was exacerbated by the extended first half, which meant that the match ended about 20 minutes later than planned. The key points of note were:

- No highway issues affecting arrival at stadium
- About 1100 vehicles using Westpoint, parking within the showground in a floodlit area.
- Arrangements for Park and Ride egress improved to include waiting pens for each coach and better queuing.
- Some conflict with Park and ride buses returning caught in queue with taxis arriving due to late finish of match. This delayed some journeys to the park and ride but queues were cleared by about 11:45pm.
- Public transport egress services were very effective and queues cleared by about 11:45pm.
- Contingencies planned to transport fans to Bristol and London but were not required.
- No traffic problems on the highway network at egress.

Sunday 11th Oct 14:30 Italy – Romania

This match was managed more in line with a Chief's game, with both Digby Park and Ride car park and Sowton 30 available for parking. The key point for this match were:

- Football match at St James' Park kicking off at midday did not have an impact on travel arrangements to Sandy Park
- About 1014 vehicles using the Westpoint Park and Ride service, nearly 600 pre-booked
- No significant conflict with Bridal Fayre at Westpoint – well segregated.
- A fleet of double-decker buses were used for egress to improve egress to Park and Ride and queues subsided by about 5:30pm.
- Public transport services operated well with no significant delays
- One major incident on the highway network at M5 J31 after match but this did not have a significant effect on traffic leaving the match.

SUMMARY

The extensive planning and preparation of the Venue Transport Operating Plan and the close working of all the key players clearly paid dividends in delivering successful transport plan. Whilst there were some minor learning points at each match, there were no significant issues that prevented spectators from arriving at the stadium in good time for the start of the match, or leaving within a reasonable time at the end of the match.

Travel Demand Management was very effective in influencing travel behaviour for the first match.

A survey undertaken after the first match indicated that there was an overall rating of 7.5/10 for overall match-day transport experience which is seen as excellent.

There was excellent communication and working arrangements between the County Council, City Council, the police and other emergency services, Highways England, Stagecoach, Dartline and Great Western Railway, the Rugby World Cup, Sandy Park and the Fanzone which enabled the minor issues to be resolved quickly, and the review process enabled improvements to be implemented between games effectively. Skype group messaging proved to be an effective form of communication between remote control locations, and it is recommended that this is considered for other applications.

The use of the County Council's Highways Operations Control Centre proved an effective location away from the stadium to manage the transport operations and for the Police to oversee their command of the event.

Chris Cranston
Devon County Council



**Department
for Culture
Media & Sport**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

18 NOV 2015

Minister for Sport, Tourism and Heritage
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100 Parliament Street
London SW1A 2BQ

020 7211 6000

www.gov.uk/dcms

Karime Hassan
Chief Executive & Growth Director
Exeter City Council
Paris Street
Exeter EX1 1JJ

CMS 275101/asg
12th November 2015

Dear Karime

I am writing on behalf of Her Majesty's Government to express my gratitude to you and your team for Exeter City Council's involvement in running what has been a memorable and successful Rugby World Cup 2015.

It has been an incredible effort from all concerned to stage such an event, and I hope that you enjoyed the three games played at Sandy Park.

I would also like to mention the success of the Fanzones, including the one in Exeter, which have allowed thousands more people to feel closer to the tournament and to enjoy their own experiences, even if they were unable to get to a game.

I hope that you have felt, and continue to feel, the local benefits of hosting such a high profile tournament and am sure you will be open to engaging in future major events.

Thank you so much for your hard work and effort in helping England and Wales put on one of the best Rugby World Cups in history. You should all be very proud.

Yours sincerely

Tracey Crouch MP
Minister for Sport



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England 2015

England Rugby 2015 Limited
Webb Ellis House, Rugby Road,
Twickenham, Middlesex TW1 1DZ

6th November 2015

Karime Hassan
Chief Executive & Growth Director
Exeter City Council
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Exeter EX1 1JJ

T 033 2015 7800
E enquiries@england2015.com
F 033 2015 7808
W rugbyworldcup.com

Dear Karime,

On behalf of England 2015 and Rugby World Cup Limited I would like to thank you and your team for your city's contribution to making this the best ever Rugby World Cup.

We hope you have enjoyed hosting the matches and that the tournament leaves a lasting impression and positive memories for residents and visitors alike.

We'd particularly like to thank Richard Ball, Caroline Wynyard, Val Wilson, Victoria Hatfield, Catherine White and Chris Cranston for all their hard work and diligence and for working so closely with us over the last two and half years.

I think you will agree that by working in partnership the tournament has been a huge success for Exeter and in particular we would like to thank the Council for delivering such a fantastic Fanzone and such a vibrant city centre entertainment program. All these activities showed off the city of Exeter to a global audience and made for an incredible few weeks in the City.

Once again many thanks for your efforts and we hope that you are proud of what you have achieved as a Rugby World Cup host city.

Stephen Brown
Managing Director

cc: Paul Smith, Head of City Delivery, E2015

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REPORT TO SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ECONOMY AND EXECUTIVE

Date of Meeting: 21 January 2016 and 26 January 2016

Report of: Museums Manager & Cultural Lead

Title: RAMM Digital Media Road Map and Progress.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

* One that affects finances over £1m or significantly affects two or more wards. If this is a key decision then the item must be on the appropriate forward plan of key decisions.

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Executive

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. This report focuses on RAMM's digital roadmap for the period 2015-18. The period is set by the major funding coming from RAMM's Major Partner Museum Funding (in partnership with Plymouth Museum & Art Gallery) from Arts Council England (ACE). The road map is to provide a structure to digital development and allow progress to be tracked against timescales.

2. Recommendations:

That Scrutiny Committee - Economy requests the Executive to approve the following:-

- 2.1. The implementation of the RAMM digital road map as extant at December 2015 (see Annexe 1 below);
- 2.2. Delegated authority to be given to the Museum Manager to decide to apply any necessary adjustments to the road map as necessitated by changes in resources or funding from external factors;
- 2.3. To agree that a follow up report is produced for Members to present the results and findings around the implementation of the road map. Regular reporting to ACE and ECC will capture changes to existing digital products.
- 2.4. To note outcomes of the work that deliver both Exeter City Council objectives and those of its partner, Arts Council England.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

- 3.1. Associated with museum collections (a 'library' of objects) is a huge amount of knowledge and information which can be distributed and shared and used by everyone through digital media and platforms.
- 3.2. RAMM has a track record of innovation and success with its digital work. This includes recognition from the Museums Association, Museum Next International Museums Conference, UK Museums on the Web, National Museum Directors Council and the Arts and Humanities Research Council. RAMM seeks to make its digital products

sustainable and build on this success, rather than creating sequential projects with limited lifespan or no lasting value or identity.

- 3.3. The planned development of RAMM's principal website will be covered in another report. It is worth noting that the main museum website acts as the centre of RAMM's online presence connecting collections websites, partnership websites, social media, museum Wi-Fi login and providing a source of best practice case studies. Any new initiatives seek to preserve this relationship to help the online visitor in finding and exploring our digital offer.
- 3.4. The digital landscape is constantly changing both in terms of how different technologies work and how they are used. Some years ago nobody would have linked a collections record on a website to Facebook but now it is odd not to do so. RAMM's digital offer seeks to keep up to date with technology and how online visitors expect to access and use content. This means user centred design to enable visitors to find what they want easily and catering for the move to increased use of mobile devices to access the web (but without forgetting desktop users). As a funding partner, the Arts Council, England makes specific reference to the important role of digital technologies and platforms in extending access and engagement to cultural content and experiences. It supports their Strategic Goal 2 'Everyone has the opportunity to experience and be inspired by the arts, museums and libraries'. The developmental work that is represented by the digital road map also relates to the MPM leadership responsibilities of ACE Goal 4 "The museums sector is marked by its excellent leadership; its workforce generally is diverse and highly skilled".
- 3.5. Partnerships can help us deliver better visitor experiences online. From impact evaluation to visitor experience partners can add a fresh perspective and help in unlocking funding. A recent example is redeveloping how stories are added to the Moor Stories website in conjunction with the University of Exeter's contribution to the national Being Human festival of humanities.
- 3.6. Keeping the digital offer evolving and sustainable allows RAMM to function and meet the expectations of online visitors and funders.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.

- 4.1. The Museums Computer Group, and other museum sector digital experts including SUMO, the Collections Trust, place RAMM at the advanced end of the museum sector digital scale. This means digital technologies are used across the museum to allow staff to work more efficiently and effectively, delivering for their efforts greater public benefit. Significantly RAMM has gone beyond a digital strategy for a minority of staff to an inclusive approach across the museum steered by the Museum Management Team and the Digital Media Officer. Colleagues across the museum from Visitor Services and Audience Development use and create digital content as part of their interaction with the public. This is monitored by the RAMM Digital Media Officer and Collections & Audiences Assistant. The Museum Management Team will keep an overview to ensure adequate resources are provided for this work, its coordination within teams and to address any unexpected challenges.
- 4.2. The museum operates a distributed publishing model so staff across the museum are already responsible for their own web pages and content on the main RAMM website, collections websites, partnership projects and blogs, exhibitions and externally funded projects (HMS Challenger and the Research Collection being examples). This digital

inclusion creates and develops skills with support from line managers. It ensures staff involvement and commitment to making digital based work a success.

- 4.3. The digital development of cultural organisation is a key priority for Arts Council England. The financial resources for the RAMM's work come from the Arts Council England Major Partner Museum budget for 2015-18 that includes improving access to collections. This emphasis on access to collections is reflected by the collections team's commitment to using digital as a tool to deliver information and content. Again effective working is done through planning and techniques such as creating once and publishing everywhere. This can be using a digital image of an object on a website, in a news story and on social media.
- 4.4. The creative and development work entailed by the digital roadmap will be led and managed by RAMM often working in conjunction with partners or specialist contractors. Many of the Museum's websites (including the main website) are externally hosted. Some digital activities are linked to ECC networks and along with the IT infrastructure needed to deliver these projects, are supported by Strata as part of its wider technical work and services with ECC.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

- 5.1 There are no additional financial implications contained in this report.

6. What are the legal aspects?

- 6.1 Legal advice on this report has not been sought.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

- 7.1 This report raises no issues for the Monitoring Officer.

8. Report details:

- 8.1 These proposals form part of RAMM's drive to make the most of its growing online audience, connecting the website offer to visitor behaviour to make a positive contribution to increasing visitor footfall in the museum and city and to extend the audience reach and engagement with museum's activities through take up of digital services. From its online presence project 2007-2010 to the present RAMM has seen website use grow from 10,090 annual visits prior to having a distinct museum website to 43,892 after reopening to the last calendar year's 144,300. Similar growth has occurred across social media channels with 11,206 followers on Twitter and daily engagement.
- 8.2 Having concrete data that was not available in the online presence project is a great help in this work. Google Analytics provides evidence of visitor behaviour on websites, from which pages are visited to how long online visitors spend on pages and the route visitors take through the website. All of RAMM's websites include Google Analytics.
- 8.3 RAMM keeps its social media offer fresh by using platforms its online visitors use. Again statistics are maintained to inform development. For example Flickr has been replaced by Instagram because visitors use it and this has enabled a successful online campaign in support of Whatever the Weather exhibition - #devonweather. Similarly use of Foursquare dropped and museum visitors prefer checking in on Facebook so the RAMM Foursquare page was closed and staff time put into Facebook.

- 8.4 There is also the opportunity to share lessons learned with RAMM's Major Partner Museum funded partner Plymouth Museum & Art Gallery (PCMAG). A digital evaluation for both museums was facilitated by SUMO (sector digital specialists) in April 2013 that fed into the RAMM digital road map. The future development of South West Collections Explorer as a resource for collections of all sizes through a tiered buy in from other regional museums will include PCMAG.
- 8.5 Income generation is already present with the Bridgeman Art Library providing licensed images to publishers. Work funded by ACE in 2015 allowed a significant development of RAMM's print on demand website delivered through Bridgeman (to avoid spend on staff time and printing and distribution that an in house service would need). This offer being retail orientated is also present on the RAMM Collections website encouraging visitors to click through and buy a print of the object photograph they are looking at. Books and exhibition related items are currently sold through the Devon Museum Group's Website as a way of reaching a bigger market. This will be kept under review.
- 8.6 Our on-line presence offers scope for fundraising. Fundraising does not currently have a high profile on RAMM's online offer. With RAMM's appointment of a Development Officer (with MPM funding) this will be an area of expansion in the planning period. Sector best practice and opportunities in keeping with the reputation of RAMM and ECC will inform this work.
- 8.7 Our digital presence reflects RAMM's role as a steward of very significant collections and associated knowledge. It enables the museum to engage wider audiences, maintain a dialogue and work in partnership at many levels.
- 8.8 This paragraph maps RAMM's online presence.

RAMM's Web presence:

Main website <http://www.rammuseum.org.uk/>

Social media:

Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/RAMMuseum>

YouTube <http://www.youtube.com/user/RAMMuseumExeter>

Twitter <http://twitter.com/RAMMuseum>

Instagram <http://instagram.com/rammuseum>

Pinterest <http://www.pinterest.com/rammuseum>

Collections websites:

South West Collections Explorer <http://swcollectionsexplorer.org.uk/>

RAMM Collections <http://rammcollections.org.uk/>

RAMM Research Collection <http://rammcollections.org.uk/research/research-opportunities.ashx>

Exeter Time Trail – includes mobile tours and online games

<http://www.rammtimetrail.org.uk/>

World Cultures – ACE designated collection with linked funding

<http://rammworldcultures.org.uk/>

Big Box – collecting and conservation game <http://bigbox.rammuseum.org.uk/>

HMS Challenger <https://www.hmschallenger.net/>

Income generation

Tickets and bookings <http://exeterramm.admit-one.eu/>

Images for publication <https://www.bridgemanimages.com/en-GB/collections/collection/royal-albert-memorial-museum/>

Print on demand <http://www.art.co.uk/gallery/id--b1761714/royal-albert-memorial-museum-art-gallery-posters.htm>

Online shop <http://www.devonmuseums.net/Royal-Albert-Memorial-Museum-and-Art-Gallery/E-Commerce/>

Partnership projects

Moor Stories – created with the University of Exeter <http://www.moorstories.org.uk/>

Time Trail Tours – funded by REACT (Research and Enterprise in Arts and Creative Technology) <http://www.rammtimetrail.org.uk/Go-Mobile/>

Church Detective – funded by REACT <http://www.churchdetective.org.uk/>

Blogs

The Leventis Project Blog <https://rammleventisproject.wordpress.com/>

Apps

Masters of the Moor – using RAMM’s art collection with augmented reality <https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/masters-of-the-moor/id913210448>

9. How does the decision contribute to the Council’s Corporate Plan?

- 9.1 These proposals connect with the City Council’s purpose to ‘provide great things to see and do’ with a focus on meeting customers’ needs. The practical outcomes from this work are intended to enhance online visitor access to collections, engagement, enjoyment, learning and interaction. There are tangible connections with health and wellbeing aims and they encourage participation by supporting and extending the ‘in museum’ activity to a wider audience.

10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

- 10.1 Meeting the ACE (and other external funders like the John Ellerman Foundation) funding and cash flow agreements is crucial and risk is best mitigated by keeping to planned deadlines and ensuring project management best practice is observed. RAMM has a strong record in its digital delivery and it is important to the success of further funding bids that this is maintained. Failing to deliver a successful outcome for visitors is a risk if evidential data of visitor behaviour is not used to inform developments and is best mitigated by support for work by the museum management team. External risks are delays by contractors and this can be mitigated by thorough checks of references as part of the procurement process and with an agreed implementation plan.
- 10.2 Rapid changes in the digital world means where new standards and opportunities arise over the course of the period covered by the road map there is a risk of losing these due to lack of time and resources. Wherever possible this can be mitigated by including new and forthcoming products in any planning, procurement, post evaluation revisions and being financially prudent. It is important that the road map is kept under regular review and adjusted to respond to external opportunities and needs.

11. What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?

- 11.1 The main RAMM website will continue to promote campaigns that benefit health and wellbeing, such as 5 Steps to Happy. It will also hold case studies in working with vulnerable groups and communities that feed into both council and museum sector aims for health and wellbeing.
- 11.2 At a practical level web standards will apply to any website including internationally recognised W3C accessibility. The AA standard is applied with the aim of achieving AAA, to ensure any disabled online visitors have the best browsing experience possible.
- 11.3 Any new, or redeveloped, digital offer will seek to apply best practice in user centred design. Whether making web sites responsive so they work across devices (PCs, laptops, tablets and mobiles) or simply encouraging staff to use plain English in writing for the web.
- 11.4 The practice of using social media that online visitors use by “voting with their feet” means RAMM is accommodating visitors through meeting them on the digital platforms they prefer to use for engaging with the museum. It also includes a recognition that some visitors and platforms prefer different types of engagement and communication to others and new ones will emerge as others decline in popularity.

12. Are there any other options?

- 12.1 For RAMM's online visitors and museum visitors accessing online content via the museum Wi-Fi the digital offer is part of the museum service. Visitors expect this service to evolve with technology and to reflect visitors' preferences. If RAMM's digital offer were to fall behind this would be damaging for RAMM and ECC's reputation, deliver a poor visitor experience and result in withdrawal of present and future funding.

Camilla Hampshire
Museums Manager & Cultural Lead

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

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

Contact for enquires:
Democratic Services (Committees)
Room 2.3
01392 265275

Annexe A RAMM Digital Roadmap 2015 - 18

RAMM aims to reflect best practice and innovation in the museum sector. This approach to digital seeks to reflect the move to digital authenticity in the museum and heritage sector. In practice this means using digital technologies as an operational strand across museum planning and work, rather than it being a task done separated from other activities.

RAMM also works closely with key sector stakeholders that support digital working, including the Collections Trust, South West Museums Development Programme, The Museum Computer Group and Museum Next.

Funding sources for digital work are Exeter City Council, Arts Council England (as part of RAMM's Major Partner Museum Status) plus awards and grants to support specific projects. RAMM seeks to make all work, projects and products resilient and sustainable within museum resources.

ONLINE PRODUCTS

Product	Aspiration	Benefits	External partners/contractors	Risks
South West Collections Explorer – RAMM sub site	Encourage use of API	Greater use of RAMM's collections and promotion of collections to wider and specific audiences	ACE - funder Nexus OS - contractor API key holders – registered users	Risk: Lack of take up as lack of promotion Mitigation: use sector contacts and networks, HE sector researchers and networks and tech networks

Product	Aspiration	Benefits	External partners/contractors	Risks
South West Collections Explorer	Add more collections and channel collections onto Culture Grid and Europeana	User experience enhanced Access to individual collections and their collections promoted; User generated content; concrete evidence of RAMM's digital leadership and best practice	Collections Trust – sets standards for museum sector data ACE - funder Nexus OS - contractor Culture Grid – UK collections aggregator Europeana – European collections aggregator	Risk: Some museums may not have resources to add representative collection; some may not fit with Culture Grid Mitigation: specify minimum standards for collections and develop a tiered participation model; adopt OAI-PMH data model for better fit with Culture Grid and Europeana
Exeter Time Trail and Mobile Trails	Improve visitor experience and move collections outside of the museum with platform developed with University of Exeter Commercial realisation	Better experience, means better engagement; caters for mobile users outside the museum; supports location element of exhibitions	University of Exeter - partner 1010 Media - contractor	Risk: Staff resources to produce new content limited Mitigation: Use student placements and research outputs to create new content guided by collections staff

Product	Aspiration	Benefits	External partners/contractors	Risks
Masters of the Moor	Use experience gained for any future deployment of apps and augmented reality in supporting exhibitions/special projects	Provided RAMM experience of creating a complete simple augmented reality app for museum and heritage sector. Links to whole experience museum outside of the museum ethos; easy to grasp model of location + collection + interaction	ACE - funder 1010 Media - contractor Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) – partner on Dartmoor related Projects	Risk: No promotion; No takers, no commercial management Mitigation: use as reference point for future development and foundation for adding more related objects that benefit form augmented reality
Museum website	Increase personalisation – initially with a responsive website then with enhanced personalisation around events, exhibitions and interests and join up museum offer	Mobile usage of website increasing steadily and better experience gives more visitor buy in to RAMM and its ethos; joining online offer through core website gives clear access for visitors; improves staff content creation and authoring skills	ACE - funder Toucan Design – website contractor Admit One – tickets and events contractor	Risk: Limited resources; mobile is rapidly evolving; RAMM website complex and needs rebuilding to deliver responsive solution; dated content needs editing Mitigation: Management Team support, use of volunteers in quantitative work, include future proofing in requirements, use evidence from Google Analytics and user feedback in decision making

Product	Aspiration	Benefits	External partners/contractors	Risks
Moor Stories	Continue to develop as resource for museum and Dartmoor visitors	Build up a core user base and use the website as a resource for creative writing at RAMM and elsewhere; support from volunteer run social media; resource for schools, businesses and community use	University of Exeter - partner Dartmoor National Park Authority – partner on Dartmoor related projects Local History Societies – super users 1010 Media - contractor	Risk: Funding not available; staff resources; DNPA lack of involvement Mitigation: support form University with events, user testing and promotion, embed in any partner work with DNPA

SOFTWARE AND HARDWARE PRODUCTS

Product	Aspiration	Benefits	External partners/contractors	Risks
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Product	Aspiration	Benefits	External partners/contractors	Risks
Filemaker Pro	Develop into a full digital asset management system and maximize potential of version 14 to deliver better ways of working and user experience	<p>Improve quality of database by allowing integration with other media, greater security and accountability, maintain Spectrum standard.</p> <p>DAMS saves staff time spent locating related content</p> <p>DAMS provides basis to create a knowledge hub for collections including document management</p> <p>Remote access for staff facilitates working in stores by replacing pen and paper and transcribing notes</p>	<p>Strata Services – ECC contractor (server, network and backup provision)</p> <p>Collections Trust (Spectrum standard)</p> <p>Sunnymedia – contractor</p> <p>Collections Trust - Sector best practice and collections data standards</p>	<p>Risk: Lack of staff resources in future; lack of funding for expert development; reduced Strata Services support</p> <p>Mitigation: use external resources to baseline DAMS, train staff to maximise potential of new system; keep Strata informed of developments and timescales, staff ensure external standards met</p>
Online ticketing and events	Simpler system with one input and improved user experience	Contemporary system give familiar user experience; users can browse events and buy tickets for more than one event; closer website integration; fully branded	<p>Admit One – lead contractor</p> <p>Toucan Design – contractor (events integration into website)</p> <p>Strata Services – ECC contractor (server provision)</p>	<p>Risk: Lack of staff resources and key stakeholder support</p> <p>Mitigation: Keep stakeholders informed and up to date, identify staff resources early and manage challenges,</p>

Product	Aspiration	Benefits	External partners/contractors	Risks
Video interactives	Ensure any new content connects to gallery and interpretation changes	Easier to maintain and control Better value for money with integrated players and screens	Maintenance contractor Strata- ECC contractor (for network)	Rick: Resources; maintenance costs and time Mitigation: Use staff time effectively by having agreed formats, clear roles on who does what, distinguish between maintenance, repairs and new work to optimise budget
Audio interactives	Ensure any new content connects to gallery and interpretation changes	Audio no longer reliant on AMX timer and direct switching is easier for staff to control	Maintenance contractor Strata- ECC contractor (for network)	Rick: Resources; maintenance costs and time Mitigation: Use staff time effectively by having agreed formats, clear roles on who does what, distinguish between maintenance, repairs and new work to optimise budget
Software interactives	Deliver good quality user experience and keep content up to date with displays.	Learn from best practice in wider heritage sector. Gradual roll out avoids overstretching staff resources	Maintenance contractor Strata- ECC contractor (for network) Spiral – creative contractor	Risk: Cost of any replacement hardware, staff resources; maintenance costs and time Mitigation: maintain a bank of spare equipment, compare repair versus replace for best value for money, balance staff time versus contractor cost

DIGITAL SUPPORT

Product	Aspiration	Benefits	External partners/contractors	Risks
Susan Collins installation	Deliver a high quality digital commission as part of the Whatever the Weather exhibition	Delivers creative digital content specific to locations known to RAMM's core and relating to change and uncertainty theme of exhibition	Susan Collins - artist National Trust – partner ACE – funder Strata- ECC contractor (for network)	Risk: hardware failure in gallery or on site Mitigation: artist supplied hardware, backup plan with USB stick slideshow for hardware failure on site
Exhibitions and events	Provide relevant digital support to deliver effective experiences	Takes an exhibition or event into another dimension; delivers extra content and value; visitors sharing about RAMM provide additional publicity via personal endorsement; we benefit from leveraging partners and others existing audiences;	Lenders – other collections eg British Museum, ACE collection, individuals Workshop and event leaders – Contractors – for specific products Strata- ECC contractor (for network) Partners – National Trust, ACE, individual collectors and artists, National and regional museums	Risk: Project creep; under resourcing; lack of planning Mitigation: include digital elements in the early stage of exhibition planning process, use a risk and benefit analysis for each project
Audience Development	Provide relevant digital support to deliver goals and digital culture and	Enable digital products and activities that join up to RAMM's overall vision, goals and existing	Contractors – as required, for example Toucan Design for	Risk: Resources; lack of staff engagement; change management

Product	Aspiration	Benefits	External partners/contractors	Risks
	exploit RAMM's mature social media presence	digital channels, platforms and culture; meeting Generation Z expectations	website developments or special features Partners – for exhibitions, festivals and joint working, for example the Art fund, ACE, University of Exeter Suppliers – as required for specific items from posters to interactives GovDelivery – for bespoke newsletters Harlequin – contractor for Customer Record Management linked to Admit One and other systems	Mitigation: Plan to accommodate changes in visitor behaviour and migrate to social platforms of visitor choice, use regular meetings to coordinate communications, work with external partners to deliver joined up work and widen audience
Front of House	Provide relevant digital support to deliver goals and digital culture	Enable digital products and activities that join up to RAMM's overall vision, goals and existing digital channels, platforms and culture; use staff skills and enthusiasm for digital	Contractors – as required for new and existing hardware Partners – from artists like Susan Collins to organisations like the	Risk: Resources; lack of staff engagement; change management Mitigation: repeat briefings to ensure all staff are reached (seven day rotas mean not all staff are in at

Product	Aspiration	Benefits	External partners/contractors	Risks
			British Museum providing digital resources Suppliers – as required Strata- ECC contractor (for network)	once), harness staff enthusiasm and wish to do a good job to create a 'can do' culture, respond quickly to requests for help
Fundraising	Apply sector and further best practice to RAMM digital products	Digital native audience addressed; visitors to donors and vice versa applied online; joined up campaigns	Donate Trainers Champions	Risk: Resources; lessons not tailored to RAMM audience Mitigation: Work with RAMM Development Officer and marketing team, provide a resource of best practice knowledge

WIDER MPM WORK

Product	Aspiration	Benefits	External partners/contractors	Risks

Product	Aspiration	Benefits	External partners/contractors	Risks
Digital & Cultural Tourism Think Tank	Using digital to enable and add value to cultural tourism in the region	Delivering cultural participation; creating a connection that can be replicated; fostering partnerships and encouraging focus on sustainable working together; long term planning; museum contribution to content lead marketing for cultural tourism	ACE - funder SWMDP – funded by ACE to support all South West museums ECC – Economy partners for example Heart of Devon	Risk: Duplication between MPM and SWMDP; lack of buy-in from partners; resources to market the resulting offer; failing to identify the audience Mitigation: REACH South West coordinators now appointed to coordinate and deliver work, keep in touch with SWMDP through their digital group
Digital Think Tank	To address trends, opportunities and concerns in current and projected digital practice	Demonstrate that there is digital energy and innovation beyond connected centres	ACE - funder SWMDP – funded by ACE to support all South West museums	Risk: Duplication between MPM and SWMDP; keynote does not attract audience Mitigation: REACH South West coordinators now appointed to coordinate and deliver work, keep in touch with SWMDP through their digital group

Product	Aspiration	Benefits	External partners/contractors	Risks
South West Collections Explorer	To make this into a regional collections access and engagement hub linking to Culture Grid and Europeana	Cost effective digital engagement for collections of any size; option to combine collections for ROI; developing platform to stay current; API to provide export to other products; add new objects at own pace; shop window for cultural tourists looking to explore collections; resource for events and exhibitions	ACE - funder Nexus OS - contractor	<p>Risk: Cuts to funding prevent access to collections being a priority; lack of promotion;</p> <p>Mitigation: Use development opportunities to add tiered 'buy in' for collections thus increasing take up, work with REACH South West coordinator, work with Culture Grid and Europeana to ensure digital take up is maintained across national and international collections aggregation websites</p>

Product	Aspiration	Benefits	External partners/contractors	Risks
Exeter as MPM digital exemplar	Build on RAMM's reputation as a source of digital good practice within the region, sector and local authority museum community with a digital first visitor experience	From pre-visit browsing to post visit reviews and sharing providing an intuitive complete digital museum experience for visitors gives value and helps move visitors toward being regular visitors, donors and members	ACE – funder REACH South West Coordinators - contractors	<p>Risk: Changes in human/digital interaction move too fast; only cater for niche audience; fail to link to physical offer sufficiently</p> <p>Mitigation: future proof new work by including visitor behaviour from web analytics and feedback plus trends in the wider digital world, use existing platforms (like Trip Advisor) instead of trying to create our own, and apply lessons learnt by others in the sector</p>

Product	Aspiration	Benefits	External partners/contractors	Risks
HMS Challenger digital implementation 2015-2016 and maintenance to 2020	To deliver the planned online resource secured from external funding in 2015 and populate content then maintain as a an active resource for participating museums and users	Project delivered on time and meeting funder's and stakeholders' requirements; leadership and best practice role in collections data publishing demonstrated; provide a digital research resource	John Ellerman Foundation - funder Natural History Museum – lead partner 19 participating museums - partners SSL - contractor	Risk: Project creep; museum data not ready; IPR disputes; trainee time limited by contract Mitigation: use past experience to project manage effectively, meet funder's reporting deadlines, ensure museum trainee devotes time to data gathering and checking

A note on timescales

Where external funding is involved RAMM needs to meet the funder's deadline. Funders will not accept delays to work caused by slow internal decision making.

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

Date of Meeting: 26 January 2016

Report of: Assistant Director Finance

Title: 2016/17 COUNCIL TAX BASE AND NNDR1

Is this a Key Decision?

No

* One that affects finances over £1m or significantly affects two or more wards. If this is a key decision then the item must be on the appropriate forward plan of key decisions.

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Executive

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 To set the 2016/17 Council Tax base in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 1.2 To seek approval that the Council's estimate of Business Rate Income (NNDR1) for the next financial year is delegated to the Assistant Director Finance.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 In accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Exeter City Council as its tax base for the year 2016/17 shall be 35,429.
- 2.1 That the section 151 Officer is delegated responsibility to approve the Council's NNDR1 return by 31 January 2016.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

- 3.1 To ensure that the Council meets its statutory deadline for notifying Precepting Authorities and the Government by 31 January 2016.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.

- 4.1 Both the Council Taxbase and the NNDR1 provide key information used to calculate the overall resources available to the Council, Government and Preceptors in the following financial year.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

5.1 Approval of the report is a statutory requirement in respect of the Taxbase. There is an increase of 679 Band D equivalent properties compared to the 2015/16 Taxbase.

6. What are the legal aspects?

6.1 The requirement to set the Council Tax base is set out in the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

7.1 This report raises no issues for the Monitoring Officer.

8. Report details:

8.1 BACKGROUND

8.1.1 In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, Exeter City Council as a billing authority will be issuing Council Tax bills to occupiers of property in March 2016, effective from 1 April.

8.1.2 As a first step to calculating the Council Tax itself, the City Council is required by legislation to determine a tax base by the 31 January for the following financial year.

8.1.3 Based on a valuation list received from the Valuation Officer, the calculation, in simple terms, involves three steps, namely :

- i. the determination of the number of chargeable dwellings;
- ii. an assessment of disregards, premiums and discounts, and
- iii. the equivalent number of band D properties and a collection rate.

8.1.4 The calculation of the Taxbase now includes the impact of the new Council Tax Support Scheme, which significantly reduces the Council's income from Council Tax. The Council Tax Support Scheme was initially approved by the Executive in December 2012 and has not been changed. In order to reflect the increased risk of non-recovery, which may result from the move to Local Council Tax Support, the Collection Rate has been reduced to 97% from 98% since introduction.

8.2 COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2016/17

8.2.1 The Council Tax Base for Exeter is set out in table 8.1 and in Appendix A. It is estimated that the equivalent number of Band D properties (Gross taxbase) for 2016/17 (including the reduction in dwellings owing to the Council Tax Support Scheme) will be 36,525, an increase of 700 over 2015/16.

- 8.2.2 To this figure the estimated collection rate of 97% for the year is applied, which results in a net Council Tax base of 35,429, an increase of 679 over the 2015/16 figure of 34,750.

Table 3.1 – Taxbase 2016/17

Taxbase	2016/17 Gross Taxbase	2016/17 Net Taxbase (97%)
Taxbase to be used in calculating the council tax for 2015/16	36,525	35,429

8.3 BUSINESS RATES RETENTION

- 8.3.1 Under the new Business Rates Retention funding, the Council has to provide DCLG with an estimate of its Business Rate Income for the forthcoming year. However due to the changes in the funding and the local/central share, DCLG require the estimate (completed on a NNDR1 form) to be compiled and formally submitted by January 31st. The Council must also share this information with Devon County Council and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service who are also affected. DCLG have stated that, in their view, the decision to approve the NNDR1 can be delegated to the section 151 Officer and this report seeks approval for such delegation as the figures have not yet been calculated (The Council requires an annual software update in order to calculate the NNDR1 form).

9. How does the decision contribute to the Council’s Corporate Plan?

- 9.1 The approval of the Taxbase enables the Council to calculate the budget available for the following financial year.

10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

- 10.1 Not applicable.

11. What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?

- 11.1 Not applicable

12. Are there any other options?

- 12.1 Not applicable

Assistant Director Finance

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

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

Contact for enquires:

Democratic Services (Committees)

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**EXETER CITY COUNCIL
2016/17 TAX BASE**

	BAND	TOTAL	A relief	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
LINE 1	No. OF CHARGEABLE DWELLINGS	50,095	20	9,581	14,068	12,603	7,576	3,669	1,707	841	30
LINE 2	No. OF DISCOUNTS	-10,120	-9	-3,758	-3,255	-1,925	-748	-262	-111	-49	-3
LINE 3	No OF ADDITIONS (TECHNICAL CHANGES)	94	0	11	32	27	13	4	5	2	0
LINE 4	WHOLE No. EQUIVALENT CHARGEABLE DWELLINGS	40,069	11	5,834	10,845	10,705	6,841	3,411	1,601	794	27
LINE 5	FRACTION TO APPLY TO ARRIVE AT BAND D EQUIVALENTS		5/9 ths	6/9 ths	7/9 ths	8/9 ths	1	11/9 ths	13/9 ths	15/9 ths	18/9 ths
LINE 6	BAND D EQUIVALENTS (PER CTB1)	36,546	6	3,889	8,435	9,516	6,841	4,169	2,313	1,323	54
	LESS HARDSHIP RELIEF	-22									
	TOTAL BAND D EQUIVALENTS	36,525									
LINE 7	COLLECTION RATE	97.00%									
LINE 8	EXETER CITY COUNCIL TAX BASE	35,429									

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REPORT TO Executive and Council
Date of Meeting: 26 January 2016 and 23 February 2016
Report of: Assistant Director Customer Access
Title: Debt Collection Policy in respect of
Council Tax Recovery, Rent and Former Tenancy Arrears
Recovery, Housing Benefit Overpayment Recovery and
Rechargeable Repairs Recovery

Is this a Key Decision? Yes

No

* One that affects finances over £1m or significantly affects two or more wards. If this is a key decision then the item must be on the appropriate forward plan of key decisions.

Is this an Executive or Council Function? Council

1. What is the report about?

This report proposes a policy for the collection of debts owed to the Council with respect to Council Tax Recovery, Rent and Related Charges Recovery, Housing Benefit Overpayment Recovery and Rechargeable Repairs Recovery

2. Recommendations:

Executive is requested to recommend the Policy to Council for approval.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

Ensuring that we have a clear Policy for the way that we will collect debt owed to the Council helps to ensure that our approach is transparent, fair and applied with consistency. It will also minimise the risk of legal challenge to our recovery action.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.

There are no specific resource implications of approving the Policy.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

A formal policy for a consistent approach to the recovery of debt is welcome. It would be beneficial if the policy could be extended to sundry debt, once that service has been bedded into the overall service.

6. What are the legal aspects?

The Policy gives us a clear framework in which to recover debts owed to the Council and diminishes the likelihood of successful legal challenge to our collection activities and adverse findings by the Local Government Ombudsman.

Council Tax recovery procedures are prescribed in The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992 (SI 613/1992). Recovery of rent is pursued under legislation

and protocol including the Housing Act 1988, Housing Act 1996 and the Pre-action Protocol for Possession Claims based on rent arrears. Housing Benefit overpayments are recovered in accordance with the Social Security Administration Act 1992, The Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 (SI 213/2006) and The Housing Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) Regulations 2006 (SI 214/2006). ECC has powers under Section 13A (1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, and this policy has been drawn up with regard to the Equality Act 2010 and Data Protection Act 1998.

The authority to write off, and write off limits is contained in ECC's Financial Regulations, contained in the Constitution of the Council.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

This report raises no issues of concern for the Monitoring Officer.

8. Report details:

Separate teams across the Council responsible for the collection of debts owed with respect to the identified areas were brought together under a new team originally called One View of Debt, now known as the Collection and Payments Team. The principle behind this decision was to reduce the duplication of effort across teams and also reduce the incidences of residents being contacted by the Council using different methods, approaches and considerations.

Each individual team had previously worked to a policy for the relevant areas, for example Council Tax, Housing Benefits etc; however as new ways of working were developed, there was a need to develop a new Policy to reflect the approach. The Policy will be supported by guidance notes which will make the Collection process clear to both staff and customers.

It is anticipated that the Policy will be reviewed annually and revised as appropriate with consideration of the Corporate Debt Policy.

9. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

This policy reflects the principles of the Council's 'Help Me with My Financial and Housing Problem' purpose. The approach is to support residents to avoid getting into debt but should that not be possible to maximise the payments to the Council by agreeing sustainable repayment plans which reflect an understanding the individuals' circumstances.

10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

The risks are identified in section six of this report. In addition, there is a risk that the Policy may not be applied consistently. This risk will be reduced by ensuring that all staff in the Collection and Payments Team who are responsible for recovery are trained and feel confident in the use of the new Policy.

11. What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?

An Equality Impact Assessment is in progress and will be made available on the Council's website.

12. Are there any other options?

There is the option of delaying the introduction of this Policy until the Corporate Debt Policy is updated, but officers' views is that given the existing policies governing the Collection of debts owed to the Council are no longer fit for purpose, the Council is at risk of challenge without a the proposed Policy.

Bindu Arjoon
Assistant Director Customer Access

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

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

Contact for enquires:
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**Exeter City Council
Debt Collection Policy
December 2015**

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the recovery of Rent, Council Tax, Housing Benefit Overpayments, Former Tenancy Arrears and Housing Rechargeable Repairs.

Exeter City Council (ECC) has a legal duty to recover debt to protect the Council's income for the ongoing provision of services in Exeter. This policy aims to ensure that collection is fair, cost effective and consistent across all debts covered in this policy.

Prevention of Debt

Our preferred approach is to prevent debt and to support this we will:

- Provide skilled staff for quality welfare benefit/local support advice and debt prevention
- Identify the debtor's ability to pay and tailor our advice accordingly
- Appropriately use discretionary funds available
- Promote a payment culture with the support of professional advice
- Give early notification of debts accruing to encourage early contact

Where we need to take enforcement action to recover money owed to us, we use the following key principles:

- Recognition of priority debts and non-priority debts in relation to the severity of legal remedy. We will prioritise debts to ECC covered in this policy, in the following order:
 1. Rent
 2. Council Tax
 3. Housing Benefit Overpayment
 4. Former Tenancy Arrears
 5. Rechargeable Repairs
- Maximisation of income available to the customer (including welfare benefit checks)
- Clear and timely communication
- Ring fencing previous year's debts and in-year recovery focus
- Equality and recognition of vulnerability

Our recovery approach will be proportionate, striking a balance between recovery of debt to ECC, the cost of recovery action and the customer's ability to pay within a reasonable timescale.

Recovery action will be applied consistently, while recognising the individual circumstances of our customers.

Our recovery methods will be transparent, helping customers and their representatives to understand our communications, their responsibility and the circumstances for discretionary help that may be available.

All our correspondence will contain the details required by law, clearly shown using plain language. We will also have clear information and advice on our website. We will give clear information about any fees and charges that the debtor may incur and we will detail the consequences of further recovery action. All of our information and notices will be available in different formats upon request to meet customer's needs.

An income and expenditure analysis will be carried out as standard to fully understand customer circumstances and determine realistic, manageable payment options. Customers will be encouraged to pay promptly and regularly. By utilising tailored payment arrangements and methods, we will help and advise on the best options to suit individual needs.

Customers will be encouraged to contact us promptly if they begin experiencing difficulties, and we have the following contact channels available:

- telephone
- email
- face to face
- letter
- home visit if appropriate

Income maximisation is key to our recovery process and will include:

- welfare benefit checks including Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support checks
- Council Tax exemption and disregard checks
- budget and debt advice referral
- use of discretionary funds
- signposting to other appropriate accredited agencies
- exploring the potential of external discretionary funds

Multiple debts to ECC will be dealt with in a holistic way. We will take one view of debt by working with the customer to understand their financial position balanced against the debts they owe to both ECC and other parties and we will seek solutions to allow the customer to meet both their liabilities and their daily living expenses. Debts to ECC will be reduced proportionately under a managed arrangement.

Escalating ECC and third party debts will trigger, with the customer's consent, referral to a professional, independent debt adviser, currently within the Exeter Money Advice Partnership (EMAP).

We will actively pursue formal recovery action through the courts with customers who refuse to engage with ECC officers, EMAP or third party representatives to arrange payment.

We will consider the customer's circumstances and decide if any characteristic unique to the customer is hindering their management of payments to us. We will also consider customer vulnerability as defined in the Vulnerability Statement 2015 (appendix A) to ensure our recovery actions are reasonable and proportionate to individual circumstances and adapt our actions accordingly.

It will be an integral part of our aim to protect the public purse and recover monies due to the Council and that we should also support the customer to discharge their responsibilities, either through our own efforts or together with our colleagues within the Council or via referral to third party agencies.

Some debts may be considered for write off under ECC's procedures and will include:

- Vulnerability decisions where recovery is inappropriate
- Customer untraceable
- Cost effectiveness of recovering a small debt
- Payment likelihood balanced against cost of proceeding
- Insufficient funds in the estate of a deceased customer

Customers in credit will be refunded unless they have another debt with ECC. In these cases, the credit will be transferred to clear or reduce the other debt. Credit and debt will be transferred automatically. Refunds will not be given if other debts to ECC exist.

Any enforcement or collection agents used by ECC will be appointed under a service level agreement. This will specify the terms in which they will operate and will cover:

- Professional conduct
- Legislation adherence
- Recognition and adherence to ECC appropriate policies
- Maintaining accurate records
- Vulnerability reporting
- Officer contact protocol
- Authority to remove goods protocol
- Membership of a professional conduct body

Customer Responsibility

Exeter City Council expects any person that owes money to the Council, or has a liability or pending liability to pay, to comply with all legal obligations in respect of that liability or potential liability. The Council's commitments to fair debt collection processes are set out in this policy and the Council's expectations of customers are set out below:

- Pay amounts due promptly on or before the date the amount is due
- Follow instructions to ensure payments are received correctly against the amount due
- Inform the Council immediately if they are unable to pay the amount due or have had a change in circumstance that may affect their ability to pay
- Notify the Council promptly of address changes
- Respect the Council, its employees and agents and respond to them courteously
- Be frank and honest when providing information in connection with billing and recovery of sums due to the Council.

Council Tax and Rent Arrears

Early contact and intervention to prevent arrears is essential, the measures we will take to achieve this are as follows:

- Offer payment by direct debit, and arrange the payment to the most convenient/relevant date for the customer available
- Offer special payment arrangements on Council Tax outside of the direct debit dates available at a frequency to help the customer to budget their payments
- Offer a wide range of payment options and pro-actively advertise these on our bills, letters, website and in all contact with the customer
- Make arrangements for payment by instalment, that are realistic and offer the best support to allow the customer to become financially independent
- Timely contact and issue of reminders to avoid the debt escalating
- Check all cases that escalate to a Council Tax liability order summons
- Check all cases before the issue of a notice to seek possession of a dwelling
- Provision of up-to-date advice and contact details on our website and correspondence.
- Encourage payment and highlight the consequences of under/non-payment

Thorough review of all cases, before recovery action is escalated will consist of:

- Checking contact has been made with the customer; and
- That accurate history and any dispute connected with the debt has been investigated and resolved
- That substantial consideration has been given to the customer's circumstances and reason for non-payment and no alternative recovery option remains
- That further Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support/Council Tax Reduction, exemption and discount checks have been exhausted, including any discretionary fund applicable to the case.
- That robust vulnerability checks for the customer and their household have taken place
- Considering reasonableness and proportionate action in relation to the customers circumstances
- That substantial assessment of the consequences of the proposed recovery action have been considered

Former Tenancy Rent Arrears

The circumstances and ability of the customer to pay will be considered as stated above, for manageable repayments to be made. Where the customer does not engage with us or moves out of the ECC area the debt will be referred to a debt collection agent if appropriate.

Garage Rent Arrears

The customer will be notified by letter of a missed payment relating to garage rent together with any other contact method agreed with the customer (e.g. text, phone call and email).

If garage rent arrears continue and the customer fails to contact ECC to discuss clearing the rent arrear a notice will be served.

If the rent arrears continue the locks on the garage will be changed, and the lock change fee will be charged to the customer. The customer will be given 28 days to remove any contents in the garage, any contents remaining after 28 days will be disposed of by ECC.

Housing Benefit Overpayments:

Overpayments occur because the customer has been paid Housing Benefit (HB) in excess of their entitlement. A large number of overpayments are due to the customer's failure to report changes in their circumstances to us promptly. The measures we have in place to minimise this happening are:

- Clear information and support to understand the importance of declaring changes promptly at the application stage.
- Clear information about changes and how to report them on our website and all benefit communications

Thorough review for all cases will be carried out as stated for Council Tax and Rent arrears

Rechargeable Repairs Recovery:

Rechargeable repairs occur when ECC charge for the cost of repairs carried out to an ECC property by the Council or their contractors.

The customer will be notified of the charge by invoice. At this point, if they cannot make payment in full, we will negotiate an affordable payment arrangement. The customer's circumstances and ability to pay will be taken into account. Multiple debts to ECC that include a rechargeable repair will be considered together when negotiating the repayment amount.

The customer will receive reminders if they fail to make payment towards their charge, and will be encouraged to make contact to discuss payment. If the customer fails to make an arrangement or full payment, we will consider referral of the outstanding amount to a collection agent if appropriate to do so, and in accordance with the customer's circumstances.

Write Off

We will consider seeking approval to write off an outstanding Council Tax debt, rent and/or garage arrears, Housing Benefit overpayment or rechargeable repair costs where the customer's circumstances dictate through financial or personal vulnerability as detailed in the Vulnerability Statement 2015

Council Tax debt will also be considered for write off in accordance with ECC criteria for using powers under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (appendix B).

Council Tax Support recovery write off decisions will be made in accordance with the ECC Council Tax Support Recovery Write Off Policy 2013/14 (appendix C).

The authority to write off and monetary limits are contained in ECC's Financial Regulations, contained in the Constitution of the Council.

Insolvency:

Any customer who is subject to:

- Bankruptcy
- a Debt Relief Order
- an Individual Voluntary Arrangement
- an Administration Order

will not be pursued for any ECC debt that is correctly included in the insolvency order in accordance with the relevant legislation¹. These debts will be written off in accordance with ECC policy and financial regulation. The customer will be advised of and supported to meet any ongoing charges they have responsibility for.

Any insolvency order in respect of a debt outstanding for a joint and several Council Tax liability, will only relate to the individual it is granted for. The person who is not subject to an insolvency order will still be liable for the amount outstanding and recovery will continue in accordance with this policy.

Until an insolvency order is granted, we will continue with recovery of the debt unless the customer's circumstances dictate otherwise or the customer actively engages and fulfils the requirements of the Council's money advice services, currently the Exeter Money Advice Partnership (EMAP).

General

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through the following outcomes:

- Collection rate
- Levels of arrears at each recovery stage
- Effectiveness of contact methods
- Complaints
- Equality impact
- Internal practice review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it is fit for purpose. This policy will be updated at the time relevant legislation changes.

Disclaimer

The Council will seek to adhere to this policy, however no omission in respect of the requirements of this policy shall invalidate a requirement to make a payment, nor shall it be accepted as a basis for delay in making a payment.

This policy does not affect the statutory rights of the Council or any appointed collection or enforcement agents, their companies or the debtor.

Data Collection

The Council will collect and store personal data for the purposes of billing and recovering money owed. Data retained for this purpose will be processed lawfully

Data will be shared with agents or contractors appointed by the Council for the purposes of recovering money owed to the Council. Data may also be shared within

¹ County Courts Act 1984, Civil Procedure Rules 1998, Insolvency Act 1986 & Insolvency Rules 1986 as amended

the Council or with external organisations where the law allows and where it is in the interests of the customer and to prevent fraud or the evasion of amounts due.

Related documents

Vulnerability Statement 2015 – Appendix A

ECC Criteria for using powers under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 – Appendix B

ECC Council Tax Support Recovery Write Off policy 2013/14 – Appendix C

Exeter City Council (ECC) Financial Regulations

Equal Opportunities Policy

Equality Act 2010

Data Protection Act 1998

Taking Control of Goods: National Standards (MoJ)

Housing Act 1988 (as amended)

Housing Act 1985 (as amended)

Pre-action Protocol for Possession Claims based on rent arrears (MoJ)

Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) & subordinate legislation

Social Security Administration Act 1992 (as amended) & subordinate legislation

ECC Vulnerability Statement September 2015

This document incorporates information from, and should be read in conjunction with, Exeter City Council's Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Exeter City Council's Council Tax Support Vulnerability Statement.

Exeter City Council (ECC) will ensure that functions carried out by staff and organisations acting on their behalf will safeguard and promote the welfare of children and protect vulnerable adults.

A child is anyone aged less than 18 years old. No recovery action can be taken, by any contact method, when only a child is present.

ECC staff and external contractors carrying out a function on behalf of ECC will be expected to report any suspicion of abuse or lack of care.

ECC staff and external contractors delivering ECC services will be made aware of, and be expected to abide by, ECCs procedures and policies as appropriate.

The characteristics below are not an exhaustive list; the assessment of vulnerability may include one or more characteristic, the decision on vulnerability should be made on a case by case basis based on the circumstances of the individual customer.

Guidance on Vulnerable Cases

Care should be taken when dealing with someone who is or appears to be vulnerable. It must be recognised that any of our customers may be vulnerable or become vulnerable, on a temporary or permanent basis, due to their personal circumstances. It must be recognised that people respond in different ways to the same situation and there are different trigger points and tolerances to an individual's ability to cope in a situation. Additionally, ability to cope can vary depending on the level of support the individual has. Anyone dealing with a potentially vulnerable customer in debt (including agents acting on our instruction) will consider:

- Does the customer understand the action being taken?
- What level of support is available or is required?
- How can this support be provided?

It is important not to make immediate assumptions or try and define specific groups of people as being vulnerable. However, in order to give some guidance on what is expected the approach below is required.

Elderly

Many elderly people are physically and mentally healthy and financially secure. However where it is evident that an elderly person is frail, unwell, confused and unable either to deal with their own affairs or keep track of their affairs then consideration should be given on further/type of recovery action and liaison with customer representatives or a third party advocate.

Disability

If the debtor has a disability, and it is evident that this person is frail, unwell, confused and unable either to deal with their own affairs, or keep track of their affairs, and they are the only person present, then consideration should be given to further/type of recovery action, and liaison with customer representatives or a third party advocate by virtue of their disability.

Mental health problems

If it is evident that the debtor is unable either to deal with their own affairs or keep track of their affairs, and they are the only person present, then consideration should be given to further/type of recovery action, and liaison with customer representatives or a third party advocate.

Serious/Long term illness

If it is evident that the debtor (or the debtor's partner), is suffering from any health condition which is serious or life threatening, consideration should be given to further/type of recovery action, and liaison with customer representatives or a third party advocate, and if it is in the interests of the customer and ECC to pursue recovery of the debt.

Recently Bereaved

Where a debtor has recently suffered bereavement it may be that they will have difficulty in coping or dealing with any contact, consideration should be given to further/type of recovery action, and liaison with customer representatives or a third party advocate or a period of non-recovery that may be appropriate.

Pregnancy

If the debtor or the debtor's partner (if present) is pregnant and appears distressed, consideration should be given to further/type of recovery action, and liaison with customer representatives or a third party advocate or a period of non-recovery that may be appropriate.

Lone Parent

If it is evident that the debtor is unable to cope with the situation or doesn't understand the action being taken, and there is no other adult present to provide support, consideration should be given to further/type of recovery action, and liaison with customer representatives or a third party advocate.

The above list is not exhaustive; if any debtor is frail, unwell, confused and unable either to deal with their own affairs or keep track of their affairs and they are the only person present, then consideration should be given on a case by case basis regarding recovery action.

ECC staff must be aware of the Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and recognise their responsibility to be vigilant for abuse of vulnerable adults and to also protect them from illness and injury whether self inflicted or inflicted by others. Where they identify a person to be at risk they must immediately report this to their line manager. If a member of staff identifies a child at the property and considers that the child is at risk of abuse, they must report this immediately to their line manager.

Persons under the age of 18

If a child (person under the age of 18) is the only person present at the property recovery action must cease. If it is established that the debtor is under the age of 18 consideration should be given to further/type of recovery action, and liaison with customer representatives or a third party advocate.

This statement will be reviewed every 2 years to ensure it is fit for purpose. This statement will also be updated at the time relevant legislation changes.

Statement Date/update:	Responsible Officer:	Version Control:
December 2015	Jayne Hanson	001

Exeter City Council
Criteria for using powers under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992
(LGFA S.13A (1)(c))

The Council will consider using its powers to reduce Council Tax liability for any Council Tax payer or class of payer and each case will be considered on its merits. The following criteria should be met for each case:

- There must be evidence of extreme hardship or personal circumstance that justifies a reduction in Council Tax liability (the Vulnerability Statement will inform decision making).
- The Council must be satisfied that the customer has taken reasonable steps to resolve their situation prior to application. The customer is expected to take up any offer of money advice and support via EMAP.
- In the case of an unoccupied property it must not be the sole or main residence of a customer.
- The customer does not have access to other assets that could be realised to pay their Council Tax.
- Eligibility for Council Tax Support has been explored and any entitlement awarded
- All eligible discounts or exemptions have been awarded.
- The customer must not be prohibited from access to public funds
- In the case of an unoccupied property, there must be evidence that every effort is being made to bring the property back into use.

Any reduction made under S.13A (1)(c) will be for the current financial year only. If the situation has not been resolved by the end of the financial year a further application will be required.

David Hodgson
Assistant Director Finance

Exeter City Council

Council Tax Support Recovery Write Off Policy 2013/14:

Enacted under The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 (SI 817/2011) (Reg. 5(4)(c))

(1) Any overpaid Council Tax Support, except support to which paragraph 2 applies, shall be recoverable.

(2) Any Council Tax Support allowed in consequence of an official error, where the applicant or a person acting on his behalf or any other person to whom the Council Tax Support has been allowed, could not, at the time the support was allowed, or upon receipt of any notice relating to the allowance of that support, reasonably have been expected to realise that it was allowed in error.

(3) Council Tax Support allowed in consequence of an official error means support allowed to which there is no entitlement caused by a mistake, act or omission by –

- (a) Exeter City Council; or
- (b) An officer or person acting for Exeter City Council;

Where the applicant or a person acting on his behalf or any other person to whom the Council Tax Support has been allowed, did not cause or materially contribute to that mistake, act or omission.

(4) Paragraph 2 does not apply to-

- (a) a reduction in the amount a person is liable to pay in respect of Council Tax in consequence of
 - (i) regulations made under section 13 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (reduction in the amount of a person's Council Tax); or
 - (ii) any discount to which that tax is subject to under section 11 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992; or
 - (iii) any disregard to which the liable person is entitled under Schedule 1 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992; or
 - (iv) a substitution under section 31 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 of a lesser amount of Council Tax previously set by the Council under section 30 of the same Act; or
 - (v) any dwelling that is prescribed as exempt under section 4 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992

(5) Advance Council Tax Support allowance (Technical overpayments)

An amount of Council Tax Support allowed in advance to the end of the financial year that is subsequently disallowed under the provisions of Exeter's Council Tax Support scheme,² will be recoverable.

David Hodgson
Assistant Director Finance

² The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) & Exeter City Council, Council Tax Reduction Scheme Policy 2013/14 (under LGFA 1992 S.13A)

REPORT TO Executive and Council
Date of Meeting: 26 January 2016 and 23 February 2016
Report of: Assistant Director Customer Access
Title: Council Tax Penalty Policy

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function? Council

1. What is the report about?

This report seeks member's approval for a Council Tax Penalty Policy that allows the Council to impose financial penalties, under legislation, where a person fails to supply information or provides false information in respect of Council Tax discounts, exemptions and liability.

2. Recommendations:

Executive is requested to recommend the Policy to Council for approval.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

Members have a duty to the citizens of Exeter to protect Council assets from all forms of abuse. Adopting this policy supports the Council's Counter Fraud Strategy and zero tolerance to fraud. The aim of this policy is to give clear guidance to our customers regarding their responsibility to provide accurate and timely information and to deter anyone from giving false information or failing to disclose changes in circumstance that affects a liability, a discount or an exemption. While protecting Council Tax revenue, the policy will help create a culture of responsibility to report changes on time.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.

Impact on resources will be minimal as in most cases; the penalty is added to the Council Tax account and is collected first before any council tax due. Staff resources will be needed for initial publicity and to answer any enquiries regarding why a penalty has been applied.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

The Section 151 Officer supports the introduction of penalties as a way of ensuring that all Council taxpayers are treated fairly.

6. What are the legal aspects?

A billing authority has the power under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992, to impose penalties for the failure to supply or knowingly give false information in relation to Council Tax exemptions, discounts and liability.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

This report raises no issues of concern for the Monitoring Officer.

8. Report details:

- 8.1 Currently Exeter City Council does not enforce penalties although it has the power to do so.
- 8.2 The Devon Benefit Officers Group (DBOG) including Devon County Council, Devon & Somerset Fire Authority and Devon & Cornwall Police have been working towards protecting Devon's purse through avoiding error and fraud entering Council systems. The DBOG report submitted to Chief Finance Officers on 21 October 2015 suggested adopting and publicising a common penalties policy. This ECC policy is the first step, with member's approval, towards meeting this target.
- 8.3 The Council Tax Penalty Policy will be administered in the Local Taxation Team. All Council Tax bills and relevant correspondence will clearly state the Council's ability to apply a penalty and the circumstances when this can happen.
- 8.4 When a review of any discounts or exemptions is undertaken by the Council, either on an individual or targeted basis, this policy will help to re-enforce the importance of correct, timely and accurate information being disclosed. It is only fair that discounts and exemptions are given to those who have a genuine entitlement and are removed from those who do not qualify.
- 8.5 Assuming approval of this policy is agreed, the first penalties will be applied where appropriate as part of the Council's planned review of Single Occupier Discounts.
- 8.6 The Council currently awards 18,208 single occupier discounts. The review is being carried out on behalf of the Council by Capita who have advised that they expect 7% are being incorrectly or fraudulently claimed.
- 8.7 Revenue raised from imposing penalties is kept in full by Exeter City Council.

9. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

This policy supports Exeter's communities and neighbourhoods in the broad sense of protecting Council Tax revenue, not only for Exeter City Council, but for Devon County Council, Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue and Devon and Cornwall's Police and Crime Commissioner. These organisations collectively provide vital services to the residents and communities of Exeter, by keeping the Council Tax base secure and accurate, precepts will be maximised. This will support one of the five key strands to the Council's strategy of reducing operating costs by changing customer behaviour by a well publicised intention and policy, in time minimising staff time and intervention to keep the Council Tax base accurate.

10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

The risks of adopting this policy are minimal. There may be challenges to the imposition of penalties, however a right of appeal to an independent Valuation Tribunal exists. Staff will be fully trained in the administration of this policy to ensure fairness and consistency.

11. What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?

An Equality Impact Assessment is attached.

12. Are there any other options?

The Council can choose not to adopt this policy.

Bindu Arjoon
Assistant Director Customer Access

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

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

Contact for enquires:
Democratic Services (Committees)
Room 2.3
01392 265275

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**Exeter City Council
Council Tax Penalty Policy
December 2015**

Purpose of the Policy

The administration of Council Tax is a statutory local government function. The Council is legally entitled to obtain information from residents, owners or managing agents to help identify the person liable for payment of the Council Tax.

The Council can impose a penalty where a person fails to provide information requested by the Council within 21 days of the request for the information or within 21 days of a change which affects Council Tax liability or an entitlement to a discount or exemption, or knowingly supplies inaccurate information. The aim of this policy is to give clear guidance to our customers regarding their responsibility to provide accurate and timely information and to deter anyone from giving false information or failing to disclose changes in circumstance that affects a liability, a discount or an exemption.

The purpose of this document is to set out Exeter City Council's policy on administering penalties in circumstances where a person has:

- Knowingly made incorrect statements, or without reasonable excuse, failed to give a prompt notification of a relevant change in circumstances affecting their entitlement to a Council Tax discount or exemption.
- Failed to respond to requests for information in relation to a Council Tax discount, exemption or liability.

Fraud Prevention

Exeter City Council is committed to the prevention and detection of fraud and promotes a zero tolerance culture. Misuse of public funds deprives the Council of finance it needs to achieve its agreed goals and strategic objectives. As a consequence of lack of finance, citizens (particularly those in need) may be deprived of vital services. This policy supports the Council's Counter Fraud Strategy. Fraud occurs because people for various reasons will not be truthful about their circumstances, or deliberately fails to tell the Council about a relevant change. The aim of this policy is to prevent criminal offences occurring by making it clear to customers that they have a responsibility to provide accurate and timely information about their circumstances.

Financial Penalties

A person who appears to the Council to be a resident, owner or managing agent of a dwelling must, on written request, supply information to the authority. The information must be supplied if it is in that person's possession or control and the authority has requested it to identify liability for Council Tax, including joint and several liability. The information requested must be supplied within 21 days of the Council's written request and in the form specified by the Council.

The Council has similar powers in respect of dwellings which appear to it to be exempt from a Council Tax charge or where the chargeable amount is subject to a discount. Where the Council has assumed that a dwelling is exempt, or that the chargeable amount is subject to a discount and they have informed the liable person of this, if the assumed exemption or discount applied is not correct, the liable person must inform the authority within 21 days of this fact.

Exeter City Council can impose a fine of £70 for failure to supply information within the above timescales.

Where a penalty has been imposed and a further request for the same information is made to that person and is again not properly complied with, the Council may impose a further penalty of £280. A penalty of £280 may be imposed each time the Council repeats the request and the person does not fulfil their statutory obligations.

The Council may quash a penalty that it has imposed.

Notification and Collection of Penalties

A penalty must be paid to the billing authority that imposes it. A penalty is collected as part of a customer's Council Tax liability and will be added to their Council Tax account.

If a current ECC Council Tax account does not exist, an invoice will be sent for payment.

Right of Appeal against a Penalty

A customer has the right of appeal to the Valuation Tribunal for England against the decision by the Council to apply a penalty. An appeal must be made in writing directly to the Valuation Tribunal.

Performance Monitoring

Accurate records on all penalties imposed will be kept and monitored. This will help the Council to make correct decisions, identify areas for improvement in our processes and review equality impact as a result of this policy.

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through the following outcomes:

- Number of penalties & reasons
- Penalties recovered in full
- Action taken to recover a penalty
- Complaints
- Number of appeals against penalties & reasons
- Effectiveness of contact methods
- Equality impact
- Internal practice review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it is fit for purpose. This policy will be updated at the time relevant legislation changes.

Related Documents:

Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended)

The Local Government Finance (England) (Substitution of Penalties) Order 2008 (S.I 2008/981)

The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992 (S.I 1992/613)

Equality Act 2010

Data Protection Act 1998

ECC Equality Policy

Equality Impact Assessment Form

Screening

Name of Strategy, Project or Policy
Council Tax Penalty Policy

Officer completing assessment
Name: Jayne Hanson
Tel: x5319

Main purpose of the strategy/project/policy
Ensuring that we have a clear policy stating how and when we will impose Council Tax penalties.

Main activities of the project/policy - for strategies list main policy areas
Imposing penalties on persons who fail to provide information or give false information in relation to Council Tax discounts, exemptions or liabilities.

Main beneficiaries of the strategy/project/policy
Residents of Exeter as the policy protects Council Tax revenue, supports an accurate database where discounts and exemptions are applied fairly and gives a clear message that information requested must be accurate and provided on time.

Negative / Positive Impact on target groups				
		Positive impact	Negative impact	Reason
Gender	Women	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recognition of protected characteristics in the administration of the Council Tax Penalties Policy
	Men	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	As above
Race	Asian or Asian British	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recognition of protected characteristics in the administration of the Council Tax Penalties Policy
	Black or black British	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	As above
	Mixed race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	As above

	Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	As above
	White	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	As above
	Chinese and other minority ethnic communities not listed above	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	As above
	Gypsies/travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	As above
Disability	Physical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recognition of protected characteristics in the administration of the Council Tax Penalties Policy
	Sensory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	As above
	Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	As above
	Mental health issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	As above
Sexuality	Lesbians, gay men and bisexuals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recognition of protected characteristics in the administration of the Council Tax Penalties Policy
Gender Identity	Trans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recognition of protected characteristics in the administration of the Council Tax Penalties Policy
Age	Age 60 +	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recognition of protected characteristics in the administration of the Council Tax Penalties Policy
	Ages 1-16 and 17-25	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recognition of protected characteristics in the administration of the Council Tax Penalties Policy
Belief	Faith groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recognition of protected characteristics in the administration of the Council Tax Penalties Policy
Equal opportunities and /or improved relations		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recognition of protected characteristics in the administration of the Council Tax Penalties Policy

Notes:

- Faith groups cover a wide range of groupings, the most common of which are Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, Sikhs, Hindus. Consider faith categories individually and collectively when considering positive and negative impacts.
- The categories used in the Race section are those used in the 2001 census. Consideration should be given to the needs of specific communities within the broad categories such as Bangladeshi people and to the needs of other communities such as Turkish/Turkish Cypriot, Greek/Greek Cypriot, Italian and Polish that do not appear as separate categories in the census.

Where you have indicated a negative impact - is that impact:

- Legal: *i.e. not discriminatory under anti-discriminatory legislation*
- Intended:
- Level of impact high:

If you have ticked the above boxes complete section below

Could you minimise or remove any negative impact that is of low significance?

Explain:

Could you improve the strategy, project or policy's positive impact?

Explain:

If there is no evidence that the strategy, policy or project promotes equality, equal opportunities or improved relations – could it be adapted so that it does

How:

Do you have data which monitors the impact of the policy on minority groups?

If not, explain how you intend to continue monitoring the impact of this strategy, policy or project:

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through the following outcomes:

- Collection rate
- Levels of arrears at each recovery stage
- Effectiveness of contact methods
- Complaints
- Equality impact
- Internal practice review

Signature: Jayne Hanson

Date: 21.12.2015

Keep a copy and send one to the Director of Corporate Services

Section Two

Full Assessment

Name of strategy, project or policy: Council Tax Penalty Policy
Date: December 2015

PART A

Question 1	
<p>Reviewing section one of the EQIA, in what areas are there concerns that the strategy, policy or project could have a negative impact?</p>	
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexuality/Transgender	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faith	<input type="checkbox"/>

Question 2
<p>Summarise the likely negative impacts: It is not anticipated that this policy will have any negative impacts on any group defined above. The policy is intended to promote fair and consistent treatment of all customers, but does impose penalties on those who without good reason have failed to comply with a request for information, or have knowingly provided false information in relation to a Council Tax exemption, discount or liability, including those with protected characteristics</p>

Question 3	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous or planned consultation on this topic/policy area/project with groups/individuals from equality target groups • Where consultation has taken place - indications about negative impact of this strategy, project or policy? 	
Equality target groups	Summary of consultation carried out or planned
Women	None
Black & minority ethnic communities	None
Disabled	None
Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals or trans	None
Older people	None
Young people/children	None

Faith groups	None
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Question 4
<p>What consultation has taken place/or is planned with Council staff – including staff that have, or will have, direct experience of implementing the strategy/ policy/ working on the project? Full training and discussion on the practical implementation and decision making in respect of this policy will take place, once the policy is approved by members.</p>

Question 5	
<p>Check that research /studies/reports concerning the equality target groups and the likely impact have been used to plan the project and guide it or indicate what research you intend to carry out.</p>	
Equality target groups	Title/type/details of report/research
Women	
Black and minority ethnic communities	
Disabled people	
Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals or trans people	
Older people	
Young people/children	
Faith groups	

Question 6
<p>If there are gaps in your previous or planned consultation and research, are there any experts/relevant groups that can be contacted to get further views or evidence on the issues. YES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>List them and explain how you will obtain their views</i></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>

PART B

Complete this section when consultation and research has been carried out

Question 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a result of this assessment and available evidence collected, including consultation, state whether there will need to be any changes made/planned to the policy, strategy or project.

- As a result of this assessment and available evidence is it important that the Council commissions specific research on this issue or carry out monitoring/ data collection?

You may wish to put this information directly onto the action sheet at the end of this form

Question 8

Will the changes planned ensure that negative impact is:

- Legal?
i.e. not discriminatory, under anti-discriminatory legislation
- Intended?
- Low impact?

Question 9

a) Have you set up a monitoring/evaluation/ review process to check the successful implementation of the strategy, project or policy?

YES NO

b) How will this monitoring/evaluation further assess the impact on the equality target groups/ensure the strategy/project/policy is non-discriminatory?

Details:

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through the following outcomes and where possible data on the impact on equality target groups will be gathered: the number and characteristics of those a fine is imposed against. The monitoring and gathering of information on decisions on cases where no fine is imposed including characteristic data.

Complete the action form below, sign the EQIA, retain a copy and send a copy of the full EQIA, including the Action Plan, to the Director of Corporate Services

Signature

Completing Officer: Jayne Hanson

Date: 18.12.2015

Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

List any recommendations for action that you plan to take as a result of this impact assessment.

Issue	Action required	Lead officer	Timescale	Resource implications	Comments
EQIA monitoring & evaluation measures	Need to be established	Kevin Hughes	March 2016	None/dependant on monitoring systems available	Monitoring against equality impact may be limited to system data & collation

					available

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REPORT TO Executive

Date of Meeting: 26 January 2016

Report of: Assistant Director Housing

Title: STAFFING WITHIN THE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 This report sets out a proposal to increase the staffing establishment within the Housing Development Team for an additional full time post to assist with the reduction in the number of empty homes working on a shared basis for the Council and for Mid Devon District Council.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 That the Council be RECOMMENDED to agree to an increase in the establishment of the Housing Development Team; the contract term in accordance with the legal agreement with Mid Devon District Council.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

- 3.1 There has been an additional pull on resources within the Housing Development team due to extra work taken on by the team in areas such as private sector housing policy and client lead for Exeter Active. As a result there is a need for an additional resource to maintain the Council's work on tackling empty homes, which continues to be an important element of our overall housing strategy.
- 3.2 The Council has recently been approached by Mid Devon District Council with a view to pooling financial resources to create a joint post that would also undertake work for them. The Council currently provide a similar service to East Devon District Council providing an officer to work in East Devon two days a week.
- 3.3 This request from Mid Devon, alongside other demands on the Housing Development Team, has led to resources being reviewed with the result that it is proposed to advertise a full time position to provide an officer to work in Exeter three days a week and Mid Devon two days per week. The Council would be reimbursed the cost of the Mid Devon element of the service via a service level agreement.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.

- 4.1 The new post will be a Housing Development Officer on an established Grade 8.
- 4.2 The net overall employee costs for the Housing Development team will not be increased as a result of the new Grade 8 Housing Development Officer post. This is because the net cost (cost less recharge to Mid Devon) equates to the former budget provision for the Grade 4 Housing Development Assistant post, which has now been removed from the establishment.

4.3 The proposed increase to the establishment will be cost-neutral. The post will be full time for as long as the arrangement with Mid Devon remains in place. If this agreement is ended the post will be reviewed.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

5.1 The proposed budgets for 2016/17 reflect the desired changes to the Housing Development Team, as set out in the report. Providing the post is shared with Mid Devon District Council and costs recharged accordingly, the net additional cost to the Council is nil. However, in the event that Mid Devon District Council withdraw from this arrangement, the continuation of this full-time post would need to be reviewed.

6. What are the legal aspects?

6.1 A formal legal agreement will be drawn up by Legal Services and entered into with Mid Devon District Council which will set out the detail and payment pro-rata for the costs of providing an officer to work at Mid Devon for two days a week.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

7.1 Subject to the legal agreement being finalised this report raises no issues for the Monitoring Officer.

8. Report details:

8.1 The report detail has been set out in paragraph 3 of this report.

8.2 The request is to increase the establishment of the Housing Development Team by one full time officer. The cost of this post would be covered within existing budgets. No additional resources are required. The post will be subject to the approval of a service level agreement with Mid Devon District Council in conjunction with the Corporate Manager Legal Services.

9. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

9.1 This decision will help ensure that the Council's strategic objectives for housing continue to be delivered.

10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

10.1 A reduction in resources to tackle empty homes could have adverse consequences. The Council recognises that empty properties can have a considerable negative impact upon a local community and can in some circumstances blight an area and the houses in the locality. Empty homes can often attract vandalism and anti-social behaviour which can lead to crime or an increased fear of crime.

10.2 There has been considerable recent government focus on returning empty properties back into use. With housing demand much greater than supply, returning long-term empty properties to use is a necessity for local authorities to help meet housing need.

11. What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?

11.1 Empty homes are a wasted housing resource at a time when there is a significant housing need in the City. By bringing empty properties back into use this will increase the housing stock for the potential benefit of vulnerable sections of the community. Properties left empty can have a detrimental effect on the environment and increase the risk of anti-social behaviour.

12. Are there any other options?

12.1 There is the option of not creating an additional post, but this is not supported because of the reasons set out elsewhere in this report.

Assistant Director

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

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

Contact for enquires:
Democratic Services (Committees)
Room 2.3
01392 265275

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WAIVER OF CONTRACT REGULATIONS

A delegated decision was taken by the Corporate Manager Property in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Enabling Services to waive contract regulations on the contract for specialist work at the Quay Climb Centre. The decision was to waive contract regulations to seek competitive quotes for the solar panel scheme on the roof of the Quay Climb Centre. The decision was made for the following reasons:

1. The fast approaching end to the FIT regime which would have undermined the agreed business case;
2. The fact that this was the first scheme delivered with a private owner under a Power Purchase Agreement and it was critical for us to be able to work closely with an experienced contractor;
3. The need to negotiate the Power Purchase Agreement with the owner and secure assurances with regard to roof access, etc; and
4. We had comfort that the selected contractor was both competent and competitive in price terms.

It was felt that proceeding with a quote or tendering arrangement would have been inappropriate in light of the particular circumstances set out above.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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