

3. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 -
EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RECOMMENDED that, under Section 110A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for items 16 and 17 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

4. **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDER 19**

A period of up to 15 minutes will be set aside to deal with questions to the Committee from members of the public.

Details of questions should be notified to the Assistant Chief Executive at least three working days prior to the meeting. Further information and a copy of the procedure are available from Member Services (265275) also on the Council web site: <http://www.exeter.gov.uk/scrutinyquestions>

5. **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER STANDING
ORDER 20**

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

Details of questions should be notified to the Assistant Chief Executive at least three working days prior to the meeting. Further information and a copy of the procedures are available from Member Services (Exeter 265275)

6. **AUDIT COMMISSION ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT**

The Audit Manager will report to Members on the progress of his 2006/07 audit - *report to follow*

7. **AUDIT COMMISSION AUDIT AND INSPECTION PLAN 2007/08**

The Council's External Auditor, Grant Thornton, will present the report to Members 1 - 24
- *report circulated*

8. **MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION LETTER TO THE AUDIT
COMMISSION**

To consider the draft letter to the Audit Commission in respect of the 2006/07 25 - 26
Statement of Accounts - *letter circulated*

9. **PORTFOLIO HOLDER TO PRESENT HER PRIORITIES FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR**

Councillor Dixon (Portfolio Holder for Business Transformation and Human Resources) will present a verbal report on her priorities for the forthcoming year in light of the Committee's work programme.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

***MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO ADVISE THE MEMBER SERVICES OFFICER OF ANY QUESTIONS OR ISSUES ON PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORTS BY 9.00 AM ON THE DAY OF THE MEETING.**

10. **AIM PROPERTY MAINTENANCE PROGRESS***

To consider the joint report of the Head of Contracts and Direct Services, Head of Housing and Social Inclusion, Head of Treasury Services and the Head of Estates Services – *report circulated (Monitoring Schedule available on request and on the Internet)*. 27 - 28

11. **FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP***

To consider the report of the Head of Treasury Services - *report circulated* 29 - 34

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE EXECUTIVE

12. **CAPITAL MONITORING STATEMENT**

To consider the report of the Head of Treasury Services - *report circulated* 35 - 48

13. **OVERVIEW OF THE GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2007/2008**

To consider the report of the Head of Treasury Services - *report circulated* 49 - 54

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - RESOURCES

14. **REVIEW OF THE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY**

To consider the report of the Head of Treasury Services - *report circulated* 55 - 64

15. **PROGRESS ON THE RECRUITMENT WEB SITE**

To consider the report of the Head of Human Resources - *report circulated*

65 - 68

**PART II: ITEMS SUGGESTED FOR DISCUSSION WITH THE PRESS AND PUBLIC
EXCLUDED**

MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE EXECUTIVE

16. **REVIEW OF SWITCH BOARD SERVICES**

To consider the report of the Head of Corporate Customer Services to seek Members' approval to release the necessary funding to finance the staffing proposals consequent upon changes to the switchboard service - *report circulated to Members*

69 - 70

17. **REVIEW OF THE VISITING OFFICER FUNCTION WITHIN THE
HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT ASSESSMENT SECTION**

To consider the report of the Head of Treasury Services regarding the outcome of a recent review of the visiting function and the recommended way forward and necessary staffing proposals - *report circulated to Members*

71 - 76

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next **Scrutiny Committee - Resources** will be held on Wednesday 21 November 2007 at 5.30 pm

FUTURE BUSINESS

The schedule of future business proposed for this Scrutiny Committee and other Committees of the Council can be viewed on the following link to the Council's website: <http://www.exeter.gov.uk/docs/committee/workschedule.doc>
Councillors can view a hard copy of the schedule in the Members Room.

Membership -

Councillors D J Morrish (Chair), Choules (Deputy Chair), Branston, P Brock, Coates, Cole, Martin, Newcombe, Noble, Prowse, Robson, R Smith and Sterry

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) 265275 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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Audit and Inspection Plan

Exeter City Council

Audit 2007/2008

External audit is an essential element in the process of accountability for public money and makes an important contribution to the stewardship of public resources and the corporate governance of public services.

Audit in the public sector is underpinned by three fundamental principles:

- auditors are appointed independently from the bodies being audited;
- the scope of auditors' work is extended to cover not only the audit of financial statements but also value for money and the conduct of public business; and
- auditors may report aspects of their work widely to the public and other key stakeholders.

The duties and powers of auditors appointed by the Audit Commission are set out in the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Local Government Act 1999 and the Commission's statutory Code of Audit Practice. Under the Code of Audit Practice, appointed auditors are also required to comply with the current professional standards issued by the independent Auditing Practices Board.

Appointed auditors act quite separately from the Commission and in meeting their statutory responsibilities are required to exercise their professional judgement independently of both the Commission and the audited body.

Status of our reports

The Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies issued by the Audit Commission explains the respective responsibilities of auditors and of the audited body. Reports prepared by appointed auditors are addressed to non-executive directors/members or officers. They are prepared for the sole use of the audited body. Auditors accept no responsibility to:

- any director/member or officer in their individual capacity; or
- any third party.

Copies of this report

If you require further copies of this report, or a copy in large print, in Braille, on tape, or in a language other than English, please call 0845 056 0566.

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For further information on the work of the Commission please contact:

Audit Commission, 1st Floor, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P 4HQ

Tel: 020 7828 1212 Fax: 020 7976 6187 Textphone (minicom): 020 7630 0421

www.audit-commission.gov.uk

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Introduction

- 1 This plan has been developed by the Relationship Manager and the appointed auditor. It sets out the audit and inspection work that we propose to undertake for the 2007/08 financial year. The plan is based on the Audit Commission's risk-based approach to audit planning and the requirements of Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). It reflects:
 - audit and inspection work specified by the Audit Commission for 2007/08;
 - current national risks relevant to your local circumstances; and
 - your local risks and improvement priorities.
- 2 Your Relationship Manager will continue to help ensure further integration and co-ordination with the work of other inspectorates.
- 3 As the audit for 2006/07 has yet to be completed by the Audit Commission, we will continue to review the audit planning process for 2007/08, including the risk assessment, taking account of any issues emerging. In addition, there are a number of developments at a national level, such as review of the 2007 Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) and the introduction of Internal Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS's), which may have a further impact on the level of audit work to be completed during 2007/08. Consequently, the information and fees in this plan will be kept under review and updated as necessary.

Responsibilities

- 4 We comply with the statutory requirements governing our audit and inspection work, in particular:
 - the Audit Commission Act 1998;
 - the Local Government Act 1999 (best value inspection and audit); and
 - the Code of Audit Practice.
- 5 The Code of Audit Practice (the Code) defines auditors' responsibilities in relation to:
 - the financial statements (including the statement on internal control (SIC)); and
 - the audited body's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.
- 6 The Audit Commission's Statement of responsibilities of auditors and of audited bodies sets out the respective responsibilities of the auditor and the Council. The Audit Commission has issued a copy of the Statement to every audited body.
- 7 The Statement summarises where the different responsibilities of auditors and of the audited body begin and end, and our audit work is undertaken in the context of these responsibilities.

CPA and Inspection

- 8 The Audit Commission's CPA and inspection activity is underpinned by the principle of targeting our work where it will have the greatest effect, based upon assessments of risk and performance.
- 9 The Council's CPA category is therefore a key driver in the Commission's inspection planning process. For CPA 2006, the Council was categorised as excellent.
- 10 We have applied the principles set out in the CPA framework, *CPA – district council framework from 2006*, recognising the key strengths and areas for improvement in the Council's performance.
- 11 Strengths in the Council's performance include the following.
 - Clear priorities that reflect local needs and a clear vision for the City.
 - A new customer service centre that has improved access to service information, reduced processing times and increased customer satisfaction.
 - Achievement of good value for money – with low council tax rates generally low service costs alongside high user satisfaction levels and service usage.
 - Some good examples of plans which reflect the needs of specific target groups and good progress being made in engaging with young people, ethnic and religious groups and people with disabilities.
 - Strong management of projects which is increasing the Council's capacity to realise its ambitious plans.
- 12 Areas for improvement in the Council's performance include the following.
 - Developing further assessment of the impact of capital and revenue investment by clearer targeting and better monitoring of outcomes.
 - Continuing to focus attention on those areas where indicators show that performance has deteriorated or remains low.
 - Strengthening target setting to help secure continued improvement in services.
 - Developing joint arrangements in order to deliver further procurement savings.

- 13 On the basis of our planning process we have identified where our inspection activity will be focused for 2007/08 as follows.

Table 1 Summary of inspection activity

Inspection activity	Reason/impact
Relationship Manager (RM) role	To act as the Commission’s primary point of contact with the Council and the interface at the local level between the Commission, the appointed auditor RSM Robson Rhodes and the other inspectorates, government offices and other key stakeholders.
Direction of travel (DoT) assessment	An annual assessment, carried out by the RM, of how well the Council is securing continuous improvement. The DoT assessment summary will be published on the Audit Commission’s website.

Work under the Code of Audit Practice

Financial statements

- 14 We will carry out the audit of the financial statements in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board (APB).
- 15 We are required to issue an opinion on whether the financial statements present fairly, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and the Statement of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2007, the financial position of the Council as at 31 March 2008 and its income and expenditure for the year. Also, the Government has announced further developments in respect of compliance with International Financial Reporting Standards and we have yet to determine the impact of this on our opinion work.
- 16 We are also required to review whether the SIC has been presented in accordance with relevant requirements, and to report if it does not meet these requirements or if the SIC is misleading or inconsistent with our knowledge of the Council.

Use of resources

Value for money conclusion

- 17 The Code requires us to issue a conclusion on whether the Council has put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. This is known as the value for money conclusion. The Code also requires auditors to have regard to a standard set of relevant criteria, issued by the Audit Commission, in arriving at their conclusion.
- 18 In meeting this responsibility, we will review evidence that is relevant to the Council's corporate performance management and financial management arrangements. Where relevant work has been undertaken by other regulators we will normally place reliance on their reported results to inform our work.
- 19 We will also follow up our work from previous years to assess progress in implementing agreed recommendations.

Use of resources assessment

- 20 The Audit Commission has specified that auditors will complete a use of resources assessment for 2007/08. The assessment focuses on the importance of having sound and strategic financial management to ensure that resources are available to support the Council's priorities and improve services.
- 21 The work required to arrive at the use of resources assessment is fully aligned with that required to arrive at the auditor's value for money conclusion.

- 22 We will arrive at a score of 1 to 4, based on underlying key lines of enquiry, for each of the following themes.

Theme	Description
Financial reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of financial statements. • External reporting.
Financial management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium-term financial strategy. • Budget monitoring. • Asset management.
Financial standing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing spending within available resources.
Internal control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk management. • System of internal control. • Probity and propriety.
Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving value for money. • Managing and improving value for money.

- 23 We will report details of the scores and judgements made to the Council. The scores will be accompanied, where appropriate, by recommendations of what the Council needs to do to improve its services.
- 24 The auditor’s scores are reported to the Commission and are used as the basis for its overall use of resources judgement for the purposes of CPA.

Data quality

- 25 The Audit Commission has specified that auditors will be required to undertake audit work in relation to data quality. This is based on a three-stage approach covering:
- stage 1 - management arrangements;
 - stage 2 - completeness check; and
 - stage 3 - risk-based data quality spot checks of a sample of performance indicators.
- 26 The work at stage 1 will link to our review of the Council’s arrangements to secure data quality as required for our value for money conclusion and, together with the results of stage 2, will inform the risk assessment for the detailed spot check work to be undertaken at stage 3. The results of the work at stage 3 will inform the Commission’s CPA assessment.

- 27 Our fee estimate reflects an assessment of risk in relation to the Council's performance indicators. This risk assessment may change depending on our assessment of your overall management arrangements at stage 1 and we will update our plan accordingly, including any impact on the fee.

Best Value Performance Plan

- 28 We are required to carry out an audit of your Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) and report on whether it has been prepared and published in accordance with legislation and statutory guidance.

Assessing risks

- 29 The Audit Commission is committed to targeting its work where it will have the greatest effect, based upon assessments of risk and performance. This means planning our audit work to address areas of risk relevant to our audit responsibilities and reflecting this in the audit fees. It also means making sure that our work is co-ordinated with the work of other regulators, and that our work helps you to improve.
- 30 Our risk assessment process starts with the identification of the significant financial and operational risks applying at the Council with reference to:
- our cumulative knowledge of the Council, which is informed through discussions and review of output with the outgoing appointed auditors;
 - planning guidance issued by the Audit Commission;
 - the specific results of previous and ongoing audit work;
 - interviews with Council officers;
 - liaison with internal audit; and
 - the results of other review agencies' work where relevant.
- 31 We have not included a risk assessment for our audit as many of the specific risks may not become apparent until after the 2006/07 audit has been completed. We will assess the situation at that time and, if necessary, amend the plan accordingly. At this stage, we are aware of the following risks that are likely to impact on our audit of the financial statements.
- There are changes as a result of the 2006 Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) that will apply to the 2007/08 accounts. Primarily this will involve the introduction of the revaluation reserve and a capital adjustment account to replace the fixed asset restatement account and the capital financing account. Consideration will need to be paid to the changes to ledgers and fixed asset registers to accommodate the amendments.
 - The 2007 SORP is under consultation and it is expected that there will be a number of presentation and disclosure adjustments that will impact on the 2007/08 accounts.
 - The Chancellor announced, in his Budget Speech in March 2007, that the Public Sector will comply fully with relevant International Financial Reporting Standards, IFRS, for accounting periods ending March 2009. We have yet to determine the full impact of this on our audit work but, to ensure that comparative information is available for the 2008/09 accounts, IFRS compliant figures need to be produced for the period commencing 1 April 2007.

- The Council's success in getting through the first round assessment for Unitary status means that is now awaiting the final decision as to whether it will be restructured into a Unitary Authority from 1 April 2009. The outcome is due to be announced at the end of July 2007. Should the Council be successful, there will be a significant number of challenging issues that the Council will need to consider and address in the lead up to reorganisation. We will discuss these, and the Council's response, once the outcome of the current process is known.
 - The Council is due to implement a new financial management system from 1 April 2008. The implementation of new systems have far reaching implications for the Council and we will consider the arrangements being put in place for both the successful introduction of the new system and the risk management arrangements supporting this.
 - The Council needs to put in place revised arrangements to respond to current and forthcoming government requirements in relation to waste management and climate change. There is a risk that revised arrangements may not meet government targets and there may be an associated financial impact where these are not met.
 - Whilst the Council has been successful in meeting previous efficiency targets, the identification and subsequent delivery of future opportunities will become increasingly challenging. We will review the Council's arrangements for identifying and evaluating those areas where efficiency gains might be obtained and how they monitor the delivery of the opportunities identified.
 - The Council needs to continue to implement the actions arising from previous audits to ensure its current assessment in use of resources is maintained and further advanced.
- 32** Our fee estimate for 2007/08 is based on the assumption that the current standard of working papers will be maintained; that internal audit will complete their planned work on key information systems to the agreed quality by 30 April 2008 and that the accounts will be prepared and fully supported by working papers by 30 June 2008.
- 33** For each of the significant risks identified in relation to our use of resources work, we consider the arrangements put in place by the Council to mitigate the risk, and plan our work accordingly.
- 34** Our initial risk assessment will be updated through our continuous planning process as the year progresses.

Work specified by the Audit Commission

Whole of government accounts (WGA)

- 35 We will be required to review and report on your WGA consolidation pack in accordance with the approach agreed with HM Treasury and the National Audit Office which is proportionate to risk.

National Fraud Initiative

- 36 The Council participates in the National Fraud Initiative which is the Audit Commission's computerised data matching exercise designed to detect fraud perpetrated on public bodies. This work will be carried out by an individual appointed to assist in the audit of the Council's accounts (in accordance with section 3(9) of the Audit Commission Act 1998).

Voluntary improvement work

- 37 Under section 35 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, the Commission may undertake voluntary improvement work at the request of the audited body. We will be happy to undertake any such work if it is requested and we have the appropriate expertise. Please contact the Relationship Manager if you wish to discuss any voluntary improvement work.

Certification of grant claims and returns

38 We will continue to certify the Council's claims and returns on the following basis.

- Claims below £100,000 will not be subject to certification.
- Claims between £100,000 and £500,000 will be subject to a reduced, light-touch certification.
- Claims over £500,000 will be subject to a certification approach relevant to the auditor's assessment of the control environment and management preparation of claims. A robust control environment would lead to a reduced certification approach for these claims.

The audit and inspection fee

- 39 The details of the structure of scale fees are set out in the Audit Commission's work programme and fee scales 2007/08. Scale fees are based on a number of variables, including the type, size and location of the audited body.
- 40 The total indicative fee for audit and inspection work included in this audit and inspection plan for 2007/08 is £93,600, which compares with the planned fee of £85,600 for 2006/07.
- 41 Further details are provided in Appendix 1 which includes a breakdown of the fee; specific audit risk factors; the assumptions made when determining the audit fee, for example, the timeliness and quality of draft accounts presented for audit and the supporting working papers; specific actions Exeter City Council could take to reduce its audit and inspection fees; and the process for agreeing any changes to the fee. The fee includes all work identified in this plan unless specifically excluded.
- 42 In addition we estimate that we will charge approximately £15,000 for the certification of claims and returns.
- 43 As indicated in paragraphs 3 and 35, the audit planning process will continue as the year progresses and it is likely that there will be some changes to our planned work and hence to the indicative fee quoted in paragraph 40 above. Any changes to the fee will be agreed with you.

Other information

The audit and inspection team

- 44 The key members of the audit and inspection team for the 2007/08 audit are shown in the table below.

Table 2

Name	Contact details	Responsibilities
Peter Lawrence Relationship Manager	p-lawrence@audit-commission.gov.uk	The primary point of contact with the authority and the interface at the local level between the Commission and the other inspectorates, government offices and other key stakeholders.
Barrie Morris Audit Engagement Lead, Grant Thornton UK	Barrie.Morris@gtuk.com	Responsible for the overall delivery of the audit including the quality of outputs, signing the opinion and conclusion, and liaison with the Chief Executive, Corporate Director of Resources and the resources scrutiny committee.
Julie Masci Audit Manager	Julie.Masci@gtuk.com	Manages and co-ordinates the different elements of the audit work. Key point of contact for the Finance team.
Simon Jones Performance Lead	Simon.Jones@gtuk.com	Responsible for the delivery of elements of the use of resources work including the value for money theme of the use of resources assessment, and data quality work.

Independence and objectivity

- 45 We are not aware of any relationships that may affect the independence and objectivity of the Appointed Auditor and the audit staff, which we are required by auditing and ethical standards to communicate to you.
- 46 We comply with the ethical standards issued by the APB and with the Commission's requirements in respect of independence and objectivity as summarised at Appendix 2.

Quality of service

- 47 We are committed to providing you with a high quality service. If you are in any way dissatisfied, or would like to discuss how we can improve our service, please contact the Relationship Manager or Appointed Auditor in the first instance. Alternatively you may wish to contact the South West Head of Operations, Bill Sanderson.
- 48 If we are unable to satisfy your concerns, you have the right to make a formal complaint to the Audit Commission. The complaints procedure is set out in the leaflet *Something to Complain About* which is available from the Commission's website or on request.

Planned outputs

- 49 Our reports will be discussed and agreed with the appropriate officers before being issued to the audit committee.

Table 3

Planned output	Indicative date
Audit Plan	July 2007
Interim audit memorandum	May 2008
Data quality report	September 2007
Opinion on the financial statements and value for money conclusion	September 2008
Report on financial statements to those charged with governance (ISA260)	September 2008
Use of resources report	December 2007

18 Audit and Inspection Plan | Other information

Planned output	Indicative date
Annual audit and inspection letter	December 2008
BVPP report (Corporate Plan)	December 2007

Appendix 1 – Audit and inspection fee

- 1 Table 4 provides details of the planned audit and inspection fee for 2007/08 with a comparison to the planned fee for 2006/07.

Table 4

Audit area	*Planned fee 2007/08 £	Planned fee 2006/07 £
Audit		
Financial statements	61,600	56,000
Use of resources (including BVPP)	26,100	25,000
Total audit fee	87,700	81,000
Inspection		
Relationship management	2,950	4,600
Direction of Travel	2,950	
Total inspection fee	5,900	4,600
Total audit and inspection fee	93,600	85,600
Certification of claims and returns	15,000	16,000
Total	108,600	101,600

- 2 The Audit Commission scale audit fee for Exeter City Council is £114,100. The fee proposed for 2007/08, at £87,700, is 23 per cent below the scale fee and is within the normal level of variation specified by the Commission.
- 3 The Audit Commission has the power to determine the fee above or below the scale fee where it considers that substantially more or less work is required than envisaged by the scale fee. The Audit Commission may, therefore, adjust the scale fee to reflect the actual work that needs to be carried out to meet the auditor's statutory responsibilities, on the basis of the auditor's assessment of risk and complexity at a particular body.

- 4 It is a matter for the auditor to determine the work necessary to complete the audit and, subject to approval by the Audit Commission, to seek to agree an appropriate variation to the scale fee with the Council. The Audit Commission expects normally to vary the scale fee by no more than 30 per cent (upwards or downwards). This fee then becomes payable.
- 5 The fee (plus VAT) will be charged in according to the usual arrangements.

Specific audit risk factors

- 6 In setting the audit fee we have taken into account the following specific risk factors:
 - audit fees are being uplifted by 2.75 per cent for inflation;
 - the Council's use of resources judgement was a level 3 in 2006;
 - the significant impact of the 2006 and 2007 SORP on the Council's accounting arrangements and the introduction of IFRS, the full impact of which is still to be determined; and
 - the Council does not gain Unitary Authority status from 1 April 2009.

Assumptions

- 7 In setting the fee, we have assumed that:
 - the level of risk in relation to the audit of the financial statements is not significantly different from that identified for 2006/07;
 - you will inform us of significant developments impacting on our audit;
 - internal audit meets the appropriate professional standards;
 - internal audit undertakes appropriate work on all systems that provide material figures in the financial statements sufficient that we can place reliance for the purposes of our audit;
 - good quality working papers and records will be provided to support the financial statements;
 - requested information will be provided within agreed timescales;
 - prompt responses will be provided to draft reports; and
 - additional work will not be required to address questions or objections raised by local government electors.
- 8 Where these assumptions are not met, we will be required to undertake additional work, which is likely to result in an increased audit fee. The fee for the audit of the financial statements will be re-visited when we issue the opinion audit plan.

- 9 Changes to the plan will be agreed with you. These may be required if:
- new residual audit risks emerge;
 - additional work is required of us by the Audit Commission or other regulators; and
 - additional work is required as a result of changes in legislation, professional standards or as a result of changes in financial reporting.

Specific actions Exeter City Council could take to reduce its audit and inspection fees

- 10 The Audit Commission requires its auditors to inform a council of specific actions it could take to reduce its audit and inspection fees.
- 11 As newly-appointed auditors it is too early for us to identify specific opportunities. However, where we have identified risks in this plan, an effective and well-evidenced approach by the Council to tackling those risks will help ensure that audit and inspection fees are kept low.

Process for agreeing any changes in audit fees

- 12 If we need to make any significant amendments to the audit fee during the course of this plan, we will firstly discuss this with the Chief Executive/Corporate Financial Advisor. We will then prepare a report outlining the reasons why the fee needs to change for discussion with the audit committee.

Appendix 2 – Independence and objectivity

- 13 Auditors appointed by the Audit Commission are required to comply with the Commission’s Code of Audit Practice and Standing Guidance for Auditors, which defines the terms of my appointment. When auditing the financial statements auditors are also required to comply with auditing standards and ethical standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board (APB).
- 14 The main requirements of the Code of Audit Practice, Standing Guidance for Auditors and the standards are summarised below.
- 15 International Standard on Auditing (UK and Ireland) 260 (Communication of audit matters with those charged with governance) requires that the appointed auditor:
 - discloses in writing all relationships that may bear on the auditor’s objectivity and independence, the related safeguards put in place to protect against these threats and the total amount of fee that the auditor has charged the client; and
 - confirms in writing that the APB’s ethical standards are complied with and that, in the auditor’s professional judgement, they are independent and their objectivity is not compromised.
- 16 The standard defines ‘those charged with governance’ as ‘those persons entrusted with the supervision, control and direction of an entity’. In your case, the appropriate addressee of communications from the auditor to those charged with governance is the audit committee. The auditor reserves the right, however, to communicate directly with the authority on matters which are considered to be of sufficient importance.
- 17 The Commission’s Code of Audit Practice has an overriding general requirement that appointed auditors carry out their work independently and objectively, and ensure that they do not act in any way that might give rise to, or could reasonably be perceived to give rise to, a conflict of interest. In particular, appointed auditors and their staff should avoid entering into any official, professional or personal relationships which may, or could reasonably be perceived to, cause them inappropriately or unjustifiably to limit the scope, extent or rigour of their work or impair the objectivity of their judgement.

18 The Standing Guidance for Auditors includes a number of specific rules. The key rules relevant to this audit appointment are as follows:

- appointed auditors should not perform additional work for an audited body (ie work over and above the minimum required to meet their statutory responsibilities) if it would compromise their independence or might give rise to a reasonable perception that their independence could be compromised. Where the audited body invites the auditor to carry out risk-based work in a particular area that cannot otherwise be justified as necessary to support the auditor's opinion and conclusions, it should be clearly differentiated within the audit plan as being 'additional work' and charged for separately from the normal audit fee;
- auditors should not accept engagements that involve commenting on the performance of other auditors appointed by the Commission on Commission work without first consulting the Commission;
- the Engagement Lead responsible for the audit should, in all but the most exceptional circumstances, be changed at least once every five years;
- the Engagement Lead and senior members of the audit team are prevented from taking part in political activity on behalf of a political party, or special interest group, whose activities relate directly to the functions of local government or NHS bodies in general, or to a particular local government or NHS body; and
- the Engagement Lead and members of the audit team must abide by the Commission's policy on gifts, hospitality and entertainment.

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Exeter City Council

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Our ref: DH/0607

Your ref:

19 September 2007

Dear Mr Brown

Exeter City Council - Audit for the year ended 31 March 2007

I confirm to the best of my knowledge and belief, and having made appropriate enquiries of other officers of Exeter City Council, the following representations given to you in connection with your audit of Exeter City Council's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2007.

I acknowledge my responsibility under the relevant statutory authorities for preparing the financial statements, which present fairly the financial position and for making accurate representations to you.

Exeter City Council has no plans or intentions that may materially alter the carrying value or classification of assets and liabilities reflected in the financial statements.

Contingent liabilities

There are no other contingent liabilities, other than those that have been properly recorded and disclosed in the financial statements. In particular:

- there are no significant pending or threatened litigation, other than those already disclosed in the financial statements.
- there are no material commitments or contractual issues, other than those already disclosed in the financial statements.
- no financial guarantees have been given to third parties.

Supporting records

All the accounting records have been made available to you for the purpose of your audit and all the transactions undertaken by Exeter City Council have been properly reflected and recorded in the accounting records. All other records and related information, including minutes of all Council / Committee meetings, have been made available to you.

Partnerships, Joint Ventures and related companies

There are no material transactions other than those disclosed in the financial statement that require disclosure.

Related party transactions

I confirm the completeness of the information provided regarding the identification of related parties.

The identity of, and balances and transactions with, related parties have been properly recorded and where appropriate, adequately disclosed in the financial statements.

Funds held on Trust

There are no other trust funds held and administered by the Council other than those which have been properly recorded and disclosed in the financial statements.

Post balance sheet events

Since the date of approval of the financial statements by Members of the Council, there have been no additional significant post balance sheet events that have occurred which would require additional adjustment or disclosure in the financial statements

Law, regulations and codes of practice

There are no instances of non-compliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice, likely to have a significant effect on the finance or operation of the Council.

Irregularities

I acknowledge my responsibility for the design and implementation of internal control systems to prevent and detect error.

There have been no:

- irregularities involving management or employees who have significant roles in the system of internal accounting control;
- irregularities involving other employees that could have a material effect on the financial statements;
- communications from regulatory agencies concerning non-compliance with, or deficiencies on, financial reporting practices which could have a material effect on the financial statements.

Annual Report

I confirm that the financial statements are not reproduced in any form in an annual report.

Signed on behalf of Exeter City Council

Name	Andrew Stark
Position	Head of Treasury Services
Date	19 September 2007

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - RESOURCES 19 SEPTEMBER 2007

AIM PROPERTY MAINTENANCE PROGRESS REPORT 2007/2008

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This is the first quarterly report, covering the period from April to June 2007 (but including updated figures at 13 August 2007). The report details the financial position of the £15m programme of reactive and planned property maintenance and refurbishment. This includes both Revenue and HRA Capital schemes as approved by Council for the financial year 2007/2008. This amount further includes budgets for schemes rolled forward from 2006/2007. Where necessary this report also provides specific details on significant programme variations.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council approved the following:

	£
(a) Housing Reactive Repairs	£ 2,215,000
(b) Housing Electrical Testing	£ 35,000
(c) Housing Servicing Contracts	£ 607,490
(d) Housing Maintenance Works	£ 1,950,040
(e) Housing Programmed Works	£ 8,007,090
(f) AIM Condition Survey Priority Programme	£ 702,890
(g) AIM Priority Programme	£ 327,310
(h) AIM Service Contracts	£ 296,680
(i) Lease Requirements	£ 109,040
(j) Service Recharges	£ 249,160
(k) AIM Reactive Repairs	£ 498,800
(l) AIM Operational Essentials	£ 92,240
Total	£ 15,090,740

- 2.3 The specifically monitored budgets in 2007/2008 above presently show a predicted overspend in the order of £113,000, in overall terms. This overspend mainly arises from projected additional costs in Housing reactive repairs

Information on significant increased cost variations from budget is provided below. A copy of the full financial monitoring report is available on the Internet.

HOUSING

2.3 Housing Reactive Repairs Generally – overall budget £2,215,000

This budget, which was only marginally increased from last year, is split into six separate parts in order to better raise and monitor orders and control work and costs. As all these works are of a reactive nature it is very difficult to predict the extent or pattern of likely expenditure each year. However, based on the present rate of spending, a projected overspend of some £270,000 is likely to be sustained. Such a prediction arises due to a general increase in the cost of repairs and an increased amount of reactive repair orders issued due in part to poor weather over the summer.

NON-HOUSING

2.4 Rougemont House Exterior Works – Overall budget £30,000

This budget was set to repair the external facade, windows and associated fittings of this building. However this work has raised the need to install a roof harness wire safety system costing an additional £5,000. Nevertheless this overspend can at present be compensated by projected savings elsewhere within the non-housing programme.

3 RECOMMENDED

- (1) that the first quarter financial position of the £15m programme of reactive and planned property maintenance and refurbishment for 2007/2008, as detailed above be noted.

HEAD OF CONTRACTS AND DIRECT SERVICES
HEAD OF HOUSING AND SOCIAL INCLUSION
HEAD OF ESTATES
HEAD OF TREASURY SERVICES

S:LP/Committee/907SCR1
16 August 2007

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)
Background papers used in compiling the report:
None

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - RESOURCES 19 SEPTEMBER 2007

RESOURCES SCRUTINY STEWARDSHIP TO 30 JUNE 2007

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report advises members of any major differences by management unit to the revised budget.

2. STEWARDSHIP TO 30 JUNE 2007

- 2.1 Following changes in the revenue accounting requirements for fixed assets, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) have specified that 'deferred contributions' must be released to service revenue accounts. 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.
- 2.2 The current outturn forecast suggests that net expenditure for this committee will decrease from the budget by a total of £94,100, which represents a variation of 0.55% from the revised budget.
- 2.3 The main variations by management unit are detailed below:

	£
2007-2008 REVISED BUDGET	17,072,360
6A1 REVENUE COLLECTION/BENEFITS	72,700
It is estimated at the end of the first quarter that there will be a net reduction in Housing Benefit subsidy of £72,700 (0.23% of the total subsidy for 2007-08).	
6A2 ELECTIONS AND ELECTORAL REGISTRATION	(17,640)
Savings are likely to be made on the maintenance of the new Electoral Registration system and a government grant has been received towards the cost of making checks on postal votes.	

6A3	CORPORATE A revised scale of fees for external audit work to be carried out during the year is likely to result in an increase in costs.	3,600
6A4	CIVIC CEREMONIALS Some expenditure on Guildhall roof repairs through the AIM programme is now expected to be made in the next financial year.	(23,000)
6A5	DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION A deferred contribution of £11,200 has been received in respect of Members Expenses (see 2.1 above).	(11,200)
6A6	GRANTS/CENTRAL SUPPORT/CONSULTATION The budget for charitable and hardship rate relief was estimated before the criteria and base figures were determined by the Government. It is expected that there will be an increase in the cost against the budget by the year-end. A contribution has been made towards a domestic violence partnership within Community Safety (BVIP target 225).	11,470
6A7	UNAPPORTIONABLE OVERHEADS A contribution in to the pension fund is due to be made to meet the approved cost of an early retirement.	12,320
6A8	CHIEF EXECUTIVE SERVICES Expenditure that was planned to be part of the capital programme has now been charged to revenue.	10,640
6B1	TREASURY SERVICES Deferred contributions of £80,210 in respect of prior year grants for the implementation of e-government systems have been received in respect of Treasury Services (see 2.1 above). There have been other minor variations within the management unit that are expected to result in a small increase in net cost.	(79,420)

6B5 CORPORATE CUSTOMER SERVICES (36,460)

Expenditure on electronic document management that was planned to be part of the capital programme has now been charged to revenue.

The cost of operating the Civic Centre is expected to be under budget by the end of the year due to a reduction in rateable value although this has been partially offset by an increase in tariffs for electricity and an increase in lift maintenance.

A deferred contribution of £38,240 has been received in respect of the IT associated with the Customer Services Centre (see 2.1 above).

6B6 IT SERVICES (37,110)

An overlap between a departed and replacement member of staff working on the website has led to a small increase in employee costs.

Expenditure that was planned to be part of the capital programme has now been charged to revenue.

There is expected to be an overall increase in Capital Charges for this management unit of £17,960.

Deferred contributions of £72,040 have been received in respect of the enhancements that were undertaken to the corporate IT infrastructure to incorporate e-government (see 2.1 above).

2006-2007 EXPECTED FINAL OUTURN £16,978,260

3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1 That the Scrutiny Committee – Resources not this report.

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/Stewardship1stQtr2007-8
7 September 2007

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SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - RESOURCES
STEWARDSHIP

APRIL 2007 TO JUNE 2007

ANNUAL BUDGET	SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGETS AND VIREMENTS	REVISED BUDGET	CODE	CURRENT OUTTURN FORECAST	OUTTURN FORECAST VARIANCE	MOVEMENTS ON RESERVES
£	£	£		£	£	£
1,663,840		1,663,840	6A1	1,736,540	72,700	
308,950		308,950	6A2	291,310	(17,640)	
861,230		861,230	6A3	864,830	3,600	
413,360	20,400	433,760	6A4	410,760	(23,000)	
900,200	181,050	1,081,250	6A5	1,070,050	(11,200)	
956,270	50,300	1,006,570	6A6	1,018,040	11,470	
294,370		294,370	6A7	306,690	12,320	
1,244,300	5,000	1,249,300	6A8	1,259,940	10,640	
0		-	6A9	0	0	
3,890,050	15,000	3,905,050	6B1	3,825,630	(79,420)	
233,070		233,070	6B2	233,070	0	
717,300	12,060	729,360	6B3	729,360	0	
581,050		581,050	6B4	581,050	0	
2,317,770	16,360	2,334,130	6B5	2,297,670	(36,460)	
2,238,150	7,500	2,245,650	6B6	2,208,540	(37,110)	
144,780		144,780	6B7	144,780	0	
16,764,690	307,670	17,072,360		16,978,260	(94,100)	0
(11,366,470)		(11,366,470)		(11,366,470)	0	
£ 5,398,220	£ 307,670	£ 5,705,890		£ 5,611,790	(94,100)	
MOVEMENTS ON RESERVES						
				0	0	0
NET EXPENDITURE AFTER MOVEMENTS ON RESERVES						
				£ 5,611,790	(94,100)	(94,100)

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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		8,007,090	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
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
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
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	2007/08 CAPITAL PROGRAMME	£	2007/08 SPEND	£	2007/08 FORECAST SPEND	£	From 2008/09 FORECAST SPEND	£	2007/08 PROGRAMME VARIANCES UNDER ()	£
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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

£	4,400,389	March 08
£	1,761,131	March 08

£	4,997,342
£	1,761,131

March07	£ 4,997,342
March07	£ 1,761,131

Working Balance	£ 4,997,342
Superannuation Reserve	£ 1,761,131

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EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY RESOURCES

19 SEPTEMBER 2007

HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT REVIEW OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To advise members of the results arising from the latest (2006/7) statutory customer satisfaction survey in respect of the Housing and Council Tax Benefits Service.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 All local authorities are required to conduct a triennial Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) Survey for the Benefits Service. The most recent survey was carried in respect of the year 2006/07. The main purpose of the BVPI Survey is to measure public satisfaction in the service.
- 2.2 The survey was conducted in line with guidelines laid down by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and was undertaken in-house using postal methodology. The survey questionnaires were sent out in 2 sampling periods during June 2006 and February 2007. In total 4,334 survey forms were sent out to new benefit claimants and of these 1,824 were returned, a return rate of 42%. In order to meet the requirements of the survey, it was only necessary to achieve a minimum of 625 returns.

3. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

- 3.1 The overall performance of the Benefits Service as measured by national performance indicators has improved since the last survey was undertaken during 2003/04. Based upon the latest performance information provided by the Department for Works and Pensions the DWP's the Council has again achieved a grade 4 (the highest) for its processing of all new claims. This high level of performance has also been reflected in the customer satisfaction survey of the service that was undertaken. A comparison with the results from previous surveys is shown below. This gives a clear indication that in general, a high level of customer satisfaction with the service has been maintained and there has also been a slight improvement in comparison with the previous survey results.

Question (Strongly Agree or Agree)	March 2001	March 2004	March 2007
Overall I am satisfied with the facilities to get in touch with the Benefits Office	68%	81%	82%
Overall I am satisfied with the experience of visiting the Benefits Office	62%	76%	77%
Overall I am satisfied with the telephone service	52%	70%	71%
Overall I am satisfied with the service provided by staff in the Benefits Office	71%	84%	82%
Overall I am satisfied with clarity and understanding of the forms	50%	60%	61%
Overall I am satisfied with the amount of time it took to determine my claim	51%	70%	75%
Overall I am satisfied with the Benefits Service	n/a	80%	81%

Question (Strongly Disagree or Disagree)	March 2001	March 2004	March 2007
Overall I am satisfied with the facilities to get in touch with the Benefits Office	15%	9%	7%
Overall I am satisfied with the experience of visiting the Benefits Office	22%	11%	8%
Overall I am satisfied with the telephone service	19%	17%	17%
Overall I am satisfied with the service provided by staff in the Benefits Office	12%	7%	6%
Overall I am satisfied with clarity and understanding of the forms	26%	19%	17%
Overall I am satisfied with the amount of time it took to determine my claim	37%	22%	15%
Overall I am satisfied with the Benefits Service	n/a	13%	8%

4. EQUALITIES ISSUES

- 4.1 The Council has also further analysed the results of its most recent survey in terms of addressing any issues of equalities. This has been undertaken using the data collected from the actual survey forms but does not form a requirement of the DCLG.
- 4.2 The results have been further broken into 3 categories with regard to Ethnicity (Appendix 1), Age (Appendix 2), and Disability and Illness (Appendix 3). Although, with regard to ethnicity we have identified some differences in the levels of satisfaction (See Appendix 1), no specific action needs to be undertaken especially taking into account the small sample size used for analysing the data. It must be borne in mind however that the sample size used for analysing some of the Ethnicity data is extremely small. The Council, nevertheless, remains committed to continuing its own equalities based work.

5. ETHNICITY (APPENDIX 1)

- 5.1 The respondents of the survey are shown in 4 categories: White British and Irish, Other, White Other and Not Answered. The survey results would appear to indicate that in general over all the questions asked, the level of satisfaction is higher with those respondents that have been identified as White British and Irish.

6. AGE (APPENDIX 2)

- 6.1 The respondents of the survey are shown in 3 categories: Up to 60, Over 60 and Not Answered. This clearly shows that in all areas respondents over the age of 60 would appear to be far more satisfied with the service provided than those below the age of 60. Further analysis of the results has indicated that younger claimants (up to age of

19) have a much lower level of satisfaction compared with any other age group. Conversely claimants over the age of 80 have indicated satisfaction levels of 90% or more in all areas (apart from the claim form).

7. DISABILITY AND ILLNESS (APPENDIX 3)

7.1 Just above 50% of respondents to the survey identified that they had a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity. The results of the survey show that satisfaction levels are relatively consistent across all areas and for all respondents. In fact those respondents identifying themselves with an illness or disability would appear to be marginally more satisfied with the service that we provide.

8. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

8.1 The results of the latest customer satisfaction survey are noted.

HEAD OF TREASURY SERVICES

CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE

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

Background papers used in compiling this report:

None

SR/Benefits Survey 2007

7 September 2007

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APPENDIX 1

Overall I am satisfied with the facilities to get in touch with the Benefits Office

Ethnicity	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
White British/Irish	1341	82.3%	184	11.3%	104	6.4%	1629	93.9%
Other	38	76.0%	8	16.0%	4	8.0%	50	2.9%
White Other	24	68.6%	5	14.3%	6	17.1%	35	2.0%
Not answered	14	66.7%	3	14.3%	4	19.0%	21	1.2%
Total	1417	81.7%	200	11.5%	118	6.8%	1735	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the experience of visiting the Benefits Office

Ethnicity	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
White British/Irish	856	77.2%	164	14.8%	88	7.9%	1108	92.9%
Other	31	75.6%	3	7.3%	7	17.1%	41	3.4%
White Other	22	75.9%	5	17.2%	2	6.9%	29	2.4%
Not answered	6	40.0%	6	40.0%	3	20.0%	15	1.3%
Total	915	76.7%	178	14.9%	100	8.4%	1193	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the telephone service

Ethnicity	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
White British/Irish	401	71.7%	67	12.0%	91	16.3%	559	94.2%
Other	9	64.3%	2	14.3%	3	21.4%	14	2.4%
White Other	8	61.5%	4	30.8%	1	7.7%	13	2.2%
Not answered	3	42.8%	1	14.3%	3	14.8%	7	1.2%
Total	421	71.0%	74	12.5%	98	16.5%	593	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the service provided by staff in my benefits office

Ethnicity	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
White British/Irish	1303	82.3%	190	12.0%	90	5.7%	1583	94.0%
Other	35	76.1%	6	13.0%	5	10.9%	46	2.7%
White Other	25	75.8%	7	21.2%	1	3.0%	33	2.0%
Not answered	14	63.6%	4	18.2%	4	18.2%	22	1.3%
Total	1377	81.8%	207	12.3%	100	5.9%	1684	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the clarity and understanding of the claim form

Ethnicity	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
White British/Irish	986	61.2%	359	22.3%	266	16.5%	1611	94.0%
Other	24	51.1%	16	34.0%	7	14.9%	47	2.7%
White Other	20	57.1%	5	14.3%	10	28.6%	35	2.0%
Not answered	12	57.1%	6	28.6%	3	14.3%	21	1.2%
Total	1042	60.8%	386	22.5%	286	16.7%	1714	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the amount of time it took to determine my claim

Ethnicity	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
White British/Irish	1281	75.6%	164	9.7%	249	14.7%	1694	94.0%
Other	36	70.6%	6	11.8%	9	17.6%	51	2.8%
White Other	26	72.2%	2	5.6%	8	22.2%	36	2.0%
Not answered	11	50.0%	5	22.7%	6	27.3%	22	1.2%
Total	1354	75.1%	177	9.8%	272	15.1%	1803	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the benefits service

Ethnicity	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
White British/Irish	1391	81.9%	172	10.1%	136	8.0%	1699	94.0%
Other	38	74.5%	7	13.7%	6	11.8%	51	2.8%
White Other	26	72.2%	7	19.4%	3	8.3%	36	2.0%
Not answered	13	59.1%	4	18.2%	5	22.7%	22	1.2%
Total	1468	81.2%	190	10.5%	150	8.3%	1808	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the facilities to get in touch with the Benefits Office

Age	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
Up to 60	913	77.1%	170	14.4%	101	8.5%	1184	68.2%
Over 60	482	92.7%	22	4.2%	16	3.1%	520	30.0%
Not answered	22	71.0%	8	25.8%	1	3.2%	31	1.8%
Total	1417	81.7%	200	11.5%	118	6.8%	1735	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the experience of visiting the Benefits Office

Age	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
Up to 60	613	72.0%	150	17.6%	88	10.3%	851	71.3%
Over 60	290	90.0%	22	6.8%	10	3.1%	322	27.0%
Not answered	12	60.0%	6	30.0%	2	10.0%	20	1.7%
Total	915	76.7%	178	14.9%	100	8.4%	1193	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the telephone service

Age	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
Up to 60	273	64.2%	62	14.6%	90	21.2%	425	66.8%
Over 60	142	88.2%	12	7.5%	7	4.3%	161	31.0%
Not answered	6	85.7%	0	0.0%	1	14.3%	7	2.2%
Total	421	71.0%	74	12.5%	98	16.5%	593	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the service provided by staff in my benefits office

Age	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
Up to 60	899	78.0%	168	14.6%	86	7.4%	1153	68.5%
Over 60	455	91.0%	35	7.0%	10	2.0%	500	29.7%
Not answered	23	74.2%	4	12.9%	4	12.9%	31	1.8%
Total	1377	81.8%	207	12.3%	100	5.9%	1684	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the clarity and understanding of the claim form

Age	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
Up to 60	659	56.3%	288	24.6%	223	19.1%	1170	68.3%
Over 60	366	71.5%	90	17.6%	56	10.9%	512	29.9%
Not answered	17	53.1%	8	25.0%	7	21.9%	32	1.8%
Total	1042	60.8%	386	22.5%	286	16.7%	1714	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the amount of time it took to determine my claim

Age	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
Up to 60	842	69.6%	132	10.9%	236	19.5%	1210	67.1%
Over 60	489	87.8%	38	6.8%	30	5.4%	557	30.9%
Not answered	23	63.9%	7	19.4%	6	16.7%	36	2.0%
Total	1354	75.1%	177	9.8%	272	15.1%	1803	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the benefits service

Age	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
Up to 60	930	76.9%	150	12.4%	130	10.7%	1210	67.1%
Over 60	510	90.9%	32	5.7%	19	3.4%	561	30.9%
Not answered	28	75.7%	8	21.6%	1	2.7%	37	2.0%
Total	1468	81.2%	190	10.5%	150	8.3%	1808	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the facilities to get in touch with the Benefits Office

Disability or Illness	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
Yes	732	84.1%	86	9.9%	52	6.0%	870	50.1%
No	654	79.3%	108	13.1%	63	7.6%	825	47.6%
Not answered	31	77.5%	6	15.0%	3	7.5%	40	0.2%
Total	1417	81.7%	200	8.5%	118	21.8%	1735	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the experience of visiting the Benefits Office

Disability or Illness	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
Yes	427	78.2%	79	14.5%	40	7.3%	546	45.8%
No	468	75.5%	95	15.3%	57	9.2%	620	52.0%
Not answered	20	74.1%	4	14.8%	3	11.1%	27	2.2%
Total	915	76.7%	178	14.9%	100	8.4%	1193	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the telephone service

Disability or Illness	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
Yes	200	71.7%	31	11.1%	48	17.2%	279	47.0%
No	207	69.7%	41	13.8%	49	16.5%	297	50.1%
Not answered	14	82.3%	2	11.8%	1	5.9%	17	2.9%
Total	421	71.0%	74	12.5%	98	16.5%	593	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the service provided by staff in my benefits office

Disability or Illness	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
Yes	696	83.1%	90	10.7%	52	6.2%	838	49.8%
No	648	80.6%	112	13.9%	44	5.5%	804	47.7%
Not answered	33	78.6%	5	11.9%	4	9.5%	42	2.5%
Total	1377	81.8%	207	12.3%	100	5.9%	1684	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the clarity and understanding of the claim form

Disability or Illness	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
Yes	517	60.3%	196	22.9%	144	16.8%	857	50.0%
No	501	61.5%	179	22.0%	135	16.6%	815	47.5%
Not answered	24	57.1%	11	26.2%	7	16.7%	42	2.5%
Total	1042	60.8%	386	22.5%	286	16.7%	1714	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the amount of time it took to determine my claim

Disability or Illness	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
Yes	701	76.9%	94	10.3%	116	12.7%	911	50.5%
No	621	73.3%	78	9.2%	148	17.5%	847	47.0%
Not answered	32	71.1%	5	11.1%	8	17.8%	45	2.5%
Total	1354	75.1%	177	9.8%	272	15.1%	1803	100.0%

Overall I am satisfied with the benefits service

Disability or Illness	Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Total No. Respondents	
Yes	755	82.4%	93	10.2%	68	7.4%	916	50.7%
No	676	80.0%	91	10.7%	78	9.2%	845	46.7%
Not answered	37	78.7%	6	12.8%	4	8.5%	47	2.6%
Total	1468	81.2%	190	10.5%	150	8.3%	1808	100.0%

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY RESOURCES

19 SEPTEMBER 2007

RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING REVIEW

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update on the progress of the ongoing recruitment advertising review and to outline the key improvements to the website development and the ongoing advertising contract.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

- 2.1 Following on from a review of the recruitment processes last year a two-year project plan was established in September 2006 to drive forward changes to the electronic method of recruitment and also improvements to the advertising contract currently in place.

- 2.2 The review covers briefly, the following areas:

E-Recruitment

- A full rebuild of the Council's on line recruitment process
- Facility for access to other links such as:
 - Rewards and Benefits
 - Training and Development
 - Flexible Working
 - Equality and Diversity
 - Family Friendly policies
 - Facts and Statistics
 - Job Profiles
 - Moving to Exeter
 - How to apply
 - Using the site
 - Contacting us
- Some other key features include:
 - The ability to part save an application form and return to it when convenient
 - The ability for applicants to automatically populate application forms from previous information submitted
 - The ability for a prospective applicant to register interest in a job even if not currently advertised for future alerts

- Facility for automated emails to be sent to confirm receipt of application and advise of short-listing process

2.3 In June 2006 Resources Scrutiny approved the two-year project plan and agreed for a mid project progress review.

3. PROGRESS REVIEW

3.1 Following a full assessment process involving a service specification, expressions of interest and presentations, Tribal Resourcing were awarded the website contract.

3.2 A full project plan was then established which took the plan for a full website solution to be developed over 12-14 weeks. This programme is approximately half way through (as at the end of August).

3.3 The remaining tasks involve the site mapping all of the links which will feed into the recruitment site such as tourism, transport, housing, education etc.

3.4 Following on from this, information relating to employment, e.g. terms and conditions, pensions etc, with the Council will be added and images will be loaded.

3.4 Copies of screen images of the main web pages are attached.

3.5 Advertising spend is also being reviewed as part of this project and currently the profile of spending is being assessed with consideration of options including:

- to secure an improved service level agreement with current provider (TMP Worldwide)
- to partner with an existing advertising contract in place within another local authority.

4. RECOMMENDATION

4.1 That Resources Scrutiny note the progress on the website development and receive further information and feedback when this site is fully developed.

4.2 That the next phase of the project continues to examine improvements for advertising, back office processes and advertising contract variation to seek the most effective solution.

4.3 That a further update be submitted to Scrutiny Resources at its meeting in June 2008.

HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE

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

Background papers used in compiling this report:

1. None



Exeter City Council

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Job of the week

[Senior Building Control Officer](#)
 Directorate: [Economy & Development](#)

Salary: £26,928 - £29,010
 Closing date: 21st March 2007

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Exeter City Council



Exeter City Council

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[Senior Building Control Officer](#)
Directorate: Economy & Development

Salary: £26,928 - £29,010
Closing date: 21st March 2007

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