

## **CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date: Thursday 1 December 2022  
Time: 5.30 pm  
Venue: Rennes Room, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter

Members are invited to attend the above meeting.

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 rear of the Customer Service Centre, Paris Street.

### *Membership -*

Vizard (Chair), Mitchell, M (Deputy Chair), Bennett, Ellis-Jones, Foale, Harvey, Holland, Newby, Oliver, Snow, Sparling, Sutton, Wardle and Warwick

## **Agenda**

### **1 Apologies**

### **2 Minutes**

(Pages 5 -  
10)

To approve and sign the minutes of the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee held on 6 October 2022.

### **3 Declarations of Interest**

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

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

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

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

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

**5 Questions from the Public under Standing Order No 19**

Details of questions should be notified to the Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support via the [committee.services@exeter.gov.uk](mailto:committee.services@exeter.gov.uk) email by 10.00am at least three working days prior to the meeting. For this meeting any questions must be submitted by 10.00am on Monday 28 November 2022.

For details about how to speak at Committee, please click the following link - <https://exeter.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/councillors-and-meetings/public-speaking-at-meetings/overview/>

**6 Questions from Members of the Council under Standing Order No. 20**

To receive questions from Members of the Council to the relevant Portfolio Holders for this Scrutiny Committee. The Portfolio Holders are:-

Councillor Denning - Portfolio Holder for Customer Services and Council Housing

Councillor Ghusain - Portfolio Holder for City Management and Environmental Services

Councillor Pearce - Portfolio Holder for Communities and Homelessness Prevention

Councillor Williams - Portfolio Holder for Recycling, Waste Management and Waterways

Advance questions from Members relating to the Portfolio Holders should be notified to the Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support via the [committee.services@exeter.gov.uk](mailto:committee.services@exeter.gov.uk) email.

**7 Update from the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Homelessness Prevention - Councillor Pearce**

**8 Homelessness Task and Finish Working Group**

**9 Tackling the Ecological Emergency**

To consider the report of the Director Net Zero Exeter and City Management.

10 **Forward Plan of Business and Scrutiny Work Plan**

(Pages 19  
- 24)

Please see for noting a link to the schedule of future business proposed for the Council which can be viewed on the Council's web site -

<https://exeter.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/councillors-and-meetings/forward-plan-of-executive-decisions/>

Also attached is a work plan for scrutiny items.

Should Members wish to raise issues in respect of future business please notify Howard Bassett in advance of the meeting.

**Date of Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting of the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee will be held on **Thursday 2 February 2023** at 5.30 pm in the Civic Centre.

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## CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 October 2022

### Present:

Councillor Matthew Vizard (Chair)  
Councillors Mitchell, M, Bennett, Ellis-Jones, Harvey, Holland, Newby, Snow, Sparling,  
Wardle and Warwick

### Apologies:

Councillors Oliver and Sutton

### Also present:

Service Lead - Environmental Health & Community Safety, Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support, Corporate Manager – Executive Support and Democratic Services Officer (HB)

### In attendance:

Councillor Bialyk	Leader
Councillor Williams	Portfolio Holder Recycling, Waste Management and Waterways
Councillor Denning	Portfolio Holder Council Housing Development and Support Services
Councillor Ghusain	Portfolio Holder City Management and Environmental Services
Councillor Pearce	Portfolio Holder Communities and Homelessness Prevention

### 18 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee held on 30 June 2022 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as correct.

### 19 **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made by Members.

### 20 **Questions from the Public under Standing Order No 19**

No questions from members of the public were received.

### 21 **Questions from Members of the Council under Standing Order No. 20**

No questions had been received from Members.

### 22 **Update from the Portfolio Holder for Recycling, Waste Management and Waterways - Councillor Williams**

Councillor Williams reported on the Recycling and Waste, Waterways and the Exeter Port Authority areas of her Portfolio, detailing the issues relating to achieving the Council's published priorities, major ongoing programmes of work, issues impacting delivery, financial performance and budget requirements and potential changes being considered.

The following responses were given to Members' queries:-

- there were a number of factors which made it difficult to provide a precise timetable for the full rollout of food waste collection across the city. As well as the difficulties noted in recruiting qualified drivers, care needed to be taken to ensure

that the collection routes were planned as efficiently as possible. There were a number of different types of properties, particularly in inner city areas, which required careful analysis and the collection of garden waste, for example, often covered more than one ward and there was a need to minimise the mileage covered when factoring in the need to return to Exton Road to offload materials. There was presently a limit to the amount of food waste that could be stored at the depot prior to being transferred to Holsworthy for anaerobic disposal. It was estimated that 47% of current waste within the black bins was anaerobic and, therefore, once the full rollout of food waste collection occurred, Exeter's rate of recycling would increase significantly;

- it was necessary to prioritise black and green bin collection which was a statutory requirement. As such, it had been unfortunate that it had proved necessary to suspend the garden waste collection service in order to maintain the statutory service. The communication process in notifying residents of changes had been improved and a data base was being developed with Strata including the compilation of residents' emails;
- the Service Lead Environmental Health and Community Safety confirmed that the recruitment of drivers was a key issue and that obtaining licences to drive 7.5 tonne and 26 tonne refuse collection vehicles was a complex process and that the same problem was being experienced by the private sector. The service had embarked on an internal development programme giving opportunity to a number of staff within the service to qualify as drivers. The roll out of food waste containers also had to be factored into the process;
- the Service Lead Environmental Health and Community Safety advised that the Council has a comprehensive fleet management replacement programme and the timescale for replacing existing diesel vehicles was seven years and would be eight years for the new electric vehicles;
- the Service Lead Environmental Health and Community Safety referred to the ongoing advertising for the recruitment of drivers as well as the use of recruitment agencies which it was hoped would attract those with relevant experience such as delivery drivers. The development programme was encouraging existing staff such as loaders to become drivers. He praised the response of staff to the recent extra day's bank holiday following the passing of Her Majesty the Queen and to their turn out to ensure that there were no disruptions to the service. They were very dedicated and excellent ambassadors for the city;
- the Service Lead Environmental Health and Community Safety advised that the total staff complement required for the food waste collection service was five drivers and 10 loaders. The delay in obtaining licenses from the DVLA had been resolved, although there could be delays in booking training courses with companies due to the demand for places on intensive driver training programmes. The new electric vehicles had been well received by staff who had quickly adapted to the nuances of longer vehicles. Manufacturers had been advised of the value of enabling the vehicles to be charged from the rear;
- the Service Lead Environmental Health and Community Safety updated Members on progress with the construction of the larger roll on roll off food waste disposal bays to the necessary standard required by the Environment Agency. At present, the volume of disposal was limited by the smaller skips used by the 7 tonne vehicles; and
- a report on the Harbour Revision Order would be submitted to Executive and Council, the key aims of the Order being to improve access to the River and Canal, to charge for existing services and to codify Health and Safety requirements. It was difficult to predict any date for implementation because of the costs involved and the need for consultation. Responding to a Member, she acknowledged the unique nature of the Canal and its value to the city and the importance for the City Council to maintain control. The River and Canal was a

great asset to residents and visitors and she praised the work of the Harbour Master and his team. The Portfolio Holder also referred to the intention to hold a Historic Vessels Festival which was being progressed by the Exeter Canal and Quay Trust.

## 23 **Operation London Bridge - Expenditure**

The Corporate Manager, Democratic and Civic Support presented the report setting out the details of an urgent decision taken by the Chief Executive & Growth Director, in consultation with the Director of Finance, the Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee, relating to the expenditure of £31,000 on the Council's response to Operation London Bridge. The Constitution required officers to present this to the next available meeting of the Executive which had been held on 4 October 2022 (Minute Number 100 refers)

The Chair of the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee, who in agreeing the urgent matter, requested that a breakdown of the costs also be presented to this Committee.

Particular reference was made to the following:-

- work on the protocol had been ongoing for a number of years, making it possible to act immediately on the announcement of the sad passing of Her Majesty the Queen;
- Council staff and partners across the city, including the University and Football and Rugby Clubs who had been involved in developing the protocol, had responded magnificently to enable the public to be engaged in the mourning period;
- the protocol had been developed nationwide, in part to reduce the anticipated pressure on the capital following the announcement. Few would have experienced the Proclamation of a new monarch and some 3,000 members of the public had gathered outside Exeter Cathedral on Sunday 11 September 2022 to hear the Chief Executive & Growth Director deliver the Proclamation; and
- the public reaction to the arrangements had been well received and there had been significant local and national media coverage of the city's arrangements.

The following responses were given to Members' queries:-

- the expectations of His Majesty for arrangements for the Coronation were unknown and no date had been fixed. As such, it was not possible to report on local arrangements and costs;
- no equivalent arrangements to Operation London Bridge for the Coronation had been made;
- the protocol for the Queen's passing had been developed in conjunction with the National Association of Civic Officers; and
- although there would have been carbon footprint implications, such as the involvement of additional vehicles, energy uses etc., it had not been possible in the time given for these to have been calculated.

The Chair of the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee, on behalf of Members, thanked all Council staff involved in the arrangements and also extended the thanks of the Committee to all partners across the city who had participated in the arrangements and which had been so well received by the public.

Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee noted the report.

## 24 **Street Naming and Numbering**

The Corporate Manager - Executive Support presented the report seeking Members' approval of a number of minor revisions to the Council's Street Naming and Numbering Policy.

The report proposed that Executive recommend that Council approves revisions to the Council's Street Naming and Numbering Policy and that approval of future revisions to the policy be delegated to the Director with responsibility for planning and development in consultation with the Chair of Planning Committee.

The policy covered both the naming and numbering of streets and the renaming of existing streets when requested. It was also an opportunity to raise awareness of arrangements.

A Member raised the following queries which the Corporate Manager - Executive Support undertook to respond to:-

- can 2.5 be clarified as to its meaning with perhaps regard to updating the language used for accessibility?;
- can the necessity of the very specific clause in 3.9.13 be explained and is there a reason other considerations are not included and what is the significance of the starting date of 1914?; and
- can 8.13 be clarified as to whether it means the local authority will instruct developers on where to site the nameplates or just that it is a requirement that developments have nameplates?

The following responses were given to Members' queries:-

- the policy covered a situation where a street name could be challenged, for example, on historical grounds and, in such circumstances, the appropriate action could be to hold a referendum;
- relevant Ward Councillors were consulted as a matter of course and requests from the public often came via Members; and
- a bank of names was not maintained.

Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee noted the report and recommended to Executive and Council for approval.

## 25 **Homelessness Task and Finish Working Group - Update from the Chair of the Working Group**

The Deputy Chair and Chair of the Homelessness Task and Finish Working Group briefed Members on meetings of the Group held on 27 September and 3 October 2022 following an initial meeting on 27 June 2022. He explained that the working group had been established in response to changes in Universal Credit and the feared impact this would have on existing homeless numbers but since then the economic climate had changed with inflation and the energy and cost of living crisis. At the same time, the City Council was consulting on its Homelessness Strategy.

As well as a call for public views on the issues including those who had experienced homelessness, two sessions were being held with witnesses, one to consider causation and prevention, the other to examine the handling of homelessness presentations. The first session on 3 October had received statements from Shelter, Exeter Citizens Advice and the City Council on the nature of homelessness, the



national picture of homelessness with consideration given to what recommendations could be made, not only for the City Council, but also for regional and national bodies and to Government.

Six bodies had been invited to the second session arranged for 19 October 2022. There had been a good response to a social media promotion of the work of the Task and Finish Working Group from individuals who had experienced homelessness. St Petrocks had also invited Members of the Group to meet with some of its clients. Councillor Pearce, as Portfolio Holder for Communities and Prevention, had been invited to the meetings with witnesses.

The Committee noted the update.

## 26 **Scrutiny Programme Board Annual Report**

The Chair, as a member of the Scrutiny Programme Board, presented the Board's report which offered an annual update in respect of the Scrutiny work achieved during the Municipal Year 2021 - 2022. He, and another Member, thanked Democratic Services for their input into the preparation of the report. The Member thanked the Portfolio Holder for the quality of the report and also remarked that it would be beneficial if that, in addition to the selected Portfolio Holder reporting in detail to the respective Committee meeting, brief updates from the other three Portfolio Holders who also reported to this Committee could be provided at each meeting.

The Chair stated that the current format had been considered and supported by the Scrutiny Programme Board and also pointed out that there was an opportunity under Standing Order 20 for Members to ask questions of the relevant Portfolio Holders at each meeting, all four being present at this meeting.

The Corporate Manager, Democratic and Civic Support advised that the suggestion could be raised at the next meeting of the Scrutiny Programme Board. He stated that it would also be appropriate for the matter to be raised at the next meeting of the Governance Review Board as part of the Board's annual review of the Council's scrutiny arrangements.

Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee:-

- (1) supported the suggestion regarding brief Portfolio Holders updates to be made at each Committee meeting to be put to both the Scrutiny Programme Board and the Governance Review Board; and
- (2) noted the Annual Scrutiny Report 2021-2022 which would be presented to Executive to note and to recommend to Council to approve.

## 27 **Forward Plan of Business and Scrutiny Work Plan**

Members noted the Forward Plan and the Scrutiny Work Plan.

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.47 pm

Chair

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## CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 DECEMBER 2022

### TACKLING THE ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY

Relevant Officers: Cat Chambers, Joe Morshead

#### 1. What is the update about?

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Board have requested a bulletin update on the current position of Biodiversity practices, and any future enhancements planned. This is in light of the ecological emergency declared on behalf of the Council in April 2021. This report will identify the history of ecology practice within frontline service, and the ongoing culture that sustains those practices. It will identify that, despite zero additional funding and a challenging financial climate, through collaboration with other organisations and community engagement, services have continued to ensure an improvement in operational practice wherever financially or operationally feasible.
- The progress and impact on biodiversity of the work to reduce use of glyphosate and next steps to reach nearly zero usage.
  - Updating of the biodiversity map from 2015 (?) to establish biodiversity trends in Exeter (land and water).
  - What measures are to be taken to improve biodiversity in the city – by the council and partners?
  - Funding for the above work.
  - Approaches to public engagement in tackling this emergency, and council messaging to support this.

#### 2. Background

##### Well Established practices:

- 2.1 Wild City is a long-standing partnership that moved the council onto an ecologically proactive footing. Established between 2008 and 2010, the Wild City Partnership with Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT) was more than the wildflower project it is most associated with today (Picture 1). It paved the way for the originally named Exe Corridor Partnership between the Council, the Environment Agency (EA), and DWT. The establishment of which aimed to enhance the biodiversity value of the Exe Corridor with a series of funded projects, which included the creation of artificial otter holts prior to 2010. It also included the construction of the swift tower on Paris Street roundabout, and the use of swift nest bricks in the Council Residential Design Guide (Picture 2). The partnership has over the last fourteen years laid the foundation for the current rewilding programmes across public lands. It set the standards for collaborative and community-based working, and contributed to achieving greater biodiversity value, both through local action and through planning proposals such as the Monkerton Masterplan and associated woodland establishment project.

Picture 1. Wild City Wildflower Meadows

Picture 2. Exeter Swift Tower



- 2.2 Today, whilst both the funding and project manager roles originally associated with the Wild City projects have ceased, due to the ongoing difficult economic climate, the partnership has remained in place. This now operational partnership continues to take an active role in informing best practice, and in service and city green infrastructure management, as outlined by our current position. In addition, the Councils Strategic partnership with DWT has been further strengthened. In 2019, the Council transferred the Valley Parks into DWT care, and the Valley parks committee commenced. A collaboration resulting not only in much needed remedial works across the valley parks infrastructure, but also in new projects to enhance the city ecology such as the Northbrook Arboretum.
- 2.3 Whether it be the meadow grass areas left as standard in cemeteries over the last 10 years, to support local Goldfinch populations, or the councils long-term use of habitat stacking as a woodland and habitat management process. The council has committed to working alone, with partners, and with the community, towards ecologically sound and sustainable practices across its frontline operations.

### 3. Current position

#### Arboriculture:

- 3.1 Currently officers take several approaches to ensure operational best practice, and improved resilience against climate change and the ever-increasing threat to tree stocks from pests and diseases. The Council undertake a program of annual tree planting, with on average 100 standard trees planted per year. When selecting planting stock, a variety of both native and exotic species are used, with consideration for the local site conditions, the existing tree stock, surrounding habitats and future climate change predictions. This 'right asset, right space' approach not only ensures the integration of genetic diversity across the councils existing tree stock, but also new tree plantings are positioned, and species are selected, with consideration for improved habitat connectivity, foraging opportunities and wildlife habitat.
- 3.2 In an extension to former habitat stacking practices, where possible, valuable deadwood habitat such as dead trees, branches, and tree surgery arising's, are left in situ wherever it is appropriate and safe to do so. This new habitat creation can provide habitat for bats, birds, invertebrates, small mammals, and equally fungi and lichen species that are also under threat because of species decline and climate change. In further support of habitats, extra value and resources are routinely focused on ancient and veteran tree management and the unique niche habitats that they provide.
- 3.3 A recent I-tree study showed that Exeter's tree cover is at 24.5%, which is above average for UK towns and cities. The council recognises the significant role that tree infrastructure will play in both the environmental and ecological emergencies that the city faces. Whilst not a majority landowner, it has committed to collaborating with other landowners and to increasing canopy cover in the city by 5% by 2030. This is a target that is integrated across council and included in the tree strategy and both NetZero and planning policy expectations. The I-Tree canopy cover map can be found on the following link: <https://urbantreecover.org/urban-forest-cover/>.

### Parks and Green Spaces:

- 3.4 Parks officers continue to work closely in collaboration with DWT and Wild City. Since the establishment of the first meadow in St Bartholomew cemetery in 2012, the city's meadow grass network has been expanded across Parks, and verge space since 2019, culminating this year in the first full 'Wildlife Highway'.



This linking corridor of meadow grass along Topsham Road offers its own ecosystem and habitat, not only supporting bees, butterflies, and moths, but also the birds and small mammals that rely on them. The programme of meadow verges citywide has only been possible through collaborative working and the partnership between ECC, DCC, and DWT.

- 3.5 Parks officers have also continued to work closely with community groups and to support community-based initiatives. The last twelve months have seen the establishment and extensions of two community gardens in Exeter. In addition, Exeter Wild City has engaged with many external organisations including Exeter University, Network Rail, and the Crematorium, to extend the meadow network beyond ECC land. Parks officers and DWT are now developing a local authority delivery team forum to share knowledge and best practice amongst local partners. This has already seen officers visit Plymouth to learn from their Future Parks Accelerator Programme, and current biodiversity projects. Finally, Wild City continues to operate seeding and planting through schools, engaging all schools locally in the wildflower meadow programme. These efforts outline the ethos of knowledge sharing, collaboration, and public engagement that are business as usual, for the parks and greens spaces team. Current practices and key operational projects can be found on the Council website: <https://exeter.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/parks-and-open-spaces/biodiversity/>.

### Glyphosate:

- 3.5 The usage of Glyphosate for 2022 stands at 120 Litres. The increase in usage from 2020 2021 seasons comes because of additional requirements in the form of Housing hard surface weed control. 2020 and 2021 saw no weed control carried out across housing footpath and drying areas resulting in significant weed growth, affecting council residents and resulting in additional work requirements to rectify the condition issues. To manage this, weed control needed to be reinstated across council housing sites, to ensure the safety and usability of housing hard surface infrastructure.

#### Recorded Usage:

2017 195L Used  
2018 160L Used  
2019 156L Used  
2020 90L Used  
2021 91L 150ml Used

- 3.6 This year several operational reductions were also made. The Wild City wild flower sites moved onto a zero weed control and over seeding process, in an impact benefit trial. The result of this was evidenced on Paris Street roundabout where there were not the characteristic floral displays seen in the past through herbicide usage. However, the extent of natural grasses, teasel, and other native flora, coupled with scattered wildflowers throughout has made the roundabout a rich habitat. Where this benefit to biodiversity remains high, and is mirrored across wildflower sites, the programme will now remain weed control free. In addition, operations moved to a pelargonic chemical for moss and algae treatment. Because of the low requirement for moss and algae treatment, pelargonic treatment is a cost effective alternative for moss and algae management. Finally, when planting saplings, Council arboriculture teams no longer utilise glyphosate to control grass growth around the sapling, instead mulch mats are used as standard to control growth.
- 3.7 Trials on alternatives options continue. The Councils parks and green spaces team undertook a concentration trial to see if aggregated reductions can be made by reducing the concentration of glyphosate within a mix. At the same time, new alternative non-glyphosate chemicals containing pelargonic acid and acetic acid were also trialled. The efficacy rate for alternatives remained poor in comparison to Glyphosate options, with regrowth in alternatives present within a month, and full regrowth within two months, whilst the clean label glyphosate options continued to suppress in full beyond the two-month window. The poor efficacy in alternatives mean that the chemicals are not cost-effective options, and can only be considered for integrated process use such as in the case of moss and algae growth (pictures 4-7).

Acetic Acid Alternative:

Picture 4. 24 Hours

Picture 5. 1 week

Picture 6. 1 month

Picture 7. 2 months



Glyphosate 250ml:

Picture 8. 24 Hours

Picture 9. 1 week

Picture 10. 1 month

Picture 11. 2 months





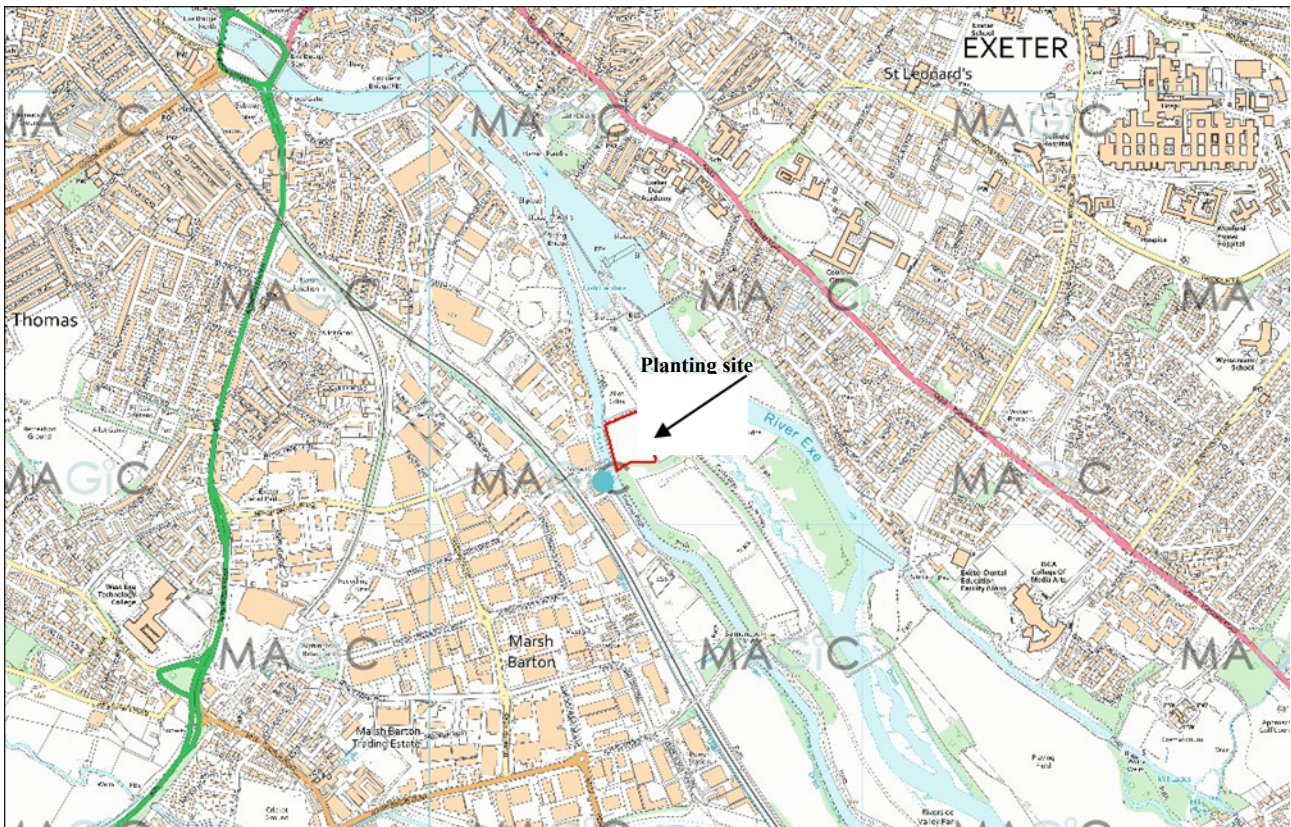
The results of the reduced concentration show that Glyphosate options can be reduced from 250ml per 10 litres of water, to 200ml per 10 litres of water, with no impact in efficacy. Lower concentrations than 200ml result in similar efficacy rates to alternatives and are not-cost effective. Operations will therefore utilise 200ml concentration for perennial grass management in 2023 season to further reduce Glyphosate use.

- 3.8 The council continues to operate an integrated process that relies on multiple methods to reduce aggregate use of chemical controls. To gauge current operational progress and to inform continuous improvement, the council took part in a Local Authority delivery team forum with the Pesticide Action Network earlier in the year. This included other southwest councils and DWT. At present, with the poor efficacy and the cost-pressures of alternatives, an integrated approach remains best practice, with reductions made where financially sustainable. The council will continue to investigate alternatives, optimise, and reduce glyphosate use as new opportunities arise in accordance with best practice and where it is cost-effective to do so.

#### 4. Future position

- 4.1 Arboriculture: there are two projects in initial stages that look to progress the Council's arboriculture development and diversity programme. The first is the arboretum in partnership with DWT. This went to executive in September where it was recommended that Council approve the allocation of £288,583 in total towards the project. Holistically the project will see a five-stage delivery programme to introduce tree species and habitat into the Northbrook site and develop community education and engagement. The second project is the New Haven Field woodland proposal. Saving Devon Treescapes (SDT) are providing funding to create a native broadleaf woodland in New Haven field (Picture 4). Much of the surrounding woodland is Ash, so the project serves to mitigate the loss of canopy through Ash Die Back and introduces mixed biodiverse native stock in its place. If successful, the woodland planting will be carried out through community engagement and volunteering and will mirror the Monkerton Ridgeline woodland project on a smaller scale, increasing the Councils woodland habitat.

Picture 4. New Haven Field Location



Map produced by MAGIC on 29 March, 2022.  
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4.3 As the Council moves forward there has, and will continue to be, a change in how it approaches traditional concepts, and as advancements are made within the relevant industries. This change has been most aptly evidenced in the planting schemes at Saint Sidwell's Point and Riverside leisure centres. The plant choices maximise pollution mitigation through the use of Phyto-sensors (plants sensitive and absorbent to air pollution) and also species decline through use of heavy flowering perennial herbs. In collaboration with Exeter City Living, leisure, and other service areas, the use of purposeful mitigation planting will become more prevalent as the agreed path forward for Council established beds.

4.4 The Draft Exeter Plan is currently out for consultation. The draft sets out the need to conserve and protect Exeter's rich ecology and biodiversity and planning have consulted with frontline delivery teams throughout the development of the draft. The National Planning Policy Framework requires developers to provide at least a 10% measurable biodiversity net gain, and the strategy proposal includes the potential of funding through Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) payments for the first time, funded by developments. The Environment Act 2021 requires the production of a Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy. This strategy will include a new and current habitat map for the Devon Nature Recovery Network, superseding its 2015 predecessor.

**5 Are there any other options?**

5.1 An Exeter i-tree project was undertaken by local urban tree specialists Treeconomics in 2021, with the support of Exeter City Councils Tree Team and local volunteers. The results of this survey provided us with some useful information and a better understanding of Exeter's overall tree stock. However, at present, there is only limited summary data available, but subject to funding, there is the opportunity to commission a full report, providing access to more comprehensive and useful information, including ecosystem services, climate change resilience, species and structural diversity. This information can then be used by Exeter City



Councils Tree Team to help make better-informed management decisions about Exeter's green infrastructure.

## **6. Conclusion**

The Council and its delivery teams continue to work together and engage externally, with both partners and communities, with a view to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Exeter's biodiversity. They do so as part of the services 'business as usual' operations. Funding, remains project specific with delivery undertaken where budget and resources allow. Whilst the pace of progress in funded development is swifter, energy and the Councils continuous development ethos is carried by council officers, has ensured that improvements continue to be made annually and that opportunities are taken where they arise. This, coupled with the work of the Draft Exeter Plan, will ensure that Biodiversity and ecology management remains a high priority.

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**WORK PLAN FOR SCRUTINY ITEMS 2022 -2023**

*November Update*

Item	Scrutiny Committee	Director	Portfolio Holder	Submitted by	Date Approved by Scrutiny Programme Board	Date Signed off
<b>NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2022</b>						
Portfolio Holders Report (Cllr Wright)	Strategic 17 November 2022			Timetabled report		
Commercialisation	Strategic 17 November 2022	Director Net Zero Exeter & City Management (DB)Service Lead Net Zero & Business (VH)				
Portfolio Holders Report (Cllr Pearce)	Customer Focus 1 December 2022			Timetabled report		
Tackling the Ecological Emergency Update	Customer Focus 1 December 2022	Director Net Zero Exeter & City Management (DB)	Portfolio Holder Climate Change (Cllr Wood)	Progressive Group (proforma)	September 2021	
Homelessness Task and Finish Group – Update	Customer Focus 1 December 2022	Deputy Chief Executive (BA)	Portfolio Holder for Communities and Homeless Prevention (Cllr Pearce)	Cllr Denning (proforma)	September 2021	

Item	Scrutiny Committee	Director	Portfolio Holder	Submitted by	Date Approved by Scrutiny Programme Board	Date Signed off
<b>JANUARY 2023</b>						
Portfolio Holders Report (Cllr Parkhouse)	Strategic 19 January 2023			Timetabled report		
St. Sidwell's Point/Active Leisure	Strategic 19 January 2023	Director Comms Culture & Leisure Facilities (JPH)	Portfolio Holder Leisure Services and Physical Activity(Cllr Parkhouse)	St Sidwells Point - Cllrs K. Mitchell M. Mitchell, Cllr D. Moore J. Moore and Sparling ( <i>Active Exeter Budget work stream discussions November 21</i> )	July/September 2021	
Portfolio Holders Report (Cllr Ghusain)	Customer Focus 2 February 2023			Timetabled report		
Food Waste Collection	Customer Focus 2 February 2023	Director Net Zero Exeter & City Management (DB)	Portfolio Holder Recycling, Waste Management and Waterways (Cllr Williams)	Annual report		
Homelessness Task and Finish Group	Customer Focus 2 February 2023	Deputy Chief Executive (BA)	Portfolio Holder for Communities and Homeless Prevention (Cllr Pearce)	Cllr Denning (proforma)	September 2021	
Budget	Combined Strategic Scrutiny and	Director Finance (DH)	Leader	Annual Report		

Item	Scrutiny Committee	Director	Portfolio Holder	Submitted by	Date Approved by Scrutiny Programme Board	Date Signed off
	Customer Focus Scrutiny 9 February					
<b>MARCH 2023</b>						
Portfolio Holders Report (Cllr Morse)	Strategic 16 March 2023			Timetabled report		
Working Towards Net Zero - Exeter City Council's Corporate Carbon Footprint Report and Carbon Reduction Action Plan	Strategic 16 March 2023	Director Net Zero Exeter & City Management (DB)Service Lead Net Zero & Business (VH)	Portfolio Holder Climate Change (Cllr Wood)	Report half yearly		
Progress Report Shared Prosperity Fund - Update	Strategic 16 March 2023	Director Net Zero Exeter & City Management (DB)Service Lead Net Zero & Business (VH)	Portfolio Holder Climate Change (Cllr Wood)	Report half yearly		
The Exeter Local Plan – Community Engagement	Strategic 16 March 2023	Director of City Development (IC)	Portfolio Holder for City development (Cllr Morse)	Director of City Development		
Commercialisation Update	Strategic 16 March 2023	Director Net Zero Exeter & City Management				

Item	Scrutiny Committee	Director	Portfolio Holder	Submitted by	Date Approved by Scrutiny Programme Board	Date Signed off
		(DB)Service Lead Net Zero & Business (VH)				
Portfolio Holders Report (Cllr Denning)	Customer Focus 30 March 2023			Timetabled report		
To review the findings of the Car Parks Strategy report	Customer Focus 30 March 2023	Director Net Zero Exeter & City Management (DB)	Portfolio Holder for Climate Change (Cllr Wood)	Combined Strategic and Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee 20/10/2022- to consider Member involvement in the developing the car parking service	November 2021 – Combined Strategic and Customer Focus Scrutiny Committees	
<b>JUNE 2023</b>						
Portfolio Holders Report The PF TBC	Strategic Scrutiny 8 June 2023					
Presentation on the Role of Scrutiny	Strategic Scrutiny 8 June 2023	Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support (JS)				
Scrutiny Programme Annual Report	Strategic Scrutiny 8 June 2023			Scrutiny Programme Board Report yearly		
Portfolio Holders Report The PF to be agreed	Customer Focus 29 June 2023			Timetabled report		

Item	Scrutiny Committee	Director	Portfolio Holder	Submitted by	Date Approved by Scrutiny Programme Board	Date Signed off
Presentation on the Role of Scrutiny	Customer Focus 29 June 2023	Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support (JS)				
Scrutiny Programme Annual Report	Customer Focus 29 June 2023			Scrutiny Programme Board Report yearly		

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