

defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

4. **CAPITAL MONITORING STATEMENT TO JUNE 2007**

To consider the report of the Head of Treasury Services. 1 - 14

(Report circulated)

5. **OVERVIEW OF THE GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2007/08**

To consider the report of the Head of Treasury Services. 15 - 20

(Report circulated)

6. **CREATION OF A NEW HOUSING SOLICITOR POST**

To consider the joint report of the Head of Legal Services and Head of Housing Services. 21 - 22

(Report circulated)

7. **UNITARY SUBMISSION TO COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

The Chief Executive will provide a verbal update.

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

8. **CORPORATE CUSTOMER SERVICES - REVIEW OF SWITCHBOARD SERVICE**

To consider the report of the Head of Corporate Customer Services on staffing proposals following a review of the switchboard service. 23 - 24

(Report circulated to Members)

9. **REVIEW OF THE VISITING OFFICER FUNCTION - HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT ASSESSMENT SECTION**

To consider the report of the Head of Treasury Services on the outcome of a recent review of the visiting function and recommending a way forward. 25 - 30

(Report circulated to Members)

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting of the Executive will be held on **Tuesday 20 November 2007** at 5.30 pm. in the Civic Centre.

A statement of the executive decisions taken at this meeting will be produced and made available as soon as reasonably practicable after the meeting. It may be inspected on application to the Customer Service Centre at the Civic Centre or by direct request to the Member Services Manager on 01392 265110. Minutes of the meeting will also be published on the Council's web site as soon as possible.

Membership -

Councillors Edwards (Chair), D Baldwin, Boyle, Dixon, Mrs Henson, Mrs Morrish, Sheldon, Shepherd and P A Smith

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 Member Services Officer on (01392) 265115 for further information.

Individual reports on this agenda can be produced in large print on request to Member Services on 01392 265111.

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EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – RESOURCES 19 SEPTEMBER 2007

EXECUTIVE
2 OCTOBER 2007

CAPITAL MONITORING STATEMENT TO JUNE 2007

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To report the current position in respect of the Council's revised annual capital programme and to advise Members of the anticipated level of deferred expenditure into future years.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Local authorities are required to estimate the total of capital expenditure that it plans to incur during the financial year when it sets the prudential indicators for capital expenditure. This shows that its asset management and capital investment strategies are affordable, prudent and sustainable.
- 2.2 Capital expenditure is a significant source of risk and uncertainty since cost variations, delays and changing specifications are often features of large and complex capital projects.
- 2.3 This report is prepared on a quarterly basis in order to update Members with any known cost variations, slippage and acceleration of projects.

3. REVISIONS TO THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 3.1 The 2007/08 Capital Programme, including commitments brought forward from 2006/07, was last reported to Scrutiny Committee - Resources on 20 June 2007. Since that meeting the following changes have been incorporated into the programme:

Description	£	Approval/funding
Capital Programme, as at 20 June 2007	24,884,770	
Private Sector Landlord Scheme	100,000	Allocation from the Regional Housing Pot capital grant. Executive 19 June 2007
Warm Up Exeter	100,000	Allocation from the Regional Housing Pot capital grant. Executive 19 June 2007

Private Sector Renewal Scheme	120,000	Allocation from the Regional Housing Pot capital grant. Executive 19 June 2007
Fore St, Heavitree - Environmental Enhancements	50,000	Contribution from Devon County Council
RAMM Off Site Store	15,000	Contribution from earmarked reserve
Beacon Lane Shops	2,500	Contribution from leaseholders
Children's Play Areas	82,090	Section 106 monies
Energy Conservation	13,410	External funding secured from utility companies
Information Technology / E Government	53,000	Approved by Executive on 3 July 2007 for digital scanning in Housing and Human Resources
Public Toilet Refurbishment	20,000	Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay
Public Toilet Refurbishment	70,000	Contribution from Devon County Council
Capital schemes brought forward from 2006/07, which fall below the de minimis level for capital expenditure	(23,110)	
Revised Capital Programme	25,487,660	

4. MONITORING PERFORMANCE

- 4.1 In order to help improve overall delivery and monitoring of the capital programme schemes have been placed within two categories, C1 and C2. Category C1 is for those schemes that the Council is reasonably certain of being able to deliver within planned timescales. Conversely, Category C2 is for those schemes that the Council is less certain of being able to deliver primarily due to factors outside the control of the Council.
- 4.2 The categories do not extend to the HRA Capital Programme as it was hoped that the full programme would be deliverable within planned timescales due to the Council's commitment to achieving the Decent Homes Standard.

5. PERFORMANCE

5.1 Projected Outturn

The capital programme for the current financial year is £25,487,660. It is projected that £1.9 million of the programme will need to be carried forward into future years. For details, please refer to Appendix 1 and to the explanations below.

5.2 Progress

During the first three months of the current financial year the Council spent £2.5 million of the 2007/08 Capital Programme.

5.3 In overall terms this equates to 9.8% of the Capital Programme being spent in the first three months of 2007/08. The Council has spent 12.47% of budgets approved for capital schemes that it identified as being reasonably certain of being able to deliver within planned timescales (C1 Schemes).

6.0 VARIANCES

6.1 The main variances are as follows:

6.1.1 Housing Revenue Account

Housing in the City

- **Sheltered Accommodation (Budget £854,430)**

This budget provides for the cost of upgrading sheltered accommodation to meet the standards of the Supporting People Programme.

The Supporting People Programme is committed to providing a better quality of life for vulnerable people to live more independently and to develop and sustain an individual's capacity to live within their accommodation.

Programmed works include the installation of lifts, provision of wheelchair access, walk-in showers and level access.

Specifications for the works are currently being prepared so that the tender process can be undertaken during the Summer, with the successful contractor appointed in the Autumn. Significant spend of this budget is not expected to be made until the contractor starts work on site later this financial year and therefore it is projected that £354,430 of the budget will need to be carried forward into 2008/09.

6.1.2 Corporate Services

Achieving Excellence in Public Services

- **Civic Centre Additional Electrical Sockets (Budget £38,590)**

A saving of £32,000 has been achieved in the cost of providing additional electrical sockets throughout the Civic Centre, as the works were completed and paid for as part of the extensive internal office moves associated with the Customer First Project.

The remaining £6,590 will be used towards reducing the reliance on extension leads by providing new electrical sockets in council offices, in order to reduce the risks associated with trailing leads and improve health and safety.

- **Civic Centre Communal Area Refurbishment (Budget £496,620)**

This budget forms part of a rolling programme to replace the fire doors, refurbish staff toilets, upgrade lift lobbies, refurbish kitchen areas and replace floor coverings in communal areas throughout the Civic Centre. To date, the budget has provided for the communal area refurbishment of Phase I, 1st and 2nd floors and Phase II, 4th floor.

Preparatory work is currently being undertaken so that the tender process for the next phase of the programme can commence, including asbestos surveys, producing detailed specifications and health and safety plans. It is hoped that the successful contractor will be appointed in early January and start works on site in February 2008. It is therefore projected that £476,620 of the budget will need to be carried forward into the next financial year.

- **Civic Centre Conversion of Boiler to Dual Fuel (Budget £25,400)**
It is planned that the oil boiler at Belle Isle Nursery will be replaced with a wood pellet boiler during the financial year and its reliability and effectiveness will be assessed, prior to replacing the oil boiler at the Civic Centre.

If successful, the new pellet boilers will help the Council to reduce its carbon emissions and utilise sustainable energy, as the Council has committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by signing the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change and the Devon Wide Declaration on Climate Change and Fuel poverty.

Delivery of this capital scheme is pending the outcome of the trial being undertaken at Belle Isle Nursery and therefore the budget of £25,400 will be deferred into the next financial year.

6.1.3 Community & Environment

Environment Cared For

- **Exhibition Fields – New Storage Sheds (Budget £85,250)**
The £140,000 budget for the provision of new storage sheds at Exhibition Fields was previously profiled over more than one financial year, with £4,750 spent in 2006/07 followed by £85,250 and £50,000 budgeted in 2007/08 and 2008/09 respectively.

The planning application for the new storage sheds and workshop for the Athletics Arena has been submitted and it is expected that the tender process will be completed by the end of September, with the successful contractor starting works on site in the Autumn.

Due to the quick speed that the steel frame can be erected it is hoped that the new storage sheds will be completed during the current financial year and it is therefore anticipated that the full budget will be spent during 2007/08, which will require the £50,000 pre-approved for 2008/09 to be accelerated.

Cultural and Fun Place To Be

- **Skating Area Exhibition Fields (Budget £16,000)**
It was originally planned for floodlighting to be installed at Exhibition Fields skate park and Flowerpot Playing Field during this financial year. However, following consultation with the Play Area Project Group, it was decided that it would be prudent to install lights at one site first and then review the need to

floodlight the second site.

The installation of floodlighting at the Exhibition Fields skate park has therefore been deferred until after new floodlighting at Flowerpot Playing Field has been installed.

6.1.4 Economy & Development

Environment Cared For

- **Fore Street, Heavitree – Environmental Enhancement (Budget £150,000)**
A comprehensive environmental enhancement of Fore Street, Heavitree is planned, which includes; new traffic management and parking arrangements, enhanced pedestrian and cycling facilities, new paving, street furniture, planting and public art.

The local community of Heavitree has been consulted with the initial proposals and gave positive feedback, which has enabled the Engineering Department of Devon County Council to proceed with producing the detailed designs so that the tender process may commence.

It is hoped that works will start on site in the Spring and therefore £100,000 of the budget will need to be deferred until next financial year.

Accessible City

- **Signage/Pedestrian Interpretation (Budget £81,210)**
This project comprises two phases, Phase 1 has already been completed with 20 monoliths designed and installed within the City Centre. Work is now being undertaken to progress Phase 2, which includes additional monoliths and the replacement and updating of finger posts.

It is intended that the designs, specifications and a sample column will be produced during 2007/08, so that the new signs can be installed at optimum locations next financial year. It is therefore projected that £60,000 of the budget will need to be deferred into 2008/09.

Prosperous City

- **Basin/Quayside (Budget £636,920)**
As previously reported to Executive on 3 July 2007, the Exeter Canal Basin Regeneration Scheme is due to be delivered over four phases during the period up to 2012.

Works planned for the current financial year, which form part of Phase 1, include preparing detailed designs in conjunction with the Highway Authority for the new link road through Haven Road car park and a new junction on to Water Lane. The acquisition of the existing lease at the Bridger Marine premises on Haven Road is also planned for the current financial year and the cost will form part of the £225,000 expenditure projected for 2007/08.

As the site is contaminated it has been necessary to consult with the Environment Agency prior to finalising the design proposals and it is hoped that a planning application may be submitted in the Autumn.

Following a review of the stages of the scheme it is projected that £411,920 of the budget will need to be carried forward into future years, as the main works on site will commence next year.

7.0 RECOMMENDED

- 7.1 It is recommended that the current position in respect of the annual capital programme be noted.

HEAD OF TREASURY SERVICES

CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:

1. None

SR/CapitalMonitoring
7 September 2007

CAPITAL AND PROJECT MONITORING
2007/08

LEAD OFFICER	CATEGORY	2007/08 CAPITAL PROGRAMME	2007/08 SPEND	2007/08 FORECAST SPEND	From 2008/09 FORECAST SPEND	2007/08 PROGRAMME VARIANCES UNDER ()
		£	£	£	£	£
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT						
	<i>Housing in the City</i>					
	Sheltered Accommodation	854,430	42,273	500,000	354,430	0
	Adaptations	600,000	115,752	600,000		0
	Defective Properties - British Steel Properties	340,200	18,510	340,200		0
	Defective Properties - Other Non Traditional Properties	155,000		155,000		0
	Low Maintenance UPVC	450,000	8,477	200,000	250,000	0
	MRA Fees	326,490		326,490		0
	Environmental Improvements - Fencing	56,470	188	56,470		0
	Communal Door Entry System	10,000		10,000		0
	Environmental Improvements - General	59,840	10,164	59,840		0
	Upgrading Council Roads/Footpaths for Highways	38,420	84	38,420		0
	Programmed Re-roofing	1,029,300		879,300		(150,000)
	Rennes / Faraday House Fire Alarm	40,000		40,000		0
	Housing Condition Survey	148,290		73,290	75,000	0
	Programmed Contingency	15,000		15,000		0
	Energy Conservation	163,300	20,688	163,300		0
	Warden System Calibration	36,000		36,000		0
	Asbestos Survey	128,970	7,547	128,970		0
	External Walls	79,800		79,800		0
	Leypark Road Structural Defects	362,240	6,939	362,240		0
	Kitchen Replacements	1,429,280	351,498	1,429,280		0
	Bathroom Replacements - Reactive	12,260		12,260		0
	Asbestos Removal Works	62,320	22,073	62,320		0
	Bathroom Replacements - Programmed	584,960	57,741	584,960		0
	Communal TV Aerials	29,500		29,500		0
	Door Replacements	70,970	65,902	70,970		0
	Bank at Leypark Road	5,530	5,525	5,530		0
	Rifford Road Structural Repairs	55,020	1,688	55,020		0
	3 Bed Dwelling Converted to 4 Bed Dwelling	50,000		50,000		0
	Development of HRA Land	1,760	1,755	1,755		(5)
	Programmed Electrical Re-wiring	530,400		530,400		0
	Central Heating	281,340	76,317	281,340		0
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT TOTAL			813,122	7,177,655	679,430	(150,005)

CAPITAL AND PROJECT MONITORING
2007/08

	LEAD OFFICER	CATEGORY	2007/08 CAPITAL PROGRAMME	2007/08 SPEND	2007/08 FORECAST SPEND	From 2008/09 FORECAST SPEND	2007/08 PROGRAMME VARIANCES UNDER ()
			£	£	£	£	£
RESOURCES							
Achieving Excellence in Public Services							
	JS	C1	7,310	6,997	17,994		10,684
	JS	C1	38,590		6,590		(32,000)
	JS	C1	125,000		125,000		0
	JS	C1	18,000		21,486		3,486
	JS	C1	4,500		4,500		0
	JS	C1	10,000			10,000	0
	JS	C1	67,320		67,320		0
	PM	C1	31,390	592	31,390		0
	JS	C1	15,950	745	15,950		0
	JS	C1	496,620		20,000	476,620	0
Environment Cared For							
	JS	C2	25,400			25,400	0
	JS	C1	6,560		6,560		0
Electronic City							
	PE	C1	1,040,930	158,612	1,008,790	38,770	6,630
	PE	C2	140,500	396	140,500		0
Accessible City							
	PM	C1	165,620	2,034	165,620		0
RESOURCES TOTAL			2,193,690	169,377	1,631,700	550,790	(11,200)

**CAPITAL AND PROJECT MONITORING
2007/08**

	LEAD OFFICER	CATEGORY	2007/08 CAPITAL PROGRAMME	2007/08 SPEND	2007/08 FORECAST SPEND	From 2008/09 FORECAST SPEND	2007/08 PROGRAMME VARIANCES UNDER ()
			£	£	£	£	£
COMMUNITY SERVICES							
Healthy and Active City							
	RN	C1	446,330	180,605	446,330		0
Disabled Facilities Grants							
Housing in the City							
	RN	C1	852,790	127,762	852,790		0
	RN	C2	100,000	1,350	100,000		0
	RN	C2	127,420		127,420		0
	SW	C2	2,218,750	75,000	2,218,750		0
	SW	C2	17,210	2,070	17,210		0
	RN	C2	243,380	26,309	243,380		0
	SW	C1	10,000		10,000		0
Development of Council Owned Land for Affordable Housing							
Private Sector Renewal Scheme							
Exeter Foyer Grant							
Accessible City							
	AC	C1	20,000		20,000		0
	PM	C2	202,760	10,470	202,760		0
	AC	C2	21,000		21,000		0
New Topsham Ferry to Carry Bicycles							
Riverside Valley Park Enhancement							
Luggs Farm Footpath Link							
Environment Cared For							
	RN	C1	44,020	18,000	44,020		0
	RN	C1	240,000		240,000		0
	PM	C1	278,710	986	278,710		0
	PM	C2	3,730		3,730		0
	BP	C2	8,370	27	8,370		0
	BP	C1	27,830		27,830		0
	RN	C2	40,000	6,600	40,000		0
	PM	C2	37,560	10,837	37,560		0
	BP	C2	50,000		50,000		0
	RN	C1	4,910		4,910		0
	AC	C2	174,550	773	174,550		0
	PM	C1	213,510		213,510		0
	PM	C2	67,470		67,470		0
	PM	C2	9,810		9,810		0
Cemeteries and Churches Storage Improvements							
Midi Recycling Banks							
St Nicholas Priory Upgrade							
General Open Spaces Improvements							
Belle Isle Pellet Boiler							
Northbrook Public Open Space Remedial Works							
Cultural and Fun Place To Be							
	AC	C2	82,720		82,720		0
Old Paper Mill Countess Weir							

**CAPITAL AND PROJECT MONITORING
2007/08**

	LEAD OFFICER	CATEGORY	2007/08 CAPITAL PROGRAMME	2007/08 SPEND	2007/08 FORECAST SPEND	From 2008/09 FORECAST SPEND	2007/08 PROGRAMME VARIANCES UNDER ()
			£	£	£	£	£
COMMUNITY SERVICES							
	AC	C2	85,250		135,250		0
Exhibition Field - New Storage Sheds	PM	C1	20,070	3,382	20,070	(50,000)	0
Playing Fields General Improvements	PM	C2	160,000		160,000		0
" " "	PM	C2	249,800		249,800		0
Bromhams Farm Changing Room	AC	C2	16,000			16,000	0
Skating Area Exhibition Fields	AC	C1	40,140		40,140		0
Play Area Refurbishments	AC	C2	220,920	13,868	220,920		0
" " "	AC	C2	5,870		1,870	4,000	0
Enhancement of Chill Zone	PM	C2	146,720		146,720		0
Hamlin Lane Changing Rooms	PM	C2	20,000		20,000		0
Parks and Open Spaces Signage	AC	C1	61,790		61,790		0
Sports Facilities Refurbishment	PM	C2	28,580		29,580	(1,000)	0
Parks Improvements	AC	C2	45,000		45,000		0
Floodlighting for Skateboard Park	AC	C2	68,900	139	20,000	48,900	0
Leisure Management Contract	AC	C1	1,169,150	87,663	1,141,984	27,166	0
RAMM Redevelopment	AC	C1	1,437,210	293,793	1,437,210		0
RAMM Off-site Store	AC	C2	51,500		51,500		0
Exwick Community Centre							
Safe City							
Image Recording and Processing Equipment	RN	C1	66,000		66,000		0
CCTV System Enhancements	RN	C1	40,190	775	40,190		0
Achieving Excellence in Public Services							
Vehicle Replacement Programme	PM	C1	851,180	26,183	851,180		0
Access Platform	PM	C1	28,000		32,679		4,679
Exton Road Weighbridge - Extension to Fencing	PM	C1	19,840		19,840		0
Exwick Cemetery - Create New Burial Area	BP	C1	20,000		20,000		0
Higher Cemetery New Storage Yard and Buildings	BP	C2	52,380	2,096	52,380		0
Exton Road Review	PM	C1	63,500	1,512	63,500		0
Upgrade Solo Sweeper Storage Facilities	RN	C1	10,000		10,000		0
Belle Isle Nursery - Various Improvements	PM	C2	102,740		77,050	25,690	0
Replacement of 'Tractor sheds' at King Georges Field, Countess Wear	PM	C1	149,980		149,980		0
COMMUNITY SERVICES TOTAL			10,773,540	890,198	10,707,463	70,756	4,679

**CAPITAL AND PROJECT MONITORING
2007/08**

	LEAD OFFICER	CATEGORY	2007/08 CAPITAL PROGRAMME	2007/08 SPEND	2007/08 FORECAST SPEND	From 2008/09 FORECAST SPEND	2007/08 PROGRAMME VARIANCES UNDER ()
			£	£	£	£	£
ECONOMY							
Environment Cared For							
	RS	C2	150,000		50,000	100,000	0
	JR	C2	467,660	3,876	467,660		0
	DP	C1	252,370	127,838	252,370		0
	DP	C2	85,000		85,000		0
	DH	C2	90,000		90,000		0
	RS	C2	84,800	84,801	84,800	15,000	0
	RS	C2	52,130		37,130		0
	DH	C1	60,850	342	60,850		0
	RS	C2	86,000		86,000		0
	JR	C2	70,750	1,014	70,750		0
	DP	C2	4,450		4,450		0
	RS	C2	9,700		9,700		0
Accessible City							
	DH	C1	18,700		18,700		0
	RS	C2	81,210	801	21,210	60,000	0
	DH	C2	55,100	1,128	40,100	15,000	0
	RC	C2	635,260	249,045	635,260		0
	RC	C2	5,930	2,690	5,930		0
Cultural and Fun Place To Be							
	RS	C2	78,560		40,560	38,000	0
	RB	C1	200,160	55,480	200,160		0
Achieving Excellence in Public Services							
	DP	C1	30,000	416	30,000		0
	DP	C1	1,430		1,430		0
	DP	C1	10,000		10,000		0
	DP	C1	5,500		5,500		0
	RC	C1	8,890	1,960	8,890		0
	DP	C1	13,480		13,480		0
	DP	C1	102,740	64,236	112,740		10,000
	DP	C2	70,000	1,735	70,000		0
	RS	C2	123,080		123,080		0

CAPITAL AND PROJECT MONITORING 2007/08

LEAD OFFICER	CATEGORY	2007/08 CAPITAL PROGRAMME	2007/08 SPEND	2007/08 FORECAST SPEND	From 2008/09 FORECAST SPEND	2007/08 PROGRAMME VARIANCES UNDER ()
		£	£	£	£	£
ECONOMY						
Prosperous City						
Furbish New Tourist Information Centre	C1	27,000		27,000		0
Basin/Quayside	C2	636,920	3,401	225,000	411,920	0
Science Park	C2	99,910		99,910		0
Met Office Relocation	C1	35,000		35,000		0
Safe City						
CCTV at Haven Road Car Park & Boat Storage Area	C2	60,000		60,000		0
Safety Fencing at King William St Car Park	C2	23,150		23,150		0
Bartholomew Terrace Retaining Wall	C1	3,160		3,160		0
CCTV Consultancy in respect of Enhancements	C1	18,000	2,000	18,000		0
CCTV Improvements at Car Parks	C1	3,950		3,950		0
Security Measures for Riverside Valley Park	C2	60,000	50	60,000		0
Custom House Optic Fibre Link	C1	22,500		22,500		0
ECONOMY TOTAL		3,843,340	600,811	3,213,420	639,920	10,000

Capitalised Staff Costs	C1	370,000	0	370,000		0
External Professional Support	C2	300,000	19,500	300,000		0

CAPITAL AND PROJECT EXPENDITURE TOTAL		25,487,660	2,493,008	23,400,238	1,940,896	(146,526)
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CATEGORY	2007/08 CAPITAL PROGRAMME	2007/08 SPEND	2007/08 FORECAST SPEND	From 2008/09 FORECAST SPEND	2007/08 PROGRAMME VARIANCES UNDER ()	
HRA Capital Schemes	N/A	8,007,090	813,122	7,177,655	679,430	(150,005)
Reasonably certain of being able to deliver within planned timescales	C1	9,326,670	1,162,685	8,777,593	552,556	3,479
Less certain of being able to deliver primarily due to factors outside the control of the Council	C2	8,153,900	517,201	7,444,990	708,910	0
CAPITAL AND PROJECT EXPENDITURE TOTAL		25,487,660	2,493,008	23,400,238	1,940,896	(146,526)

**CAPITAL AND PROJECT MONITORING
2007/08**

LEAD OFFICER	CATEGORY	2007/08 CAPITAL PROGRAMME	2007/08 SPEND	2007/08 FORECAST SPEND	From 2008/09 FORECAST SPEND	2007/08 PROGRAMME VARIANCES UNDER ()
		£	£	£	£	£

Lead Officer Key Table	
AC	Head of Leisure and Museums
AS	Head of Treasury Services
DH	Engineering and Construction Manager
DP	Head of Estates Services
RN	Head of Environmental Health Services
JR	Director of Economy and Development
JS	Head of Corporate Customer Services
BP	Head of Administration and Bereavement Services
PE	Head of IT Services
PM	Head of Contracts and Direct Services
RB	Head of Economy and Tourism
RC	Head of Administration and Parking Services
RS	Head of Planning Services
SW	Head of Housing and Social Inclusion

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EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - RESOURCES

19 SEPTEMBER 2007

EXECUTIVE

2 OCTOBER 2007

OVERVIEW OF GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2007-2008

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members of the overall projected financial position of the General Fund Revenue Budget after three months, for the 2007-2008 financial year.

2 GENERAL FUND – Appendix A

- 2.1 The Service Committee budgets shows a forecast overspend of £101,190 (0.52%) against a revised budget of £19,248,780.

- 2.2 Following changes in the revenue accounting requirements for fixed assets, CIPFA have specified that ‘deferred contributions’ must be released to service revenue accounts (£383,220 for 2007-2008). Deferred contributions are government grants and external contributions received in respect of fixed assets. In order that this adjustment does not impact on the level of Council Tax, it is required that the value of deferred contributions released to revenue accounts are reversed out when accounting for total service cost.

- 2.3 Details of the variances are being disclosed in stewardship reports to individual Scrutiny Committees during the current cycle of meetings.

- 2.4 The main variances are as follows:

2.4.1 Scrutiny Committee Community – (An over spend of £68,650).

Additional expenditure of up to £90,000 has been approved in respect of the Winter Ice Rink, £20,000 for the Exe Estuary review and for Housing Advisory Services; repair costs for PSL property hand backs are expected to exceed the budget together with additional staffing costs to cover for long-term sickness.

This has been partly offset by additional income from the sale of recycling materials and associated recycling credits, together with additional income from the garden waste service.

2.4.2 Scrutiny Committee Economy – (An under spend of £75,100)

Rental income is higher than expected due to the completion of several rent reviews in respect of commercial properties. Income is higher than budgeted for Markets and

Halls due to the increased use of the car parks at the Matford Centre and the introduction of a Wednesday car boot sale.

2.4.3 **Scrutiny Committee Resources – (An over spend of £107,640)**

It is estimated at the end of the first quarter that there will be a net reduction in Housing Benefits subsidy of £72,700 (0.23% of the total subsidy for 2007-08)

There are additional costs of £18,140 in respect of items transferred from capital to revenue following the decision to increase the de-minimis level for capital to £10,000; and a strain payment of £12,320 in respect of an early retirement has been incurred.

Savings have been made in respect of Election costs and Asset Improvement and Maintenance (AIM) costs for work at the Guildhall have been deferred to 2008-09.

2.5 **Other Financial Variations**

2.5.1 There is a net transfer from Earmarked Reserves of £248,087, £42,233 for Other Sports Facilities, £3,380 from the Splash Scheme reserve, £20,000 from the Local Development Framework reserve, £132,150 from the Princesshay reserve and £107,590 from the Planning Delivery Grant reserve. This will be offset by a transfer of £33,566 to earmarked reserves in respect of Housing Partnership, £23,700 to the Vehicle Licensing reserve.

2.5.2 There is a reduction of £40,000 in respect of investment interest due mainly to a reduction in the return achieved by the Council's Fund Managers. This is primarily a result of investment decisions that had taken place in the previous financial year. As a result of concerns about the performance of the Fund Manager, some investments have already been returned to be managed instead by the in-house finance team. There is a £20,000 revenue contribution to capital costs and £59,000 is being carried forward in respect of AIM works to be undertaken in 2008-09.

2.5.3 The overall net deficit is estimated to be £596,953 at 31 March 2008 after accounting for July approved supplementary budgets of £996,230; this will be transferred from the General Fund Working Balance.

3 **CONCLUSION**

3.1 The forecast increase in Service Committee net expenditure for 2007-08 totals £101,190 including the supplementary budgets of £996,230. This together with transfers from Earmarked Reserves, the reduction of £40,000 from investment income, a transfer of £20,000 for revenue contribution to capital and AIM carried forward of £59,000 will result in a transfer of £596,953 from the Working Balance. The forecast General Fund Working Balance at 31st March 2008 is £4,400,389 and equates to 27.9% of the General Fund net expenditure.

4 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

- (1) The forecast financial position for the 2007-2008 financial year is noted.

HEAD OF TREASURY SERVICES

CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling the report:

None

SR/GFOverviewJune07
7 September 2007

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EXETER CITY COUNCIL
2007-2008 REVENUE ESTIMATES - SUMMARY
as at 30th June 2007

APPENDIX A

	Annual Budget £	Supplementary Budgets £	Revised Annual Budget £	Year End Forecast £	Variance to Budget £
SCRUTINY - COMMUNITY	14,136,920	236,440	14,373,360	14,442,010	68,650
SCRUTINY - ECONOMY	674,850	452,120	1,126,970	1,051,870	(75,100)
SCRUTINY - RESOURCES	5,196,480	307,670	5,504,150	5,611,790	107,640
less Notional capital charges	(2,877,480)	-	(2,877,480)	(2,877,480)	0
Deferred Contributions	383,220	-	383,220	383,220	0
FRS17 Pension Adjustment	738,560	-	738,560	738,560	0
<u>Service Committee Net Expenditure</u>	18,252,550	996,230	19,248,780	19,349,970	101,190
Net Interest	(1,380,000)		(1,380,000)	(1,340,000)	40,000
Business Growth Incentive Grant	(1,500,000)		(1,500,000)	(1,500,000)	0
<u>General Fund Expenditure</u>	15,372,550	996,230	16,368,780	16,509,970	141,190
Transfer To/From(-) Working Balance	631,120	(996,230)	(365,110)	(596,953)	(231,843)
Transfer To/From(-) Earmarked Reserves	(259,740)		(259,740)	(248,087)	11,653
Grant Adjustment	0		0	0	0
Revenue Contributions to Capital	0		0	20,000	20,000
AIM Carried Forward	0		0	59,000	59,000
<u>General Fund Net Expenditure</u>	15,743,930	0	15,743,930	15,743,930	0
Formula Grant	(11,663,930)		(11,663,930)	(11,663,930)	0
<u>Council Tax Net Expenditure</u>	4,080,000	0	4,080,000	4,080,000	0

Working Balance	March07	March 08
	£ 4,997,342	£ 4,400,389
Superannuation Reserve	March07	March 08
	£ 1,761,131	£ 1,761,131

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EXETER CITY COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE
2 OCTOBER 2007

CREATION OF A NEW HOUSING SOLICITOR POST

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Members approval for the creation of a new solicitor post to specialise in Housing and Anti Social Behaviour matters.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In 1996 Legal Services took the unusual step of agreeing to re locate the Planning Solicitor to the planning office. The rationale at the time was to encourage a much closer working relationship between the two services and ensure the planning solicitor was involved with planning cases at a very early stage.
- 2.2 Although the Planning Solicitor sits with the planners, the daily management and supervision falls necessarily to the Head of Legal Services. Planning Services provides a separate office for this solicitor since he/or she is required, at the discretion of the Head of Legal Services, to deal with non-planning work and occasionally, matters of a confidential nature.
- 2.3 This arrangement has worked particularly well. The client satisfaction with the legal service provided is extremely high and Legal Services is looking to replicate this type of service delivery arrangement within Housing Services.

3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 In July 2006, the Council introduced a new anti-social behaviour policy and became one of the first local authorities to sign up to the Government's Respect Standard for Housing Management. A new Neighbourhood Management policy was also introduced in October 2006.
- 3.2 To assist with the above, additional resources were made available within the Tenancy Services team to ensure these polices could be introduced effectively so that the Council's tenants would see an impact within a relatively short space of time.
- 3.3 New anti-social behaviour recording software was implemented in November 2006. This allows all cases of anti-social behaviour on the Council's estates to be logged and tracked and helps Housing Services to prioritise resources accordingly.

3.4 Increased awareness of anti-social behaviour amongst the general public and higher profile activity by Tenancy Services staff through neighbourhood inspections and joint visits with the Police has further increased our tenants' expectations that reports of anti-social behaviour will be dealt with quickly and effectively. Over the past six months the Council has effectively used a range of legal powers available to it through the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 to stop anti-social behaviour and prevent problems re occurring. Each case needing such action is labour intensive and requires significant officer time from both housing and legal officers.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1

POST	PAY SCALE	COST PER ANNUM £ (including on cost)
Housing Solicitor	Grade 12	£49,970 (top of the scale)

4.1 It is proposed that the cost of the new Housing Solicitor would fall to be recharged to the Housing Revenue Account. There are sufficient reserves available within the HRA to fund this post without affecting other services. However, where work is undertaken for the Homelessness and Housing Advice team, a recharge would be made to the general fund as at present.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Members are asked to approve the creation of a Housing Solicitor post the arrangements for which shall reflect those in place in respect of the Planning Solicitor post.

6.2 Members are asked to agree this new post should be funded from the Housing Revenue Account where appropriate.

Head of Legal Services
Head of Housing Services
 20/9/07

CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)
Background papers used in compiling this report

None

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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