

**REPORT TO:** Place Scrutiny Committee  
**Date of Meeting:** 12 January 2017

**REPORT TO:** Executive  
**Date of Meeting:** 14 February 2017

**Report of:** Victoria Hatfield, Economy & Enterprise Manager  
**Title:** Exeter & the Heart of Devon, a shared economic strategy.  
A Collaborative Approach to Growth & Productivity 2017 - 2020

**Is this a Key Decision?**

No

**Is this an Executive or Council Function?**

Executive

**1. What is the report about?**

1.1 To inform members of the new shared Growth & Productivity Strategy, covering Exeter, East Devon, Mid Devon and Teignbridge.

**2. Recommendation**

2.1 That Place Scrutiny Committee note and Executive support the Exeter & the Heart of Devon, a shared economic strategy. A Collaborative Approach to Growth & Productivity 2017 – 2020.

2.2 To continue working in partnership with East Devon, Mid Devon and Teignbridge Local Authorities on common economic development objectives.

2.3 To work in partnership with the proposed Greater Exeter Growth & Development Board to ensure consistency with vision, objectives and individual projects and initiatives.

**3. Reasons for the recommendation**

3.1 To continue with joint working with neighbouring local authorities for the benefit of the Exeter economy, its residents, businesses and student population and to improve local outcomes by delivering specific joint projects across a recognised functional economic market area.

3.2 The 'travel to work' area for Exeter has expanded significantly over the previous ten years, covering much of our neighbouring local authorities. Working in partnership is a mutually beneficial relationship for all concerned.

3.3 To ensure work undertaken by the emerging Greater Exeter Growth & Development Board and the Economic Development teams of each for local authority work in parallel and to a common shared vision and goal.

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

4.1 The Growth & Productivity Strategy will be delivered and implemented using existing financial and personnel resources through the City Council's Growth & Enterprise budget.

**5. Section 151 Officer comments:**

5.1 There are no additional financial implications contained within this report.

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

6.1 This report raises no issues from a legal standpoint.

**7. Monitoring officer Comments:**

7.1 This report is in line with the Executive's decision regarding the development of the Greater Exeter Growth and Development Board and will play an integral part in achieving this. As such, it raises no issues for the Monitoring Officer.

**8. Background**

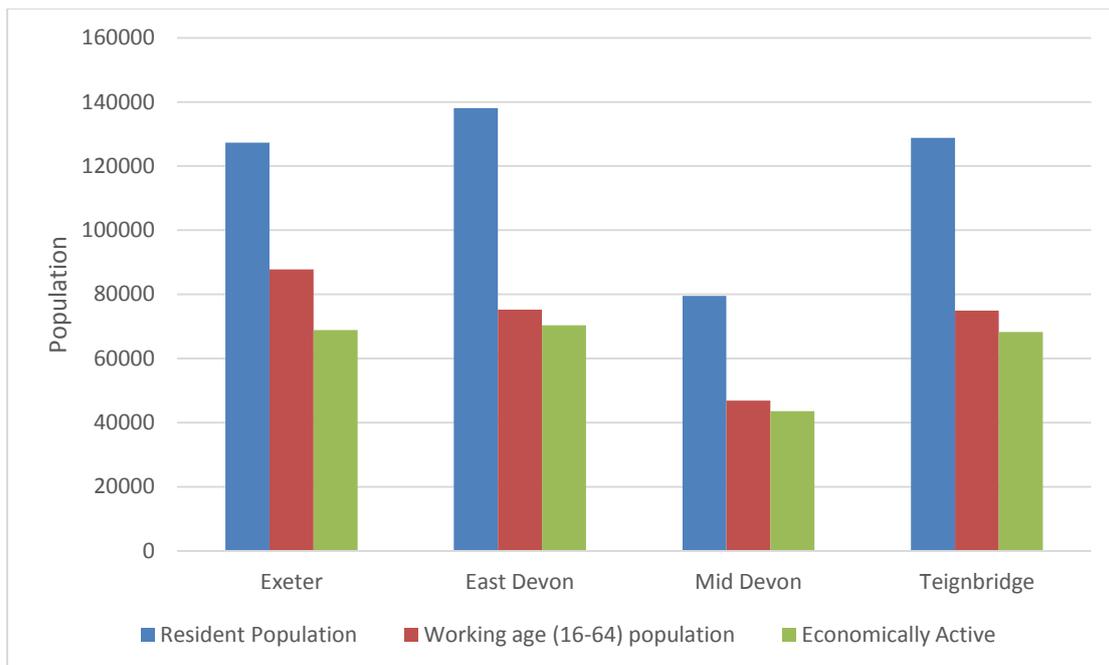
8.1 The Economic Development Teams from Exeter, East Devon, Mid Devon and Teignbridge District Councils have been working collaboratively for just over 2 years. This has enabled a trusting and confidential relationship to emerge which has aided joint projects to be developed, which are mutually beneficial for the Exeter & the Heart of Devon area and each Local Authority within.

8.2 As a result of joint working, the four Local Authorities have:

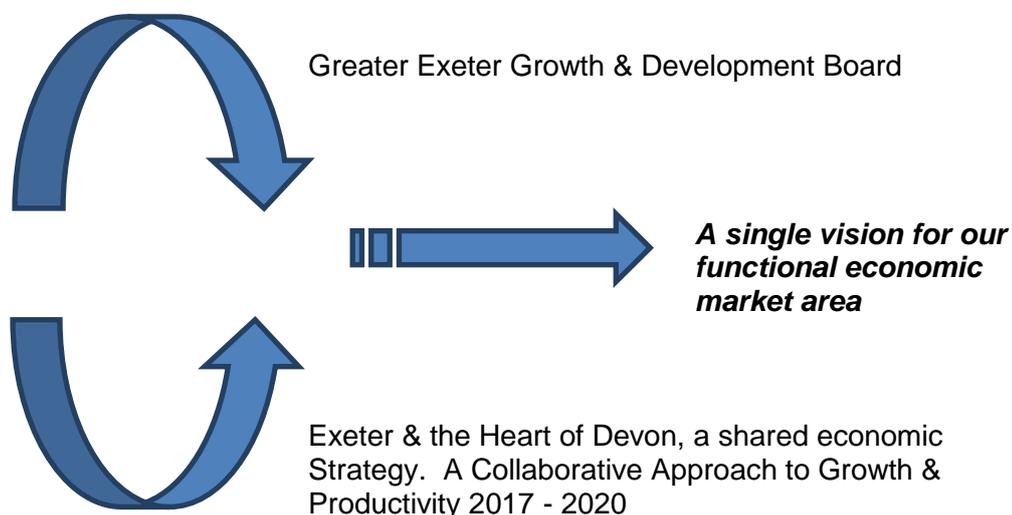
- Expanding the Exeter Commercial Property Register to cover all four Local Authorities
- Joint purchase of the Mint business database to gain business intelligence
- Joint procurement of business support covering all four Local Authorities
- Gained recognition of Exeter & the Heart of Devon as a Functional Economic Market Area

8.3 The 'travel to work' area for Exeter has expanded considerably over the previous ten years, as shown in the illustration in Appendix 1 (data from the Office of National Statistics). This indicates the significance of the Exeter economy on work delivered by neighbouring local authorities and its residents who work in Exeter.

8.4 The table below highlights the resident population, the working age population and the number of residents who are economically active within Exeter & the Heart of Devon. The total residential population of Exeter & the Heart of Devon is 473,700 and is broken down into a working age population of 285,000 a resident population of 251,200 that are economically active. Approximately 45% of Exeter's workforce commute daily into the city, which highlights the significance of partnership working.



8.5 A report was taken to Executive on 8 November 2016 proposing a Greater Exeter Growth & Development Board, which detailed a formal governance structure for the Exeter & the Heart of Devon functional economic market area. The same report is being presented at Teignbridge and East Devon District Council, with Mid Devon being encouraged to join the formal collaborative approach. Going forward work will continue in how this strategy fits in with the aspiration of the new Growth & Development Board with both meeting in the middle.



## 9. Developing a Growth & Productivity Strategy

9.1 East Devon District Council applied for funding to the Local Government Association Economic Growth Advisor Programme early 2016 and was successful in their application. This enabled a Growth Advisor to be appointed to research and write a growth & productivity strategy for Exeter & the Heart of Devon. The Growth Advisor was tasked to research and unpick a complex local, regional and national policy framework and to recommend a shared vision for Exeter & the Heart of Devon. The shared strategy

articulates shared ambitions to shape growth plans with a view of improving collaboration and maximising leverage.

- 9.2 A wide ranging consultation exercise, across all four areas, was undertaken during the spring and summer of 2016 which included academia, Devon County Council, the LEP and business across the area. This resulted in the Growth & Productivity Strategy being produced, as shown in Appendix 2. The overall priority for the strategy and each local authority is to:
- Strengthen the sub-regional economy to secure sustainable growth through creating more, higher-value better paid-jobs.
- 9.3 The attached strategy has not been prepared in isolation, it takes into account the government's own 'Plan for Growth', the Heart of the SW LEP's existing Strategic Economic Plan and the Productivity Plan which is currently in development, Devon County Council's Strategy for Growth and the Exeter & The Heart of Devon Employment & Skills Board Skills Plan Evidence Base.
- 9.4 As Exeter & the Heart of Devon we want to improve collaboration and to maximise leverage through joint working, which will:
- Improve the productivity of the Exeter & the Heart of Devon economy
  - Attract and retain investment in high-value priority sectors
  - Support the creation of attractive jobs that increase our productivity and raise the wage profile
  - Ensure local skills meet the current and future needs of the local business landscape
  - Actively support sustainable regeneration in key growth towns and locations
  - Improve infrastructure across the functional economic market area
- 9.5 Each local authority has an area of expertise, which will help deliver the strategy and its objectives, Exeter City Council will lead on Inward Investment, as shown in the table below.

| <b>Economic initiative</b>          | <b>Exeter &amp; the Heart of Devon wide joint projects and initiatives</b>   | <b>Lead local authority</b>  |
|-------------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Business Transformation             | Retain and grow the business base providing the right conditions for business-led growth   | Mid Devon District Council   |
| Inward Investment                   | Design and deliver a proactive and targeted approach to inward investment  | Exeter City Council          |
| Employment & Skills                 | Transform skills from a growth barrier to a growth stimulus  | Teignbridge District Council |
| Strategic Planning & Infrastructure | Support the identification and delivery of strategic and deliverable employment sites. Pursue investment to deliver transport network and digital infrastructure | East Devon District Council  |

- 9.6 Exeter City Council have been managing and developing inward investment activity for a number of years and will focus its attention on improving the following projects and initiatives to secure additional inward investment:
- Development of business ambassadors to assist within inward investment activities
  - Improve the Exeter Key Employer programme
  - Further develop the Exeter Commercial Property Register
  - Proactive marketing of the area
  - Development of soft landing packages
  - Work with Exeter City Futures and Innovation Exeter on city wide transformational projects
  - Improve broadband infrastructure within the city and its business parks

- 9.7 Work undertaken by the additional three local authorities, will play a direct impact on the success of the city, such as graduate retention, delivering employment land, investing in skills, Exeter Science Park, SkyPark and the emerging Enterprise Zone.

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

- 10.1 Joint work being delivered by the attached Growth & Productivity Strategy directly affects the following purposes of the City Council:

- A stronger city
- Provide great things for me to see and do
- Help me run a successful business
- Deliver good city development

As work cuts across a number of Departments and Portfolio Holders within the City Council, joint working is imperative going forward.

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

- 11.1 No new resources or structural changes are being put forward to implement the attached strategy, only an assurance that each Local Authority continues to dedicate existing officer time and budget as and when required. To ensure this continues, each respective Portfolio Holder and Leader has endorsed the attached Growth & Productivity Strategy.

- 11.2 Going forward the Economic Development Officers of each Local Authority needs to ensure communication and collaborative working continues and that projects and initiatives are aligned with the proposed Greater Exeter Growth & Development Board, currently led by Innovation Exeter.

**12. 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?**

- 12.1 The Growth & Productivity Strategy ensures that all residents of, and businesses located in, Exeter, East Devon, Mid Devon and Teignbridge are able to access business support and advice to enable them to improve their employment and business opportunities.

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

- 13.1 There is the option of Exeter working in isolation, but due to the city being heavily reliant on our neighbouring local authorities for employees and supply chain development, it is necessary for the city work in partnership and to look outwards for the benefit of all.

**Victoria Hatfield, Economy & Enterprise Manager**

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

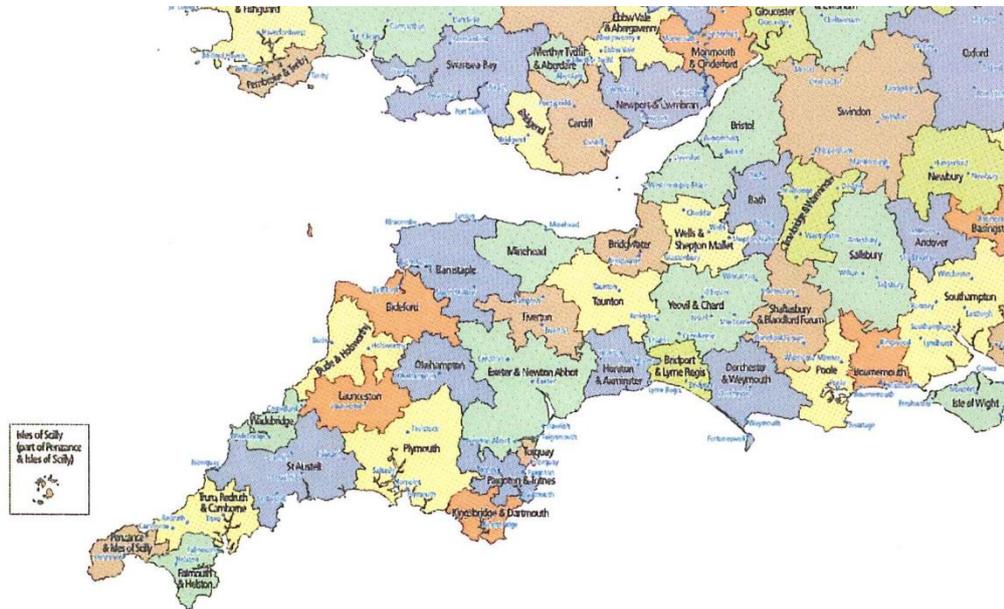
**Background papers used in compiling this report:-**

None

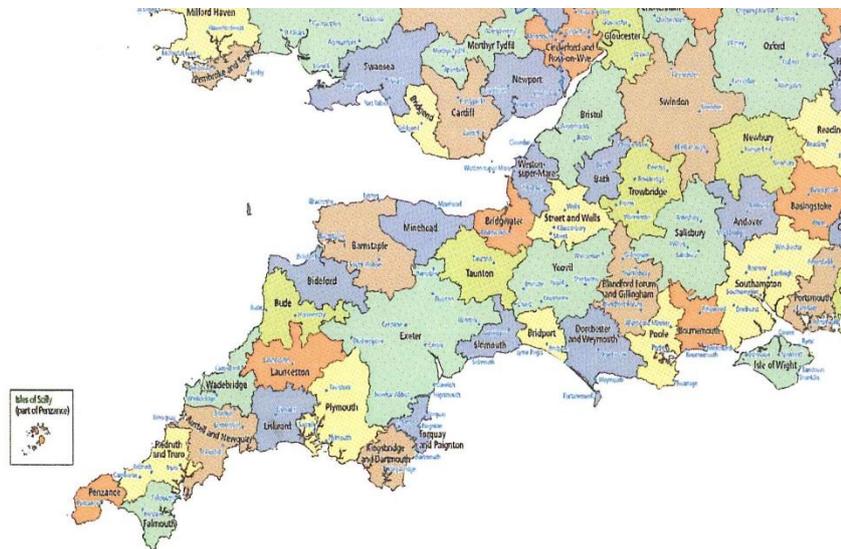
Contact for enquires: Sharon Sissons, Democratic Services (Committees), Room 2.3,  
01392 265275

### APPENDIX 1 – Exeter Travel to Work Area

Exeter Travel to Work Area 2001



Exeter Travel to Work Area 2011



**Appendix 2 – Exeter & the Heart of Devon, a shared economic strategy. A Collaborative Approach to Growth & Productivity 2017 - 2020**