PUBLIC QUESTIONS RECEIVED Under Standing Order 19 for Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee – 23rd March 2017

Question for Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee
From Andy Vowden:

"The quest to find the information on the website for this meeting shows there are some clear issues with communication and transparency to the public.

Now unfortunately we don't all have GCHQ standard web skills so In light of this fact, this motion and a councillor recently crossing the floor due to the lack of democracy and accountability, can someone tell me, why there appears to be resistance from the administration to implementing these proposals in full? I understand I will have a right to respond also?"

Response by Councillor Pearson, Portfolio Holder for Support Services

Councillor Pearson as Portfolio Holder for Support Services responded to the question by informing that there was no resistance on the part of the administration to these proposals, but what was being suggested reflected a realistic position, and was, in itself, a step forward in attracting more public interest in the Council's decision making process.

For the first time the council was moving towards measured levels of public engagement, where our output could be monitored and refined according the needs and demands of our residents.

Response by Mr Vowden

Mr Vowden expressed his thanks for the response and informed that the navigation on the Exeter City Council, especially in comparison to other Local Authority websites, was very difficult to navigate to find what he was looking for. There was too much clicking to navigate the website. He commented on the proposal from February last year. He asked that finding relevant information, policy processes and decisions be made more accessible which would improve public participation at committee meetings.

Response

Councillor Pearson and the Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support explained that the proposal in the report under agenda item 7, showed that meetings varied on how they functioned and numbers of attendance. It was understood there was an issue of making the public more aware of council meetings and would look at the website functionality to improve user experience.