

PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday 4 January 2018
Time: 5.30 pm
Venue: Rennes Room - Civic Centre

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 Howard Bassett, Democratic Services Officer (Committees) on 01392 265107.

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

Membership -

Councillors Wardle (Chair), Foale (Deputy Chair), Branston, Foggin, Hannan, Hannaford, Holland, Morris, Thompson and Vizard N

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 meeting held on 7 September 2017.

3 Declaration of Interests

Councillors are reminded of the need to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests that relate to business on the agenda and which have not already been included in the register of interests, before any discussion takes place on the item. Unless the interest is sensitive, you must also disclose the nature of the interest. In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, you must then leave the room and must not participate in any further discussion of the item.

Councillors requiring clarification should seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer prior to the day of the meeting.

4 **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - Exclusion of Press and Public**

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

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

5 **Questions from the Public under Standing Order 19**

Details of questions should be notified to the Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support at least three working days prior to the meeting. Further information and a copy of the procedure are available from Democratic Services (Committees) (Tel: 01392 265115) and also on the Council web site - <https://exeter.gov.uk/councillorsfaq/>.

6 **Questions from Members of the Council under Standing Order 20**

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

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE EXECUTIVE

7 **Impact of and Preparation for Universal Credit Roll Out**

To consider the report of the Director.

(Pages 5 - 32)

8 **Housing Rents and Service Charges : 2018/19**

To consider the joint report of the Chief Finance Officer and the Director (BA)

(Pages 33 - 38)

ESTIMATES, CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND FEES AND CHARGES

9 **Housing Revenue Account - Estimates/New Capital Bids/Fees : 2018/19**

To consider the report of the Chief Finance Office.

(Pages 39 - 56)

10 **People - General Fund - Estimates/New Capital Bids/Fees and Charges : 2018/19**

To consider the report of the Chief Finance Office.

(Pages 57 - 68)

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND COMMENT ONLY

11 **Green Travel Plans and Planning Conditions Spotlight Review**

The report will be presented by Councillor Harvey.

(Pages 69
- 74)

12 **Exeter Health and Wellbeing Board - Minutes of the meetings held on 12 September and 31 October 2017.**

(Pages 75
- 82)

Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the People Scrutiny Committee will be held on **Thursday** 1 March 2018 at 5.30 pm in the Civic Centre.

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

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REPORT TO: PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 4 January 2018

REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE

Date of Meeting: 9 January 2018

Report of: Bindu Arjoon - Director
Title: Universal Credit Full Service (UCFS) rollout

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?

Universal Credit (UC) is a new benefit which is replacing means-tested social security benefits and tax credits for people of working age. The Government's intention is to simplify and streamline the benefits system, improve work incentives, tackle poverty among low income families, and reduce the scope for fraud and error. Around 7 million individuals and families are expected to receive UC when it is fully introduced.

This report is presented to inform members regarding the Full Service rollout of Universal Credit in Exeter from September 2018. From that point on, all claims to legacy benefits will instead be claims to Universal Credit.

Legacy benefits are:

- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit

Universal Credit only applies to customers of working age; that is, those below the age at which they become eligible for State Pension Credit – currently around 64 years old.

Universal Credit Live Service has been in Exeter since November 2015 for single jobseekers with no dependent children. The rollout of Full Service will vastly increase the rate at which households move onto Universal Credit and will expand the groups who will be affected.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 That Members note the contents of this report and the background information paper attached.
- 2.2 That Members recognise that the support that can be given to customers impacted by Universal Credit via the Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP), and Local Welfare Support (LWS) budgets, as currently administered, is limited, and may need to be reviewed.

2.3 Without reliable predictions of the amount of extra demand that will be placed on affected services as a result of Universal Credit rollout, no further resources are requested at this present time. However Members are asked to note that there may be a need to request additional resources in the future. If evidence shows such a need, this data will be presented to Members for their decision.

2.4 That Members agree that the Council will deliver digital and budgeting support to Universal Credit claimants as a delivery partner for the Department for Work and Pension's Universal Support scheme for 12 months from April 2018.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

3.1 The Council is already spending our full DHP allocation each year, (£167,000 in 2016/17, £239,000 in 2017/18). There is therefore little capacity to meet extra demand caused by Universal Credit. Legally, we are able to spend up to 2.5 times our yearly DHP allocation, however the cost of all spend over the allocation has to be met by the Council. We are legally unable to refuse an award on the grounds that the DWP allocation has been spent if we are still below the 250% limit. Based on our 2017/18 allocation, the theoretical maximum liability for DHP for the Council would be £358,500 based on a total spend of £597,500.

3.2 Local Welfare Support has been used to provide support on a yearly basis from funding previously received from Devon County Council. This funding stopped in 2015 and we have been using the small reserve to provide crisis support only. Much of the current demand for crisis help comes from people experiencing benefit decision or payment delays, benefit sanctions and clients of the Housing Advice service. Demand for crisis support is likely to increase for all of these groups after Universal Credit Full Service roll out.

3.3 There is likely to be an increase in demand on already stretched resources, as set out in paragraph 4.2 below. Without being able to predict at this point the extent of the impact on demand, where this extra demand will be felt or how the staff skill base needs to change, no permanent change in resources is recommended until there is further data available.

3.4 Although there is no legal requirement to deliver digital and budgeting support to Universal Credit claimants, we will need to assist our UC claimants anyway in order to collect revenue due to the Council. The agreement to deliver Universal Support runs for 12 months beginning each April. Volumes will be closely monitored after Full Service roll out begins to inform the decision for future years.

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

4.1 Forecasting the impact Universal Credit Full Service will have on Exeter City Council is extremely problematic. Highlighted here are the main financial risks to the authority. Where figures are given for estimated impact they are provided to give Members a sense of the relative scale of each impact. Estimates are based on the best available information from experience elsewhere and our caseload data.

4.1.1 **Rent collection** – there is general acceptance that rent arrears for local authority landlords will increase under Universal Credit. Estimates for how much this will amount to vary. During the small scale rollout in Exeter so far, the value of arrears per tenant has increased by 27% after moving to Universal Credit. If this experience is repeated, additional HRA arrears could amount to £425,000.

4.1.2 **Council Tax collection** – both reduced take up of Council Tax Support (CTS) and less available income for households on Universal Credit will reduce Council Tax collection from affected households. If lower CTS take up and reduced income for this group reduces Council Tax collection rates by 10% this could amount to an extra £310,000 annually.

4.1.3 **Housing Benefit overpayment recovery** – Universal Credit will make recovery of our £2.5m overpayment debt slower and more difficult. Between raising little new debt and recovering less old debt this could eventually add up to £1m each year.

4.1.4 **Housing Benefit Administration Grant** –worth £423,000 in 2017, authorities that are already full service have seen their DWP grant initially reduced by 20 - 25%, so we expect to see at least a 20% reduction in grant in 2019-20 and beyond as rollout continues.

4.1.5 **Demand for support from discretionary funds** – the implementation of Universal Credit is likely to put more households into financial hardship. Demand for assistance from the funds we have available – Discretionary Housing Payments, Local Welfare Support, Exceptional Hardship for Council Tax Support and Housing Spend to Save – is likely to put existing budgets under severe pressure.

4.1.6 **Temporary accommodation rent collection** – if this is not removed from Universal Credit before rollout reaches Exeter, there is likely to be a significant impact on our collection rates for temporary accommodation rent. Even on a positive projection, where we manage to collect 80% of the amount currently paid direct by Housing Benefit, we could be faced with an extra £211,000 non-HRA arrears in 2018/19. It was announced in Budget 2017 that temporary accommodation costs should be removed temporarily from UC by April 2018.

4.2 There could be an increased demand on staffing resources within Customer Services, Payments and Collection, Benefits and Welfare, Housing Advice, and Housing Customer Relations due to the following:

- Assisting customers to make their Universal Credit claim online
- Supporting customers to maintain their online journal
- Explaining the differences in Universal Credit rules compared to Housing Benefit and how this will affect their need to budget and pay their rent
- Triaging new Housing Benefit claims and changes of circumstances received every day and contacting customers where they need to claim UC to avoid overpayments and minimise benefit lost for customers
- Chasing and monitoring direct payments of rent, rent arrears and overpayment recovery from DWP
- Chasing increased levels of debt to the Council which can no longer be recovered from ongoing Housing Benefit
- Assisting customers with budgeting and money management, and utilising discretionary funds for crisis support

- Assisting single people aged 18-21 with no dependent children, who have no automatic right to have their housing costs met
- Supporting more households being threatened with eviction and finding the private rented market harder to access when receiving Universal Credit

4.3 Exeter City Council has been asked to sign up as delivery partners for the Department for Work and Pension's Universal Support scheme, delivering digital and budgeting support to Universal Credit claimants. There is no legal obligation to deliver this support, and the grant funding offered by the DWP for this is small, however as a landlord and creditor, officers will need to be assisting our UC claimants anyway in order to try and collect revenue due to the Council.

5. **Section 151 Officer comments:**

Although there are no immediate financial implications contained in the report, there are significant financial risks arising out of the implementation of Universal Credit. Reductions have, as yet, not been factored into the medium term financial plan and could require significant savings across the Council in order to enable the Council to balance the budget. The section 151 Officer will work with the Benefits section to try and identify the appropriate risks and what, if anything, needs to be included in the medium term financial plan for 2019-20 onwards.

6. **What are the legal aspects?**

The Universal Credit Full Service rollout timetable is set by Statutory Instrument. The rules governing Universal Credit claims and payment are similarly set by Parliament. Both are therefore subject to change if the Government wishes. Delivery of Universal Support is not a legal requirement.

7. **Monitoring Officer's comments:**

No comment other than legal aspects set out above.

8. **Report details:**

8.1 The fully digital Universal Credit service is rolling out in Exeter Jobcentre from September 2018. It will eventually replace Housing Benefit for most working age customers.

8.2 The attached report, **Universal Credit Full Service rollout from September 2018**, details the background to this rollout, the effect on households, the effect on Exeter City Council and stakeholders, and the approach we intend to take to mitigate the impact.

8.3 Although officers are working closely with Exeter Jobcentre to raise awareness, initially amongst social and private landlords, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has been unable to provide projections on how quickly cases will transfer to UCFS, which makes proper planning difficult.

- 8.4 Of the 6,294 working age households in Exeter receiving Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Support, who are expected to transfer to Universal Credit, 40% could be financially worse off under the scheme.
- 8.5 Universal Credit Live Service has been in Exeter since November 2015, however it is a very different scheme to Full Service which is administered on different systems with different rules and affects different customer groups.
- 8.6 Under the current Housing Benefit (HB) scheme, all HB payments to Council tenants are made directly to the tenants' rent accounts. However under UCFS, direct payment can only be made when the tenant has built up eight weeks of arrears, or where there is an identified vulnerability.
- 8.7 A claim for UCFS is made exclusively online and requires claimants to set up and regularly maintain an online account. All instructions and meeting appointments will be sent through the online journal, requiring a good level of digital literacy and engagement. Failure to complete claims correctly, meet deadlines or provide evidence will result in delays, lost entitlement or claims being closed.
- 8.8 Lessons learned from authorities already live with UCFS include:
- A big decrease in people claiming Council Tax Support (CTS) which becomes a council tax recovery problem. Under the current system a claim for CTS is taken at the same time the customer claims HB, however under UC, the customer has to make a claim for CTS directly with the local authority, and often doesn't do so until recovery action has been taken.
 - New claims made for HB need to be checked promptly. Paying a customer HB when they should be claiming UC results in overpayments which cannot be recovered and carry a significant risk of affecting our HB subsidy claim. The customer also has to be directed to claim UC as soon as possible as new claims will not be backdated.
 - Although caseload numbers drop as customers migrate from HB to UC, the volume of work for Benefits Officers remains due to the volume of changes notified each day via the DWP data hub, and the need to now assess CTS separately. (Taunton Deane have seen a 20% reduction in caseload but a 260% increase in notifications of changes).
 - Currently, under Housing Benefit, we award HB in advance of an accommodation move meaning that we are able to use Discretionary Housing Payments for deposits and rent in advance. This enables people to access more suitable accommodation and is a useful tool in preventing homelessness. However legally under UCFS, we cannot make an award of DHP until DWP have awarded the Housing Costs element of UC. So no DHP can be paid until after a claimant has moved in, and this will inevitably prevent people from moving or finding a home.
 - The design of the local CTS scheme will need to be reviewed. Firstly to make it simpler to assess as HB administration funding reduces. Secondly to work with the high volume of UC change notifications received daily under Full Service.
 - The need to review the suitability of current processes and rethink the recovery of debts.
- 8.9 We believe that our response to UCFS should protect Council income, work to prevent homelessness and mitigate the worst effects of the reform for vulnerable customers. In order to do this, initially a team will be formed from existing staff with expertise in Benefits & Welfare, Customer Support, Collection, Housing Advice and Housing Customer Relations. As demand grows, the team will grow with additional officers

coming from the areas where experience shows the greatest need exists. We will continue to work with internal and external partners to ensure that we are making best use of resources to achieve these aims.

- 8.10 As a landlord we also need to be considering what actions can be put in place to mitigate the threat to our income stream. Currently 60% of Council tenants are in receipt of Housing Benefit with their payments going direct to the rent account. The Payment and Collection team will be working as part of the Universal Support group outlined in 8.9. They will be able to intervene early with new Universal Credit claimants to minimise resulting rent arrears. Ahead of rollout, Universal Credit training will also be given to officers within the Housing Customer Relations, Lettings and Leasehold, and Housing Advice teams. The Universal Support group will work with these teams on any changes to processes that can be adopted in support of the group's aims. The majority of landlords (18 out of 21) within Devon Home Choice charge their tenants rent in advance. As the impact of UC on rent arrears becomes known Members may wish to consider introducing this for new tenants. Meantime the working balance for HRA has been increased from £3m to £4m in response to the higher value assets levy. Although not initiated by the rollout of UC, the higher working balance does give a contingency for changes introduced by Government such as Universal Credit. No increases in bad debt provision for the general fund or HRA have been made as yet.

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

Exeter City Council has committed to providing services that meet customers' needs. The needs for those customers affected by UC roll out are going to change and in some cases become more complex. This report highlights our intention to ensure our services are flexible and robust enough to meet that demand.

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

There is a risk that the rollout as currently announced will be altered in major ways before September 2018, or that Universal Credit rules will be changed before (or after) rollout begins. By not making permanent changes to structures and staffing at this point, any temporary resources can be reassigned or ended at short notice. The financial risks are detailed in 4.1.

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?

Universal Credit will affect most of our vulnerable low-income working-age households including sick and disabled, large families and the long-term unemployed. Any support we put in place will be of direct benefit to these groups, helping to reduce the risk of homelessness, minimising debt and financial hardship with the associated social costs.

12. Are there any other options?

Council can opt not to sign up to provide Universal Support from April 2018. DWP will then have to advise alternative sources for this support.

Council could introduce charging rent in advance, or assess income levels prior to awarding tenancies. This could potentially lead to more refusals, delays in lettings and increase void times, and therefore less rental income. Members may wish to explore these alternatives once actual impact on rent arrears is known.

Bindu Arjoon
Director

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

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

See attached appendix – Universal Credit Full Service rollout from June 2018

Contact for enquires:
Democratic Services (Committees)
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01392 265275

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Exeter
City Council

Full Service rollout

Universal Credit

From September 2018

Chris Buckman – Benefits & Welfare Lead

November 2017

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Background

Rollout

Universal Credit is now available in every Jobcentre across the country, covering all Local Authorities, and supported by 22 Service Centres. UC is being introduced gradually, and was initially introduced from April 2013 in certain areas of the North West, known as Pathfinder sites. Initial eligibility criteria focused on single, unemployed, non-home-owning claimants without any children. In February 2015 the service started national rollout to new single unemployed claimants across Great Britain. By April 2016 Universal Credit was available for new claims from single unemployed claimants in all jobcentres across the country and also for couples and families in 96 sites across the North West of England. This phase of UC rollout was known as UC Live Service.

In May 2016 DWP started expansion of Universal Credit to a wider range of claimants, as with the rollout to single jobseekers, DWP have been doing this in a gradual, safe and secure way and the new Full Service is now available in 101 jobcentres around the country. From October 2017 DWP will begin to scale up to more than 50 jobcentres a month and the intention is that all cases are migrated, and a Full Service is available nationally, by March 2022. After the expansion process is complete, DWP will begin migrating claimants on other benefits to the Universal Credit Full Service from July 2019. This phase of UC rollout is known as UC Full Service.

Source: DWP, Universal Credit Statistical Ad Hoc: Payment Advances, October 2017

Universal Credit Full Service (UCFS) is due to arrive in Exeter Jobcentre in September 2018¹. From that point on, all claims to legacy benefits will instead be claims to Universal Credit (UC). This will vastly increase the rate at which households move onto Universal Credit and will expand the groups who will be affected.

Legacy benefits:

- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit

Universal Credit only applies to customers of working age; that is, those below the age at which they become eligible for State Pension Credit² – currently around 64 years old.

This report is prepared on the assumption that both the rollout timetable and UCFS rules continue as announced³ up to 19 October 2017. Changes to either are possible, even probable, and will affect the assumptions made herein. Please see Appendix 1 for changes announced up to 23 November 2017.

¹https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/662099/universal-credit-transition-rollout-schedule.pdf

²<https://www.gov.uk/state-pension-age>

³<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8096/CBP-8096.pdf>

The scale of the reform

Exeter has 6,294 working age households receiving Housing Benefit (HB) and / or Council Tax Support (CTS) who are expected to transfer to Universal Credit. Modelling⁴ indicates that 40% of these will be financially worse off under the new scheme. 2,066 Council tenants or those in temporary accommodation are expected to end up on Universal Credit. Of the 6,294 total cases who will move across, 4,774 (76%) currently receive Council Tax Support.

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) have been unable to provide us with projections for how quickly cases will transfer to UCFS. We have used experience from similar local authorities, including those in Somerset who went live earlier this year, to generate our own estimates. The rate of transfer will depend on how frequently households have a change which triggers the move to UCFS.

Examples of changes triggering a UCFS claim:

- Moving into work
- Moving out of work to job-seeking or sickness
- Going from full time to part time work or vice versa
- Becoming liable for rent for the first time
- Becoming responsible for a child for the first time
- Partner joining or leaving household
- Moving into new LA area
- Coming out of prison / hospital
- Taking on or stopping caring responsibilities

It is possible that within the first three months we could have transferred 1,000 cases to Universal Credit with the majority having moved within 12 months. Other projections indicate a much slower transfer with only around one third (2,000) cases lost in the first 12 months. Most cases that have not transferred in the first 12 months will be those whose circumstances rarely change. Many will remain on legacy benefits until the managed transition begins in July 2019⁵.

Current state

Universal Credit Live Service (UCLS) arrived in Exeter Jobcentre in November 2015. This is a very different scheme to the Universal Credit Full Service (UCFS) which is coming from September 2018. UCFS is administered on different systems with different rules and affects very different customer groups to UCLS. Any lessons learned from Live Service should therefore only be used cautiously to predict impacts under Full Service. However with little other data to go on, it at least gives an indication of the likely impact.

In most cases, when a customer claims Universal Credit, their Housing Benefit award ends. If they are liable for Council Tax however, their Council Tax Support award continues. As at October 2017 there were 165 Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support cases receiving Universal Credit; less than 2% of our overall caseload. Numbers of cases have remained fairly static for the past 12 months; the majority of claimants who are eligible under the Live Service rules have already moved across to Universal Credit.

⁴ Low Income Family Tracker dashboard from Policy in Practice – data as at June 2017

⁵ <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06547/SN06547.pdf>

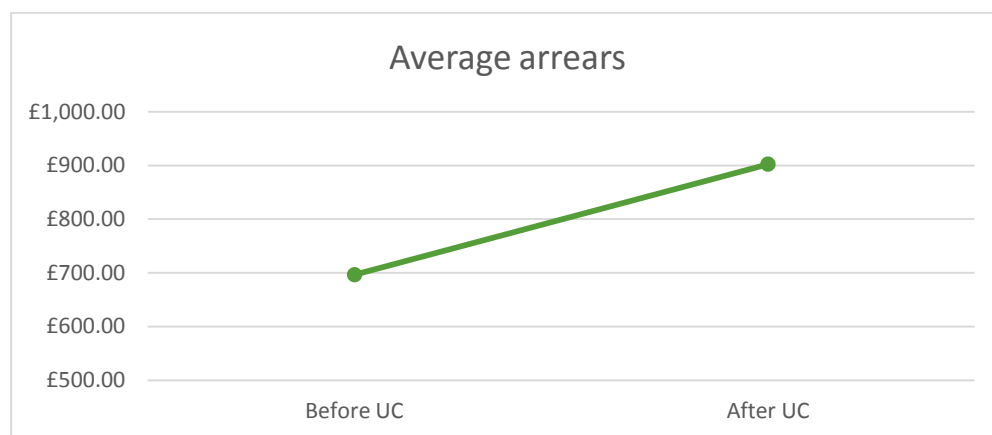
The Payment and Collection team have been keeping a manual record of the Council tenants (that they are aware of) receiving Universal Credit, in order to monitor their arrears situation. As at September 2017 they were tracking 56 HRA tenants and 6 in non-HRA temporary accommodation.

Under the Housing Benefit scheme all Council tenant payments were made directly to the tenants' rent accounts automatically. Under UCFS, direct payment is only available in limited circumstances,⁶ including when the tenant has built up two months of arrears or where there is identified vulnerability. The process is lengthy and largely manual, involving a lot of work for the Payment and Collection team. Decisions may take several weeks, meaning arrears will be even higher by the time a decision is made, and there is no guarantee that the decision will be positive anyway.

DWP have recently announced⁷ the rollout of a Landlord Portal for social landlords and the ability for some of them to apply for Trusted Partner status. It is claimed that these developments will allow for more effective communication and reduced administrative burden on these landlords. It is yet to be seen whether the announced changes deliver improvements in practice.

Of the 62 claims mentioned above 48% are on a direct payment arrangement where the Housing Costs element of Universal Credit is paid directly to us. We have recently discovered that these arrangements made under UCLS will be cancelled when tenants move over to UCFS. New requests will have to be made under the new regime leading to further delays and arrears.

The large majority of tenants (90%) were, for a variety of reasons, already in rent arrears at the point of moving onto Universal Credit. Now all 62 tenants are in arrears. The financial value of arrears has increased by 27% for the HRA tenants and 78% in non-HRA accommodation.



The sample size here is small, but is consistent with the picture elsewhere. See [Rent Collection](#) section for more information.

⁶https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/607851/personal-budgeting-support-and-alternative-payment-arrangements.pdf

⁷<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-09-07/9500>

Effects on households

Many organisations have reported on the impacts of Universal Credit. The Work and Pensions Committee has a current inquiry running⁸, looking at the rollout of UCFS. Their previous inquiry was interrupted by the announcement of the 2017 General Election before it could report its findings.

In this section we highlight some of the most significant challenges that customers will face. Further background can be found from the sources below and referenced throughout this report.

[House of Commons Library Briefing Paper – Housing Costs in Universal Credit](#)
[Work and Pensions Committee inquiry](#)
[Child Poverty Action Group UCFS Early Warning System report](#)
[The impact of Universal Credit in Sedgemoor](#)
[Citizens Advice Delivering on Universal Credit](#)
[DWP whistle blower in The Independent](#)

There is also a wealth of official information, statistics, guidance and background on www.gov.uk/universal-credit
[Universal Credit and rented housing: guide for landlords](#)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/research-reports>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/universal-credit-statistics>

Making UC claim online

The Full Service Universal Credit claim is made exclusively online and requires claimants to set up a citizen account first. It requires a greater level of digital literacy than the current system. UCFS will also be affecting many more claimant groups who are less likely to be digitally confident. Failure to complete the claim correctly and in time will result in delays and lost entitlement.

Managing ongoing UC award online

All communication with DWP and Jobcentre Work Coaches will be through the customer's online journal. Instructions and meetings will all be sent through the journal. Customers will need to be online frequently in order to keep up with the ongoing claim requirements. Failure to meet deadlines and provide evidence online will result in claims being closed. Customers will then have to reclaim with inevitable delays before they can receive any more money and leave gaps in entitlement. The only digital support need recognised by DWP is for making the initial claim online (see [Universal Support](#) section).

An emerging need seems to be the provision of ongoing support for customers to maintain their awards online. Access to telephone support is via a charged 0345 number and long delays are reported getting through to an advisor. (NB the Secretary of State announced on 18th October that calls to this number were to be made free within the next month.)

Delay in first payment

Universal Credit is designed to make the first payment to customers six weeks after they make their claim. During that period all other benefits will be stopped. If the customer was in work they will be expected to survive on their final payment of

⁸ <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/work-and-pensions-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/inquiry/>

wages which could of course be weekly pay. Research by Citizens Advice⁹ found 39% of customers presenting for help with Universal Credit waited longer than 6 weeks for payment, with 11% waiting 10 weeks or longer.

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions addressed the availability of advance payments supporting UCFS rollout in a speech¹⁰ to the Conservative Party conference on 2 October 2017. DWP claim that any customer who needs an advance payment will receive one within five days; same day if they are in immediate need.

Reduced income

Universal Credit is not intended to be a money saving reform. However there are inevitably winners and losers with any large change. Customers who are migrated across from July 2019 will have a degree of transitional protection applied to the amount of their income. This will not apply for customers who move across following a change in circumstances.

Most new claims for Universal Credit have to serve seven “waiting days” at the start of their award. This is one week where the customer is not entitled to any benefit at all. They will be responsible for paying their rent and all other outgoings for this week, even though they may have no income.

Lower earnings disregards will also reduce many people’s entitlement compared to the legacy benefits as well as some specific rules for housing costs being less generous than under Housing Benefit^{11,12}.

Managing single monthly payment in arrears

One of the major selling points of the Universal Credit reform is that it combines all other benefit payments into one.

What is an advantage in some ways, creates huge problems for some customers. Currently a family could be receiving Jobseekers Allowance every two weeks on a Thursday from Jobcentre Plus, Child Tax Credit from HMRC every two weeks on a Friday and Housing Benefit from us every two weeks on a Monday. This allows families to spread out their expenditure across the month. Also, if there is a delay or problem with one of those payments, there is likely to be another one made within a few days.

Under UC the whole income will come together, once a month. Customers will have to get used to making this one single payment last for all their expenses for the month to come. If there is a gap in Universal Credit entitlement, or simply a delay in payment, the customer will be left with no income at all to pay their rent or other bills, or to buy food with.

Claiming Council Tax Support (CTS)

Under the current system a claim for CTS is taken at the same time the customer claims Housing Benefit. Under Universal Credit the customer has to make a separate claim for CTS directly with the Local Authority. Experience elsewhere indicates a significant decrease in take up of Council Tax Support under UCFS. This will add

⁹ <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/how-citizens-advice-works/media/press-releases/citizens-advice-calls-for-universal-credit-rollout-to-be-paused-as-research-reveals-people-left-facing-financial-difficulty1/>

¹⁰ <http://www.ukpol.co.uk/david-gauke-2017-speech-at-conservative-party-conference/>

¹¹ <http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06547#fullreport>

¹² <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06547/SN06547.pdf>

extra expense for low income households and the risk of additional costs and distress where recovery action is taken before identifying their underlying entitlement to support.

Housing costs for young people

Under Universal Credit rules single people aged 18-21 with no dependent children will not have an automatic right to have their housing costs met. There will be exceptions for some vulnerable categories¹³, but this policy is likely to result in this group struggling to secure and maintain independent accommodation¹⁴. Modelling from Policy in Practice¹⁵ suggests that 42 individuals are at risk of being affected by this aspect of Universal Credit.

Recovery of overpayments

Housing Benefit rules mean that we cannot recover any overpayment of Housing Benefit where it is a result of an official error if the customer could not be expected to realise they were being overpaid. DWP have not replicated that rule in Universal Credit. It is quite likely that, as DWP get used to deciding housing costs for the first time in 30 years, there will be an increase in official errors. It is also likely that customers (and their advisors) struggling to understand the new rules will not be in a position to spot and report these errors. This means that more claimants will be left facing overpayments – which could be quite large once housing costs are included – that are not their fault and that they were unaware of.

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-costs-for-18-to-21-year-olds>

¹⁴ <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06473/SN06473.pdf>

¹⁵ Low Income Family Tracker dashboard from Policy in Practice – data as at June 2017

Effects on Exeter City Council

Rent collection

Currently 20% of working age customers who receive Housing Benefit have rent arrears with us. Our experience to date with the Live Service indicates that this will increase significantly once they transfer to Universal Credit. There have been a number of reports from Local Authorities and Housing Associations looking at rent arrears in areas where Universal Credit has been introduced. The National Federation of ALMOs (NFA) and Association of Retained Council Housing (ARCH) published their research in January 2017¹⁶. They surveyed 33 local authority and ALMO landlords who had seen Universal Credit rolled out to their tenants. Their figures showed that the value of arrears for Universal Credit claimants doubled over the monitoring period, whilst those for non UC claimants actually reduced in value.

DWP believe the rent arrears argument is overstated. Neil Couling, Director General of the Universal Credit Programme wrote to LA Chief Executives on 2nd October 2017 to address this and other points relating to rollout. He highlights three different types of arrears:

- “Book arrears” caused by the charging practices of landlords (presumably charging rent in advance)
- “Time lag arrears” caused by the monthly in arrears payment of Universal Credit and
- Arrears caused by (“a small number of”) tenants not passing on their rent money from UC to their landlord.

He acknowledges issues with housing costs decisions and payments in a minority of cases. He goes on to explain that the slow roll out has allowed DWP to learn lessons and improve the process. He quotes a figure that 80% of cases now receive a full payment on time at the end of their first assessment period.

A wide variety of figures for the impact of UC on rent arrears are reported from different sources. They do not readily compare to each other because of the different conditions underlying each survey. However there is a common picture emerging in all cases: rent arrears will rise under Universal Credit. There are a number of reasons for this and some mitigation can be put in place to reduce the effect (see: [Our approach](#) section). However, no matter how much extra resources are put into collection services and supporting customers, some increase in arrears is inevitable and built into the design of Universal Credit.

Temporary accommodation

One area where there is still a high degree of uncertainty is the provision of housing costs for those in temporary accommodation. It was recognised early on that not all accommodation was suitable for inclusion in Universal Credit housing costs. Responsibility for paying towards supported accommodation has stayed with local authorities through Housing Benefit. It has long been expected that the same decision would be taken for temporary accommodation. To date that has not happened.

We are therefore faced with the prospect of a benefit that is assessed once a month in arrears will need to meet the housing costs of people who, by their very nature, move frequently between accommodations at different rent levels. It is unlikely that

¹⁶ http://www.arch-housing.org.uk/media/96253/nfa_arch_universal_credit_-_a_progress_update_welfare_reform_survey_findings_-_as_at_sept_2016_.pdf

the award of UC housing costs will ever be flexible enough to cope with the short term nature of this group¹⁷. It is also true that the limits on the amount of UC housing costs mean that, even when an award does include housing costs, it will not meet anything like the full charge. Finally there will be little or no time to arrange direct payments to landlord for these clients. Any housing costs payments that are made will therefore be to the customer. By the time they receive the money they may have left the accommodation or even the area. Their priority at that point will be to pay the rent where they currently live, making the prospect of collecting any rent arrears on the temporary accommodation remote.

Projected Housing Benefit expenditure to residents of temporary accommodation is £1.053m in 2018/19. Under current rules 100% of this amount would all be paid directly to the rent accounts of the tenants. If we manage to collect 80% of this amount from payments made to Universal Credit claimants, this will increase rent arrears for this group by £211,000. It will also require significantly more time and effort put into collecting that money, either directly from the tenant or from DWP via direct payments or attachments for arrears.

Council Tax collection and Council Tax Support administration

The introduction of Universal Credit affects Council Tax in three main ways:

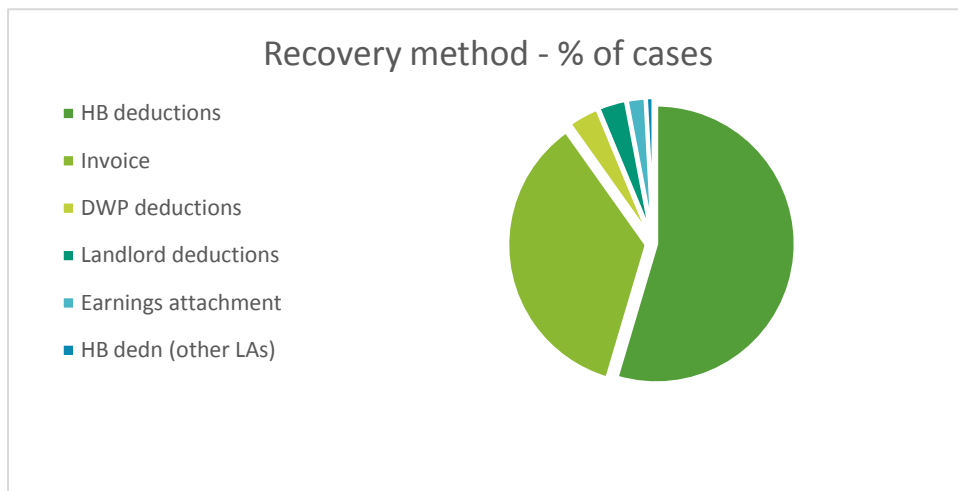
- Claiming Council Tax Support is no longer tied to a claim for help with housing costs. Take up of claims is therefore lower under UCFS than the current scheme. Many customers will only claim when chased for arrears.
- CTS schemes, as currently designed, reassess entitlement every month when UC income changes. This generates a significant amount of extra work for the Benefits & Welfare team. A sample of five sites which have moved to full service in the last year sees an average of 150% increase in volumes of reassessments.
- Reassessing CTS awards also creates a new bill and resets the recovery cycle, making in year collection much harder.
- Delays in payments and gaps in the awards of UC leave customers with less money available to pay their bills, including Council Tax.

60% of our current CTS claims are expected to be affected by the rollout of UCFS at some point. The annual Council Tax charge for this group of customers is in the order of £6.5m. CTS currently covers £3.1m leaving £3.4m to be collected from them. As previously observed, take up can be expected to be lower under UCFS. If just one person in 10 fails to make their claim for CTS that will increase the amount of collectible charge by £0.31m. Although not a large proportion of the total collectible Council Tax (around £65m), the financial circumstances of these customers will make collection much more labour intensive. It will inevitably involve providing more support and assistance alongside traditional collection methods.

Housing Benefit overpayment (HBOP) recovery

Universal Credit removes a very important method of recovering overpaid Housing Benefit. We have a current HBOP debt of around £2.5m and recover around £100,000 each month. Currently 55% of our HBOP cases are recovered by deductions taken from Housing Benefit before payments are made. Once housing costs are included in UC awards, the Payment and Collection team must make a request for recovery of a Housing Benefit overpayment to DWP. The priority of HBOP debt is a long way down a very long list. Also, the amount that can be recovered from UC is lower than can currently be recovered from HB. Lastly, the administration involved in making and monitoring requests and payment reconciliation is substantially more than in the current system.

¹⁷ <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06547/SN06547.pdf>



Of the 6294 claimants who are expected to transfer to UC, 803 have a Housing Benefit overpayment debt with us. The majority of these will be repaying the overpayment from their ongoing HB awards, representing up to £9,000 income per week. As the HB caseload reduces, the amount of new debt raised will drop in line. However the amount of overpayment that is recovered each month will drop even more sharply – new debt being faster to recover than old. This will reduce another income stream for the authority which, over time, could approach £1m annually.

Homelessness

DWP are beginning to recognise the importance of establishing relationships with social landlords and are taking steps to improve the journey for these tenants. Recently DWP have announced a new portal for social landlords¹⁸ to access and supply information relating to tenant's UC claims. They are not able to do the same with the majority of private landlords. Tenants in the private sector are likely to suffer more from delayed and reduced payments of their housing costs than under the Housing Benefit system. The knock on effect for us will be an increase in households, including families and long term sick and disabled people, facing the threat of eviction. It is also likely, as has been experienced elsewhere, that the private rental market will become harder to access for people receiving Universal Credit. This could be felt particularly in Exeter where there is already a shortage of property available at rents that are affordable on benefits. There are 1765 households in private rented accommodation in Exeter who will be moving to UCFS.

Housing Benefit administration

The most obvious, but not necessarily most significant, impact of UCFS rollout will be the reduction in HB caseload. Accurately predicting the timeline and final situation is almost impossible with the frequently changing rollout schedule. Ultimately though, the majority of our 6500 working age cases will transfer to have their housing costs met by UC. During the transitional period DWP will continue to withdraw large amounts from the HB administration grant they pay to us. In other areas this has been between 20 and 25% in the first year following the start of rollout – 2019/20 for us. Although it has been eroded through the years of austerity, this is still a large grant - £422,826 for 2017/18 – which makes a big contribution to the costs of running the Benefits and Welfare service.

¹⁸ http://www.arch-housing.org.uk/media/96253/nfa_arch_universal_credit_-_a_progress_update_welfare_reform_survey_findings_-_as_at_sept_2016_.pdf

The type of work being undertaken will unquestionably change as UCFS rolls out, but, from experiences elsewhere, overall workload will not reduce anything like as much as the funding reduces. The team will still be dealing with any working age cases that fall outside UC rules – currently including supported accommodation and possibly broadening to include temporary accommodation before the end of this year¹⁹. We will continue to deal with remaining working age HB claims until the managed transfer of cases is completed – scheduled for 2022.

There is work to do to close down cases, but once transferred the volume of means-tested assessments being undertaken will decline. DWP are providing New Burdens funding to support the migration process. For 2017/18 the amounts for Exeter City Council were:

New Burdens	Funding	Description
Management	£8,549	This is to support Universal Credit Implementation.
Housing Benefit Natural Migration	£1,553	This is to support moving claimants from legacy benefits to UC.
Support for Housing Expertise	£ 0	This is to fund LAs for the clerical process of providing further information for complex housing costs to Universal Credit.
Housing Benefit Debt Migration	£ 1,053	This is for the administrative cost of transferring details of claimant HB debt to DWP.
Total	£11,155	

When compared to the reduction in Administration Grant of potentially £105,000, this New Burdens payment does not go very far towards making up the shortfall.

Assessors will also still be dealing with pensioner Housing Benefit and CTS claims for all customers. Currently the CTS assessment happens alongside the HB assessment – little extra work is necessary. In future the CTS assessment will be a piece of work of the same scale as a HB assessment, but without the same level of administration funding.

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)

Under UC rules housing costs for most customers are paid by DWP as part of their UC award. DHPs have long been used by Local Authorities as a way of topping up Housing Benefit where a customer had additional housing costs that were not being met. It is used for the hard cases and exceptions where the regulations do not allow a payment of Housing Benefit. Under UC the responsibility for deciding and paying DHP remain with the Local Authority.

The positive side to this is that we still retain some local funding for housing costs. This will be a valuable tool in helping to avoid evictions and homelessness caused by shortfalls and deficiencies in the Universal Credit Housing Costs decision making. It does however cause a number of problems.

Under UC we no longer have any control or influence over the housing costs award. The first step when a claim for DHP is made now, is to check that the maximum amount of Housing Benefit is being paid. In future, even if we believe the DWP decision on housing costs is wrong, we will have to pay out of the limited DHP pot.

¹⁹ <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06547/SN06547.pdf>

We are already spending our full DHP allocation each year (£167,000 in 2016/17, £239,000 in 2017/18). This allocation is funded by the DWP and will not increase under UC. Indeed it is projected to reduce by £15m each year from 2018/19 to 2020/21²⁰. Therefore there is little capacity to meet extra demand generated by the rollout of UC. DHP is designed as a top up to statutory entitlement for housing costs and is not of a scale to replace all of the benefit that may be lost through gaps and shortfalls.

Legally we are able to spend up to 2.5 times our yearly DHP allocation, however the cost of all spend over our allocation has to be met by the Council. If a customer is eligible for an award of DHP, under the regulations and our policy, we are not legally allowed to refuse an award on the grounds that the DWP allocation has been spent if we are still below the overall limit. This could, in theory, expose the authority to unbudgeted expenditure of 1.5 times the DWP allocation, £358,500 in 2017/18.

We cannot make an award of DHP until DWP have awarded the Housing Costs element of UC. Currently we use over a third of our budget for deposits and rent in advance, allowing people to move to more affordable or suitable accommodation. We can do this by assessing the Housing Benefit award in advance of the move. DWP cannot do this, so no DHP can be paid until sometime after the claimant moves in. This restriction also means that we cannot pay while a decision on housing costs is delayed. There is a risk that this will reduce our ability to help prevent homelessness.

Many social landlords are responding to the threat to their balance sheet posed by Universal Credit. Devon Home Choice recently became aware of a social housing provider in the area requiring 8 weeks rent in advance of granting a tenancy. We are also seeing many more social landlords who are introducing new or increasing their existing rent in advance requirements. Until now tenants on benefit have generally been able to negotiate a payment arrangement. That option is now being removed meaning an additional strain is put on the DHP budget.

Local Welfare Support (LWS)

We have retained a small budget from the funding Devon County Council provided for Local Welfare Assistance after the transfer of responsibility for parts of the Social Fund in 2013. There has been no funding provided to us since 2015 and we have been using the small reserve to provide crisis support only.

For 18 months from July 2017 this budget has also been used to fund the Money and Budgeting Advice Worker. This involves a caseworker from Exeter Citizens Advice working within the Payments and Collection team. He is supporting their officers and those within the wider system to develop their budgeting advice skills with the aim of maximising sustainable collection rates. The contract for this caseworker ends in January 2019. A revenue bid to have funding for the £35,000 per year contract met beyond this point has been to SMB. Their recommendation is that the funding is included as part of the major grant to Exeter Citizens Advice.

We provide food vouchers to supplement Exeter Foodbank and help customers with utility top up vouchers. We also support colleagues in Housing Advice with the costs of relocating homeless clients and provide them funding for food vouchers for their clients. Much of the demand for this crisis help (other than homeless clients) comes from people who are experiencing delays in the award or payment of their benefit or who have had a benefit sanctioned. Demand in all of these areas is likely to be significantly higher once UCFS rolls out.

²⁰ Summer Budget 2015

Currently the majority of UC claimants are single jobseekers who are generally quite resilient and have minimal crisis support needs. Once the rollout affects families and disabled households the amount of financial shortfall they each face will be much higher. We would also expect that more of those presenting for crisis support will have a vulnerability. Around £50,000 remains in the budget for crisis support. At present we spend around £15,000 per year and would expect this to increase sharply once rollout begins.

Customer advice and assistance

Customers currently come to our Customer Service Centre with a range of complex situations, asking for our help with their financial and/or housing problems. Many of the solutions can be found, directly or indirectly, through Housing Benefit. Once we are no longer in control of decision making on housing costs we will lose much of our ability to offer practical assistance.

Our ability to offer advice will also be severely reduced as our access to information under UCFS is extremely limited. Customers used to having their questions answered and problems resolved by our teams will be faced with the frustrating prospect of being redirected back to DWP for answers.

It is also difficult to predict at this point how demand volumes will be affected. We may see a reduction in enquiries for Housing Benefit claims as people move across to Universal Credit housing costs. At the same time we can expect to see a number of customers coming to us for help navigating the Universal Credit claim process. As a landlord we will have people coming to us for evidence in support of their housing costs claim: currently this is all transferred automatically for Housing Benefit. It is also likely that a number of customers will present with complex debt problems as a result of the issues above. Even if volumes are lower, the complexity of these cases will require more officer time to deal with.

Effects on other stakeholders

Private and social landlords

As discussed in the section on [Homelessness](#), landlords of all types are likely to see increased rent arrears. Levels of tolerance for their tenants' problems may be different between the different groups, but fundamentally all landlords rely on rental income to remain viable. Private landlords have a long history of resistance to offering housing to benefit claimants. The inclusion of "No DSS" on rental adverts is still commonplace many years after DSS ceased to exist. Over recent years we, in common with most Local Authorities, have worked hard to build relationships with our local private landlords. This has helped to keep the private rental market accessible, even as we faced recent welfare reforms that have impacted private renters reliant on benefits. Much of this hard work threatens to be undone by the move to housing costs in UCFS. DWP tend to demonstrate less flexibility and discretion in their decision making which, while understandable, will inevitably result in more claims being refused or delayed than under Housing Benefit. Landlords' patience is not likely to last forever.

The response of Social Landlords will be varied; one common response is discussed in the section on [DHP](#). Some landlords will be putting more resources into supporting their tenants affected by UCFS, others will toughen their lettings and arrears policies. Aster Housing spoke recently about how they have varied their approach for Universal Credit claimants. They have accepted the inevitability of structural arrears due to the design of UC and are not wasting resources chasing those who have no money to pay. Instead they are focused on early intervention, speaking to tenants as soon as they know a UC claim is being made and setting clear affordable arrangements ahead of the first payment being received. They are not doing much actual support of tenants, directing them instead to DWP and Local Authorities. They are though making sure tenants fully understand the rules, how UC works and what is expected of them.

Advice agencies

All agencies dealing with benefit, budgeting, digital inclusion, debt or housing issues are going to see an increase in demand from UCFS customers. Citizens Advice, in calling for a pause in the rollout²¹, highlighted that, of the 30,000 people they supported with UC problems, 25% also had debt issues. 57% of those surveyed had been forced to borrow money whilst waiting for their first payment.

Charities

Any charities involved with supporting low income households will see more demand for help as the rollout continues. In particular, those providing crisis support are likely to find more families coming to them with no money for essentials. The Trussell Trust operate a network of 420 foodbanks across the UK, including in Exeter. They addressed the increased demand in their submission to the Work and Pensions Committee Universal Credit inquiry²² in September 2017. They observed an increase in demand for food parcels of 16.85% in 2016/17 in those areas where Universal Credit Full Service was completely or partially rolled out. In other areas demand increased by only 6.64%. Their volunteers are reporting increases not just in volume but severity and complexity of issues in the people presenting for help. They highlight

²¹ <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/how-citizens-advice-works/media/press-releases/citizens-advice-calls-for-universal-credit-rollout-to-be-paused-as-research-reveals-people-left-facing-financial-difficulty1/>

²² <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/work-and-pensions-committee/universal-credit-rollout/written/70172.html>

the wider effects of the delay in first payment: "...increased debt levels, exacerbation of mental health issues, strain on relationships, and the inability to meet essential payments, such as rent."

Universal Support

Universal Support is DWP's approach to mitigate some of the worst impacts of Universal Credit rollout on households. Under this scheme local authorities sign an agreement to deliver support to UC customers in two areas:

- Digital inclusion – making an online claim
- Financial inclusion – personal budgeting support

The scheme has been operating since the introduction of the UC Live Service in 2013. In Exeter we have signed up to provide this support since 2015 and taken the small amount of funding on offer. Take up of this service has been extremely low to date which partly reflects the client group who have been affected by the Live Service. We have also been clear with Jobcentre managers that the service we offer will be in line with the value put on the work by DWP's funding.

There is no statutory requirement for Exeter City Council to sign up with DWP to deliver Universal Support each year, and several Devon Authorities have refused to do so in 2017/18, due to the poor funding offered. Whether we continue to offer Universal Support under Full Service will largely depend on what role we wish to play as Universal Credit rolls out.

Signing up will mean that Exeter City Council becomes officially the organisation responsible for supporting customers impacted by DWP's policy. Jobcentre Plus and other organisations will send all customers who are struggling to manage the new system, either online or financially, to us for a solution.

If we do not sign up then it will remain DWP's responsibility to identify the means of support for digital or financial assistance for their customers.

DWP expect that we have no alternative to signing up because they are aware that when these customers are struggling they will turn to us anyway (for Local Welfare Support crisis assistance, Discretionary Housing Payments and homelessness prevention). Many will also be our tenants, so we will have to be involved with supporting them to pay their rent. The large majority will also be Council Tax payers who we will need our support to claim CTS and pay their remaining liability.

For the current year, under Universal Credit Live Service, the funding for Universal Support has been fixed based on assumed volumes. It is expected that funding under UCFS from next year will be on the same basis. DWP estimate the number of new claims for Universal Credit on a monthly basis and assume a percentage of them who will require support with online or budgeting skills. They then attribute a time value for that support and an hourly rate to deliver it. Experience in other UCFS areas has been that the estimates of demand have been low and funding insufficient.

	Full service		Live service		2017/18
	Time (m)	Value	Time (m)	Value	Profile cases
Digital support	102	£43.62	60	£25.66	68
Personal Budgeting Support	120	£51.32	120	£51.32	40

We have seen under the current system that the time allowed, in particular for budgeting support, is not enough to be able to deliver an effective service. Overall funding available (maximum £3,829 for 2017/18) is nowhere near enough to justify a contracted out service or to fully fund an internal position. Agreeing to deliver Universal Support for DWP will therefore carry an unfunded cost to the Council. However it may be that, properly delivered, this support can help to protect Council income.

The approach we intend to take

We believe that our response to Universal Credit should have the following objectives:

- Protect Council income (Rent collection, Council Tax collection & HB overpayment collection)
- Prevent homelessness
- Mitigate the worst effects of the reform for vulnerable customers

Customers affected by UCFS are going to have a wide range of needs and our response must be similarly broad. Officers involved in supporting UCFS customers must have, or be able to access, expertise and decision making authority in at least the following areas:

- Universal Credit claim & payment rules
- Budgeting, money management and identifying priority payments
- Debt resolution remedies and grants available
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Support
- Housing Advice and homelessness prevention
- Collection of Council rent, Council Tax and Housing Benefit overpayments
- Discretionary support including
 - Local Welfare Support
 - Discretionary Housing Payments
 - Exceptional Hardship Payments
 - Housing Spend to Save

Demand is the great unknown at this stage. The Government recently wrote to LA Chief Executives confirming the current rollout timetable was to continue. However calls for a pause in the rollout or significant changes to the design of Universal Credit continue to come from many sources.

Our planning assumptions are made on the basis that rollout continues as announced and the policy design remains largely unchanged. Even so it is very hard to predict the pattern and volumes of demand over time.

The proposed solution is to draw officers with the relevant expertise from the different teams impacted by the rollout i.e. Benefits & Welfare, Customer Support, Payment & Collection, Housing Advice and Housing Customer Relations. This multi-disciplinary group should be able to work together to resolve whatever the customer's individual issues are. At the core of the Universal Support group will be a co-ordinator and two full time dedicated officers. Initially, while demand is low, a single officer from each team will need to be involved as "Universal Credit Champion" for their area. This will probably be on an on-pull basis where their expertise can be called on when needed. As demand grows, membership of the group can be expanded with additional officers coming from the areas where experience shows the greatest need exists.

This team will need to be able to do all of the things needed by customers affected by Universal Credit to meet the three objectives set out above. This will include:

- Delivering Personal Budgeting Support and Digital Support under the Universal Support agreement
- Make early contact with Council Tenants to ensure the customer understands the process and what is needed from them
- Setting up realistic and sustainable payment plans before first UC payment is received

- Ensuring CTS is claimed and paid and that affordable arrangements are set for the remaining balance
- Assisting with extra discretionary help and signposting to other sources of support where needed
- Providing or facilitating specialist advice on housing or debt issues identified
- Providing ongoing support with digital access to maintain customers' UC awards

Officers for this group will have to come from within existing teams due to the levels of expertise needed to provide the support above. The amount of time that will need to be given to these customers is difficult to predict. It is therefore hard to say how much officer time will need to be backfilled and how much can be freed up by changing the way existing services are delivered. Initially we will need to keep the extra temporary resources we already have in place, including an additional 7 hours of a Senior Benefits & Welfare Officer and an agency Assessment Officer who is covering maternity leave until the New Year.

We are also introducing an apprentice into the Customer Service Centre from January 2018. Their purpose will be to test the Customer Service floorwalker role where customers can be given some less intensive assistance with self-help facilities. This person may prove valuable in providing the digital support that UCFS customers need.

Considerations as a landlord

This report has already highlighted the potential increase in rent arrears, therefore as a landlord we too need to be considering what actions we can put in place to mitigate this threat to our income stream. A recent survey of the 21 Devon Home Choice partner landlords showed that Exeter City Council was one of only three landlords who do not ask new tenants for rent in advance. The 18 other DHC partner landlords all request rent in advance of varying amounts with differences in how widely they enforce their rules.

The option to start charging rent in advance is one that Members may wish to explore further once the actual impact on rent arrears is known.

The Payment and Collection team will be working as part of the Universal Support group outlined above. They will be able to intervene early with new Universal Credit claimants to minimise resulting rent arrears. Ahead of rollout, Universal Credit training will also be given to officers within the Housing Customer Relations, Lettings and Leasehold, and Housing Advice teams. The Universal Support group will work with these teams on any changes to processes that can be adopted in support of the group's aims.

Appendix 1 – Changes announced since the report was written

Announcements relating to Universal Credit rollout and design were made in Budget 2017 and in a statement to Parliament by the Secretary of State on 23 November 2017. Full details of these announcements have not been released, although they are likely to have a significant impact on the contents of the report.

Delayed roll out timetable

Exeter Jobcentre will now go live from September 2018 rather than June 2018.

Removal of seven waiting days

The seven days at the start of new claims where there would be no entitlement to UC will be removed from February 2018. This should mean first payments (not including advances) will be sent five weeks or longer after a claim is made rather than six weeks or longer.

Two week run-on of Housing Benefit when transferring to UC

UC claimants with an existing HB award will keep their HB award for a further two weeks reducing the period of time before UC housing costs is paid. It looks as though there will be an overlap of payments where the claimant is paid housing costs twice for the same period.

Easier to request payment to landlord

Where UC claimants already have HB payments made to their landlord it will be “made easier” for this arrangement to continue. It appears that this means guidance will be issued to DWP staff to highlight the existing options to customers at the point of claiming rather than a relaxing of the rules.

Easier access to and increased amount of payment advances

From January 2018 applications for advance payments will start to be available online. The maximum amount that can be requested will increase from 50% of a monthly underlying entitlement to 100%.

Increasing period for payment advances to be repaid

The period over which payment advances must be repaid will increase from 6 months to 12 months.

Temporary accommodation costs

Local authorities will be able to reclaim “over 80% of the money they spend on temporary accommodation directly from the Department for Work and Pensions rather than from the claimant”. A letter from Neil Couling, UC Director General, on 23 November states that housing costs for Temporary Accommodation will be met from Housing Benefit from April 2018, subject to legislation being laid.

Partnership working with Citizens Advice

DWP are “exploring with Citizens Advice the scope for greater collaborative working to help claimants locally as they move to Universal Credit.” This is said to be building on the Universal Support already delivered by local authorities.

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – PEOPLE AND EXECUTIVE
DATE OF MEETING: 4 January 2018 and 9 January 2018
REPORT OF: Chief Finance Officer & Director
TITLE: Housing Rents and Service Charges 2018-19

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 changes to council dwelling rents, garage rents and service charges with effect from 1 April 2018.

2. Recommendations:

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

2.1 Rents of Council dwellings are reduced by 1% from 1 April 2018

2.2 Garage rents are increased by 4% from 1 April 2018

2.3 Service Charges will remain at their existing levels, with the exception of charges specified in paragraph 11.3, from 1 April 2018

3. Reasons for the recommendations:

With effect from 1 April 2016, the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 requires social housing landlords to reduce rents by 1% a year for 4 years from a 2015-16 baseline.

The financial year 2018-19 represents Year 3 out of 4 of implementing the 1% rent cut.

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 2018-19 estimates for the Housing Revenue Account, which are also presented to this committee.

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

The Government's previous social rent policy was intended to give social landlords certainty over the 10 year period, 2015-16 to 2024-25, with rents expected to rise by Consumer Price Index inflation (CPI) + 1%. The 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 proposed changes to rents and service charges for 2018-19 in accordance with the Government's current social housing policy.

6. What are the legal aspects?

Section 23 of the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 requires registered providers of social housing in England to reduce social housing rents by 1% a year for 4 years from a frozen 2015-16 baseline.

7. Monitoring Officers comments:

This report raises no issues for the Monitoring Officer.

8. Report Details:

RENT SETTING BACKGROUND

8.1 Despite applying a 1% reduction to rents, the underlying rent for each council property is based upon a national rent formula.

8.2 The rent formula was established to ensure that social rents take account of:

- The condition and location of a property – reflected in its value
- Local earnings
- Property size (specifically, the number of bedrooms in a property)

8.3 The rent formula for each council dwelling is set, based upon January 1999 levels, and up until 2015-16 was uplifted for inflation each year.

8.4 During the 4 year rent reduction period, the baseline 2015-16 'formula rent' will be incrementally reduced by 1% in 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20.

8.5 On 4 October 2017, DCLG announced that increases to social housing rents, after the 4 year rent reduction period, will be limited to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1% for 5 years from 2020.

Social Rent Decreases for 2018-19

8.6 In accordance with the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016, it will be necessary to reduce rents by 1%. For 2018-19 this will result in an average reduction of £0.75 per week, over 52 weeks, per property.

8.7 Rents are collected over 48 weeks, resulting in an average reduction of £0.81 per collection week for 2018-19.

8.8 On a typical 2 bedroom flat the weekly rent for 2017-18 will be £75.11 (over 52 weeks). For comparative purposes, the average weekly rents for a 2 bedroom flat in Exeter are:

- £91.41 per week with a housing association
- £173.08 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% for four years also applies 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 Under self-financing local authorities are encouraged to review the rents of non-dwellings in order to ensure associated costs are fully recovered. In light of the proposed capital investment in garages over the next 4 years, it is considered appropriate to recover the costs over a period from a higher rental.
- 10.3 A 4% increase in garage rents is proposed, which represents an uplift at the former CPI + 1% level. Rents for car-spaces will remain at their existing levels.

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 it is proposed that service charges are maintained at their existing levels for 2018-19, with the following exceptions:
- 7% increase in respect of water at Magdalen Gardens in line with rises in water and sewerage charges
 - 5% increase in electricity service charges to reflect utility contract costs
 - 2.5% increase in respect of the Older Persons' property service charge in line with rises in employee costs
 - 5% reduction in respect of door entry systems in line with system maintenance costs

12. High Value Assets Levy

- 12.1 The Government introduced powers in the Housing and Planning Act 2016 in respect of the sale of local authority higher value vacant housing. The Act enables the government to set out a definition of 'higher value' homes and will create a duty on local authorities to consider selling homes that meet this definition when they become vacant.
- 12.2 The Act allows the government to estimate the amount of money they would expect each individual authority to receive, in each financial year, from sales of higher value homes. Authorities will then be required to pay this amount to the Treasury.
- 12.3 The payments will be used to extend the Right to Buy to housing associations and to pay off debt attached to the sold properties.
- 12.4 The impact on the Council is pending both the definition of higher value homes and the mechanism by which the government will calculate the amount payable, 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.
- 12.5 The Government have not yet announced an implementation date, but DCLG have indicated that no payment will be due during 2018/19 whilst detailed regulations are prepared.

13. 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.

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

In addition to the 1% reduction in rental income over the four years; 2016-17 to 2019-20, the main risk to council dwelling rents relates to the impact of welfare reforms, in particular the move to Universal Credit.

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

The uncertainty regarding the definition of 'high value' and calculation of the High Value Asset levy is also a risk, it is therefore considered prudent to maintain the HRA Working Balance at no less than £4,000,000 over the medium term.

15. 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?

Rents and service charges represent the main sources of income to the HRA, which in turn provides the financial resources to deliver housing services and maintain the condition of council dwellings, which has a positive impact on the health and well-being of Council tenants. In the delivery of services, housing officers are able to identify and manage issues relating to safe-guarding, vulnerabilities and community safety.

16. Are there any other options?

No other options.

**Chief Finance Officer
Director**

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

Background papers used in compiling this report:

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REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - PEOPLE
DATE OF MEETING: 4 January 2018
REPORT OF: Chief Finance Officer
TITLE: Housing Revenue Account Estimates 2018-19

Is this a Key Decision?

Yes

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1. What is the report about?

This report sets out the proposed revenue and capital estimates for 2018-19 in respect of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Council Own Build Sites.

2. Recommendations:

That Members of Scrutiny Committee – People support the estimates for 2018-19 and recommends their approval at the Special Meeting of the Council on 20 February 2018.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

The HRA is a record of income and expenditure relating to an authority's own housing stock. Local housing authorities have a statutory duty to keep an HRA in accordance with proper accounting practices, to set an annual budget and to review the account throughout the year.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources

The financial resources required to deliver both housing services to Council tenants and to invest in new and existing housing stock during 2018-19 are set out in the body of this report. The budgets have been set within the confines of implementing the third year of social housing rent cuts, in accordance with the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016. This represents a significant reduction in financial resources.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

This report has been prepared on behalf of the Section 151 Officer to set out the revenue and capital estimates for 2018-19 in respect of the Housing Revenue Account and Council Own Build Sites.

6. What are the legal aspects?

The Local Government Act 2003 places a duty on authorities to set robust estimates, maintain adequate reserves and to monitor the budgets and this applies equally to the HRA as to the General Fund.

The Housing Revenue Account is also framed by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. This Act created the ring-fence and the structure within which the HRA operates and covers the detailed operation of the HRA, including the credits (income) and debits (expenditure) which make up the account.

7. Monitoring Officer Comments:

This report raises no issues for the Monitoring Officer.

8. Report Details:

BUDGET FRAMEWORK FOR THE HRA

8.1 SELF-FINANCING

Since April 2012, the Council's HRA is expected to be self-financing. Thus all income collected locally from rents, service charges and other sources are kept at a local level to deliver housing services to tenants and to maintain the housing stock.

8.2 ANNUAL BUDGET SETTING

Budgets are revisited each year to make amendments for assumptions made on stock levels, interest rates, inflation and other changed circumstances.

8.3 INFLATION

An overall allowance of £230,880 has been set aside for inflation within the HRA. The inflationary increases allowed in the budgets are:

Pay award	2%
Pay – Increments	0.5%
Electricity	2.5%
Gas	2.5%
Water	0%
Insurance	10%
Fuel	3%
General Inflation	0%
Income (except dwelling rents)	3%

General inflation has again been held at zero; however, where there are contracts in place, inflation at around the Consumer Price Index (CPI) has been added.

8.4 INTEREST RATES

In respect of interest rates, next year's budget reflects the likelihood that whilst base rate may remain low, borrowing for cash-flow purposes will increase and the Council may begin to take out borrowing over a longer timeframe as a result.

However, this only affects the borrowing attributable to the original Council Own Build sites; Rowan House and Knights Place, as the HRA has fixed the interest rate payable on its 50 year maturity loan with the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb).

8.5 SOCIAL RENT POLICY

With effect from 1st April 2016, the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 requires social housing landlords to reduce social housing rents by 1% a year for 4 years from a 2015/16 baseline.

The financial year 2018/19 represents Year 3 out of 4 of implementing the 1% rent cut.

As previously reported, local authorities had previously been given assurance that rents would rise by Consumer Price Index inflation (CPI) + 1% for the ten years; 2015-16 to 2024-25. The statutory 1% rent cut has therefore significantly reduced the resources available to the HRA with approximately £7.9 million less rental income over the 4 year period compared to previous income projections.

For 2018-19 this will result in an average reduction of £0.75 per week, over 52 weeks, per property.

A separate report is being presented to this committee in respect of setting council dwelling rents for 2018-19, which provides more detail.

8.6 KEY HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET CHANGES PROPOSED FOR 2018-19

The table below sets out the key changes between the budgets for the current financial year and the draft estimates for 2018-19. Please also refer to Appendix 1.

Movement	£	Detail
Budgeted Deficit for 2017-18	2,303,775	
Inflationary increases	230,880	As explained in paragraph 8.3
Decreased budget for Management	224,580	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following Executive approval on 17 October 2017, the budgets reflect recruitment of three temporary posts to ensure that the new Housing Management IT system is introduced and implemented effectively. A Housing Systems Team Lead and two Housing System Officers will be appointed on 23 month fixed term contracts. Budgetary provision has also been made for consultancy fees in respect of identifying and implementing service improvements across the HRA.
Increased budget for Housing Customers	39,070	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee costs reflect additional members of the superannuation scheme and the associated employer contributions at 15.8%. The budgets reflect an increase in the provision for the Downsizing Scheme, which provides assistance to tenants who wish to move to smaller accommodation and free up family units.
Increased budget for Sundry Land Maintenance	62,990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As previously reported, it is projected that the number of trees on HRA communal land requiring annual inspections and major works will significantly increase over the next 5 years. The demand for works to trees is further exacerbated by the spread of ash dieback (Chalara disease) and the resurgence of elm disease. <p>The HRA's medium term financial plan had already factored in a £70k year-on-year increase for dealing with its trees and the proposed budget increase for 2018-19 reflects this.</p>
Decreased budget for Repairs and	(170,500)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, a reduction in the budgets required for the Repairs and Maintenance Programme in 2018-19, which reflects;

Maintenance Programme		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgets for general reactive repairs and repairs to void properties based upon last 7 year average plus an inflationary allowance based on Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) rates. • The budget for external painting to council dwellings provides for works to be undertaken on a 7 year cyclical programme. • Service and maintenance budgets reflect contract arrangements and allow for inflationary rises, where appropriate. • The budget for asbestos removal costs reflects planned capital works (such as kitchen and bathroom replacements), in order to ensure safely removed prior to major works being undertaken.
Increased Revenue Contribution to Capital	699,910	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of revenue monies required towards financing the HRA capital programme is expected to increase from £6.5m in 2017-18 to £7.2m in 2018-19. <p>This increase reflects the HRA's contribution to the St Loyes Extra Care scheme and financing significant investment in existing stock, in particular the proposed refurbishment of LAINGS properties and the refurbishment of Rennes House.</p>
Increased budget for Capital Charges	70,520	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This represents an increased depreciation charge in respect of HRA assets including; dwellings, garages, IT, vehicles and plant and equipment. It is calculated in accordance with the latest Stock Valuation guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government in November 2016. <p>Depreciation is a real cost to the HRA as it represents the minimum amount of revenue monies to be set aside in the Major Repairs Reserve in order to provide for future capital works and help maintain assets in a stable condition.</p>
Increased budget for Housing Assets	161,140	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following Executive approval on 14 November 2017, the budgets reflect the recruitment of two temporary posts to support the new Fire Safety Management Policy. An Implementation Officer and Implementation Surveyor will be appointed on 18 month fixed term contracts. • Budget provision has been made for the cost of decanting tenants in order to facilitate the refurbishment of seventeen LAINGS properties in the Cowick area.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The budgets also reflect the removal of non-recurring budgets within the 2017-18 estimates in respect of a stock condition survey and operating model consultancy costs.
Decreased income budget in respect of Rents	168,730	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The budget for rental income from council dwellings has decreased in accordance with the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016, which requires social landlords to reduce rents payable by individual tenants by 1% each year, for 4 years, between 2016-17 and 2019-20.
Increased income budget in respect of Interest	(28,950)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional interest receivable in respect of HRA balances (working balance, capital receipts and major repairs reserve).
Budgeted Deficit for 2018-19	3,762,145	

8.7 MOVEMENT IN HRA WORKING BALANCE

The proposed budgets for 2018-19 indicate that a total of £3,762,145 will need to be taken out of the HRA Working Balance in order to meet the budgeted deficit. The impact on the HRA Working Balance is set out below.

Please also refer to Appendix 2 which sets out the total forecast HRA capital resources over the next 3 years, of which the HRA working balance forms a significant part.

Movement on HRA Working Balance	£
Estimated HRA Working Balance, as at 1/4/18	9,226,749
Budgeted Deficit for 2018-19	(3,762,145)
Balance resolved to be retained (HRA contingency)	(4,000,000)
Total Forecast Balance Available, as at 31/3/19	1,464,604

8.8 HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The HRA Capital Programme for 2018-19 is £18.2m, which comprises:

HRA Capital Investment	£
Capital investment in existing stock	12,487,220
Capital investment in the provision of new council homes	5,690,000
Total HRA Capital Programme 2018-19	18,177,220

In terms of investment in existing stock the proposed budgets for 2018-19 include the following:

- 132 kitchen replacements

- 148 bathroom replacements
- Refurbishment of 17 LAINGS properties
- 400 boiler replacements
- Year 1 of storage facility improvements in accordance with the Fire Safety Management Policy
- 6 properties to have low carbon building retrofit as part of a Zero Energy Buildings project
- 236 properties to have window replacement
- Re-roofing to 50 houses and planned works to roofs of blocks of flats

A detailed list of the proposed new schemes for this Committee is attached at Appendix 3.

8.9 HRA CAPITAL FINANCING

The proposed HRA Capital Programme for 2018-19 will be financed as follows. Please also refer to Appendix 2 which sets out the impact on capital resources available to the HRA over the next 3 years.

HRA Capital Finance	£
Major Repairs Reserve	7,830,670
Revenue Contribution to Capital	7,196,550
Capital Receipts	1,000,000
Commutated sums	10,000
Department of Health grant for St Loyes Extra Care Scheme	1,490,000
External contributions	650,000
Total HRA Capital Financing 2018-19	18,177,220

8.10 HRA DEBT

Although the HRA is now self-financing, the Government have put a limit on the amount of borrowing the authority can have for the purposes of the HRA, called the 'debt cap'. For Exeter City Council, the debt cap is £57,882,413.

As set out below, the Council already has debt up to its 'Debt Cap' and therefore has no headroom to take on any additional borrowing in respect of the HRA.

The Autumn Budget 2017 announced that HRA borrowing caps will be lifted in areas of high affordability pressure, whereby local authorities will be able to bid for increases in their cap from 2019-20 in order to build more council homes. The HRA's current debt cap will therefore remain in place for 2018-19.

HRA Debt	£
Settlement Payment to end Subsidy System	£56,884,000
Borrowing undertaken to finance the construction of COB Wave 1	£998,413
Total HRA Debt	£57,882,413

8.11 FEES AND CHARGES

The proposed Fees and Charges for Housing in 2018-19 are included at Appendix 4.

9. BUDGET FRAMEWORK FOR THE COUNCIL'S OWN BUILD SCHEMES

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

The main budget variations for 2018-19 are detailed below, please also refer to Appendix 5.

Movement	£	Detail
Budgeted Surplus for 2017-18	(£35,970)	
Inflationary increases	£200	
Other Budget increases	£19,140	The allocation of employee costs has been revised to reflect officer time spent managing the council own build properties.
Budgeted Surplus for 2018-19	(£16,630)	

10. 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.

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

It is not permissible for the HRA to go into an overall financial deficit position. In setting the annual budget it is important to ensure that an adequate level of HRA balances is maintained as a contingency against risks.

A key risk that officers are aware of relates to the High Value Assets Levy, which will require the Council to make a payment to the Government in respect of its 'high value' housing. Due to the uncertainty regarding the definition of 'high value' and calculation of the levy payable, it is considered prudent to maintain the HRA Working Balance at no less than £4,000,000 over the medium term.

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?

The proposed revenue budgets for the year will help the HRA provide tenancy management services and maintain the condition of council dwellings, which has a positive impact on the health and well-being of Council tenants. In the delivery of services, housing officers are able to identify and manage issues relating to safe-guarding, vulnerabilities and community safety.

In terms of capital expenditure, the 2018-19 capital programme will enable enhancements to existing dwelling stock to be undertaken and help support the provision of new housing, both of which will have a positive impact on those in housing need.

13. Are there any other options?

No

Chief Finance Officer

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

Background papers used in compiling this report:

None

Contact for enquiries:

Democratic Services (Committees)

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SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - PEOPLE (HRA)

APPENDIX 1

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

Subjective Analysis	BASE ESTIMATE 2017/2018	INFLATION	NEW PROPOSALS RECURRING	NEW PROPOSALS NON- RECURRING	OTHER ADJUSTMENTS	NEW ESTIMATE 2018/2019
PAY	2,268,910	55,120	0	0	196,400	2,520,430
PREMISES	13,778,480	212,940	0	81,200	474,250	14,546,870
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	569,650	2,420	0	(45,000)	10,030	537,100
TRANSPORT	67,345	880	0	0	6,700	74,925
SUPPORT SERVICES	1,547,740	0	0	0	94,390	1,642,130
CAPITAL CHARGES	4,915,490	0	0	0	70,520	4,986,010
Total Expenditure	23,147,615	271,360	0	36,200	852,290	24,307,465

INCOME	(23,147,615)	(40,480)	0	0	(1,119,370)	(24,307,465)
Total Income	(23,147,615)	(40,480)	0	0	(1,119,370)	(24,307,465)

Net Expenditure	0	230,880	0	36,200	(267,080)	0
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Represented By						
85A1 MANAGEMENT	1,028,395	7,300	0	20,000	204,580	1,260,275
85A2 HOUSING CUSTOMERS	1,299,180	14,870	0	0	39,070	1,353,120
85A3 SUNDRY LANDS MAINTENANCE	492,660	6,060	0	70,000	(7,010)	561,710
85A4 REPAIR & MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME	6,063,030	179,830	0	0	(170,500)	6,072,360
85A5 REVENUE CONTRIB TO CAPITAL	6,496,640	0	0	0	699,910	7,196,550
85A6 CAPITAL CHARGES	2,935,930	0	0	0	70,520	3,006,450
85A7 HOUSING ASSETS	1,425,000	22,820	0	(53,800)	214,940	1,608,960
85A8 RENTS	(19,295,820)	0	0	0	168,730	(19,127,090)
85B2 INTEREST	1,858,760	0	0	0	(28,950)	1,829,810
85B4 MOVEMENT IN WORKING BALANCE	(2,303,775)	0	0	0	(1,458,370)	(3,762,145)
Net Cost	0	230,880	0	36,200	(267,080)	0

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HRA AVAILABLE RESOURCES

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	2017-18 £	2018-19 £	2019-20 £	2020-21 £	2021-22 £	TOTAL £
CAPITAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE						
Usable Receipts Brought Forward						5,607,226
Major Repairs Reserve Brought Forward						8,719,199
Other HRA Sales	227,364	0	0	0	0	227,364
RTB sales	1,800,000	500,000	500,000	400,000	400,000	3,600,000
Surrender back to DCLG - pending St Loyes financing decision	(3,420,000)	0	0	0	0	(3,420,000)
Major Repairs Reserve	3,000,614	3,006,450	3,006,450	3,006,450	3,006,450	15,026,414
Revenue Contributions to Capital	3,796,642	7,196,555	2,500,000	3,000,000	4,500,000	20,993,197
External contributions	45,470	434,000	160,259	0	0	639,729
Grant funding - HCA grant (St Loyes)	0	1,490,000	0	0	0	1,490,000
Grant funding - Estate Regeneration Funding	1,295,000	0	0	0	0	1,295,000
Grant funding - Zero Energy Buildings Project	0	216,000	0	0	0	216,000
Commuted sums	556,840	10,000	5,360,000	156,360	0	6,083,200
Total Resources available	7,301,930	12,853,005	11,526,709	6,562,810	7,906,450	60,477,329
CAPITAL PROGRAMME						
HRA Capital Programme	11,732,625	18,177,220	15,244,030	7,782,810	8,045,830	60,982,515
Quarter 2 - Overspends / (Savings)	(134,000)					(134,000)
Quarter 2 - Slippage / Re-profiling	(1,169,430)					(1,169,430)
Total Housing Revenue Account	10,429,195	18,177,220	15,244,030	7,782,810	8,045,830	59,679,085
UNCOMMITTED CAPITAL RESOURCES:						
Usable Receipts Brought Forward	5,607,226	1,223,114	723,114	723,114	723,114	5,607,226
Major Repairs Reserve Brought Forward	8,719,199	9,976,046	5,151,831	1,434,510	214,510	8,719,199
Resources in Year	7,301,930	12,853,005	11,526,709	6,562,810	7,906,450	46,150,904
Less Estimated Spend	(10,429,195)	(18,177,220)	(15,244,030)	(7,782,810)	(8,045,830)	(59,679,085)
Uncommitted Capital Resources	11,199,160	5,874,945	2,157,624	937,624	798,244	798,244
WORKING BALANCE RESOURCES:						
Balance Brought Forward	8,567,454	9,226,749	5,464,604	5,937,222	6,335,413	8,567,454
HRA Balance Transfer - Surplus/(Deficit)	659,295	(3,762,145)	472,618	398,191	(623,006)	(2,855,047)
Balance Carried Forward	9,226,749	5,464,604	5,937,222	6,335,413	5,712,407	5,712,407
Balance Resolved to be Retained	(4,000,000)	(4,000,000)	(4,000,000)	(4,000,000)	(4,000,000)	(4,000,000)
Uncommitted HRA Working Balance	5,226,749	1,464,604	1,937,222	2,335,413	1,712,407	1,712,407
TOTAL AVAILABLE CAPITAL RESOURCES	16,425,909	7,339,549	4,094,846	3,273,037	2,510,651	2,510,651

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HOUSING - CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2018/19 AND FUTURE YEARS

DESCRIPTION	2017/18 B/fwd	2018-19	2018-19 Total	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
INVESTMENT IN EXISTING STOCK							
1 Adaptations	-	500,000	500,000	517,500	535,610	554,360	2,107,470
2 Balcony Walkway Improvements	-	135,000	135,000	105,000	108,670	112,470	461,140
3 Bathroom Replacements (inc. Communal)	-	563,760	563,760	883,220	1,324,840	1,545,640	4,317,460
4 Boiler Replacement Programme & Central Heating	-	560,000	560,000	575,000	590,500	606,500	2,332,000
5 Common Area Footpath & Wall Improvements	-	350,000	350,000	50,000	51,750	53,560	505,310
6 Communal Area Improvements - New Flooring	-	48,980	48,980	103,190	79,930	14,360	246,460
7 Communal Door and Screen Replacements	-	342,370	342,370	246,320	254,940	-	843,630
8 Door Replacements (inc. Outbuildings)	-	122,000	122,000	143,940	231,000	235,530	732,470
9 Electrical Central Heating	-	19,510	19,510	19,900	21,890	22,650	83,950
10 Electrical Rewires - Communal	300,000	-	63,750	246,140	156,300	164,100	802,790
11 Electrical Rewires - Domestic	-	540,000	540,000	510,000	410,000	400,000	1,860,000
12 Energy Conservation	100,000	-	100,000	-	-	-	100,000
13 Estate Improvements	-	200,000	200,000	207,000	214,250	221,750	843,000
14 Fire Risk Assessment Works	-	63,000	63,000	65,200	67,480	69,840	265,520
15 Garage Upgrades	-	63,000	63,000	64,260	66,510	68,840	262,610
16 Kitchen Replacements (inc. Communal)	-	859,950	859,950	1,347,250	2,020,880	2,357,700	6,585,780
17 LAINGS Refurbishments	-	2,110,000	2,110,000	500,000	-	-	2,610,000
18 Loft and Cavity Insulation	-	50,000	50,000	51,750	53,560	55,440	210,750
19 Reroofing - Flats	-	655,300	655,300	127,550	52,680	36,000	871,530
Reroofing - Houses (outbuildings, chimney, gutters, downpipes, 20 fascia)	100,000	231,340	331,340	153,040	133,420	278,140	895,940
21 Porch Canopies	-	102,000	102,000	90,480	55,810	19,390	267,680
22 Rennes House Structural Works	500,000	2,475,000	2,975,000	2,675,000	-	-	5,650,000
23 Soil Vent Pipe Replacement	-	52,030	52,030	63,950	27,000	27,950	170,930
24 Structural Repairs	119,430	150,000	269,430	155,250	160,680	166,300	751,660
25 Whipton Barton House Water Mains	50,000	-	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
26 Window Replacements	-	708,300	708,300	733,090	758,750	785,310	2,985,450
27 ZEBCat Project	-	480,000	480,000	-	-	-	480,000
Sub total - Investment in Existing Stock	1,169,430	11,317,790	12,487,220	9,634,030	7,376,450	7,795,830	37,293,530
PROVISION OF NEW COUNCIL HOMES							
28 Social Housing Acquisitions - Section 106	-	490,000	490,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	1,240,000
29 Social Housing Acquisitions - Open Market	-	1,000,000	1,000,000	-	-	-	1,000,000
30 St Loyes Extracare Scheme	-	4,200,000	4,200,000	5,360,000	156,360	-	9,716,360
Sub total - Investment in the Provision of New Homes	0	5,690,000	5,690,000	5,610,000	406,360	250,000	11,956,360
Total HRA Capital Programme	1,169,430	17,007,790	18,177,220	15,244,030	7,782,810	8,045,830	49,249,890

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APPENDIX 4**Housing Revenue Account - Fees and Charges 2018/19**

	Fee	VAT @	Total	VAT
	£ p	20%	£ p	Code
		£ p	£ p	
<u>LETTING ROOMS</u>				
Sheltered Homes - Community Rooms				
per hour or part thereof -				
- non profit-making bodies	8.20	-	8.20	8
- profit-making bodies	23.70	-	23.70	8
Sheltered Homes guest rooms per night	14.50	-	14.50	8
<u>MORTGAGE FEE REFERENCES</u>				
	39.58	7.92	47.50	3
<u>LEASEHOLD FLATS</u>				
Legal Fees for leasehold flat transfers	145.83	29.17	175.00	3

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SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - PEOPLE (HRA)

85B5 - COUNCIL OWN BUILD

Subjective Analysis	BASE ESTIMATE 2017/2018	INFLATION	NEW PROPOSALS RECURRING	NEW PROPOSALS NON- RECURRING	OTHER ADJUSTMENTS	NEW ESTIMATE 2018/2019
PAY	9,140	240	0	0	18,510	27,890
PREMISES	17,420	110	0	0	0	17,530
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	200	0	0	0	0	200
TRANSPORT	370	0	0	0	0	370
SUPPORT SERVICES	4,610	0	0	0	290	4,900
CAPITAL CHARGES	22,740	0	0	0	(370)	22,370
Total Expenditure	54,480	350	0	0	18,430	73,260
INCOME	(54,480)	(150)	0	0	(18,630)	(73,260)
Total Income	(54,480)	(150)	0	0	(18,630)	(73,260)
Net Expenditure	0	200	0	0	(200)	0
Represented By						
H005 COB MANAGEMENT	14,120	240	0	0	18,310	32,670
H006 ROWAN HOUSE	(10,480)	0	0	0	130	(10,350)
H007 KNIGHTS PLACE	(59,550)	(40)	0	0	1,190	(58,400)
H008 INTEREST	6,980	0	0	0	(910)	6,070
H009 CAPITAL CHARGES	12,960	0	0	0	420	13,380
H010 COB MOVEMENT IN WORKING BAL	35,970	0	0	0	(19,340)	16,630
Net Cost	0	200	0	0	(200)	0

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REPORT TO: PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING: 4 January 2018
REPORT OF: Chief Finance Officer
TITLE: People Scrutiny Committee - Estimates 2018/19

Is this a Key Decision?

Yes

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1. What is the report about?

This report sets out the proposed revenue and capital estimates for 2018/19 in respect of People Services.

2. Recommendations:

That Members of People Scrutiny Committee support the estimates for 2018/19 and recommends their approval at the Special Meeting of the Council on 20 February 2018.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

Local authorities have a statutory duty to set an annual budget and to monitor the budget throughout the year.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources

The financial resources required to deliver People Services during 2018/19 are set out in the body of this report.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

This report has been prepared on behalf of the Section 151 Officer to set out the revenue and capital estimates for 2018/19 in respect of People Scrutiny Committee.

6. What are the legal aspects?

Part 2 of the Local Government Act 2003 provides the legislative framework for the process of setting and managing budgets. The act places a duty on authorities to set robust estimates, maintain adequate reserves.

7. Monitoring Officer Comments:

This report raises no issues for the Monitoring Officer.

8. Report Details:

BUDGET FRAMEWORK FOR PEOPLE SERVICES

8.1 ANNUAL BUDGET SETTING

Budgets are revisited each year to make amendments for assumptions made on interest rates, inflation and other changed circumstances.

8.2 INFLATION

An overall allowance of £107,500 has been set aside for inflation within People Services. The inflationary increases allowed in the budgets are:

Pay award	2.0%
Pay – Increments	0.5%
Electricity	2.5%
Gas	2.5%
Oil	2.5%
Water	0.0%
Insurance	10.0%
Rates	2.5%
Fuel	3.0%
General Inflation	0.0%
Income (excluding Car Parks)	3.0%

General inflation has again been held at zero; however, where contractual arrangements are in place, inflation in accordance with the terms of the contract has been added.

8.3 INTEREST RATES

In respect of interest rates, next year's budget reflects the likelihood that whilst base rate may remain low, borrowing for cashflow purposes will increase and the Council may begin to take out borrowing over a longer timeframe as a result.

8.4 LIKELY REVENUE RESOURCES 2017/18 TO 2021/22

Resources remain as per the medium term financial plan as the Government has agreed the four year settlement, however at the end of the four year settlement a significant reduction is anticipated when the Government implement the business rates reset.

	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000
RSG	1,320	869	365	0	0
Council Tax	5,338	5,624	5,723	5,967	6,215
Business Rates	4,873	5,360	5,561	4,289	4,396
Resources	11,531	11,853	11,649	10,256	10,611
Increase/(decrease)		322	(204)	(1,393)	355
Annual % change		2.8%	(1.7%)	(12.0%)	3.6%

The medium term financial plan is based upon an assumption that under the council tax referendum threshold, Shire District councils will be allowed increases of less than 2% or up to and including £5, whichever is higher. Exeter's budget strategy for next year assumes that council tax will increase by £5, which, along with the estimated surplus on the collection fund of £138,900 and increase in the taxbase will raise an extra £286,000.

All authorities in Devon have applied to take part in the Business Rate pilot for the 100% retention of Business Rates. We are pleased to report that the Devon Business Rate Pilot submission for 2018-19 has been successful and potentially could benefit the Council by between £300,000 and £500,000 for 2018-19 only. This has not been built into the medium term financial plan, at this stage.

The Government has removed £800 million from New Homes Bonus in order to fund Adult Social Care. The Government will reduce the payment to four years from 2018-19 and additionally, no payment will be made on housing growth below 0.4%. This is

expected to lead to an award of approximately £2.730 million for 2018-19.

8.5 GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The proposed General Fund Capital Programme for the next three years has been established. The total of the current People Services programme is as follows:

	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000	2020/21 £'000
New Bids	0	0	0
Pre-approved	450	450	450
Total	450	450	450

The proposed capital programme for Scrutiny Committee - People is attached at Appendix 1.

8.6 KEY BUDGET CHANGES PROPOSED FOR 2018/19

The table below sets out the key changes between the budgets for the current financial year and the draft estimates for 2018/19. Please also refer to Appendix 2.

MU Code	Management Unit	Commentary
81C2	Housing Advisory Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Housing Needs Lead post has been increased from 60% to 100%
86A1	Revenue Collection/Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security in the Customer Service Centre has been increased Two temporary Local Taxation Visiting Officers have been made permanent Access to the online welfare reform impact dashboard has been extended by 12 months Grant income has been reduced

In addition to the changes summarised in the table, the following overarching changes have been made:

Support Services

Changes in accounting guidance has ended the requirement to spread support service costs as overheads. The change allows local authorities to report its financial performance in the same way that the authority operates and manages its services.

Support services are managed as separate functions within the Council (legal, finance, HR etc.), their costs are now budgeted as discrete functions rather than spread across Council services as overheads. The only exceptions being the statutory requirement to continue charging support service costs to the Housing Revenue Account and to certain services that are required to recover their full costs (e.g. building control).

The impact of this change on the 2018/19 budgets is that many services have reduced expenditure due to the removal of support service overhead costs and support services are showing increased expenditure due to the retention of their

costs when compared to the 2017/18 budgets. However, across the Council the impact is cost neutral.

Superannuation

Employers' contributions to the superannuation fund are set every three years as a result of the actuarial valuation of the Fund. The last valuation, as at 31 March 2016, resulted in the employers' contribution rate increasing from 14.1% to 15.8%. For 2017/18 the additional cost was budgeted centrally as a corporate cost, however during the year the budget has been re-allocated across Council services to reflect pensionable pay within the respective services.

The impact of this change on the 2018/19 budgets is a reduction in corporate budgeted costs with a corresponding increase in service budgeted costs, however across the Council the impact is cost neutral.

Communications and Marketing

Budgets across the Council relating to communication and marketing activities have been pooled in order to resource and strategically plan for communication and marketing across the Council.

The impact of this change on the 2018/19 budgets is a reduction in service budgeted costs with a corresponding increase in corporate budgeted costs, however across the Council the impact is cost neutral.

8.7 FEES AND CHARGES

The proposed Fees and Charges for Scrutiny Committee - People in 2018/19 are included at Appendix 3.

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

People Services contribute to 5 key purposes, as set out in the Corporate Plan: Customer access to help me with my housing and financial problem, make it easy for me to pay, provide suitable housing and be a good landlord.

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

The key risks revolve around ensuring that the Council has sufficient funds to both meet the financial plans set out in the report and to protect itself against any unexpected expenditure that occurs. The risk is mitigated by ensuring that there are sufficient reserves held to offset unexpected expenditure needs. Regular monitoring is undertaken and reported to both the Strategic Management Board and Members.

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?

The revenue service costs reported to this Committee help support the provision of temporary accommodation, housing advice, licensing of houses of multiple occupation, new affordable housing within the City and the administration of housing benefits. All these services have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of residents, in particular those in housing need.

In terms of capital expenditure, the 2018/19 capital programme helps facilitate disabled adaptations which has a positive impact of the health and wellbeing of residents.

12. Are there any other options?

No

DAVE HODGSON
Chief Finance Officer

Authors:
Nicola Matthews-Morley and Michelle White

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)
Background papers used in compiling this report:
None

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PEOPLE - CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2018/19 AND FUTURE YEARS						
SCHEMES LISTED WITHIN COUNCIL PURPOSES	NEW BID	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Future Years	What the scheme is trying to achieve
		£	£	£	£	
PEOPLE						
<i>HELP ME FIND SOMEWHERE SUITABLE TO LIVE</i>						
Disabled Facility Grants		450,000	450,000	450,000	450,000	To meet the legal duty to pay grants to enable disabled people to remain in their homes.
Sub-Total - Help Me Find Somewhere Suitable to Live		450,000	450,000	450,000	450,000	
PEOPLE TOTAL		450,000	450,000	450,000	450,000	

New Bids	0	0	0	0
Pre-Approved	450,000	450,000	450,000	450,000
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	450,000	450,000	450,000	450,000

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SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - PEOPLE

5PEOP - PEOPLE SERVICES

Subjective Analysis	BASE ESTIMATE 2017/2018	INFLATION	NEW PROPOSALS RECURRING	NEW PROPOSALS NON- RECURRING	OTHER ADJUSTMENTS	NEW ESTIMATE 2018/2019
PAY	3,790,840	99,190	(5,420)	0	322,210	4,206,820
PREMISES	2,220,910	38,100	0	0	(261,510)	1,997,500
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	817,000	1,580	0	29,000	(63,960)	783,620
TRANSPORT	18,750	210	0	0	3,370	22,330
SUPPORT SERVICES	2,415,870	0	0	0	(2,361,000)	54,870
CAPITAL CHARGES	8,420	0	0	0	4,660	13,080
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	37,983,260	949,590	0	0	(3,460,570)	35,472,280
Total Expenditure	47,255,050	1,088,670	(5,420)	29,000	(5,816,800)	42,550,500

INCOME	(43,743,180)	(981,170)	60,000	0	5,048,890	(39,615,460)
Total Income	(43,743,180)	(981,170)	60,000	0	5,048,890	(39,615,460)

Net Expenditure	3,511,870	107,500	54,580	29,000	(767,910)	2,935,040
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Represented By						
81C2 ADVISORY SERVICES	1,396,930	22,780	22,580	0	(466,950)	975,340
81C3 AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT	160,120	4,170	0	0	(73,020)	91,270
81C4 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING	136,220	1,080	0	0	(21,270)	116,030
81C5 SUNDRY LANDS MAINTENANCE	87,790	2,190	0	0	0	89,980
81E1 GF HOUSING - PROPERTY	140,890	23,370	0	0	71,270	235,530
86A1 REVENUE COLLECTION/BENEFITS	1,589,920	53,910	32,000	29,000	(277,940)	1,426,890
Net Cost	3,511,870	107,500	54,580	29,000	(767,910)	2,935,040

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SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - PEOPLE

APPENDIX 3

	2017/18 Charges				Proposed Charges for 2018/19			
	Fee £ p	VAT @ 20% £ p	Total £ p	VAT Code	Fee £ p	VAT @ 20% £ p	Total £ p	VAT Code
HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION								
Licence for Houses in multiple occupation with five or more residents occupying a property more than two storeys high (under the provisions of the Housing Act 2004)								
(1) Licensing								
5 year licence - per property *	740.00	-	740.00	9	760.00	-	760.00	9
Processing a shorter term licence	740.00	-	740.00	9	760.00	-	760.00	9
Processing an application for a Temporary Exemption Notice	131.00	-	131.00	9	135.00	-	135.00	9
Fee for officers to draw property plans for application	131.00	-	131.00	9	135.00	-	135.00	9
Variation of licence	131.00	-	131.00	9	135.00	-	135.00	9
Revocation of licence	131.00	-	131.00	9	135.00	-	135.00	9
* A £125 discount on the mandatory HMO licensing fee will apply where landlords are accredited under a nationally recognised accreditation scheme								
(2) Serving of notices and making of orders								
Improvement notice	244.00	-	244.00	9	250.00	-	250.00	9
Hazard awareness notice	244.00	-	244.00	9	250.00	-	250.00	9
Prohibition order / Emergency prohibition order	244.00	-	244.00	9	250.00	-	250.00	9
Emergency remedial action	244.00	-	244.00	9	250.00	-	250.00	9
Demolition order	277.00	-	277.00	9	285.00	-	285.00	9
Reviewing suspended notice or order	136.00	-	136.00	9	140.00	-	140.00	9
Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Penalty Charge Notice	5,000.00	-	5,000.00	9	5,000.00	-	5,000.00	9
Penalty for housing offences under Section 249A of the Housing Act 2004 (up to maximum of £30,000)					30,000.00	-	30,000.00	9
(3) Fee reductions								
Full compliance with improvement notice within timescales specified by the notice	244.00	-	244.00	9	250.00	-	250.00	9
Full compliance with prohibition order within timescales specified by the order	244.00	-	244.00	9	250.00	-	250.00	9
Resolution of hazards within 3 months of receipt of Hazard awareness notice	244.00	-	244.00	9	250.00	-	250.00	9
(4) Immigration Visits								
Pre immigration visit to determine the suitability of a premises for occupation including a full HHSRS inspection and production of a letter confirming the outcome of that visit. Payment must be made in full before the inspection is carried out and is non returnable.	169.17	33.83	203.00	3	175.00	35.00	210.00	3
Inspection undertaken following a missed appointment or cancellation. Payment must be made in full before the inspection is carried out and is non returnable.	64.17	12.83	77.00	3	66.67	13.33	80.00	3
(5) Additional Licensing for Certain Types of Houses in Multiple Occupation								
1 Flat* (per flat; in the case of flats in multiple occupation in a mixed used building with up to 5 tenants, additional £100 per tenant thereafter)	720.00	-	720.00	9	740.00	-	740.00	9
2 Flats*	870.00	-	870.00	9	900.00	-	900.00	9
3 Flats*	1,025.00	-	1,025.00	9	1,060.00	-	1,060.00	9
4 Flats*	1,180.00	-	1,180.00	9	1,220.00	-	1,220.00	9
5 to 7 Flats*	1,340.00	-	1,340.00	9	1,380.00	-	1,380.00	9
8 to 10 Flats*	1,490.00	-	1,490.00	9	1,540.00	-	1,540.00	9
10 or more Flats*	As above, plus £150 per additional flat			9	As above, plus £150 per additional flat			9
* Discounts available:								
- Single ownership discount (all flats need to be under one ownership for this discount to apply) No discount applied where there are fewer than 2 flats	(100.00)	-	(100.00)	9	(100.00)	0.00	(100.00)	9
- Early registration discount	(50.00)	-	(50.00)	9	(50.00)	0.00	(50.00)	9
- Accreditation / landlord association discount	(125.00)	-	(125.00)	9	(125.00)	0.00	(125.00)	9

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REPORT TO: PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting: 4th January 2018

Report of: Cllr Harvey:
Member of the Green Travel Plans and Planning Conditions
Spotlight Review Group.

Title: Green Travel Plans and Planning Conditions
Spotlight Review Report.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1. What is the report about?

To report the findings and recommendations of this Spotlight Review Group to the People Scrutiny Committee.

2. Recommendations:

The People Scrutiny Committee:-

(a) Acknowledge the work of this Spotlight Review Group.

(b) Share this report and its findings with:-

- the (yet to be formed) Transport Board;
- Devon County Council in respect of the Sustainable Urban Movement Plan;
- With Exeter City Council officers responsible for implementing the Parking Strategy;
- Greater Exeter Strategic Partnership.

(c) Support the formation of a Task and Finish Group to expressly monitor the IKEA green travel plan and ascertain what improvements to Green Travel Plans could be made in future.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

(a) To improve the way in which the Council deals with green travel plans at the planning stage.

(b) To engage with key partners and other authorities to ensure the success of green travel plans going into the future.

(c) To monitor the progress and success of a recently implemented green travel plan.

(d) To identify and measure the potential for improvements to future green travel plans.

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

None.

5. Section 151 Officer Comments:

There are no financial aspects to this report.

6. What are the legal aspects?

None identified.

7. Monitoring officer Comments

This report raises no issues for the Monitoring Officer.

8. Report Details:

This topic was identified as a priority for Spotlight Review investigation by Members.

Membership of the Group:-

Cllr Foggin
Cllr Brimble
Cllr Hannan
Cllr Harvey
Cllr Musgrave
Cllr Sutton
Cllr Wardle

Andy Robbins, City Development Manager
Ross Hussey, Principal Project Manager (Infrastructure Delivery)
Will Pratt, Principal Transport Planner, Devon County Council

Context:-

To set the context for this report, an initial concern was that the amount of new building taking place in Exeter is adding to the issues surrounding congestion and car parking (particularly residents' parking) and the Group wished to investigate the following key issues:-

- What happens to Green Travel Plans post planning?
- How effective are they and do they work?
- Do we need to look at how we handle planning applications as a local authority?

How this fits in with the Council's aims and priorities:-

The Council's Core Strategy (1.3) states that there is a need to make significant reductions in carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions and adapt to changes in climate, already underway as a result of past emissions.

To support and deliver the Exeter Vision, the Core Strategy sets out ten objectives, one of which is to promote development that contributes to a healthy population - by implementing the Green Infrastructure Strategy and ensuring that environmental quality and air quality is protected and enhanced.

CP11 states that developments should be located and designed so as to minimise and if necessary, mitigate against environmental impacts in line with proposals set out within the Local Transport Plan and Air Quality Action Plan to reduce pollution and meet air quality objectives.

The Air Quality Strategy 2015 – 2020 (9.5 and 9.6) states that officers liaise with City Development to ensure that air quality issues are taken into consideration at both the development and adoption of the Council's Development Plan documents and policies, and when Members consider planning applications. Officers within Environmental Health and Licensing are also involved in programmes of work concerned with important sustainability issues such as climate change and that all play an integral role in ensuring that aims and aspirations of the Exeter Vision and the Councils' Strategic Objectives are met.

Exeter City Futures "Congestion Free by 2025"

Exeter City Council has signed up to this initiative and the Leader of Exeter City Council is also supportive of further work in relation to the Transport Strategy.

National Planning Policy Framework

At a national level the National Planning Policy Framework states that planning should contribute to reducing pollution and that Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements can positively contribute to:-

- encouraging sustainable travel;
- lessening traffic generation and its detrimental impacts;
- reducing carbon emissions and climate impacts;
- creating accessible, connected, inclusive communities;
- improving health outcomes and quality of life;
- improving road safety; and
- reducing the need for new development to increase existing road capacity or provide new roads.

National planning policy sets out that planning should actively manage patterns of growth in order to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.

The Background

The Group met on two occasions. The first meeting focussed on a presentation provided by the Principal Transport Planner, Devon County Council and the City Development Manager (ECC). It was explained that both Authorities have always worked in partnership in this area but with quite different roles. The City using planning powers on applications and conditions on the back of policies (for example, the Core Strategy), essentially providing the planning framework, whilst the County Council deal with implementation.

St Lukes was referred to as an example of a travel plan working well, where monitoring reports are received regularly. EDF was held as a very positive example of an employer who is exceptionally supportive of green travel and who embraces and implements their green travel plan very effectively.

Through discussion, the Group identified various challenges with regards to the quality of green travel plans and a variety of difficulties which can hinder successful implementation, as set out below:-

- The Council has to make planning decisions within its policies and government guidelines which makes it difficult to refuse an application if it complies with these, even if Members are not entirely satisfied with the extent of the green travel plan provided.
- Changing people's behaviour with regards to car –v- walking or cycling.
- Changing pre-conceptions – some people will not use public transport.
- Making sure that travel information is readily accessible to the general public so that they particularly know what is available to them within their area.
- The enormous variation between big companies in terms of their policies and outlook on green travel and what priority it is given.
- Monitoring the implementation of travel plans is very resource intensive.
- For Exeter, the travel to work area is vast.
- Making green travel/public transport a more attractive option in terms of being cheap and easy to use.
- The law can be used to prohibit but a Green Travel Plan actively requires the developer to do something. The problem is that plans seem to progress initially but over time there tends to be a step back from that level of commitment. The requirement to have a Green Travel Plan remains in place, but over the passage of time the question is, does it remain sufficient?

The second meeting of the Group took place on the 16th October, to which the Chair of the Planning Committee (Cllr Gottschalk) was invited together with the Portfolio Holder for City Transformation, Energy and Transport (Cllr Denham) and the Principal Project Manager, Infrastructure Delivery (ECC).

The Chair of Planning explained that it was usual practice for large planning applications to have a condition attached requiring the developer to submit a Green Travel Plan and although ECC take part in the process, it is DCC Highways who take the lead with the developer. At present a “soft measures” approach is adopted to incentivise green travel, for example, promoting bus routes and cycle paths rather than adopting an enforcement approach. Planning officers in particular are trying to encourage a “modal” shift which they see as having the most potential for long term success. Green travel conditions are specifically tailored to each application and it is about looking at the individual application and what sort of impact the development is likely to have in direct relation to Exeter. With that said, the Chair did suggest that there needs to be a wider acknowledgment from both ECC and DCC that a more extensive policy package is required and this could be the subject of a separate Task and Finish Group investigation.

There is a lot of working going on behind the scenes between ECC and DCC, particularly in respect of the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan which is linking developments built and looking at how travel is measuring up to the planning applications – the emphasis being on research rather than enforcement so that both Authorities can plan realistically for the future.

DCC is now enforcing travel plans on large planning applications in Exeter. The first tranche involved developments at Pinhoe and Monkerton which saw personalised travel planning and taster tickets made available to households with a 50% uptake and developers were happy to support this.

Through the Group's enquiries and discussions, it was agreed that the following suggestions should be highlighted to the People Scrutiny Committee and thereafter to the relevant forums as follows:-

Suggestions for Devon County Council, Sustainable Urban Movement Plan under the Direction of the Transport Board

- Make modes of public transport easier and more attractive option to employers as well.
- Working with employers to support green travel – focussing on journeys to and from work.
- Employers need to accept that they create part of the problem and they can be part of the solution.
- Explore setting a higher standard for Green Travel Plans.
- Encouraging staggered start and finish times to ease congestion, targeting schools, work places in the City together with existing and established businesses.
- Promoting home working with employers.
- Improve bus travel – for instance off bus ticketing.
- Changing habits and encouraging people to use public transport instead.
- Looking at large businesses to work with small businesses on car sharing and green travel initiatives.
- Having a travel plan scheme that small and medium employers could buy into – this could pay for a travel plan officer. Worth exploring a business model which might support it.
- Oxygen House have 60 car parking spaces and 170 staff. They pay their staff extra to incentivise green travel by not driving to work and this has worked well.
- Oxygen House could promote what they are doing – educating others and encouraging them to try the same.

Suggestions for the Transport Board

- Explore the Work Place Levy in respect of Exeter (this concept worked well in Nottingham but was linked in with tram infrastructure).

Suggestions for Greater Exeter Strategic Partnership

- Residential applications – looking at infrastructure, funding and design guidance for residential applications.
- Think radically about how to design in a parking scheme.
- Review policy on green travel – a wider policy may be required.

***The Development of Exeter City Council's Parking Strategy**

- More dynamic charging policies for car parks.
- Peak time car park charges – at present people are currently charged less if they leave between 4 pm/5 pm than after 6 pm and this needs to change to assist in reducing congestion at peak times. It will not only help the transport network but also the City Centre economy. It will incentivise people to drive more but will encourage them to stay longer.
- Increase charges for parking at 9 am and leaving at 5 pm.
- Find ways of generating revenue to go back into different transport methods.

*The points were considered in the recent Parking Review and newly adopted Parking Strategy. Enquiries are currently underway to establish whether the parking machines that are in situ are able to differentiate between different times of parking and adjust charges accordingly. Therefore, implementation is very much dependent upon the capabilities of the technology already in place.

9 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?

Cllr Harvey: Member of the Green Travel Plans and Planning Conditions Spotlight Review Group

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)
Background papers used in compiling this report:**

None

Contact for enquiries: Anne-Marie Hawley, Scrutiny Programme Officer
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Room 2.3

EXETER HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Tuesday 12 September 2017

Present:-

Councillor Bialyk (Chair)	Exeter City Council
Councillor Edwards	Exeter City Council
Councillor Morse	Exeter City Council
Councillor Randall-Johnson	Devon County Council
Julian Tagg	Exeter City Football Club
Matt Evans	Active Exeter
Sarah Gibbs	Public Health
Kristian Tomblin	Devon County Council
Amanda Kilroy	CoLab
Jo Yelland	Exeter City Council
Dawn Rivers	Exeter City Council
Howard Bassett	Exeter City Council

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APOLOGIES

This was received from Simon Bowkett with Amanda Kilroy deputising, Gillian Champion, Tim Golby, Dr Virginia Pearson with Sarah Gibbs deputising.

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 JULY 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2017 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as correct.

17

WELLBEING EXETER

Dawn Rivers updated the Board on progress with Wellbeing Exeter pilot and the two main elements of community connectors operating in conjunction with GP surgeries, funded by the New Devon CCG and Devon County Council and the community builders funded via Exeter City Council Community Infrastructure Levy monies from April 2018. Both parts of the scheme were to be rolled out across the City as part of the Wellbeing Exeter programme. Wellbeing Exeter had been shortlisted for a National Health Service Journal award.

Sarah Gibbs suggested broadening out the access to self-referral. Jo Yelland highlighted the importance of being clear about the purposes of social prescribing as it meant lots of different things to different people. The Wellbeing Exeter model had a clear purpose to reduce future demand on statutory services and the evaluation was really clear that GP's were identifying hard to reach individuals who would not self-refer. As the pilot moved into mainstreaming then the steering group would be looking at digital self-help resources as an underpinning platform and would keep under review other referral routes as more is learnt about impact and outcomes.

RESOLVED that the position be noted.

CITY COMMUNITY TRUST

Julian Tagg spoke on the background to and work of the City Community Trust, formerly the Exeter City Football in the Community, which had been rebranded to reflect its wider focus to involve more organisations across the city and embrace different social initiatives. It was no longer purely a football based initiative. Its work complemented that of Active Devon and Active Exeter and it was involved in the Exeter and Cranbrook bid to be a Sport England Local Delivery Pilot. A key area was involving young people from all backgrounds and there were currently over a 100 courses in sports participation. Julian Tagg described the successful delivery of the National Citizenship project that the City Community Trust were delivering to young people in Devon.

Members agreed that the City Community Trust was a valuable delivery partner of the Health Board.

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COUNCIL TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The Chair presented the report of the City Council's Dementia Friendly Task and Finish Group that had concluded its findings and reported to the People Scrutiny Committee in March 2017. It had been recommended that the report be submitted to this Board for information.

Councillor Morse, a Member of the Task and Finish Group, enlarged on its findings and recommendations. She referred to the involvement of the Exeter Dementia Action Alliance in this work and to a visit from representatives of the Alzheimer's Society who had praised the City Council's Customer Services in the steps taken to become more dementia friendly. The City Council was now a member of the Alliance and, in addition to encouraging external organisations to join, there remained a number of areas where the Council itself could further improve. Sarah Gibbs welcomed the Council's work and recommended liaison with a Honiton based scheme (contact Heather Penwarden) involving support for the elderly via the scouts and guides etc. Amanda Kirby also referred to possible input via Active Health Science and the Design Council.

RESOLVED that the Chair and Jo Yelland examine areas that might require expansion, updating and improving within the City Council's Alliance Action Plan.

SPORT ENGLAND LOCAL DELIVERY PILOT

Jo Yelland reported that the Exeter/Cranbrook bid to become a Sport England Local Delivery Partner, one of 118 submitted, was amongst the 19 shortlisted to progress to Stage 2. This submission had been made on 11 September and a further assessment would take place on 4 October. James Bogue from Active Devon was taking a lead role in this work. An on-site assessment would take place on 4 October, the results likely to be announced in December.

The bid was promulgated on meeting the challenges of a City facing rapid growth in population and economy but with widening inequality and pockets of deprivation with an understanding that changing behaviour was key to resolving the challenges. The aspirational vision was now to make Exeter the most active city in England and for Cranbrook to be a Healthy New Town with families active together. Goals were to narrow stubborn health inequalities by getting 10,000 previously inactive people living in the most challenged communities moving more and reducing congestion and improving air quality through more people walking and cycling in their daily lives.

It was noted that this work would also feed into a future Sports Strategy for the City.

RESOLVED that the position be noted.

21

SUGAR SMART CITY

Dawn Rivers reported on progress with Sugar Smart Exeter delivered in conjunction with the Exeter Food Network (to be renamed Food Exeter) as part of one of the Board's priorities of improving the diet of Exeter's citizens. Sugar Smart was an ambitious campaign aimed at helping towns, cities, counties and boroughs across the UK to raise awareness and reduce consumption of sugar across all age groups. The campaign aimed to promote health alternatives and remove or reduce unhealthy food and drink, particularly targeting those high in sugar. Experience showed that getting commitments from institutions and businesses could help to motivate real change in different settings at a local level and across the country.

The University of Exeter was helping with evaluation at a local level.

It was hoped that concerted action across the country would encourage the Government to introduce appropriate legislation

More information about the campaign can be found on the national website www.sugarsmartuk.org and the local website www.exeterfoodnetwork.org.uk/sugar-smart

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FUTURE OF EXETER HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Jo Yelland, referring to the original aims of the Health and Wellbeing Board when established in September 2013, which were:-

- To ensure the delivery of improved health and wellbeing outcomes for the population of Exeter with a specific focus on reducing inequalities;
- To concentrate its efforts over the medium-term to significantly improving the health outcomes in one priority area;
- To promote integration and partnership working between the City Council, NHS, Devon County Council social care, public health, Police, voluntary services and other local services; and
- To improve local democratic accountability for health and wellbeing.

Jo Yelland highlighted the success of Active Exeter and how the Board had promoted integration and partnership working by sharing information, knowledge and supported campaigns: which included regular information on Public Health profiles, information and updates on Integrated Care Exeter, support for Smoke Free play areas, sign up to the principles of Sugar Smart City and the promotion of Cosy Homes grants.

Following discussion on the way forward for the Board there was consensus that the Board remained of value and it was agreed to adopt the following four areas as future areas of work for the Board as it sought to increase and develop its cross city co-ordinating role:-

- maintaining a priority focus on physical activity;
- providing local oversight of Wellbeing Exeter to embed both social prescribing and community building;
- co-ordination of the implementation of the Exeter Youth Strategy; and
- promoting the Exeter Community Strategy and co-ordinating its implementation across the City, and in particular with statutory partners .

Sarah Gibbs remarked that initial Public Health funding of £20,000 for the Board in 2013 had facilitated data collection and which had informed Active Exeter - which itself had helped with the bid for the Sport England Local Delivery pilot and would input into the Sports Strategy. Matt Evans added that the Board and its Members provided valuable support to the work of Active Exeter comparing it with the difficulty he sometimes experienced in rural Devon where the Districts did not possess this mechanism of supporting partnership initiatives. Unlike West Devon, for example, it was recognised that Exeter benefitted from its compact nature. Kirstian Tomblin felt that the Board was a valuable forum helping the County Council address complex social issues.

Amanda Kilroy identified learning opportunities as a potential additional area of focus to address the poor aspirations of certain groups.

The Chair invited Members to put forward any further suggestions for consideration.

RESOLVED that Jo Yelland report further to the next Board meeting on 31 October confirming future priorities for the Board, a revamped terms of reference and suggestions for membership.

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DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Future meetings, commencing at 2.00pm, were scheduled for:-

31 October 2017
30 January 2018
10 April 2018
10 July 2018
11 September 2018

(The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and closed at 4.00 pm)

Chair

EXETER HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Tuesday 31 October 2017

Present:-

Councillor Bialyk (Chair)	Exeter City Council
Councillor Edwards	Exeter City Council
Julian Tagg	Exeter City Football Club
Matt Evans	Active Exeter City Council
Virginia Pearson	Public Health, Devon County Council
Gillian Champion	Clinical Commissioning Group
Amanda Kilroy	CoLab
Jo Yelland	Exeter City Council
Dawn Rivers	Exeter City Council
Howard Bassett	Exeter City Council

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APOLOGIES

These were received from David Bartram, Simon Bowkett with Amanda Kilroy, deputising, Adel Jones, Councillor Morse, Councillor Sara Randall-Johnson and Kristian Tomblin.

25

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 SEPTEMBER 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2017 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as correct.

26

SOUTH WEST YOUTH GAMES - PRESENTATION

Chris Broadbent had been unable to attend due to a family matter and would be invited to the January Board meeting.

RESOLVED that Chris be requested to circulate details of the Games to the Board.

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ACTIVE EXETER UPDATE

Matt Evans advised that Active Exeter was continuing to deliver increases in activity in key groups across the City. A successful 18 month review of this three year project had just been completed by John Horne of Sports England. Active Exeter was funded by a £190,000 grant from Sport England, Public Health and other partners.

To date, there had been 1,086 new participants, the target for the three year period being 2,205. Netball was increasing in popularity and there had been a significant increase in running groups including at Heavitree, St Thomas, RD&E Hospital and the County Council.

The National Active People survey had been discontinued, with data now being provided via the Active Life Survey, the latest figures having been produced for May 2016/May2017. As well as being the most active City in the South West, this Survey

had shown that Exeter was the most active local authority area in the UK for the 16+ group.

Virginia Pearson advised that there was also data available via Public Health England physical activity public health profiles that would be useful to refer to.

RESOLVED that the position be noted.

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SPORT ENGLAND LOCAL DELIVERY PILOT

Jo Yelland reported that the announcement on whether Exeter's bid to become a local delivery pilot was scheduled for 17 November 2017. She also advised that Exeter with the other participants in the bidding process had been invited to attend a learning networking event.

RESOLVED that the position be noted.

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EXETER HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD - WAY FORWARD

Following initial debate at the previous meeting on 12 September, further consideration was given to the purpose, name, function, terms of reference and membership and the roles and responsibilities of members of the Board. The overall proposal was that the Board should become a City-wide strategy development and oversight group, holding each partner to account on delivery of agreed strategies/programmes with a focus on health inequalities. In detail, the suggested strategy for 2017-2020 was:-

- **City-wide Advisory Group for Health & Wellbeing Strategy development**
 1. Exeter Community Health, Wellbeing and Physical Activity Strategy (Sport England Local Delivery Pilot Vision)
- **City-wide Co-ordination and Implementation Group for agreed strategies**
 1. Exeter Youth Strategy (non-recurring funding allocated by Exeter Board)
 2. Exeter Community Forum Community Strategy: encouraging partners to and adopt ABCD approaches across the City
- **City-wide Oversight and Reference Group for City-Wide Health & Wellbeing Programmes**
 1. Active Exeter
 2. Wellbeing Exeter: develop and embed social prescribing and community building across the City
- **City-wide Health and Wellbeing Information and Networking Exchange**
 1. Facilitation of bi-annual themed open information exchange and networking events (funding to be sought)

In endorsing the above framework, Members reflected on the value added by the Health Board since its inception in September 2013, notably its leadership role in the work of Active Exeter and promotion of physical activity, the recent success in getting to the shortlist stage for the Sport England bid and presentations such as on air quality. Its direction has been guided by the JSNA, results from which were regularly reported.

Continuation and enhancement of its unique role as a governance and advisory body with City wide oversight for the delivery of City wide strategies with a focus on co-ordinating the health and wellbeing of the citizens of Exeter was supported. The following, in particular, were mentioned as potentially appropriate for coming under the Board's umbrella:-

- Exeter Community Forum and Community Strategy;
- Youth Strategy which since its launch would now need an appropriate home;
- Continuation of ICE streams of work; and
- Mental Health, particularly around young people.

Acting as the strategic oversight group, it was important for the Board to have appropriate representation from partners. Membership had been sporadic in some cases in the past and improved engagement would be of great value. Representation beyond statutory bodies already characterised the Board membership and suggestions of additional groups to become Board members were sought. The following were mentioned:-

Police (already represented)
Fire and Rescue Service
Exeter Community Forum
Exeter Active (already represented)
Exeter College
Wellbeing Exeter
Social Care
City Futures

Whilst representation at senior level was required to drive strategies and ensure synergy, the value of grass roots/volunteer work was acknowledged. Police involvement, for example, helped ensure that their resources dovetailed with community initiatives and concerns and, related to this, linkage to the Community Safety Partnership would be explored.

Members supported the idea of regular exchange and networking events and it was suggested that the name Exeter Community Health and Wellbeing Board be adopted.

Jo Yelland would prepare a draft paper broadening the above framework, setting out terms of reference and identifying potential membership for circulation to the partners via email for any further views to be added, including membership suggestions.

RESOLVED that Jo Yelland circulate a formal draft paper followed by a final report to be considered at the January Board meeting.

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DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Future meetings, commencing at 2.00pm, were scheduled for:-

30 January 2018
10 April 2018
10 July 2018

(The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and closed at 3.45 pm)

Chair

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