



**Exeter City Council**

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**AGENDA FOR**  
**EXETER CITY COUNCIL**  
**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ECONOMY**

The Scrutiny Committee - Economy will meet on **THURSDAY 1 MARCH 2007**, commencing at **5.30 pm**, in the Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter EX1 1JN to consider the following business. If you have an enquiry regarding any items on this agenda, please contact Sharon Sissons, Member Services Officer on **Exeter 265115**.

*Entry to the Civic Centre can be gained through the Customer Service Centre, Paris Street.*

Pages

**Part I: Items suggested for discussion with the press and public present**

1. **MINUTES**

To sign the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2007.

2. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Councillors are reminded of the need to declare personal and prejudicial interests, including the nature and extent of such interests, in relation to business on the agenda.

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

It is not considered that the Committee would be likely to exclude the press and public during the consideration of any of the items on this agenda but, if it should

wish to do so, then the following resolution should be passed: -

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

4. **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF 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 (Exeter 265115) 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 procedure are available from Member Services (Exeter 265115).*

6. **WILD CITY PROPOSAL**

To consider the report of the Director Economy and Development – *report circulated.* 1 - 4

7. **WALKING PROJECT UPDATE**

To consider the report of the Directorate Projects Officer – *report circulated.* 5 - 8

8. **PROPOSED SCIENCE PARK - PROGRESS UPDATE**

To consider the joint report of the Director Economy and Development and Head of Economy and Tourism – *report circulated.* 9 - 14

9. **UPDATE - GLOBAL GRANTS**

To consider the report of the Head of Economy and Tourism – *report circulated.* 15 - 20

10. **EXETER AUTUMN FESTIVAL 2006**

To consider the report of the Head of Economy and Tourism – *report circulated.* 21 - 28

11. **PROPERTY VOIDS AND DEBTS**

To consider the report of the Head of Estates Services – *report circulated.* 29 - 34

12. **NATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATOR RESULTS 2005/06 AND HOW EXETER'S RESULTS COMPARE**

To consider the report of the Director Economy and Development – *report circulated.* 35 - 38  
(Please bring a copy of the Performance Indicator Results previously sent to you by Policy Unit)

13. **ECONOMY SCRUTINY STEWARDSHIP TO DECEMBER 2006**

To consider the report of the Head of Treasury Services – *report circulated.* 39 - 40

14. **OPERATION OF SCRUTINY - WORK PROGRAMME**

Report to be tabled 41 - 42

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next **Scrutiny Committee - Community** will be held on Thursday 7 June 2007 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 Fullam (Chair), Moore (Deputy Chair), M G Baldwin, M A Baldwin, Boyle, Choules, Gale, Newby, Noble, Pettinger, Sterry, Wadham and Winterbottom

Find out more about Exeter City Council services by looking at our web site <http://www.exeter.gov.uk>. This will give you the dates of all future Committee meetings and tell you how you can ask a question at a Scrutiny Committee meeting. Alternatively, contact the Member Services Officer on (01392) 265115 for further information.

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



## **EXETER CITY COUNCIL**

### **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ECONOMY**

**1 MARCH 2007**

#### **EXECUTIVE**

**13 MARCH 2007**

### **WILD CITY PROPOSAL**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report proposes the development of a long term framework for managing Exeter's natural assets for promoting biodiversity and for enhancing, in the broadest sense, public access.

#### **2. INFORMATION**

- 2.1 In comparison with most British cities Exeter is unusual in terms of its structure which makes the natural environment particularly accessible to very many citizens. The River Exe and a range of tributaries combine to give it a unique character; when added to the adjacent countryside and to other open space within the City, nearly half of Exeter is a major biodiversity resource. The linkages, from the Valley Parks to the surrounding countryside and the estuary, mean that there is already a considerable level of biodiversity across the City. The City's population therefore has access to a range of varied habitats ranging from those of local significance to those of national and international standing.
- 2.2 There are inevitably threats to the nature and the extent of the City's biodiversity. The day to day interest of a substantial part of the population in recreational activities that put pressure on these habitats needs to be carefully managed so that people can enjoy all but the most sensitive of these habitats without undermining the quality and long term prospects for their survival. Longer term pressures on open space could also substantially undermine biodiversity if new development is not directed to those sites of limited value, (or where pressures can be carefully managed) and if sporadic development results in corridors being severed.
- 2.3 Looking beyond these comparatively short term issues, there is the likely impact of climate change which threatens imminent damage to a range of diverse habitats unless a comprehensive and innovative response is adopted to manage this impact during the coming decade. The current review of the City's Community Strategy has recognised that, to date, the emphasis on sustainability has been comparatively weak, but that it should be amongst several priorities for a revised Sustainable Community Strategy. Sustainability should be a core focus of the strategy, which needs to be supported by a comprehensive and cross cutting programme of actions, to

ensure that the biodiversity we currently enjoy is at least maintained, and if possible, appropriately enhanced. Indeed, we have a duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 to promote biodiversity.

- 2.4 The City Council has already done a considerable amount to manage Exeter's biodiversity effectively. The City Council commissioned a major biodiversity survey of Exeter several years ago and adopted a biodiversity strategy. A number of action plans have been implemented and others are still to be prepared. Work on interpretation and education has had some input to date but this will expand significantly with a new team member in Leisure and Museums on a two year contract, whose principal focus this will be.
- 2.5 One of our key partners is the Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT) and their Chief Executive sits on the Vision Partnership. He has proposed taking this a significant step further. The core of the proposal is to highlight the City's inherent attractions by designating Exeter as a "Wild City", and to put together a policy and programme that can deliver on our emerging Vision commitments. The two core elements of this work are an over-arching strategy and a set of actions that will deliver more enhancements, building on those initiatives that have already been successful. Some elements of that strategy are already being put in place through the review of the Community Strategy and by dovetailing this with work currently being undertaken by the City Council and East Devon District Council.
- 2.6 Previous survey work has already substantially identified the nature and the extent of the City's biodiversity and a joint piece of work is about to be undertaken on a Green Infrastructure Study that will look at how, as part of a sustainable development strategy for the East of Exeter development, green infrastructure could be established at the heart of that spatial strategy and delivered over the next 20 years. The strategy also needs to model the potential impacts of climate change on particular habitats and to consider whether these habitats can be maintained in the face of significant change and, if so, what actions are necessary. Beneath this strategy, there are a number of initiatives that need to be developed or expanded, ranging from policies to be applied in local planning documents and in relation to specific applications, through to actions for managing the Valley Parks and other sensitive habitats to ensure their survival.
- 2.7 A further significant challenge is making these issues accessible to a much greater proportion of the population. The jargon involved is off-putting to most people, but the sheer enjoyment of particular environments or wildlife, whether they be woodlands, wild flower meadows or rare birds, mean that much of the population could be excited and motivated by a set of practical projects. It will also contribute to a strong theme on which to base visitor promotion activities which is of particular interest to organisations such as the RSPB. There is a wide range of possible initiatives, including:
- creating new wildlife corridors through the City
  - introducing Green Coat Guides – along the same lines as Red Coat Guides

- combining the Health Agenda and the Green Agenda to encourage greater access to our Valley Parks (and other parks, gardens and allotments) by a wider group of the population
- creating green gyms
- promoting locally sourced food, ensuring reduced air miles and lower energy intensity production
- setting up wildlife listening posts
- setting up screens in key City Centre locations linked to webcams in key green spaces – similar to the kestrelcam
- introducing a wildlife festival
- linking up with ‘green’ access strategies such as the Green Circle and Cycle Network
- and so on!

2.8 There are many potential partners in this work, ranging from the Environment Agency through to the RSPB. The RSPB has also developed a “City to the Sea” proposal, embracing integrated recreational and biodiversity provision between the City, the estuary and the coast and has discussed initial ideas with funding bodies. There is considerable potential to integrate these two projects. To take this work forward Members will be aware that within the 2007/08 budget there is provision for grant aid to the Devon Wildlife Trust for the appointment of a Project Officer for a two year period. The intention would be a collaborative effort between DWT, the City Council and other key partners (including the RSPB) to develop a strategy, identify a set of key actions and submit a range of Lottery bids for funding for innovative proposals to help deliver this.

### **3. CONCLUSION AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 This is potentially a very exciting project that could link a series of themes together under the sustainability banner, by combining planning, biodiversity, leisure and health as part of the “Wild City” initiative. The longer term financial implications cannot yet be quantified and will depend on the work of the Project Officer over the next two years, for which £30,000 per annum has been budgeted in 2007/08 and 2008/09. The benefits of this work will be considerable, protecting the biodiversity we currently enjoy and delivering selective enhancements around the City. It is potentially of benefit to very large numbers of residents and, given the spread of the Valley Parks and other open spaces, provides good access to a number of defined Wards within the Valley Park catchments. The “Wild City” tag has associated linkage with the wildlife attractions of the adjacent countryside and estuary areas, and will help to promote eco-tourism to our unusually biodiverse City.

### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 It is recommended that Members
- (i) support the development of a Wild City Strategy and Action Plan
  - (ii) request officers to set up a cross Directorate project team to work with

the Devon Wildlife Trust and other key partners to take this project forward, whilst incorporating elements of the concept in a revised Sustainable Community Strategy

**John Rigby**  
**Director Economy & Development**

**Hazel Ball**  
**Director Community & Environment**

**Local Government (Access to information) Act 1985 (as amended)**

Background papers used in compiling this report:

*None*



## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE -ECONOMY

1 March 2007

#### WALKING PROJECT UPDATE

##### 1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update Economy Scrutiny on recent improvements to walking routes across the City and to outline our proposed focus for 2007/08 and beyond.

##### 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The purpose of the Exeter Walking Project, started in April 2001, is to increase walking as a mode of transport and as a leisure activity in Exeter. The Project is co-ordinated by Peter Grainger, an employee of Sustrans, the Sustainable Transport Charity. The City Council and Devon County Council have supported this project over several years. National Lottery funding was also provided in the first three years. The City Council also partly funds the salary of the project co-ordinator.
- 2.2 The 2004 opening of the 12-mile walking route known as the 'Green Circle' represented a significant achievement. A free 'interpretative' leaflet pack has also been published to accompany walkers on this route. Wooden benches are currently being installed along the route – in one case a £4000 grant from the Environment Agency is being used to employ artists to design and construct seats on Duckes Marsh Playing Field in the Riverside Valley Park.
- 2.3 An access audit of the route was conducted in 2005 and has informed improvements to the Green Circle route since that date. For example in 2006/07 an additional access point and path to Exeter University grounds (which by-passes steps from Belvidere Rd) has been created. The surfacing of land from Woodwater Lane to Ludwell Lane to create a shared used pathway has also been completed. In March 2005, the City Council included a series of questions on the Green Circle in its Wavelength Survey. These revealed good awareness and use. Further questions are also planned for 2007 to explore how awareness and usage have progressed since.
- 2.4 A second edition of the Green Circle Leaflet has also just been produced which will capture improvements since the route was first opened and will offer further information for users with disabilities. The City Council's approach to circulating this leaflet will be informed by results from the 2007 Wavelength Survey (for example, targeting those communities who appear to make less use of the Green Circle relative to others).
- 2.5. The Walking Project co-ordinator is also contributing to work on pedestrian signing in the city-centre, currently being undertaken by planning officers.

### 3 STRATEGY FOR 2007/08 – 2009/10

- 3.1. Two significant phases of work are proposed for 2007/08 and 2008/09. The scale of work involved suggests a staged approach to their implementation. This paper invites Members to offer broad support for these outline plans. Detailed proposals and any request for further capital funding will be subject to Executive agreement in due course. If agreed, these proposals will complement the work on Wild City and green tourism.

#### **Exwick Loop**

- 3.2 A 3-mile (4.8 km) route has been identified in Exwick (see attached plan which shows an outline route; the detailed alignment will be determined following consultation and negotiation). Parts of the route are already accessible to the public and other parts have work or plans in progress for access. A highlight of this route will be the long-distance view of Exeter afforded from the highest sections of the path. Way-marking, additional seating and a dedicated information leaflet could also be provided in due course.
- 3.3 The steep slopes, rural terrain and existing steps on parts of the route will not allow access for every potential user. Nevertheless, regular surface and vegetation maintenance, provision of resting places, and aids such as handrails will be offered, where practical, to improve accessibility (sensitive of course to the need to preserve the inherent qualities of the walk).
- 3.4 In summary, the route includes:
- part of the Green Circle alongside Exwick Cemetery
  - part of the shared-use path through Exwick Playing Fields by the flood relief channel
  - Exwick Acres green space to the north of Station Road
  - Establishing a path along Hamlyns Lane north of Farm Hill
  - Thorndale open space, already managed by ECC
  - a route from Kinnerton Way across to Liverpool Hill or Exwick Lane
  - a new path from Exwick Lane to St Peters Mount.

#### **Sir Alex Walk (Footpath 20): Topsham to Countess Wear**

- 3.5 Public Footpath No. 20 follows the northeast side of the River Exe for approximately 1.8 km between the bend in Glasshouse Lane in Countess Wear, and the junction of Ashford Road and Ferry Road in Topsham (see attached plan). Parts of the path are flooded at high tides and other parts are narrow, often overgrown, muddy or covered in debris. The route provides close views of the upper tidal reaches of the Exe. When combined with the Topsham ferry and the canal towpath back to Bridge Road, it would provide a circular route around the lower reaches of Riverside Valley Park.
- 3.6 Improvements, which would be undertaken in partnership with the County Council's Public Right of Way team, are likely to include a boardwalk through the tidal reed beds, appropriate surfacing of other muddy sections and some vegetation clearance. A full condition survey will be undertaken over the next few weeks and then a detailed design and plan of works will be provided.
- 3.7 It is *not* proposed to make this a shared-use route with cyclists. Careful consideration of the ecological impact of any improvements will be required and proposals will need to be agreed with Natural England, the Environment Agency (who own and manage the Lower Wear reed-bed as a nature reserve) and Devon Wildlife Trust. Consultation with

planners and local residents will also be undertaken as required. Accessibility improvements will be made where practical and environmentally acceptable, though inherent constraints on some parts of the path are likely to limit what will be possible.

#### **4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. Exeter City Council has contributed £94,040 to the walking project over the period 2002/03 –2005/06. The National Lottery, Devon County Council, the Environment Agency and Sustrans have also contributed. The City Council has allocated a further £70,000 for 2006/07 and £43,200 for 2007/08. Exwick Loop and Sir Alex Walk proposals are likely to require additional funding into 2008/09 and 2009/10. Detailed design, costing and implementation planning will be undertaken over the next few months, and will be subject to Executive approval.

#### **5 RECOMMENDED that**

##### **5.1 Members**

- (i) note progress to date with the walking project
- (ii) support outline proposals for enhancing Sir Alex Walk and providing a circular route on the edge of Exwick.

**David Betteley**  
**Projects Officer**  
**Economy and Development Directorate**

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## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ECONOMY

1 MARCH 2007

#### PROPOSED SCIENCE PARK – PROGRESS UPDATE

##### 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update Members on progress towards developing the Science Park.

##### 2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Exeter's Vision has, as one of its key themes, establishing the city as "A prosperous city" by promoting sustainable investment. The document refers to one of the key ingredients for the successful expansion of the Exeter economy as the development of a science park, in conjunction with partners, including the University of Exeter, East Devon District Council, Devon County Council and the Met Office.
- 2.2 The concept of a science park is a priority in regional and sub-regional economic strategies. The Exeter and Heart of Devon Economic Partnership's Economic Development Strategy 2005-2008 has, as one of its main objectives, the development of a science park. It has as a linked priority the maximising of the role of Exeter University and the Met Office as catalysts for knowledge and technology transfer leading to business development and the creation of high value employment. The economy of the city and sub-region could be considered to be too dependent on the public and service sectors which may in future years suffer from tighter controls on Government spending or restructuring leading to loss of employment. It is important to look to the city's assets, in particular these two organisations with a national and international reputation, and its advantageous location as the basis for creating or attracting re-locating knowledge based businesses that have the potential to bring higher quality employment opportunities.
- 2.3 The Devon Structure Plan 2001-2016 supports the development of a science park and proposes a site in East Devon. The Regional Economic Development Strategy and Regional Spatial Strategy both underline the importance of innovation and the exploration of knowledge to the region's economy.
- 2.4 A number of studies have supported the case for and the opportunity to develop a science park for the city and the sub-regional economy. These studies include:
- "Exploiting the knowledge base of the South West of England – Final Report" – Arthur D Little, Cambridge UK, 2003 – which concluded that Exeter requires a science park which can be developed over an extended period of time, to act both as a strategic site for inward

investors and provide grow-on space for projects incubated at the Innovation Centre;

- “Feasibility study for a science park in Exeter” – SQW, 2003” – which suggested that there was sufficient demand to support the creation of such a park and recommended the site at Redhayes as the preferred location.

2.5 Members received a progress report on 9 June 2005, which also summarised the project plan and timetable for laying the groundwork for delivering the Science Park. The timetable focussed on:

- establishing the Partnership, its authority and governance based on an agreed Memorandum of Understanding
- negotiating and managing the relationship with the land-owner over the use or acquisition of the preferred site
- progressing planning related issues of the proposal in view of the need to eventually secure planning permission and to restrict development strictly to science park related activity
- establishing a delivery mechanism/body and business plan

2.6 In order to progress this challenging proposal, the City Council has approved £150,000 revenue and £100,000 capital funding as contributions towards progressing key elements of the project.

### **3.0 PROGRESS**

#### *Partnership*

3.1 A Steering Group comprising representatives of the following partners has continued to take this project forward, chaired by the Registrar of the University of Exeter:

- University of Exeter
- Met Office
- Exeter City Council
- East Devon District Council
- Devon County Council
- South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWERDA)

3.2 The Steering Group have commissioned and jointly funded the preparation of a business plan by a science park specialist, formerly the Chief Executive and the Chairman of Manchester Science Park and a board member of the Science Park. The draft business plan is currently being finalised which sets out in some detail the following important aspects relevant to progressing the park:-

- local market interest in locating on the park
- a vision for the science park
- the potential attraction and contribution that both the University and the Met Office bring to the park
- the recommendation that the partners should establish a Company Limited by Shares to manage and develop the park including seeking investment and funding

- working closely with the Innovation Centre which will provide specialist business development services
- the infrastructure needed to access the site
- the outline project timeline indicating the programmes of key action dates and timescale for progressing the development
- an initial financial forecast setting out the initial investment required

#### *Planning Aspects*

- 3.3 In order to set out and control the planning aspects of the project, a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is being prepared by consultants, Atkins, on behalf of the Partnership for East Devon District Council as local planning authority. The SPD is intended to specify what is necessary to secure the quality of the development desired, including the appropriate range of land uses, form of development, landscaping and design quality. It will also provide the basis for East Devon District Council, as the planning authority, to ensure that the development takes place as required and is restricted to “acceptable” Science Park occupiers. It is anticipated that this work will be completed by September 2007.
- 3.4 East Devon District Council, as part of preparing the SPD, have been consulting over the issues and options for the planning of the science park. The Issues and Options document is the precursor to a set of draft Preferred Options for the SPD, which will then be taken forward for further consultation, following which a final version will be prepared for adoption by East Devon District Council. Integrated within this process is a Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment, which is designed to ensure that key environmental issues, and potential impacts, are considered at this stage.
- 3.5 *Delivery Organisation*  
Having considered a number of options, the recommendation from the consultant is for the creation of a “company limited by shares” as the best option for the achievement of the aims and objectives of the project, without being over complex. The organisational structure should: offer the management the commercial flexibility needed to succeed financially and operationally; be transparent to stakeholders and related partners; and enable appropriate criteria for tenants and other occupiers to be established and enforced. It would of course need to be legally sound and not hinder the future development and expansion of the park.
- 3.6 The establishment of a “company limited by shares” would commit each of the current partners to decide whether to be full stakeholders by the investment of equity into the development of the park. This vehicle is recommended because assets of considerable value are involved, and it would provide an independent vehicle which could use its own discretion and powers to effectively manage the business of the Science Park. Further consideration will be given to this recommendation to determine whether this is the best option. Each of the current partners has agreed to consider the issue of making an equity contribution to the project.

*Business Development*

- 3.7 An important function of the science park will be that it is a part of a joined-up provision of business support with the Innovation Centre, to support the establishment and growth of new and established technology-based companies. Whether the Innovation Centre has a physical presence in the science park will depend on the speed of occupation of the new accommodation at the University and whether the business support services required by the science park tenants can be delivered effectively from the Innovation Centre.

*Timeline*

- 3.8 An outline timetable for the project anticipates a planning application being submitted by summer 2008. On the basis of no serious unforeseen circumstances arising, the first building could be completed by late 2010.
- 3.9 It is suggested that the first building should be the Science Park Centre of some 30,000sq ft. lettable space for multi-occupation including accommodation for the Park management and to provide meeting space and reception facilities. Once planning approval has been granted, work will also start on securing tenancies, particularly from larger companies.

*Financial Plan*

- 3.10 An initial plan is being drawn up which seeks to recognise that in the longer term the Park must be a viable, profitable business venture fulfilling the objectives of the partners. It is unlikely that full financial viability will be achieved in its early years. At this point in time the business plan is being prepared on the basis that the business operation of the science park company will be primarily that of a property investment company which owns the initial property, controls what goes on in it, and generates both added capital value and rental value from managing it. The primary aim of the company will still remain that of managing the operation and developing the Park to fulfil the partnership's aims as set out in the attached appendix.

**4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Council has approved £150,000 revenue towards the costs of progressing this development. To date the following expenditure as the City Council's share of costs as attributed to this budget are:-

- preparation of Supplementary Planning Document -£20,000
- preparation of Business Plan -£9,000

Substantial matched funding is being committed by the partners in the project, with a total of £150,000 having been confirmed to date. Substantial additional expenditure will be incurred during 2007/08 to progress the detailed technical work needed to support a planning application.

- 4.2 Government funding recently announced for the designated New Growth Point for Exeter/East Devon includes £100,000 as a contribution towards progressing this project. The newly established delivery team for the New



Growth Point will help ensure the Science Park is progressed in conjunction with Skypark, the intermodal freight terminal and the new settlement at Cranbrook.

- 4.3 The Council's Capital Programme includes an allocation of £100,000 which will be used as a preliminary contribution to the costs of bringing the site forward.

**5.0 RECOMMENDED** that

- 5.1 Members note the progress made with developing the proposed science park.

**RICHARD BALL**  
**HEAD OF ECONOMY & TOURISM**

**JOHN RIGBY**  
**DIRECTOR ECONOMY &**  
**DEVELOPMENT**

**ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE**

**Local Government (Access to information) Act 1985 (as amended)**

Background papers used in compiling this report:

1. "Feasibility Study for a science park in Exeter" SQW 2003
2. "Report on Exeter Science Park" David Rowe 2004
3. "University of Exeter Science Park Supplementary Planning Document – Issues and Options" – Atkins 2006

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## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ECONOMY 1 MARCH 2007

#### UPDATE – GLOBAL GRANTS

#### 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members on progress in the delivery of activities under the European funded Global Grants Programme, known as the ‘Exeter Positive Steps Fund.’

#### 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On the 15 March 2005 Executive approved funding support as part of a bid to secure funding for Exeter from the European Global Grant programme. In October 2005, the Government Office South West approved the bid and, following negotiations, an initiative entitled Exeter Positive Steps Fund was launched in January 2006. The money from the Fund is available for allocation only to community and voluntary groups that help people of working age in Exeter, particularly those living in deprived wards, to improve their skills, build confidence and raise self-esteem, assisting them on the road to work and/or improve their earning potential.
- 2.2 A report to November Scrutiny Committee updated Members on the performance of the Fund. Initially the grants allocated from the Exeter Positive Steps Fund had been behind the anticipated profile. However, following a change in the method and delivery of outreach by Devon Community Foundation (DCF) the management and demand for grants had improved significantly.
- 2.3 A total of 15 projects had been approved for grant awards including 3 which had yet to be finally ratified by DCF. A summary of each one was reported to Members. In total £130,000 of grants had been allocated, added to which, applicants had secured a further £22,000 to the costs of delivering projects. A forecast number of 584 people will be supported by these projects.

#### 3. UPDATE

- 3.1 By the end of January 2007, 24 projects have been supported with nearly £181,000 of grants allocated to groups for the delivery of projects. In addition, applicants had secured just over £51,000 towards costs. The forecast number of people supported by these projects had grown to 823. A summary of all the projects supported to date is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 Recipients of grant awarded projects since November 2006 are summarised below.

#### **Recommended projects reported at the November Scrutiny Committee**

- a) Double Elephant Print Shop - £8,590  
This project was reported at the November Committee, although at the time, it was only recommended and details of the recipient could not be revealed. It provides workshops to help a target group of 20 people who are either unemployed and/or offenders and are also

recovering from brain injuries. The workshops will help them to develop practical skills in the creative industries and improve their self-confidence to help them prepare for part-time employment or if not possible, voluntary work.

- b) Westbank League of Friends - £9,777  
This project also recommended at the November Committee will provide training and support for 36 young carers who are isolated through home life and often disengaged from school. The project will run a series of workshops for three groups of 12 people to raise their confidence, improve IT skills, assist them in writing CV's and also in producing personal development plans that helps recognise their previous and newly acquired transferable skills.

- c) Spacex - £8,000  
This project also recommended at the November Committee will provide training and support to enable 23 disadvantaged young people including those with basic skills, disabled or offenders to form and participate in a project management team to organise and deliver an event. The project will help the participants to understand their career options and also improve their skills in for example, teamwork, communication and budgeting.

#### **New projects approved**

- d) Exeter YMCA - £9,215  
This project will support 50 offenders in custody at HMP Exeter and provide group activity and one-to-one support. Most prisoners have very low abilities in basic skills for life and many of them when they are released from custody will remain resident in Exeter. They will undertake a skills for life programme involving reading, writing and a range of interpersonal and communication skills. A significant number of participants are expected to go on and undertake other courses within the prison.
- e) Olive Tree - £6,591  
This project will work with 16 women from black and minority ethnic backgrounds who have never held a regular job and lack self-esteem. They will follow a programme of self-development, improve their English Language speaking skills, learn practical skills in relation to textiles and sewing and be encouraged to establish a small business co-operative.
- f) Exeter Shilhay - £6,900  
This project will work with 12 homeless people and seek to increase their skills for employment through a music production training programme. Two previous clients of Shilhay have devised the project and through links with Exeter College an accredited basic skills programme will be delivered. It will involve people that would not normally engage in any form of training, who will participate in twice weekly, 3-hour sessions over a 12-week programme.
- g) Wren Trust - £6,554  
This project will work with 45 people from Newtown and St David's and users of the St. Sidwells Centre, whose first language is not English, who will be unemployed, have health problems or learning disabilities. Participants will plan and run musical activities, which will help them to work well in team environments and take up learning opportunities.

- h) Exeter Community Initiatives - £10,000  
This project will run a programme of training courses for 20 people who are leaving care to ease their transition in becoming independent and help them to have improved levels of confidence, life skills and encourage them into further learning, volunteering and/or employment.
- i) Wolf & Water - £ 9,700  
This project will target 24 young people working through schools, youth offending teams and those that are not in employment, education or training (NEET). Three 12 week structured music courses will aim to bring about changes in behaviour and help participants to gain skills through a choice of 3 levels of accreditation within the National Foundation for Youth Music. Participants will also learn basic working skills such as regular attendance and team working. The project also has the commitment of a previous beneficiary, who will be employed as a trainee and be a 'peer mentor' with the participants. Post completion of the courses, the project will continue to support participants.
- j) Refugee Support Group - £9,597  
This project will support 10 women from black and ethnic minorities and whose language is not English. The project aims to reduce social isolation and also deliver an outreach programme of activity, which will improve self-confidence, develop English language speaking skills and signpost participants to opportunities in further education and training.
- k) Headway Devon - £7,355  
This project will support 10 people who have suffered brain damage through a serious accident or illness. The project will start as a pilot dedicated employment service for adults in Exeter and will help to identify voluntary and/or paid work opportunities, work placements and/or training courses and also liaise with and support employers. The client group should achieve improved self-esteem and self-confidence to help them progress towards work opportunities.
- l) Exeter Foyer Residents' Association - £7,003  
This project will support 52 young residents of a supported housing scheme by employing a part-time development worker for 12 months to work with the group to enable them to run their own association and management committee. This will result in the development of self-esteem, personal skills and accredited learning in active citizenship and community involvement.

#### **Next Panel meeting**

- m) Grant allocation - £9,555  
This project will employ 3 part-time staff to work with 20 prolific offenders to improve their self-confidence and inter-personal skills and advise and support them in finding accommodation.
- n) Grant allocation – £6,650  
This project will work with 10 people who are homeless and help them to improve their life skills, basic skills and self-confidence. Participants will participate in the completion of a radio broadcast in Exeter that provides them with valuable work experience and also receive help with the preparation of their CV.

- 3.3 In March 2007, to support groups that have been awarded grants for their projects, DCF are organising an event that will enable participants to network and meet a range of organisations in Exeter whose role is to help people find employment, for example Job Centre Plus, Next Steps, Exeter CVS and local recruitment agencies.
- 3.4 European funding for this programme ceases at the end of December 2007, the last date at which a grant can be awarded. DCF has been working with Officers and the private sector to establish a Community Fund to continue the work of this project. It is hoped that the focus and framework for delivery of such fund, will be similar in nature to that of the Global Grants Exeter Positive Steps Fund. A series of meetings to consider the establishment of such a Community Fund is being led by the private sector, supported by presentations by DCF and the Exeter CVS.
- 3.5 Following on from the lead taken by the City Council and the success of the Exeter Positive Steps Fund (managed on its behalf by DCF) and chaired by the City Council, Devon County Council have been working with the Foundation to extend the programme to the rest of the County (excluding Plymouth and Torbay). The County Council has committed £50,000 to the new programme, called the Devon Step Up Fund, with a further £50,000 currently under discussion. The Foundation is also contributing £70,000 from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People, a programme it manages on behalf of the Department for Employment and Skills (DfES). The Devon Step Up Fund was launched in January this year and too will run until December 2007. The existing Exeter Positive Steps Fund panel, chaired by the City Council, has been asked to assess applications received.

#### 4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Table 1 below summarises the amended funding contributions from the various partners to the project. A small funding shortfall of £9,500 identified in previous reports has remained unmet, which is still being pursued by DCF. Unfortunately, to date HSBC have been unable to release their full contribution to the Fund, as it will only be made available on a project-by-project basis and must have members of their staff actively participating within them. DCF have made presentations to HSBC staff and submitted project proposals, but no interest has been forthcoming. It seems unlikely that funding will be released as a consequence of this restriction, other than £7,500 released by HSBC in recognition of their attendance at Panel meetings and participation in project approval decision making. This means that the shortfall for the Fund has risen to £52,000 plus a loss of £42,500 ESF matched funding.

<b>Table 1: Funding for the Exeter Positive Steps Fund – including management and outreach costs</b>		
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Exeter City Council	£80,000	£80,000
Local Network Fund (DCF)	£70,000	£70,000
HSBC	£50,000	£7,500
Devon County Council	£15,000	£15,000
Independent Charitable Contributions	£11,500	£11,500
Other Funding	£9,500	£0
ESF Global Grant match funding	£193,000	£150,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>£429,000</b>	<b>£334,500</b>

- 4.2 To make good the shortfall, DCF have been in negotiations with a local organisation that may provide money to replace part of the gap in funding left without HSBC's finance. Any further funds secured to reduce the shortfall for the Fund will draw down 45% match from the European Social Fund (ESF), thus enhancing significantly money available for projects. To date, the average cost per individual supported by the Fund equates to around £220 per person.
- 4.3 The Economy and Tourism Unit has some £30,000 within its budget (2006/2007) for helping people in deprived wards to develop their skills and in view of the success to date of the programme, it would be appropriate that the City Council extend its funding support for this Global Grants Fund to help draw down the maximum amount of ESF monies for projects. The additional contribution of £30,000 would be spread over the next financial year and secure matched ESF money of £24,500.
- 5 RECOMMENDED** that
- 5.1 Members note the report
- 5.2 That Members support the further release of £30, 000 from the Economy and Tourism Budget to support the deliver of the Fund and finance additional projects with ESF monies.

**RICHARD BALL**  
**HEAD OF ECONOMY AND TOURISM**

#### **ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE**

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

**Background papers:**

Global Grants report to Executive 15 March 2005

Global Grants reports to Scrutiny – Community and Economy

## APPENDIX 1

<b>Exeter Positive Steps Fund – grants awarded and people supported as at January 31<sup>st</sup> 2007.</b>					
The rows shaded have been to the Panel since November report to this Committee					
<b>Name of Applicant</b>		<b>Grant Awarded</b>	<b>Applicant's secured contribution</b>	<b>Total Project Costs</b>	<b>Number of people to be supported</b>
1	Exeter Home Start	£3,111	£200	£3,311	12
2	CARD Training Project (ECI)	£7,060	£750	£7,810	30
3	St Petrocks	£10,000	£7,533	£17,533	60
4	Telephone Box Company	£4,750	£500	£5,250	15
5	Devon Development Education	£6,000	£2,525	£8,525	12
6	Exeter Forum Theatre	£9,300	£2,575	£11,875	35
7	Olive Tree	£8,922	£500	£9,422	35
8	Exeter CVS	£9,820	£5,300	£15,120	15
9	Age Concern	£2,500	£0	£2,500	250
10	Magic Carpet	£9,950	£0	£9,950	25
11	Ivy Project	£9,681	£0	£9,681	15
12	Ivy Project (individual)	£500	£295	£795	1
13	Double Elephant Print Shop	£8,590	£0	£8,590	20
14	Westbank League of Friends	£9,777	£0	£9,777	36
15	Spacex	£8,000	£2,000	£10,000	23
16	Exeter YMCA	£9,215	£1,295	£10,510	50
17	Olive Tree	£6,591	£1,000	£7,591	16
18	Exeter Shilhay	£6,900	£500	£7,400	12
19	Wren Trust	£6,554	£3,403	£9,957	45
20	Exeter Community Initiatives	£10,000	£0	£10,000	20
21	Wolf & Water	£9,700	£21,401.80	£31,101	24
22	Refugee Support Group	£9,597	£0	£9,597	10
23	Headway Devon	£7,355	£0	£7,355	10
24	Exeter Foyer Resident Association	£7,003	£2,000	£9,003	52
<b>Total</b>		<b>£180,876</b>	<b>£51,777.80</b>	<b>£232,653</b>	<b>823</b>



## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ECONOMY 1 MARCH 2007

#### EXETER AUTUMN FESTIVAL 2006

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report on the evaluation of the Autumn Festival in 2006, which took place between 3 and 19 November 2006.
- 1.2 To seek support for the proposal for the development of the Autumn Festival in 2007 to take place between 2 and 18 November 2007.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The first Autumn Festival took place in November 2004 following a report to Scrutiny Committee Economy in November 2003, which outlined proposals to enhance the Exeter Festivals. The aim of the Autumn Festival is:

“To showcase local cultural activity and encourage the growth and development of talent through participation, performance and creativity”

- 2.2 The key objectives of the Autumn Festival are to:
  - programme events delivering complementary activities to the Summer Festival, involving local performers, groups and other producers
  - merge fringe type events that have been delivered during the festival period in July, providing the voluntary, amateur and semi-professional sector with a platform from which to showcase their work.
  - facilitate the development of locally produced activities and act in an advisory capacity to support amateur and voluntary groups in developing and managing cultural projects
- 2.3 The Autumn Festival was created in order to achieve greater focus and higher profile for participating groups whilst also providing a significant opportunity for wider participation by residents and local artistes in a new event. This also contributes further to the objective of achieving a year round programme of cultural activity in the city.
- 2.4 Following a consultation exercise with community arts organisations in 2004, a common issue that concerned most participants was that the activities of local performers and groups were too often lost or hidden from the public eye because of the high profile received by core professional events during the Summer Festival and that often community events clashed with core festival events.
- 2.5 The Autumn Festival has also contributed to the objective of the promotion of local artistes and organisations, as identified in the Arts and Media Strategy 2004-2006 by:

- investing in a capacity building programme to enable groups to create and manage their own programmes by supporting them with financial assistance and advice where appropriate.
- promoting social cohesion through a programme that is designed to empower residents with an interest in the arts and cultural fabric of the city.
- reducing barriers to participation by providing events that are accessible to those that are socially excluded such as those on low incomes, young people and those with learning disabilities
- encouraging the use of City venues and spaces whilst promoting the Exeter night time economy

### 3. AUTUMN FESTIVAL 2006

#### *Overview*

- 3.1 The number of organisations/groups taking part in the Autumn Festival 2006 increased from 43 in 2005 to 49 in 2006. Approximately 661 artists took part with 285 volunteers and employed staff involved in the organisation of those events. The festival was programmed by outside organisations with the Economy and Tourism unit acting in an advisory capacity, where required. The City Council collated the festival brochure, hosted the festival website and assisted with a planned promotional campaign.
- 3.2 The Festival attracted 6,304 people to ticketed events and over 15,900 people to free events and exhibitions. This compares with 6,867 people to ticketed events and over 32,000 people to free events and exhibitions in 2005. The large decrease in numbers of people attending free events in 2006 from 2005 is attributable to the very popular “Their Past, Your Future” war time exhibition in the Guildhall which was included in the programme in 2005. Some 5,065 people attended ticketed events and over 17,072 people went to free events and exhibitions in 2004.
- 3.3 A mix of 84 amateur, semi professional and professional events took place in 28 different venues. This consisted of 54-ticketed events and 30 free events compared with 105 events in 2005 made up of 46 ticketed events and 59 free events. In 2004 93 events were delivered made up of 48 ticketed events and 45 free events.

#### *Awards*

- 3.4 The Exeter Autumn Festival Awards scheme was set up in 2004 to financially assist community groups, youth groups, clubs, organisations and individuals who want to put on an event, exhibition or activity during the festival. The Award Scheme events produced by all award winners fulfilled the required criteria by:
- contributing to the range and quality of events in the festival programme
  - promoting the creative talents and activities of groups or individuals within the City
  - benefiting the local community
- 3.5 This year the number of applications made increased to 20 from 17 in 2005 and 11 in 2004. This year a total of £4750 was awarded to 12 applicants, 2 less than last year and 4 more than 2004. Grants ranged from £750 for Exeter Forum Theatre to engage a professional comedy writer to work with formerly homeless and vulnerably housed people in Exeter, to £250 granted to Magic Carpet whose activity engaged those with learning disabilities.

*Marketing*

- 3.6 To promote the Festival 25,000 full colour programmes were distributed throughout the City and neighbouring areas. The Exeter Citizen carried a full page feature and daily advertisements designed to raise awareness were placed in the Express and Echo. The Express and Echo also carried various features on highlighted events and printed daily listings on all festival events. An extensive press release and listing campaign was conducted targeting key Devon media organisations, including events such as Alabama 3 Unplugged which provided an international element in order to give the Festival a higher profile in the media.

**4. EVALUATION***Overview*

- 4.1 The Autumn Festival has achieved its key purpose as set out in the recommendations of the 2004 festivals report to committee by providing further opportunities for wider participation, whilst building on the strengths of other key cultural providers in the city and thereby adding strength to the City's cultural position on a local and national basis. This has led to more coverage in local media for individual participants, groups and organisations. Supportive relationships have also been strengthened between amateur, semi- professional, professional and voluntary groups and the City Council.
- 4.2 Questionnaires were sent to the 49 organisations and groups that took part in the Autumn Festival with 76% returned. Participant organisations said that being part of the Autumn Festival was beneficial as the marketing of the festival raised groups/organisations profile and gave them more publicity and wider coverage than would otherwise have been the case. However some organisations found the benefit difficult to quantify. Of those that returned questionnaires, 93% stated that they would participate in the 2007 festival. The remaining 7% are currently either reviewing or considering their inclusion.
- 4.3 It is also clear from engaging with some of the organisations involved that their awareness and experience of regulations and event organisation could be improved by enhancing their knowledge of legal requirements and sources of advice and information. Improvements in this area should enable organisations to avoid unnecessarily running into difficulties over legal requirements and help improve audience and participant experience of the events.

*Programme*

- 4.4 In its third year the festival maintained its wide-ranging and inclusive programme. The number of events in the 2006 festival decreased by 21 to 84 and comprised the following:

Music	42	Education	5	Exhibition	9
Dance	4	Theatre	15	Comedy	2
Literary	5	Film	4		

The number of events in the 2005 festival increased by 13 to 105 from 2004 and comprised the following:

Music	32	Education	43	Exhibition	14
Dance	2	Theatre	12	Comedy	1
Literary	1				

- 4.5 The main difference in the number of educational events can be attributed to the large number of individual workshops organised by the Wren Trust to prepare lanterns by school children for the Christmas Lights switch-on event in 2005. Other Council led events and initiatives benefited from inclusion in the Autumn Festival brochure including the Exeter Continental Market, The Devon Slow Food Market, Exeter Open Studios and the Christmas Lights Switch on. It is estimated that these events combined attracted in excess of 25,000 people.
- 4.6 As recommended in the March 2006 report to Committee it was suggested that consideration be given to the promotion of one or two high profile events to enhance the profile of this festival. Due to working pressures on the festival team, it proved not to be possible to achieve this.
- 4.7 For the festival website a new content management system was employed this year. A total of more than 16,000 visits were made to the website.
- 4.8 Participants were asked to comment on the quality of this year's site. Some 62% of those responding stated that they found the site satisfactory or good and 38% stated that they did not visit the site. Many perceived the site to be not exciting enough, and not what a festival site should look like. Other participants found the site hard to find and that the searchable database required clearer definitions when it came to categorising type of events.

## 5 FESTIVAL 2007

- 5.1 In order to further develop the content and scale of the Autumn Festival, it is recommended that:
- all groups be invited along to an awareness raising/training exercise to help understand and explore areas such as the new licensing and fire regulations, risk assessments, fund raising, data protection and the Disability Discrimination Act
  - the awards scheme be continued and organisations be invited to apply in May 2007 with priority being given to encouraging more applicants that demonstrate or engage with educational content
  - consideration be given to the promotion of one or two established acts or high profile events to enhance public awareness of the Autumn Festival and attract more regional press coverage, with the possibility of an event with a sub regional partner
  - the appearance and ease of use of the website be reviewed together with the Council's IT Services Unit

## 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The total costs of delivering the festival, as summarised below amounted to £24,585 leaving a surplus of £415 from an allocated budget of £25,000.

### Expenditure

Marketing	£18,085
Awards	£4,800
Production costs	£1,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>£24,585</b>

<b><u>Income</u></b>	
Exeter City Council	£25,000
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>£415</b>

**7.0 RECOMMENDED** that

- 7.1 The report on the Autumn Festival 2006 be noted.
- 7.2 Support be given to develop proposals for the delivery of a 16 day Autumn Festival for 2007.

**RICHARD BALL**  
**HEAD OF ECONOMY AND TOURISM**

**ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE**

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

**Autumn Festival Programme Analysis**

In summary **49** organisations were involved in promoting **84** events attracting a total audience of over **22,000**. All award winners are shown in bold type

Event (* Number of performances if more than 1	Audience		Artists	Non Artistes/ Volunteers	Genre
	Ticketed	Free			
<b>To Bee or not to Bee (2)</b>	71		1	4	Theatre
<b>The Linley Band</b>	84		5	4	Music
Between the Worlds with Raven Tales	55		4	2	Story-Telling
Exeter Comedy Club	150		4	7	Comedy
<b>The Photophonic Experiment</b>	100		9	4	Music
<b>Dreadzone</b>	Cancelled	Cancelled			Music
City of Exeter Pipes & Drums (9)		3500	21	4	Music
Drop-In Family Print Making Day		66	3	4	Art Workshop
Christine Anne Marsden's	50		2	2	Music
Jah Wobble	250		17	10	Music
Phoenixounds	110		15	10	Music
Panacea	50		5	2	Music
With A Cup of Tea		50	4	1	Theatre
Poetry at the Palace	55		3	2	Poetry
Silver & Coppin	58		2	6	Theatre
Melosa	40		7	2	Music
Fanclub Dance (2)	165		5	4	Dance
<b>Mitzi Maybe Goes Global</b>	31		3	7	Music
A King Ludd Decoction	Cancelled	Cancelled			Cancelled
<b>Quo Vadis Baby (2)</b>	147			5	Film
Canon-A-Nouvelle	45		6	2	Music
Blazin' Fiddles	300		7	5	Music
<b>'Phone for the Fish Knives (2)</b>		175	5	1	Theatre
Exeter Festival Chorus Haydn	673		154	15	Music
Jazz Club (2)	60		8	2	Music
Theatre Alibi: How to Hug Trees	180		4	4	Theatre
Opera Glass	165		16	10	Music
Exeter Traditional Song Club	60		4	4	Music
Alabama 3 Acoustic & Unplugged	700		11	10	Music
Aquasky	200		6	4	Music
<b>Magic Carpet'Fall' Into Art</b>		22	2	2	Workshop
Exeter Symphony Orchestra	220		60	12	Music
RIP Mrs Pappadopoulos	40		5	2	Theatre
Festival Ceilidh	95		6	12	Music/Dance
<b>Dubterranea</b>	70		9	4	Music
<b>Klezmer - East European Dance (2)</b>	31		5	1	Music/Dance workshop
Exeter Forum Theatre	70		9	8	Theatre
EMCo Poetry & Song	25		3	4	Poetry/music
<b>The Passenger</b>	101			5	Film
<b>Society of Recorder Players</b>	25		25	5	Music
The Guild of Fabulists	10		3	3	Theatre

<b>Event</b>	<b>Audience</b>				
(* ) Number of performances if more than 1	<b>Ticketed</b>	<b>Free</b>	<b>Artists</b>	<b>Non Artistes/ Volunteers</b>	<b>Genre</b>
Blackdown Baroque	60		4	3	Music
Theatre Upstairs Solo Showcase (6)	67		7	4	Theatre
The Boys from Melbourne Street	50		6	2	Theatre
Ga Ga	350		4	6	Music
Hybrid Live	300		8	6	Music
Exeter Local History Day		750	17	3	Exhibition
City Steam Jazz Band	76		6	10	Music
<b>City of Exeter Railway Band</b>	100		25	5	Music
<b>Eat Static, Phil Hartnoll &amp; More</b>	450		12	10	Music
<b>Romantic Atlantic – Terrific Pacific</b>	75		18	8	Music
Blowzabella	200		6	6	Music
Pets (Ramm)		9,000	1	4	
<b>Eye to Eye (Ramm)</b>		As above	Not known	As above	Exhibition
<b>The Art of the Souvenir (Ramm)</b>		As above	Not known	As above	Exhibition
<b>This is me (Ramm)</b>		As above	20	As above	Exhibition
<b>Art Exhibition</b>		5	4	7	Exhibition
<b>Heather Tweed – Anubis</b>		2,000	1	4	Exhibition
<b>Suzannah Jones</b>		As above	1	4	Exhibition
<b>Digital Gallery III</b>		300	11	1	Exhibition
<b>Total</b>	<b>6304</b>	<b>15918</b>	<b>661</b>	<b>285</b>	

Number Of Events **84**

Total Attendees **22,222**

\*9,000 covers visitor figures for all RAMM exhibitions during the autumn festival period

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## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ECONOMY 1 MARCH 2007

#### PROPERTY VOIDS AND DEBTS

#### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the position regarding void properties for the period 1 August 2006 to 31 January 2007 and debts for the four quarters ending on 24 December 2006.

#### VOID PROPERTIES

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The situation regarding void properties as at 31 July 2006 was reported to the Scrutiny Committee – Economy on 7 September 2006.
- 2.2 For the purpose of the report a void is defined as any unused or unlet land or building which is not used for the provision of services but with the following assumptions:
- Includes commercial properties and undeveloped and surplus land
  - Excludes parks and community spaces, allotments and garden plots, grazing land, all highway land, pavement cafes, showcases, parking spaces and Council houses.
- 2.3 Any property remaining un-let for more than one year is treated as a long-term void for the purposes of this report.

#### 3.0 LONG TERM VOIDS

- 3.1 Since the last report two long-term void properties have been let. The former market hall at the St Georges building is now occupied by Foodeaze. Following a very high quality fit out, this space is trading as a food hall with an exciting fresh and international food offer, a restaurant of some 60 covers and the Foodeaze Academy (a cookery school). Topsham Lock Cottage is now let to AS Watersports as an outdoor activity and education centre with bunkhouse accommodation.
- 3.2 The former Electricity Generating Building is under offer as part of the Phase I proposals for the Canal Basin. Completion of the Development Agreement and commencement of conversion works is imminent. The scheme will provide retail and restaurant units and a hotel reception on the ground floor frontage with hotel suites above. The turbine hall to the rear will be an exhibition and gallery space and will provide a breakout area for the restaurant offer. The scheme also includes a new retail and residential block on the adjoining site.
- 3.3 At Beacon Lane, terms have been agreed with Wilkies Stores, the convenience

store operator at number 88B, for them to vacate that unit, and take a much larger trading space within the run of shops at numbers 92 – 98. The hairdresser, currently at number 92, has agreed to move to number 90. Once this is achieved, a new void will arise at 88B. The prospects of re-letting the freestanding unit are good. Tenders for the necessary reconfiguration work were higher than anticipated, but an addition to the capital programme has now been approved by Executive to allow the scheme to proceed. It is anticipated that work will commence in early April and be complete by the end of June.

- 3.4 The Custom House is to be occupied by the Archaeological Field Unit, once works to facilitate this occupation are carried out. A tender for the work has been accepted and the contractor is set to commence the project on 12 March and complete by mid August.
- 3.5 118 Cowick Street is let, subject to contract, and in solicitors' hands.
- 3.6 The first floor offices at 50/53 South Street are now let, subject to contract, to Foodeaze.
- 3.7 The long-term voids as at 31 January 2007 are summarised in Table A below.

**Table A**  
**Long term voids**

Address	Area m <sup>2</sup> Approx	Rental Value £	Date Vacated	Notes
Former Electricity Generating Building	940	10,000	10/06/02	See note 3.2
90 Beacon Lane	47	4,500	27/07/04	See note 3.3
94 Beacon Lane	47	4,500	01/06/04	Ditto
96 Beacon Lane	47	4,500	30/09/04	Ditto
Custom House	246	Nil	01/09/91	See note 3.4
118 Cowick Street	65	7,000	25/03/05	See note 3.5
50/53 South Street	76	4,000	01/10/05	See note 3.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,468</b>	<b>34,500</b>		

#### **4.0 SHORT TERM VOIDS**

- 4.1 Since the last report, the second floor offices at 115 Sidwell Street have been let to the previous tenant of a smaller office area on the first floor, which is now void.
- 4.2 The former Sharps unit at 1 South Street is let to Warrens subject to contract and planning consent.
- 4.3 The new shop unit at 87 Fore Street, created as part of the reconfiguration of the former St George's Market, is let subject to contract.
- 4.4 The retail unit at 81 South Street was taken back by the Council at the end of last November and is now on the market following the carrying out of some remedial work.

- 4.5 The new convenience store at Kinnerton Way secured by the Council as part of the community provision at this site has been marketed and is now under offer.
- 4.6 The shop at 91 Wonford Street is likely to form part of a redevelopment scheme for which discussions between Housing Services and a RSL are progressing. It had been occupied until recently by TVRS but is now vacant and is unlikely to be re-let prior to a scheme proceeding.
- 4.7 120/121 Sidwell Street has recently been handed back to the Council as the previous tenant, Olan Mills Ltd, has gone into administration and the lease has subsequently been disclaimed.
- 4.8 The short-term voids as at 31 January 2007 are summarised in Table B below.

**Table B**  
**Short term voids**

Address	Area m <sup>2</sup> Approx	Rental Value £	Date Vacated/Available	Notes
1 South Street	260	50,000	31/07/06	See note 4.2
98 Beacon Lane	47	4,500	23/06/06	See Note 3.3
115 Sidwell Street (first floor part)	21	2,300	06/10/06	On the market
87 Fore Street	144	45,000	01/07/06	See note 4.3
81 South Street	66	19,000	27/11/06	See note 4.4
Kinnerton Way	120	18,000	15/11/06	See note 4.5
91 Wonford Street	40	1,300	20/12/06	See note 4.6
120/121 Sidwell Street	135	27,500	18/01/07	See note 4.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>167,600</b>		

## 5.0 UNDEVELOPED AND SURPLUS LAND

- 5.1 Since the last report no land in this category has been disposed of.

**Table C**

Land	Area Hectares	Descriptions	Comments
Exhibition Fields (Eastern Fields)	2.6	Development site	Linked to infrastructure provision

## 6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The position on void units compared to the four previous reports is:

**Table D**

	<b>No of Void Units</b>	<b>Total Area of Void Units in m<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Annual Rental of Void Units (£)</b>
July 2004	16	1,641	68,710
December 2004	16	1,655	89,660
July 2005	12	2,711	154,900
January 2006	14	2,740	161,700
July 2006	13	2,964	210,750
January 2007	15	2,301	202,100

- 6.2 The position on long-term voids is very positive with proposals in place for each property in this category. Of the short-term voids, lettings are agreed for a good number of these with the remainder being recent vacancies. The retail property market continues to be generally strong with relatively few un-let units. Well-placed units do let with effective marketing, but units in poorer locations have proved much more difficult to let.
- 6.3 The rental value of current voids amounts to approximately 5.5 % of the total rental value of the commercial portfolio. This is to be expected for a large and varied property base.

## **RENT AND DEBT COLLECTION**

### **7.0 BACKGROUND**

The table overleaf summarises the amount of rent invoiced for each of the four quarters up to the quarter ended 24 December 2006, and the outstanding amounts at various points up to the date of compilation, the 29 January 2007. The first three columns of the table summarise the invoices as sent; the fourth column the amount of rent outstanding at 28 days, along with the percentage of the original total which these figures reflect; the fifth at 90 days, and the final one as at the date of compilation of this table.

### **8.0 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- 8.1 Targets have been set for debt management where the rent is billed on a quarterly basis. The Council has agreed that debts outstanding 90 days after billing should be less than 2% of the total sum invoiced.

### **9.0 CURRENT POSITION**

- 9.1 £30,628 outstanding at 90 days, representing 1.16% of the total invoiced on the M01 to M05 Cost Centres during the 4 quarters ending the 24 December 2006 is a slight reduction on the amount outstanding in the last report made to Committee in September 2006, the figures then being £32,081 and 1.17% respectively.

- 9.2 However, hidden within these figures are various amounts which sit as credits or overpayments against certain invoices: some of these will in due course be returned to the tenants as overpayments and some will be reallocated as payments against the correct invoices, but whilst they sit within the system their presence necessarily results in inaccurate “Outstanding” figures – note especially where 0.00% has been entered: there are bound to be some outstanding invoices here but the total debt is outweighed by certain other invoices having been overpaid, and the resulting credits being temporarily held in the System.
- 9.3 The figure of 44.70% outstanding on the March 2006 Quarter after 28 days arises from a large number of payments although made being held temporarily unallocated during April. The figure is misleading, and would have been greatly reduced shortly afterwards. In addition, certain properties were the subject of “one off” invoiced amounts during this quarter in respect of back charges following Rent Reviews, and this has tended to distort the total in the Amount column for March.
- 9.4 The drop in the total invoices raised after March is due to rationalisation, whereby some properties which had been receiving two invoices up to the March quarter (in respect of Rent and, separately, Insurance) thereafter have been receiving a single joint invoice.

**10.0 RECOMMENDED that:**

- 10.1 The Report on Voids and Debts be noted.

**COMMERCIAL DEBT RAISED AND OUTSTANDING  
AS AT 30 JANUARY 2007**

Summary	Items	Amount	Outstanding at 28 days	Outstanding at 90 days	Outstanding as at 30.01.07
		£	£	£	£
Billed December 2005	296	588,143	49,615	0	0
% outstanding			8.44%	0.00%	0.00%
Billed March 2006	293	853,560	381,516	14,373	0
% outstanding			44.70%	1.68%	0.00%
Billed June 2006	252	586,712	115,367	8,093	0
% outstanding			19.66%	1.38%	0.00%
Billed September 2006	254	620,518	103,527	8,162	2,475
% outstanding			16.68%	1.32%	0.40%
<b>Total</b>	1,095	2,648,933	650,025	30,628	2,475
<b>% outstanding</b>			24.54%	1.16%	0.09%

**DAVID PROSSER  
HEAD OF ESTATES SERVICES  
ECONOMY & DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE**

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

## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ECONOMY 1 MARCH 2007

#### NATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATOR RESULTS 2005/2006 HOW EXETER'S RESULTS COMPARE

#### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 A full analysis of Exeter's performance indicator results for 2005/06 has been sent to Members under a separate cover. This report provides an overview of the performance of those services covered by this committee. The other two Scrutiny Committees will get a similar report covering services within their remit.

#### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Exeter's performance indicator results for 2005/06 were published in the Best Value Performance Plan. The Audit Commission subsequently published comparative data in January 2007.
- 2.2 The graphs contained within the detailed analysis compare Exeter's results against authorities in the Council's benchmarking group and therefore provide a comparison against other broadly similar councils.
- 2.3 The graphs have been arranged so that councils with comparatively good performance are shown on the left side of each graph. Those councils with comparatively poor performance are on the right side of each graph. Exeter's results are highlighted on each.
- 2.4 The Audit Commission uses national upper and lower quartile figures as benchmarks against which to judge service performance. The detailed analysis shows quartile figures for all English district councils against each graph. Services should generally be aiming to be in the top quartile (i.e. the best performing 25% of councils in the country). The star rating shows at a glance how well the service is performing against the quartiles for each indicator. Four stars show that Exeter meets or exceeds the top quartile and one star that it is at or below the lower quartile.

#### **3 RESULTS OVERVIEW**

- 3.1 Exeter is in the top quartile for 25 indicators out of a total of 67 where comparisons are possible (37%), compared to 20 out of 51 (39%) last year. It is in the bottom quartile for 11 indicators, compared with 11 last year.
- 3.2 This year has seen improvement in 24 indicators with 5 of these achieving a higher star rating than last year. However, 16 indicators show a lower performance than last

year, with 8 achieving a lower star rating. It is important to note that many indicators have been introduced or have had their definitions change from 2004/05. There is no comparative historical data for these indicators. Out of the 10 indicators that fall within the remit of this Scrutiny Committee, only 1 has poorer performance than last year and this is BVPI 109c (See below).

### **Planning**

- 3.3 The percentage of new homes built on brown field sites (BVPI 106) increased significantly in 2005/06 to 87.5% compared with 55.4% in 2004/05. This resulted in the Council moving up into the second national quartile. This indicator will inevitably fluctuate dependent on the mix of developments in the pipeline in any particular year. Some authorities are achieving 100% on this PI, including Eastbourne, Oxford, Worcester and Worthing within our benchmarking group. Bedford is the lowest at 45%.
- 3.4 The percentage of major applications processed in 13 weeks (BVPI 109a) increased from 68% to 72.41%. Exeter is in the second national quartile for this indicator and is ninth in the benchmarking group. Worcester is at the top with 90% and Lancaster at the bottom with 49%.
- 3.5 The Council continues to perform well on minor applications processed in 8 weeks (BVPI 109b), achieving 80.46% compared with 76% in 2004/05. Exeter remains in the top national quartile. Of other applications, 83.19% are processed in 8 weeks (BVPI 109c), compared with 86% in 2004/05. Exeter falls from the second to the bottom national quartile. Exeter is 13<sup>th</sup> in the benchmarking group for this indicator.

### **Land Charges**

- 3.6 The performance on standard land searches carried out in 10 working days (BVPI 179) remained at 100%, maintaining Exeter's position in the top national quartile and top of the benchmarking group. The worst performer was Canterbury with 8.10%

### **Appeals**

- 3.7 A new indicator was introduced for the percentage of appeals allowed against the authority's decision to refuse planning applications (BVPI 204). Exeter had 27.9% of appeals allowed, compared with a range from 17-50% in the benchmarking group. It would be misleading to define 'top' and 'bottom' performance – a certain level of 'lost' appeals is appropriate showing that decisions to refuse are balanced between the two ends of the spectrum.

### **Conservation**

- 3.8 The percentage of conservation areas in Exeter with an up to date character appraisal (BVPI 219b) is 52.94%. 41.18% have published management proposals (219c). Both these indicators place Exeter in the top national quartile.

### **Quality of Service**



3.9 Exeter scored 94.4 on a quality of service checklist and is in the top national quartile. Six councils within the benchmarking group scored 100.

#### **4 RECOMMENDED**

(1) That Members consider the report and indicate whether they wish to receive any further information on any particular issue(s).

**JOHN RIGBY  
DIRECTOR ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT**

### **ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE**

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

**Background papers used in compiling the report:**  
National Performance Indicator Results - January 2007

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# Agenda Item 13

ANNUAL BUDGET	SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET	NOTIONAL INTEREST ADJUSTMENT	REVISED BUDGET	CODE	
£	£	£	£		
(2,154,070)	57,990	(7,480)	(2,103,560)	3A1	PROPERTY & ESTATES SERVICES
1,303,570			1,303,570	3A2	TRANSPORTATION/CONCESSIONARY FARES
(2,625,680)	93,700	(465,250)	(2,997,230)	3A3	CAR PARKING
795,440	15,000		810,440	3A4	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
386,860			386,860	3A5	FESTIVALS & EVENTS
484,680		(320)	484,360	3A6	TOURIST INFORMATION
27,000			27,000	3A7	ARCHAEOLOGY IN EXETER
290,320	1,180	(39,390)	252,110	3A8	DISTRICT HIGHWAYS & FOOTPATHS
54,380			54,380	3A9	BUILDING CONTROL
138,040	16,810	(4,010)	150,840	3B1	LAND DRAINAGE
0	7,500		7,500	3B2	ADMINISTRATION SERVICE
0			0	3B3	DIRECTOR ECONOMY & DEVELOPMENT
0	10,000	(1,160)	8,840	3B4	ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION SERVICES
800,960	20,000	(160)	820,800	3B5	PLANNING SERVICES
151,380	47,420	(4,120)	194,680	3B6	CONSERVATION
8,000	30,000	(540)	37,460	3B7	ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD UNIT
102,500			102,500	3B8	PRINCESSHAY
193,120	51,000	(23,770)	220,350	3B9	MARKETS & HALLS
<b>(43,500)</b>	<b>350,600</b>	<b>(546,200)</b>	<b>(239,100)</b>		<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>

REVENUE CO

OVERALL VARIATION FORECAST FOR THE YEAR A

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## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ECONOMY

1 March 2007

#### REVIEW OF BUSINESS

The sub group met on 28 February to discuss a proposed means of re-structuring the agenda to facilitate a more in-depth review of key issues. There was a general desire to have exception reporting of other matters.

The proposed structure of business for the next year is set out below.

#### **June**

Portfolio Holders' Programme for the year  
City Centre Strategy  
Capital Programme Monitoring – year end  
Key Performance Indicators – year end

#### **September**

Festivals  
- Overview  
- Programming, funding and performance  
Financial Stewardship

#### **November**

Portfolio Holders' Half year Report  
Arts  
- Strategy  
- Service Level Agreements and Performance  
Financial Stewardship  
Key Performance Indicators – half year  
Capital Programme Monitoring – half year

#### **January**

Archaeology  
- Update on contracted work  
- Research programme funded by Economy  
Economy  
- Trends  
- Implication for Strategy  
- Inward Investment – activity and outcomes  
Financial Stewardship

**March**

Tourism

- Strategy

- Performance

Financial Stewardship

**RECOMMENDATION**

Members are asked to comment on the above.

**JOHN RIGBY**  
**DIRECTOR ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT**

**ECONOMY & DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE**

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

**Background papers used in compiling the report:**

None.