



## Exeter City Council

To the Chair and Members  
of the Executive

Philip Bostock, Chief Executive

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Our ref:

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A meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** will be held in the Rennes Room, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter at **5.30 pm** on **TUESDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2009** to consider the following business. If you have an enquiry regarding any items on this agenda, please contact Rowena Whiter, Member Services Manager on **Exeter 265110**.

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

Pages

### AGENDA

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

1

#### MINUTES

To sign the minutes of the meetings held on 15 and 29 September 2009.

2

#### DECLARATIONS 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, before any discussion takes place on the item. Councillors requiring clarification should seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer prior to the day of the meeting.

3

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 - EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

**RESOLVED** that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of items 13 to 17 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 5 of Part I, Schedule 12A of the Act.

4

**PROPOSALS FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

To consider the report of the Assistant Chief Executive. 1 - 12

Scrutiny Committee – Community considered the report at their meeting on 10 November 2009 and their comments will be reported.

(Report circulated)

5

**REVIEW OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR HOUSING LANDLORD SERVICES**

To consider the report of the Head of Housing Services. 13 - 18

Scrutiny Committee – Community considered the report at their meeting on 10 November 2009 and their comments will be reported.

(Report circulated)

6

**TREE MANAGEMENT IN EXETER**

To consider the report of the Head of Contracts and Direct Services. 19 - 30

Scrutiny Committee – Community considered the report at their meeting on 10 November 2009 and their comments will be reported.

(Report circulated)

7

**COUNCIL HOUSING ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICY**

To consider the report of the Head of Housing Services. 31 - 38

Scrutiny Committee – Community considered the report at their meeting on 10 November 2009 and their comments will be reported.

(Report circulated)

8

**DOWNSIZING INCENTIVES FOR COUNCIL TENANTS**

To consider the report of the Head of Housing Services. 39 - 44

Scrutiny Committee – Community considered the report at their meeting on 10 November 2009 and their comments will be reported.

(Report circulated)

9 **FUNDING OF NEW TECHNOLOGY FOR EFFICIENCY GAINS IN CLEANSING SERVICES**

To consider the report of the Head of Environmental Health Services. 45 - 60

Scrutiny Committee – Community considered the report at their meeting on 10 November 2009 and their comments will be reported.

(Report circulated)

10 **REPLACEMENT OF HOMECALL EQUIPMENT**

To consider the report of the Head of Environmental Health Services. 61 - 66

Scrutiny Committee – Community considered the report at their meeting on 10 November 2009 and their comments will be reported.

(Report circulated)

11 **PARKING TARIFFS**

Parking tariffs need to be increased to reflect the reversion of the VAT rate to 17.5%. No further increase is recommended in view of the wider economic climate. It is proposed that the tariffs shown in the attached schedule be implemented with effect from 11 January 2010, thus allowing time for the necessary Amendment Order to be advertised and made. 67 - 68

It is therefore recommended that:

- (1) the changes to tariffs detailed in the attached schedule be agreed;
- (2) notice of intention be given to make a Parking Places Amendment Order to revise the City of Exeter (Civil Enforcement Off-Street Parking Places) Order 2008 to enable the tariff changes detailed in the schedule to come into effect on 11 January 2010;
- (3) officers be authorised to make any further necessary changes to the City of Exeter (Civil Enforcement Off-Street Parking Places) Order 2008 to ensure it remains fit for purpose;
- (4) authority to consider any objections be delegated to the Director Economy & Development in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development & Transport;
- (5) subject to consideration of any objections, the Order be made and sealed.

(Schedule circulated)



## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next scheduled meeting of the Executive will be held on **Tuesday 8 December 2009** at 5.30 pm in the Civic Centre.

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

### ***Membership -***

Councillors Fullam (Chair), S Brock, Cole, Edwards, Mrs Henson, Mitchell, Mrs J Morrish, Newton and Wadham

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

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

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## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMUNITY 10 NOVEMBER 2009

#### EXECUTIVE 24 NOVEMBER 2009

### PROPOSALS FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

#### 1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek the views of the Committee on proposals for the Council's approach to Community Involvement to be presented to Executive.
- 1.2 To seek views on the identified priority neighbourhoods of the city as a focus for one aspect of the council's involvement work.
- 1.3 To seek views on the future format of Community Forums.

#### 2.0 Background

- 2.1 My Neighbourhood was an 18 month pilot project, launched in June 2007, aiming to increase resident participation at neighbourhood level in four areas in the city: Exwick, St. David's, Newtown/Polsloe and Kings Heath/Clyst Heath. Members will recall receiving progress and evaluation reports on the pilot at their November 2008 meeting. The evaluation report identified that the project had been successful in its original objectives and had successfully increased the involvement of local people in the work of the partnerships, had enabled residents to communicate more effectively with public sector agencies and had increased residents' wider involvement in their neighbourhood.
- 2.2 Some of the main drivers for this work are:
  - To strengthen and enhance the role of ward members as strategic leaders in the governance of their localities. Community engagement provides extra opportunities for local people to work with their councillors to influence decisions and thus enhance both participatory and representative local democracy.
  - To support the implementation of the Duty to Involve which came into force in April 2009 and requires Councils to 'embed a culture of engagement and empowerment' (Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act) It is designed to ensure that local people have greater opportunities to influence decision making.
  - The Comprehensive Area Assessment where the council is assessed on '*how well is the organisation delivering its priority services, outcomes and improvements that are important to local people*'.
  - Expectations from the public to have a greater involvement in shaping the places in which they live and improving services that impact on their locality.

"Community Engagement and Empowerment is important because it can help to deliver:

**Stronger communities** – resilient communities with strong social networks and active citizens taking responsibility for their own well-being

**Better services** – services informed and influenced by communities so that they meet needs effectively and efficiently

**Vibrant democracy** - representative democracy improved through active participation.”

*(From NEA framework for an ideal empowering authority pg4 ( Improvement and Development Agency)*

2.3 Community empowerment is concerned with creating the conditions by which local communities feel they can influence local public services. It has taken on an increasingly higher profile with government and national policy makers because recent research indicates that the public is disaffected with local government. It showed that too many people feel they have little or no influence over the public bodies that affect their everyday lives and believe they can play little part in decision making. For example:

- Nationally, more than seven in ten (71%) of citizens feel they have **no** influence over decisions affecting their local areas. In Exeter the figure is 72.4%.
- Nationally, only 45.4% of people are satisfied with the performance of their local council. In Exeter the figure is 53.5%, better than the national figure but still leaves nearly one in two (46.5%) less than satisfied.
- Only one third of the population vote in local elections (in Exeter the figure from 2008 is 37.8%), and 41% of those who do not claim that it is because they do not think it will make a difference.
- Residents in deprived areas are the most alienated from the political system.

*“Community involvement and engagement is not new to local government but what has changed is the emphasis central government is placing on empowerment – and the expectation that councils will take a more strategic and systematic approach to placing community involvement at the heart of everything they do.”*

(Source: Councillor’s guide. The Essential Guide for all New Councillors 2009/10, pg 67, Improvement and Development Agency)

### 3.0 Proposal

3.1 Consultation on the proposed model for Community Involvement took place with the following groups and individuals:

- Strategic Management Team
- Departmental Management Teams
- Portfolio Holder Housing and Community Involvement
- Leader of the Council
- Voluntary sector partners – Exeter CVS, Exeter Community Initiatives, Living Options, Ivy Project, Age Concern
- Devon and Cornwall Police
- Political group leaders
- Resident and Community groups who were invited to comment on proposals at a St Sidwells/Devon Link event on the 12 September
- Human Resources Service

A visit took place to learn from the experience of Gloucestershire County Council who have implemented a similar model of community engagement since January 2009. At the time of the visit, feedback was that the project was proving to be effective with a good response from communities and partner agencies. “Overall, the presence of Area Lead Officers

(ALOs) at neighbourhood meetings has been welcomed by representatives of the community, Police and other partners. It is felt that we have 'put GCC on the map' and strengthened links with the community and partners. Feedback from neighbourhood meetings has been very positive and there is general agreement that there is a need for the ALO role."

(Report to Corporate Management Team 23.09.09 Gloucestershire County Council.)

#### 4.0 Proposed Community Involvement Model

##### 4.1 My Neighbourhood PACT

**Aim:** To work in partnership with the community police teams in the city as part of the **Partners and Communities Together (PACT)** project, local councillors, resident and community associations and other public service organisations (DCC, Housing Associations, Exeter University, Health Services, Voluntary and Community Sector etc) to provide opportunities for effective participation from individuals and communities to get and exchange information to improve services and neighbourhoods.

- 4.1.1 Feedback from members, residents and officers has helped to inform and develop this proposal for the continuation of our involvement work. The proposals are based on the learning from the pilot but takes account of resources now available. The My Neighbourhood Pilot cost £51k over 18 months (for a contract with the Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) to deliver capacity building support to communities). There was an additional £20k for community grants and another £9k in core running costs to support the cost of venue hire, publicity and refreshments.
- 4.1.2 For 2009/10, there is existing revenue funding of £25,000 to support Community Involvement work. This proposal is based on a model that works within this budget (plus a c/f of £8,000 from the pilot stage over the next twelve months.) This proposed model is based on the recognition that it would be beneficial to work alongside the established Partners and Communities Together ( PACT ) model delivered by the police – a nationally recognised approach that is already established in communities across Exeter. This would present the opportunity for a more 'joined up' approach to working with communities, It would enable us to bring efficiencies into the work through shared resources and expertise, it would help the city council to target services more effectively at communities expressed needs and also it reflects best practice in partnership working.
- 4.2 PACT meetings and activities in neighbourhoods take place once a month. Some of these take place in local community venues, other sessions take place on street corners or alongside existing community meetings that are organised by resident/ community associations. The City Council engagement process would seek to work alongside existing formal and more informal structures.
- 4.3 It is proposed that officers from across the City Council will be selected (through a recruitment process) and supported to attend local area PACT/ My Neighbourhood meetings. The Police deliver PACT through 17 identified policing areas (including the city centre and Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital). (**See map on page 9 for Neighbourhood Police teams areas in Exeter.** ) However, the proposal suggests that the City Council takes a 'pilot' approach to the roll out of the project in order to understand the work involved to ensure that it can be adequately resourced. It is suggested that of the 17 areas of the City that the police currently deliver PACT, the City Council participates in initially half of these areas. This would suggest we recruit up to eight officers as Area Liaison Officers (ALOs) to deliver the My Neighbourhood /PACT work in the first 12 months of the pilot.

The ALO role will be an opportunity for officers to develop new skills, experience a wide range of issues and work closely with elected members, community groups and residents and partner organisations. **(More information on the role of the ALO and the required skills is outlined in Appendix One.)** The ALO role will assist officers to have a wider understanding of the council's business and to develop 'connections' across the Council and the City.

The role would need to be managed within the officer's existing role and hours. It is essential that officers have the full support of their managers and recognised that the role gives added value not only to the individual officer's development, but also to the department and indeed the whole council.

- 4.4 The recruitment process will be open to all officers across the council who have the potential and appropriate skills to take on the role. An honorarium of £1,000 will be paid as remuneration for the task in lieu of additional hours worked. The role will be initially for one year and must have the support of the relevant Line Manager and Director. It is estimated that the role will take around one to two days per month (mostly evening meetings and occasional weekends). Training and follow up activities that are related to the role will be part of the officers' core working hours and support will be provided by the Community Involvement Officer.
- 4.5 The focus of the work will be on wider community issues and priorities, although where individuals have specific issues regarding council services, these will be fed into the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system operated by the Customer Service Centre.

## 5.0 Resources

- 5.1 The project has £25,000 in 2009/10 plus £8,000 carried forward from 2008/9. It is proposed that the breakdown of expenditure is as follows:

<b>Detail</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Honorarium for Area Liaison Officers	£8,000
To support community meetings costs; venue hire, publicity, training for officers and partners and contributions to voluntary and community sector partners to support the capacity building requirements of new and existing community and resident associations.	£10,000
For a community kitty where groups across the city can bid for small community grants (up to £500) to sustain or kick start new community initiatives or for small capital expenditure projects (such as community notice boards or minor landscaping projects) that encourage a sense of pride and belonging and stronger communities.	£15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£33,000</b>

It is proposed that the community kitty is open to all groups across the city, not just the groups in the My Neighbourhood/ PACT areas. A Participatory Budgeting (PB) exercise would be used twice a year, where representatives from communities across the city, plus representative councillors from each group would decide on which groups should be allocated the grant (following an application process). It would be important to hold the PB event fairly regularly so that groups were not waiting on the outcome of their bid for too long and to ensure groups were kept on board with the community engagement process. It is hoped that other agencies may be able to contribute to the community grants, such as

the police, housing associations and possibly the business community. (In the My Neighbourhood Pilot an additional £6,000 was contributed to communities from local businesses, national suppliers, county councillors and the police, and an additional £10,000 was raised through Awards for All as a result of the My Neighbourhood work in Exwick).

5.2 The project would be evaluated at the end of the first twelve months (December 2010) to determine the effectiveness of the approach and to decide funding required for any future roll out of the initiative. Interim reports would be provided after the first six-month period.

5.3 Members may wish to note that The South West Regional Improvement & Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) invited Exeter City Council and other Local Authorities to bid for funding up to £12,500 to support initiatives that demonstrate good practice in the area of community engagement and responsiveness. As part of the bid, councils were required to demonstrate what had already been achieved in terms of effective partnership working, clear leadership and how it has impacted on changes to work practices across the organisation.

The successful authorities (two will be chosen across the South West region) will be asked to share their good practice to other authorities and partnerships across the region. The city council has applied for the funding to support the following activities:

Detail	Amount
Joint training for Community Engagement partners	£4,000
Communities First Information Day	£ 2,500
Capacity building support for community and resident associations	£4,500
Participatory Budgeting event	£1,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>£12,500</b>

The SWRIEP Programme Board will select two authorities at their Board meeting on 28 October. Authorities will be notified on the 29 October.

## 6.0 Internal mechanisms to progress issues

6.1 The proposal is to develop a pro-forma case sheet to record and monitor progress on actions **for the City Council**. Individual resident issues would be fed into the existing Customer Relation Management System (CRM) process to avoid duplication of tracking systems. Issues for other authorities would be passed onto an appropriate contact. (DCC have agreed to identify a lead contact for the authority plus officer contacts in each directorate).

For community-wide issues, the City Council will adopt the PACT approach of working to three priorities identified by each area at any one time. The priorities would be for the community, not for each agency, therefore there would be times when there are three issues for the City Council to address, and other occasions when there were none. The ALO role at this time would be to continue to support the engagement and development process within their identified community. The priorities would be tracked and reviewed at each meeting to identify progress and decide when issues can be moved off the priority list to leave space for new priorities to be identified.

It is proposed that we pilot a Traffic light system to identify priorities for action within a given timescale (similar to the system adopted by the Community Tasking Action Team)—Red for issues to be addressed in the short term (one to three months), Amber for Issues to be addressed within a medium timescale (3 - 6 months) and green for issues that are longer term. This gives the City Council a systematic approach to monitor progress and to be able to identify any actions taken in response to residents concerns. It also gives a

transparent process to be able to give reports back to residents at subsequent meetings and on the city council website.

Administrative support for the project will be provided from within the Chief Executive's Department.

In addition to existing duties, the Community Involvement Officer will be responsible for the development and support of the ALOs, liaising with Heads of Service and partners to resolve challenging issues, provide cover and backup for community meetings when an ALO can't attend and reporting progress of the programme and co-ordinating the project on behalf of the City Council.

Reporting back to communities is crucial to the success of the project. This will be done using city council tools including the Citizen, website, and using other media as appropriate.

## **7.0 Priority Neighbourhoods and the Place Survey**

- 7.1 The Place Survey replaces the Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) surveys conducted in 2000, 2003 and 2006. The main aim of the survey is to measure satisfaction with local public services. Data from the place survey will form part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) with a number of questions producing National Indicator scores and others relating to the overall performance of the council.

For the purposes of this report, analysis from the Place Survey identifies where residents live who are least satisfied with the Council and local police force and who feel the least informed, engaged and able to influence decisions. These areas correlate with the priority neighbourhoods as identified in the Geography of Deprivation (ECC April 2008) as they tend to score higher rates of deprivation.

- 7.2 The eight areas of Exeter proposed for Community Involvement in the first 12 months of the pilot are identified below. (Members will note that some wards are broken down into two areas where they represent a particularly large ward – There may be an argument for identifying further breakdown of other large wards eg Exwick – but the project is based on identifying eight areas in total in this pilot stage).

1. **Priory** - focus on Burnthouse Lane (Trees and Poets)/Rifford Road
2. **Priory** - Countess Wear – Glasshouse Lane
3. **Newtown**
4. **Cowick**
5. **Wilmington**
6. **Exwick**
7. **St. Thomas**
8. **Pinhoe**

**(See map on page 11 of Exeter identifying these areas)**

### **Wards excluded from this list that feature high levels of deprivation:**

**St David's** the city centre has proven hard to engage and St David's Neighbourhood Partnership working effectively in partnership with local councillors and police

**Mincinglake already** a lot of very effective partnership work in this ward via Tenant Liaison Manager, city councillors, police and the Beacon Heath Community Project.

Feedback from the Neighbourhood Police teams supports the eight areas identified in 7.2 as most likely to benefit from a city council community involvement investment.

7.3 The Social Health and Inclusion Partnership (SHIP) has identified that they and the rest of the Local Strategic Partnership should work to address inequalities by focusing resources in areas of the city with the greatest levels of deprivation. By focusing the work of the My Neighbourhood/ PACT initiative on these areas, it would support our commitment to addressing inequalities in the city.

7.4 When city council officers were asked for feedback on areas that would benefit from a community involvement focus, the areas particularly identified were as follows:

- Priory – Burnthouse lane
- Buddle Lane/Newman Road/Dunsford Road square area of Cowick
- Summerway area of Pinhoe
- Countess Wear – Glasshouse Lane

(Officers who contributed: Tenant Liaison Manager, Parks and Open Spaces Manager, Cleansing Services Manager, Community Safety Partnership Co-ordinator.)

## **8.0 Community Forum**

8.1 Consultation with the Wavelength panel and the Community Forum mailing list members gave no conclusive results between the two models.

The two models were a Question Time format and a Thematic approach. It is suggested that we introduce four thematic forums and one Question Time a year.

8.2 There is a recognition that it would be useful to do further consultation with LSP partners on the future themes and format of the forums

## **9.0 Recommendations**

9.1 That the committee gives their views on proposals for the Community Involvement including the roll out of My Neighbourhood/PACT into neighbourhoods identified through the Place Survey results 2009 and with reference to the Geography of Deprivation Priority neighbourhoods.

9.2 That the Community Forum model proposed is agreed and that further consultation takes place with LSP partners on the thematic areas and format

**BINDU ARJOON**  
**ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENT**

Date: 14 October 2009

## APPENDIX ONE

### Identified Role and Skills for Area Liaison Officers

#### Role:

- To be the principal point of contact for the My Neighbourhood PACT project within a named area. To be the named point of contact to help residents and community groups link to the council.
- Work with officers, members and partners to co-ordinate information and feedback to relevant individuals within directorates or partner organisations.
- Attend meetings in the identified area (usually once a month), and where appropriate identify fellow officers who also need to attend.
- Help directorates link into local communities particularly on consultation and service delivery.
- Work closely with partners and other key stakeholders in the area. Issues can rarely be dealt with by one organisation and usually find a better solution when solved in partnership.
- Encourage and support local people to be more actively involved in the wider community.
- Share issues, experiences and learning with other area leads and influence the development of the council's programme of Community Involvement.

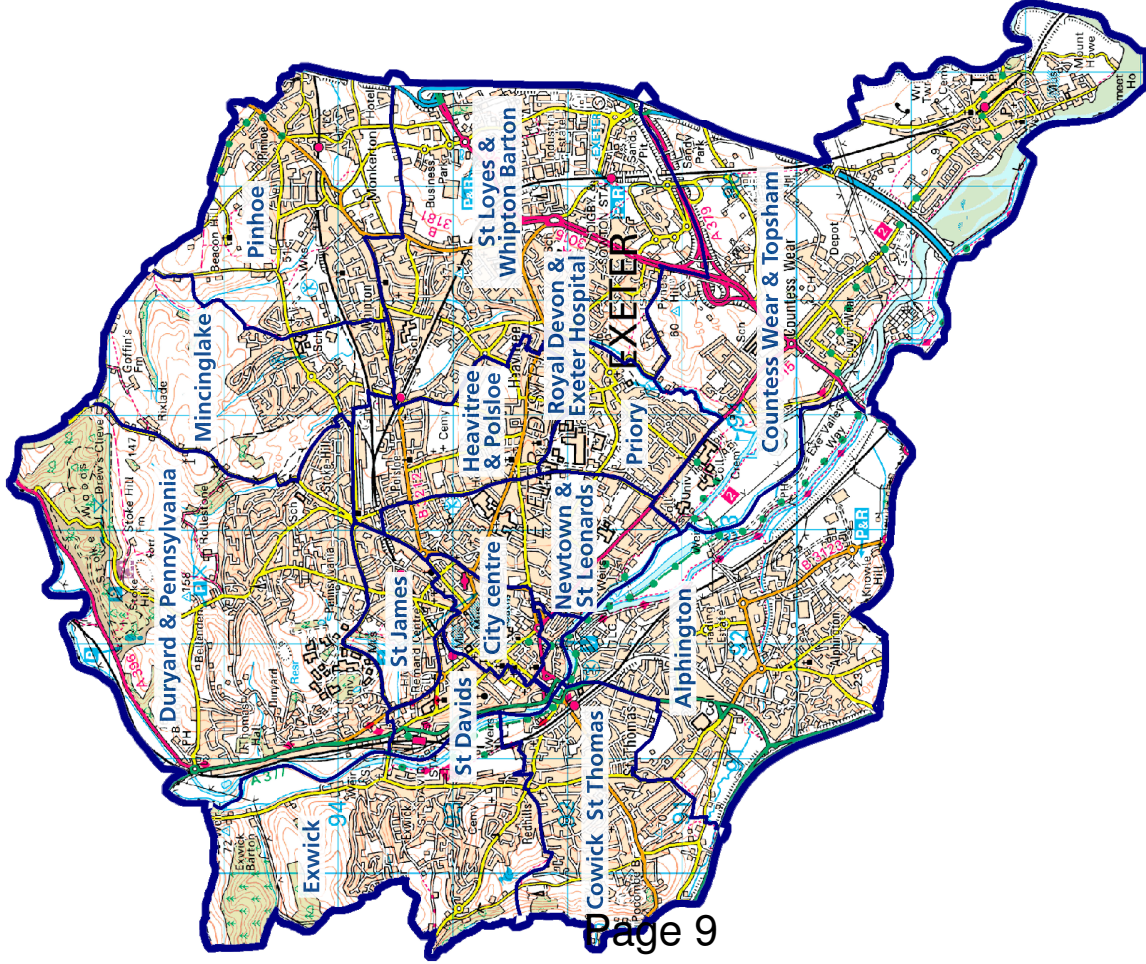
#### Skills, Experience and Qualities:

- Experience of face to face work with residents in current or previous role (or voluntary experience of supporting a community initiative)
- Effective communication skills with residents, elected members and partners to manage expectations and present clear information
- Ability to build trust with residents and partner agencies and to motivate and reinforce the value of participation
- To champion and promote improvements for communities in partnership with other identified key residents and partners
- An understanding and commitment to challenging the factors which contribute to social exclusion
- Open and participatory style, and commitment to community participation
- Ability to work flexibly, both as part of a team and own initiative
- Ability to work flexible hours, including evenings and occasional weekends

# Your local neighbourhood policing teams - Exeter

Your Exeter Neighbourhood Policing Inspector is Inspector Brent Davison.

Your local neighbourhood policing teams in Exeter consist of four geographically based neighbourhood team leaders who are police sergeants (PS), neighbourhood beat managers (NBMs) who are police constables and police community support officers (PCSOs).



## Exwick Neighbourhood

PS Morris Elphick  
PC Mark Arthurs  
PCSO Michael Lippett  
PCSO Will Malcolm  
Exeter\_west@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

## Alphington

PS Morris Elphick  
PC Michele Maton  
PCSO Juliet Cullen  
PCSO Kevin Davies  
Exeter\_west@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

## Heavitree & Polslloe

PS Matthew Lazenby  
PC Gary Wall  
PCSO Stephen Parsons  
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## Cowick

PS Morris Elphick  
PC Chris Conway  
PCSO Darren Wallis  
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## Mincinglake

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PC Simon Thomson  
PCSO Richard Shelton  
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## St Thomas

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PC Karl Colman  
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## Pinhoe

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PC Lou Western  
PCSO Ryan Williams  
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## Countess Wear & Topsham

PS Tom Cunningham  
PC Kevin Wetherell  
PCSO Percy Giles (Topsham)  
PCSO Mark Marshall (Countess Wear)  
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## Priority

PS Tom Cunningham  
PC Ian Lugg  
PC Paula Trevett  
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## Duryard & Pennsylvania

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PC Dave Cropp  
PC David Dalziel (University of Exeter)  
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## Newtown & St Leonards

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## Exeter city centre

PS Andy Nordqvist  
PC Katy King  
PC Sarah Tong  
PC Alison Cruwys  
PC Raymond Faichey  
PC Barry Seager  
PC Tim Soper  
PCSO Martin Pascoe  
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PC Chris Leisk  
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## St James

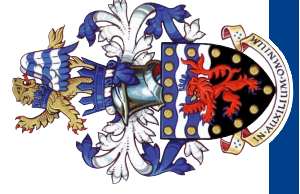
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## St Loyes

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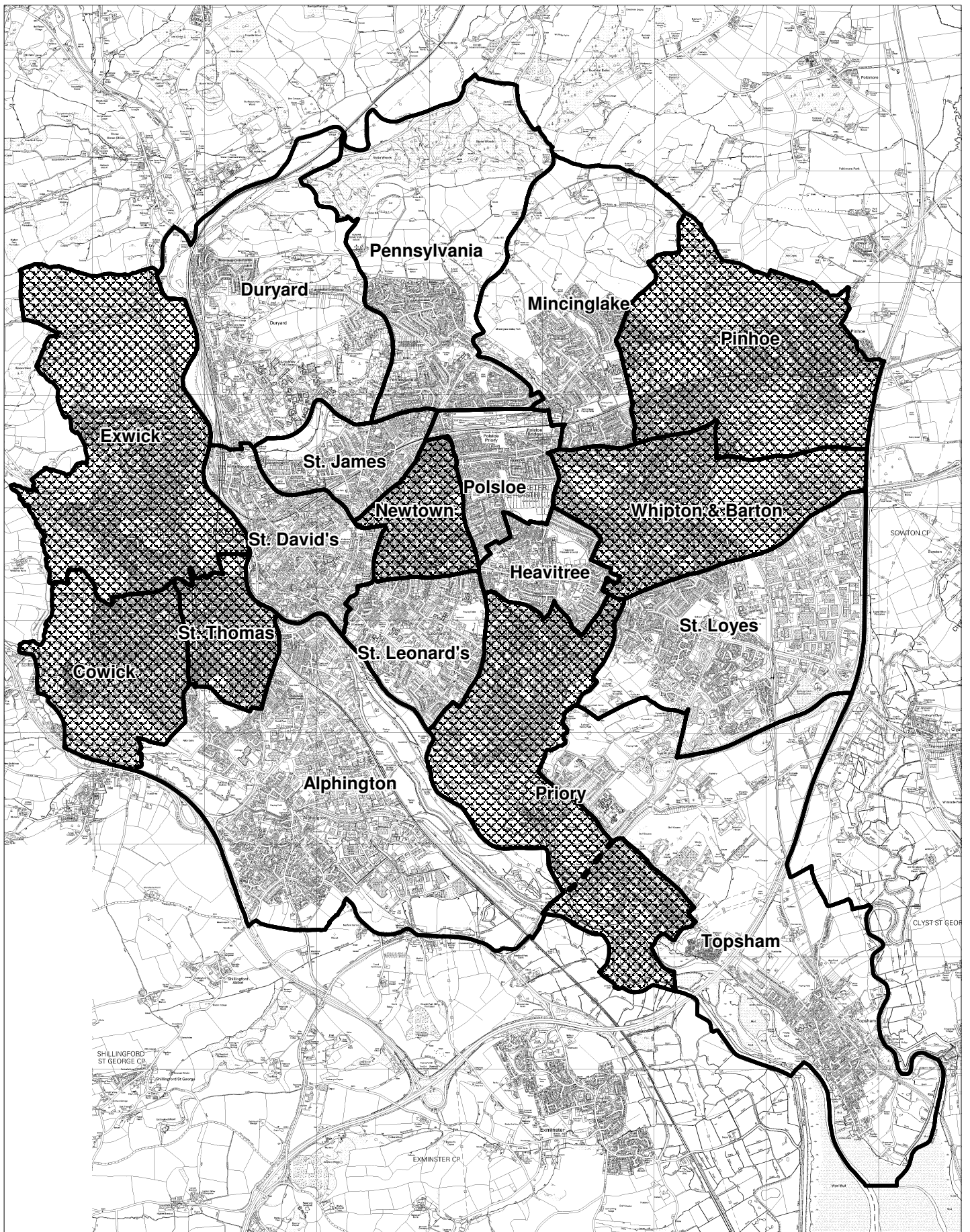
## Whipton Barton

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DEVON & CORNWALL  
CONSTABULARY

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**Exeter City Council**

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## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY 10 NOVEMBER 2009

#### EXECUTIVE 24 NOVEMBER 2009

### REVIEW OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR HOUSING LANDLORD SERVICES

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Members' approval for the amended Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Procedures document following its regular review.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee – Community on the 28 February 2006 Members approved the current anti-social behaviour policy to ensure it embraced existing legislation, official guidance and current best practice. As part of our obligations under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 we are required to review these policies and procedures on a regular basis and have committed to carry out a comprehensive review every three years.
- 2.2 The review has been carried out over the past four months and has taken the following into account:
- Ensuring the policy statement complies with the requirements of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.
  - Changes in legislation.
  - Consultation outcomes with tenants through our Status Survey 2008 and a tenants' focus group looking specifically at how we deal with reports of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).
  - Staff feedback via a working group of those staff involved in tackling ASB as part of their day to day responsibility, and a review by the Service Improvement Board.
  - Existing procedures for investigating reports including timescales and action taken.
  - The experience of the Housing Solicitor and the ASB Case Manager.
  - Use of partnership working to address anti-social behaviour, including our relationship with the police and the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership.
- 2.3 As a result of the review the document, Anti-Social Behaviour - Statement of Policy and Procedure, has been revised. A copy is available on the website and is linked to the agenda. It is also available in the Members' Room and by request from Member Services. This document will replace the Council's previously published policy and procedures for dealing with reports of Anti-Social Behaviour on the Council's housing estates.
- 2.4 The document clearly sets out the Council's policies and procedures for dealing with ASB and harassment on its estates and will enable staff, Members and residents to understand what we will do with incidents of ASB. The document also includes sections on dealing with racist incidents, domestic abuse and providing support and protection for witnesses.

### 3. TENANT CONSULTATION

- 3.1 The Status Survey carried out in September 2008 stated that we have high levels of satisfaction from tenants (85%) for overall performance and 84% of tenants stated that the Council's performance in dealing with ASB had either improved or stayed the same over the past two years.
- 3.2 However, the results also showed that 29% of tenants had stated that they found it difficult getting hold of the right person when making a report about ASB; 32% stated they found staff unable to deal with the problem and 31% were dissatisfied with the final outcome of their report. The review team were very keen to ensure that these issues were addressed to help improve this level of satisfaction in the next survey (due in 2010).
- 3.3 A focus group of tenants who had reported ASB to the Tenancy Services team and had therefore used the service met with an independent facilitator on 21 September 2009 to look at the ASB Policy and Procedure and to review the service from their point of view. The group looked specifically at what worked well and what needed improving.
- 3.3 The review group have taken into account the comments from both the STATUS survey and the residents' focus group and looked at ways of addressing their concerns and improving the overall service for everyone.

### 4. REVISIONS FOLLOWING CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The table below shows what the focus group believed were areas of improvement in relation to how the housing unit dealt with reports of ASB and how the policy and procedure has been amended to address these comments. It is important for Members to note there were many positives that came from the focus group but that as part of our commitment to improve the service we have concentrated on the areas where improvement is required.

<b>Focus Groups Areas of Improvement</b>	<b>Outcomes within the ASB Policy and Procedure</b>
Residents were not fully aware of the service standards and felt they are not clearly defined within the ASB leaflet provided to tenants when making a report of ASB. They were also unsure of timescales in relation to the responding to e-mails etc and what to do when they wish to complain.	Although the leaflet does explain what action we will take when receiving a report of ASB, actual "service standards" are not clearly set out. It has been agreed to meet with the focus group following the policy being approved to revise the leaflet.
There was an issue raised about Estate Officers and Wardens in relation to what action we can take and how we deal with reports of ASB.	Once the Policy and Procedure has been agreed full training of Estate Officers and Neighbourhood Wardens will take place to appraise them of changes and to act as a refresher course on the procedures to follow.
The focus group confirmed what had been stated in the Status Survey in regard of difficulty in getting hold of the correct person and getting a response.	The revised policy and procedure ensures that staff are obliged to maintain regular contact with complainants when a case is open and being investigated and action taken (a minimum of contact at least once a month).

	Estate Officers and the ASB case manager are expected to spend the majority of their time out on the estates pro-actively managing the areas they are responsible for and this obviously impacts on their ability to take and respond to messages or reports when received. However, there are clear timescales set put in the revised procedures for officers to respond within that will be included in the revised ASB leaflet. Cover within the office to deal with enquiries has also been introduced.
There was a report from one couple at the focus group about the time taken to receive diary sheets.	The procedure has been amended to send out diary sheets at the initial investigation by officers (where they are appropriate) which should take place within 1 working day of the report on cases classified as serious. Officers will also contact those households who have been sent diary sheets on a regular basis to make sure they are using them and recording any incidents correctly.
The focus group felt that the Council did not listen or always take reports seriously or understand the need to be offered support or counselling.	A new leaflet called “information for witness” has been agreed with the tenants’ Editorial Board and has recently been published. This will be provided to tenants as appropriate. The revised Policy and Procedure makes clear reference to the use of mediation and agencies offering support to victims of ASB. This will form part of the training to Wardens and Estate Officers.
The focus group wanted an action plan in place showing what would happen next when they reported ASB.	The revised policy and procedure ensures that an action plan is agreed and put in writing to the complainant. This action plan will include future actions and timescales, together with who is responsible for doing each task.
There was some confusion within the focus group as to what action a complainant should take following breaches of any legal action such as an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) or Injunction.	A letter setting out clearly what court orders have been obtained and what a complainant should do in the case of a breach has been drafted and will form part of a set of suited letters relating to keeping tenants informed when they have reported ASB.

4.2 The focus group were then asked for their suggestions going forward on how we can improve the way we deal with reports of ASB, the table below shows those suggestions together with the review team’s response.

Focus Groups suggestions going forward	Outcomes within the ASB Policy and Procedure
Earlier escalation for serious cases needed especially where it concerns various forms of harassment.	This is agreed and the policy and procedure make specific reference to what staff should do in regard of cases where there is harassment. Also with the employment of a specialist housing solicitor we are now in a position to escalate cases far quicker and have in recent months been able to obtain interim injunctions within hours of receiving the report.
Clarify supported housing role	This will form part of the revision to the ASB leaflet in conjunction with this focus group and the training to staff following a final version of the policy and procedure being approved by the Executive.
Improve response to messages, correspondence and e-mail ensuring there is cover when people are on leave and that messages are picked up.	The proposed policy and procedure has specified timescales for the response to messages and arrangements are in place to cover staff on leave and that messages are picked up.
Write case studies of actual cases in the residents' newsletter (Insight) to show the community the action we are taking and encourage people to have the courage to report ASB.	This has been added to our policy and case studies will be approved by our Tenants Editorial Board.
Consider reducing the size of estate officers' patches and train them more in relation to ASB.	There is currently a comprehensive review of the Tenancy Services team underway which will look at the range of functions the team undertakes and will focus on the way we manage our neighbourhoods. This review may lead to a change in how neighbourhood management is provided to tenants. This will form part of a further report to Members in due course.
Consider the policy of moving the victim and the letting process for any new tenants.	Our policy states that our preferred option is not to disrupt any victim of ASB by them having to move and to also give them support through the process.

4.3 The ASB focus group has asked to work with staff in an advisory capacity and review the outcome of their work in relation to ASB. As outlined above we will be asking this group to meet with us to review our ASB leaflet, to feed back the outcome of this report and help with future monitoring on the ASB service.

4.4 In response to one of the issues raised in the 2008 STATUS survey, when each case is closed we send out a letter informing the complainant that the case has been closed, giving the reasons for this and enclosing a survey form to complete about their satisfaction on how the case was been dealt with. The results of these surveys are

reviewed by the housing management team and tenants on the performance review committee. We shall use this survey to monitor the changes we have proposed in the new policy document and plan future improvements where required.

**5. RECOMMENDED:**

- 5.1 That Scrutiny Committee – Community supports and Executive agrees to adopt the revised Anti-Social Behaviour – Statement of Policy and Procedure.

HEAD OF HOUSING SERVICES

S:LP/PA/Cttee/1109SCC1  
8.10.09

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

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

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

None

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## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY 10 NOVEMBER 2009

#### EXECUTIVE 24 NOVEMBER 2009

#### TREE MANAGEMENT IN EXETER

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To present to Members recommendations for the safe, effective and sustainable management of trees within the Council's care.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council has specific responsibilities regarding tree management within the city, and in particular it has a legal duty to look after its own tree stock in a manner that does not expose people and property to unnecessary risk. The recently adopted Tree and Woodland Strategy identifies how best to manage existing and future trees within our care in a sustainable and sensitive manner.
- 2.2 To enable the correct levels of management the Council needed to know the extent and condition of trees and have a system of data management in place. Members previously agreed the introduction of a Tree Management Plan in order to obtain the necessary data and put in place a system of delivery that was robust and effective.
- 2.3 The Council also controls the care and management of trees in non-council ownership through various planning controls. It manages Tree Preservation Orders, trees within Conservation Areas or with covenants, and those affected by construction and similar works to ensure they are also afforded protection. Planning staff also advise on development issues regarding both retention of trees, and trees within landscaping proposals. This role is excluded from this report.
- 2.4 The Council's Parks and Open Spaces team also manage trees in Exeter on behalf of Devon County Council, the Highways Authority. For the purpose of this report the management of highways trees is also excluded. However, it is the intention to manage highways trees in an identical manner to the Council's trees, subject to certain variations required by the Highways Authority.
- 2.5 In 2002 the Council began to develop a robust and defensible tree management system. At that time the Council had no comprehensive knowledge of the tree stock. Random surveys had been undertaken of main parks, but this data was not linked to a programme of proactive care. Additional funding was provided for a pilot survey and in a subsequent report to Members in 2004 an eight-year survey programme, the Tree Management Plan, funded for five years was approved.
- 2.6 The aims of the Tree Management Plan were to:
- develop further a quantifiable and practical survey approach,
  - establish the extent and condition of the Council's tree stock
  - allow for immediate remedial works the surveying would uncover
  - allow for cyclical inspections
  - fund replacement and new tree planting, catching up on losses from previous decades

- identify and populate a suitable database system with GIS links to allow mapping of individual trees and woodland.

2.7 It was the intention to bid for further funding to complete the survey work however in the event it is now thought we are in a position to manage trees without the need for further detailed survey work and hence no additional funding is required.

2.8 As a result of the survey work a risk matrix has been developed, which shows the frequency of ongoing inspections judged appropriate following the initial inspections undertaken. This is contained in Appendix I of this report.

2.9 The Tree and Woodland Strategy was adopted in January 2009. As might be anticipated, it was logical that the development of both the Strategy and the Tree Management Plan had progressed in tandem. The Tree Management Plan is coming to an end so a framework for future tree management needs to be approved.

### **3. KEY POINTS OF TREE MANAGEMENT**

3.1 There are many tree management systems that can be used however they must demonstrate responsible proactive management where the scope of inspection is defined and the recommended actions are acted upon. The documentation must be present and the whole programme must be systematic so as to be able to demonstrate to a judge in the case of an accident that the Council has exercised reasonable care and taken appropriate avoiding action as necessary to protect those who are reasonably likely to be affected by a tree.

3.2 The tree management system proposed in this report seeks to provide:

- Affordable and practical tree maintenance
- Appropriate risk reduction to people and property
- Comprehensive customer enquiry handling to meet Council quality standards
- Good standards of tree husbandry
- Management standards that meet the requirements of the Tree and Woodland Strategy
- A planned tree planting programme
- A sustainable tree warden scheme
- Accessible and educational tree information

### **4. OPTIONS FOR TREE MANAGEMENT**

4.1 There are three main approaches to tree management:

- 1) Fully in-house - this tends to be found only in the larger organisations where there is sufficient work to enable at least one full time working team, under the direction of arboricultural officers. This has been considered, but estimated costs are considered unacceptably high.
- 2) Hybrid - usually strategic management is in-house, and operational work is undertaken by contractors. This is the method the Council has used since 1994.
- 3) Fully contracted out - there is potential for a conflict of interests where the contractor is identifying and recommending the work undertaken. However, partnering invariably leads to a very close working relationship which tends to preclude such problems. Two separate contractors, one on the client side and one on the operational side may be an option, but this is not as cost effective and has a potential for contractual issues to arise.

- 4.2 Exeter's trees have been largely managed on a reactive basis in the past. This is an inefficient way of working but one that was unavoidable due to the lack of information regarding the tree stock. One of the objectives of the tree management project was to identify all the trees owned or managed by the Council and, from this, identify and budget for maintenance needs. The earlier approaches and development to the proposed tree management system are detailed in Appendix II.
- 4.3 Following consideration of the key tasks that need to be undertaken within tree management as a whole and where it is best to place these (See Appendix III) it is proposed that the third option in 4.1 is followed. We would develop and extend the existing tree management contract between Parks and Open Spaces and the current arboricultural contractor into a partnering arrangement. The existing contract is in place until 2011 therefore enabling this approach to be developed. The aim is to improve tree management by having a closer working arrangement between client and contractor. The objectives will be to:
- Reduce communication chains
  - Work to a performance criteria as opposed to individually specified inputs and outputs
  - Use the contractor to provide the arboricultural elements of the client role including work prioritisation, liaising with the public and elected members and updating databases.
- 4.4 Under the partnering arrangement the contractor will provide:
- A working arborist dedicated to the Exeter city area.
  - A two-tier consultancy service, a full service with association professional indemnity insurance cover and informal opinion
  - Regular attendance at the Council's Belle Isle depot with desk workspace made available
  - Database and GIS updating capacity
  - Surveying service
  - Inspection and investigation service
  - Quantitative tree risk assessment style skills and service
- 4.5 Enquiries, whether originating from the public, officers, elected members, inspections or surveys will be logged and managed at Belle Isle. The workload will be generated by the Council and moderated with negotiation with the contractor.
- 4.6 This will be a developmental partnership, with specific interests and skills evolving over time. Advantages include a greater element of continuity as the contractor will inevitably have a larger workforce than is required by ECC, and will therefore be able to cover staff changeover more readily. Preliminary discussions have been held with the contractor, and this is a partnering development they wish to see. It benefits them in their accreditation for both ISO9001 and Arboricultural Association membership. The contractor has already gone beyond a pure contractual arrangement by collaborating with parks staff on other initiatives. These include a trees and ropes training course for Exeter and adjacent authority play rangers, the TREEmendous days out with tree climbing and abseiling in St Bartholomew's Cemetery and St Thomas Pleasure Ground, and controlled equipment sharing to reduce hire costs. There is no additional premium to the existing contract costs, and day work charges should reduce as a consequence of better work planning.

## **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Parks and Open Spaces structure includes the post of Arboricultural Officer (CE11109), which is currently vacant. In addition a temporary post of Assistant Arboricultural Officer (CE11148) was funded from the budget identified in the Tree Management Plan as its role was to carry out much of the survey work associated with the plan. This post is also

currently vacant, and we have not tried to fill this post prior to consideration of this report. It has previously proved difficult to fill both posts with suitable candidates.

- 5.2 It is therefore proposed to delete the post of Arboricultural officer (CE11109) and that of the Assistant Arboricultural Officer (CE11148) A new post of Parks Tree Administration Support Officer is proposed which will yield revenue savings (subject to Job Evaluation) as the post does not require the same level of qualifications as an arborist. The role of this post is as identified in Appendix III.
- 5.3 Arboricultural work undertaken for external agencies incurs a recharge for management costs, and this will continue under the proposal. An additional advantage to this proposal is that it is future-proofed in respect of fluctuations in workload occasioned by any structural changes.
- 5.4 Appendix IV shows the existing and proposed total costs for tree management. The introduction of the proposal will result in a saving of approximately £30K depending on job evaluation outcome and assumes tree maintenance being continued at the same level of spend as now. Clearly greater savings could be achieved by reducing the funding identified for tree work however this would increase the risk to the Council of claims for injury and damage and in the light of recent tree-related incidents in other Local Authorities and our current knowledge about trees in the City is not recommended at this point.

## 6. RECOMMENDED

- 1) that Scrutiny Committee Community approves:
- the revised funding proposals contained in the report,
  - the deletion of the posts of Arboricultural Officer (CE11109) and Assistant Arboricultural Officer (CE11148),
  - the appointment to the post of Parks Tree Administration Support Officer (CE11109) at a grade to be determined by Job Evaluation,
  - developing the existing contractual arrangement to a partnership approach as detailed in section 4 of the report and
  - supports the move to planned from reactive maintenance
- 2) that Scrutiny Committee Community recommends approval by Executive.

## HEAD OF CONTRACTS AND DIRECT SERVICES

S:PA/LP/Cttee/1109SCC11  
30.9.09

### COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

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

Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2005 Exeter City Council  
Trees and Woodlands Strategy 2009 Exeter City Council

The Law of Trees Forests and Hedgerows Charles Mynors ISBN 0-421-590 408

Treeline Conference 2004 David Dowson

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf> HSE Website

APPENDIX I

RISK MATRIX (\*QTRA – Quantified Tree Risk Assessment)

Location type	Risk rating	Tree Risk Criteria	Survey completion	Re-inspection frequency	Re-inspection type
Car parks	High	QTRA* type assessment	2005	Annual	Individual tree
Closed Churchyard	High	QTRA type assessment	2005	Annual	Individual tree
General Open Spaces	High	Specific tree hazard identified	2007	Annual	Individual tree
General Open Spaces	Low	Medium to low use, no specific tree hazard identified (40% completed by end of 2008)	To Be Completed (TBC)	5 Years	Walk over
Highways General	Med	QTRA type assessment	2001, 2003, 2007	3 Years	Drive by
Highways Red and Blue routes	High	QTRA type assessment	2001, 2003, 2007	Annual	Individual tree
Highways General	High	Specific tree hazard identified. Such incidences will always be dealt with on a reactive basis	As found	NA	Individual tree
Neighbourhood or pocket park	Med	Access by less than 10 people per day	2007	5 Years	Walk over
Neighbourhood or pocket park*	High	Access by 10 people or more per day	2007	Annual	Individual tree
Park*	High	All have mature trees	2006	Annual	Individual tree
Play Areas*	High	All those with a tree within fall distance	2006	Annual	Individual tree
Play Areas*	Low	None with a hazard tree within fall distance. (these are within other Location types)	TBC	NA	Walk over
Playing Field Type A*	Med	Park type – urban location, high use	2006	3 Years	Individual tree
Playing Field Type B*	Low	Traditional playing field, lower use	2006	5 Years	Walk over
Small POS	Low	QTRA type assessment	TBC	5 Years	QTRA
Wardened Housing sites	High	QTRA type assessment	2009	Annual	Individual tree
Woodland/copse Type A	Med	Access to all or part by 10 people or more per day	QTRA survey trial Jan 2009	3 Years	QTRA
Woodland/copse Type B	Low	Access to all or part by less than 10 people per day	TBC	5 Years	QTRA

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## DEVELOPMENT OF TREE MANAGEMENT 2005-2009

### REACTIVE MAINTENANCE

The original process was;

- Enquirer (Resident, Councillor or Council Officer) requests work to a tree.
- Arboricultural Officer assesses what work is appropriate to the tree.
- Arboricultural Officer advises client officer, if appropriate.
- Arboricultural Officer issues work.
- Tree works contractor undertakes work.
- Tree works contractor submits invoice.
- Arboricultural Officer checks a percentage of invoiced work.
- Arboricultural Officer approves invoice.

There are a number of disadvantages to this system.

- Only those trees enquired about receive attention
- Nearby residents often telephone a request when they see the tree team working near their house, thus starting the above process again
- Arboricultural Officer spends disproportionate amount of time on a few trees
- Tree team spend a lot of time moving from site to site, rather than dealing with all the required tree work in the vicinity
- In one financial year over 350 instructions were issued to the tree works contractor, covering work to more than 1000 trees.

### PLANNED TREE MAINTENANCE

Most trees do not require maintenance every year, and the Council does not have the resources to maintain every tree every year. Most of the work the Council undertakes to its trees is the same; ie raising crowns over roads and footpaths, reducing crowns away from buildings and gardens, removing dead, dying and dangerous trees. Work to a single tree itself does not take a great deal of time, disposing of the waste and moving on to the next job does.

Planned cyclical maintenance is the way forward; these cycles will be every three years for the majority of the Council's trees. To achieve this requires limiting the work at any one time to a geographical area. Council wards are a convenient geographical area. Most wards do not have many trees; some have many. Conveniently, from the tree surveying undertaken to date, 6 wards appear to have many trees, 12 appear to have relatively few. Therefore, it would be possible to maintain trees in 2 large wards and 4 small wards every year. Work to trees in these areas would be to an agreed standard, as specified with the tree works contractor.

The Council also has 12 principal parks. All the parks have been surveyed, and urgent work identified has been carried out. Maintenance in these parks could also be every three years, so 4 parks a year would be maintained.

Advantages to this system include:

- All trees on a site are maintained to the agreed standards;
- Reactive enquiries inspired by the appearance of the tree team are dealt with immediately;
- Tree works contractor spends more time working on trees, less time sitting in traffic; and
- Arboricultural Officer issues one works order for a ward, minimising paperwork for the Council and the contractor;

Work to reduce risks posed by trees with decay would fall outside this system, and would be undertaken as soon as judged to be appropriate, usually within 1 month of problem identification.

An obvious disadvantage to this system is that until the cycle was into its third year, there would remain a reactive element, in that work.

Residents, Councillors and Officers may be reluctant to wait up to 3 years for routine tree work. It is hoped that an explanation of the reasons why work will be delayed will address such concerns.

The proposed maintenance schedule would look like this

Financial Year	Many tree Wards	Fewer tree wards	Principal Parks
Year One	Exwick Whipton Barton	Cowick, Mincinglake, Newtown, St Loyes	Northernhay, Rougemont, St Thomas Pleasure Ground, Topsham Recreation Ground
Year Two	Alphington Priory	Pennsylvania, St James, St Thomas, Topsham	Belle Isle Park, Bury Meadow Park, Heavitree Pleasure Ground, Pinces Gardens
Year three	Pinhoe St Davids	Duryard, Heavitree, Polsloe, St Leonards	Belmont Park Bull Meadow Park Southernhay Green St Bartholomews Cemetery

The proposed tree management system encompasses

- Stock Survey, plotting and recording all tree stock. Trees and woodlands are plotted on a GIS and detailed data is linked to this from a database.
- Inspection regime, with audit and quality control, to guide risk management and decision-making. Inspection intervals are set by the database, based on a range of criteria.
- Remedial and Maintenance work – some programmed but largely reactive, with a method of recording actions taken in relation to individual trees. Ward work – All trees within a ward are managed on a three year cyclical basis, allowing a cost –effective planned approach. (See Appendix I) Planned maintenance and Reactive work are co-ordinated and prioritised on a weekly basis.
- Planting work. The tree planting programme is developed through the year in response to further information becoming available
- Customer care and Work Co-ordination. A call-centre approach to enquiry management has been trialled since 2008. This has been very effective in linking all tree enquiries to one management centre, allowing more efficient use of resources by
  - Co-ordinating and prioritising responses to enquiries
  - Managing workflow
  - Ensuring enquiries are managed through to an end process where enquirers are informed of the outcome
  - Providing information and tree management responses in context with other criteria such as the Tree and Parks and Open Spaces Strategies, future planting schemes, and prioritisation of work
  - Pro-active links to Planning issues such as TPOs, Conservation areas and tree management in relation to developments
  - Direct links to the local Tree Wardens

## KEY TASK ANALYSIS

The table below shows key tasks in tree management and where those tasks will be undertaken. Whilst it might be considered prudent that those tasks of checking the work undertaken by the contractor, and site visits with Members of the public and/or elected members are undertaken by a Council employee with Arboricultural qualifications, significant elements of these tasks can be undertaken either by office staff, or contracted staff under the right conditions. Within the right framework, traditional "client" officer tasks can be undertaken by contractors.

Tasks	Contractor		Parks and Open Spaces
	Operational Role	Client Role	Parks Tree Administration Support Officer
Inspections	✓	✓	NA
Operate and update database	✓	NA	✓
Surveys	✓	✓	NA
Interface with members of the public	NA	NA	✓
Site visits	✓	NA	NA
Cyclical work	Carry out Cyclical work	NA	Organise Cyclical work
Customer enquiries	NA	NA	✓
Provide professional reports	NA	✓	NA
Raise work	Identify work	NA	Issue work
Invoicing	Raise invoices	NA	Authorise invoices
Financial management	NA	NA	✓
H&S	✓	NA	✓
Use and development of Exygesis database	✓	✓	✓
Assist in Setting budgets	✓	NA	✓
Respond to Member enquiries	NA	NA	✓
Delivery of Tree Strategy	✓		✓

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## FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

	A075 ARBORICULTURAL	F033 ARBORICULTURAL	F083 TREE MANAGEMENT	Current TOTAL	Proposed TOTAL
	£	£	£	£	
<b>INCOME</b>					
HRA TREES & SHRUBS BUDGET	20,130			20,130	20,130
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	20,130	-	-	20,130	20,130
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
DIRECT LABOUR	2,860			2,860	2,860
AGENCY LABOUR	-			-	
SALARIES		29,060	30,160	59,220	22,000
FRS 17		(1,560)	(1,310)	(2,870)	(2,870)
MATERIALS	2,270		5,200	7,470	
SUB-CONTRACTORS	56,060		39,590	95,650	10,000 83,200
PREMISES IT EQUIPMENT & SOFTWARE	-		5,150	5,150	5,150
TREE WARDENS					2,000
SUPPORT SERVICES - PARKS	14,170	8,170		22,340	22,340
SUPPORT SERVICES - CENTRAL	3,840	5,370	3,130	12,340	12,340
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	79,200	42,120	81,920	203,240	177,470
<b>NET COST</b>	59,070	42,120	81,920	183,110	157,340

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## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY 10 NOVEMBER 2009

EXECUTIVE  
24 NOVEMBER 2009

#### COUNCIL HOUSING ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

##### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Members' approval of the new Housing (Landlord Services) Energy and Sustainability Policy that sets out how we will seek to improve the energy efficiency of our homes and help reduce incidences of fuel poverty for tenants.

##### 2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The requirement to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes in order to reduce carbon emissions and tackle fuel poverty is a priority across national and local government.
- 2.2 The Council has a range of policies and strategies that demonstrate its commitment to these aims, together with a number of challenging targets to measure the level of our success.
- 2.3 A major part of any strategy for reducing carbon emissions will be to improve the energy efficiency of the existing housing stock, both in the private and public sectors
- 2.4 This policy, attached as Appendix I, builds on the commitments outlined in the Housing Asset Management Strategy (2009 -15) to ensure that across the Council's own housing stock we take whatever measures we can to improve the energy efficiency of our homes. Such measures will also help to reduce fuel bills for tenants and thereby make a contribution to helping to tackle the problem of fuel poverty among low income households.

##### 3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The policy identifies the measures the Council currently undertakes to meet these commitments and outlines the need to invest further in new technologies and building products in order to improve energy efficiency within the stock in the future. It commits the Housing Energy and Sustainability Group to develop new priorities and specific targets across a wide range of issues together with identifying best practice and new products that will help to meet the objectives in the policy.
- 3.2 Examples of the use of such new technologies include the installation of solar panels on a recent major renovation scheme and the high energy efficiency levels of the proposed new build properties on the Council's in-fill sites.
- 3.3 The policy is intended as a baseline statement of our commitment and will be developed further as the group explores what other measures we can put in place. Therefore, further updates will be presented to Members as the policy develops in the future.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Housing Capital Programme identifies a number of modernisation and improvement schemes that will be undertaken over the coming years. This programme is reviewed each year and as funding becomes available new schemes will be added that meet the objectives of this policy.

#### **5. RECOMMENDED**

- 1) that Scrutiny Committee – Community supports and Executive agrees to adopt the Housing (Landlord Services) Energy and Sustainability Policy.

HEAD OF HOUSING SERVICES

S:PA/LP/Committee/1109SCC3  
2.10.09

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

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

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

None



**Exeter City Council**

**EXETER CITY COUNCIL**  
**HOUSING (LANDLORD SERVICES)**  
**ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICY**

Introduction

The past few years has seen a growth in awareness of environmental issues. With assets of over 5000 houses and flats plus garages and common areas as well as other ancillary land, Housing Services has a responsibility to minimise its environmental impact, not only to its own residents but to the wider Exeter community.

This policy will set out the framework that Housing Services will adopt to increase the environmental sustainability across the full range of its operations and work.

There are a number of corporate documents that should be read in conjunction with this policy –

- Exeter City Council Environmental Strategy 2007 – 2012.
- Sustainable Purchasing Policy 2007.
- Exeter Climate Change Strategy 2008-2018
- Housing Asset Management Strategy 2009 – 2015.
- Sustainable Procurement and Commissioning Strategy 2009-2012.

The government has set targets of reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 60% from all housing by the year 2050. Because of the stock profile across the country these targets will only be met by dramatic improvements being made to the existing stock.

The key objectives of this policy are to:

- Increase the resource efficiency of our stock by improvements to the average SAP ratings.
- Improve performance on fuel poverty.
- Minimise energy and water usage to reduce carbon dioxide emissions
- Manage vehicles to minimise carbon emissions, fuel consumption and air pollution
- Minimise waste by reducing waste production at source and reusing and recycling waste.
- Procure materials from local sources where possible.
- Use local labour where possible.
- Use environmentally friendly and sustainable products where possible.

The key aims of this policy are to:

- Improve the safety and quality of accommodation to residents.
- Incorporate environmental protection and sustainability measures within planned and major works programmes.
- Ensure that all staff, contractors and residents are kept fully informed of, and committed to, the need for these measures and of the Council's policy and strategy.

Environmental and sustainability standards will also apply to new build properties, whether they are the Council's own build schemes, housing association developments or new affordable housing built by private developers through Section 106 agreements. In these cases Homes and Community Agency grant will only be available where the homes meet the current Code for Sustainable Homes criteria, the Lifetime Homes standard and other sustainability measures.

### Background

Information in terms of what we know about the stock is crucial in establishing targets and understanding what needs to be done to achieve those targets.

The Council currently uses a stock condition database called Omega that holds information on the condition of various property attributes. Although the last survey was completed in 2004 the information is being constantly updated from various major works programmes to ensure it is as up to date as possible. It is planned to start a resurvey of all the stock during 2009/10. The new survey will be loaded into a new database called Codeman.

The authority is planning to undertake an exercise in using the Ecohomes XB toolkit that will provide further valuable information on the current standard of the stock, this will be completed by December 2009. Once this is completed an action plan can be developed.

A great deal of work has already been undertaken by way of planned and major works contracts to improve the environmental sustainability of the ECC housing stock: This includes:

- The majority of stock has upvc double glazed windows and doors.
- Programmes of work have been undertaken to install wall cavity insulation and increase loft insulation.
- Some use of renewable energy solutions – solar panels and air source heat pumps.
- Provision of energy saving bulbs on empty properties and electrical rewires.
- Replacement of old heating systems with more efficient 'A' rated gas central heating boilers, complete with thermostatic controls.

Housing Services has set up an Energy and Sustainability Group that will meet at regular periods. The main activities of the group will be to:

- Develop and deliver an action plan to improve energy efficiency and sustainability within the Council's existing stock.
- Review and advise on the use of new technologies.
- Keep under review the targets that have been set.
- Review the use of different products used on maintenance and repairs and major works programmes.

### Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) Ratings

One of the most important factors in understanding the energy efficiency of the stock and what properties need to be targeted to reduce fuel poverty is the production of SAP ratings.

The Council uses the 2005 SAP rating system and the current targets for the average SAP rating are –

- 2009/10 SAP rating of 67.96
- 2010/11 SAP rating of 68.41
- 2011/12 SAP rating of 68.86
- 2012/13 SAP rating of 69.31
- 2014/15 SAP rating of 69.76

During 2009 Housing Services will set targets for minimum SAP ratings and how it will achieve them.

#### Energy Performance Certificates (EPC's)

The emergence of EPC's offers further opportunity to add valuable information on stock performance in terms of a homes ability to conserve energy and minimise carbon emissions. It can also be used as a benchmark against which we can measure ourselves against other social landlords.

In accordance with the regulations EPC's will be produced when:

- There are new tenancies.
- A section 125 Offer Notice is sent to a tenant who has exercised the Right to Buy.

At the time of the inspection other energy saving measures will be checked:

- Cavity wall insulation.
- Level of loft insulation (minimum level of 250mm).
- Hot water cylinder jacket.

If any of these fall below the required standards or are missing altogether then the Domestic Energy Assessor (DEA) undertaking the inspection will arrange for the insulation work to be carried out.

#### Empty Properties (Voids)

The voids process gives officers the opportunity to undertake a comprehensive property inspection which can provide a useful checklist to target improvements. In addition to the checks set out above the following will be carried out:

- At the completion of any void work contractors will install an energy saving light bulb to each light fitting.
- When the gas engineers return to the property at the start of the new tenancy they will set up and explain the controls to the new tenant.
- Energy saving advice will be offered to the new tenant by the supply of an Energy Advice leaflet and training offered by relevant officers.

#### Major works programmes

Major works programmes are an ideal opportunity to improve the energy efficiency of a dwelling and to ensure that the new products being brought in to the property are environmentally sustainable. For example:

- When new heating systems are installed or existing systems replaced the boilers will be high efficiency gas boilers and will include thermostatic radiator valves and room controls. Annually we will review the boiler we fit as part of the programme to ensure that it is the most cost effective and efficient one.
- We will continue with cavity wall insulation work to achieve a target of all properties having had this work carried out by 2011.
- All new light fittings installed on any of the refurbishment schemes will be capable of receiving energy saving bulbs.
- Future programmes will consider the replacement of electric heating with high efficiency gas boilers or the use of renewable technology.
- All kitchen units will have Forest Stewardship Council Accreditation.
- All new bathrooms will be fitted with low volume dual flush toilets and water saving taps.
- Every time an electrical rewire is completed the tenant will be supplied with whole-house energy saving light bulbs.

### New Build Schemes – In-fill sites

The Council is currently embarking on a programme of providing new affordable homes on a number of in-fill sites on housing land across the city. These new build properties will be developed by either the Council or its housing association partner for this project – Sovereign Housing Association. All properties on these sites have been designed to achieve high environmental standards. For example, as a minimum all the homes will meet the Code for Sustainable Homes level 4, and where possible this will be increased to level 5. All properties will also meet the Lifetime Homes Standard. Finally, because of the technology used to heat the properties the level of fuel consumption will be low, thereby reducing fuel bills for tenants.

### Information and Training

Training is a fundamental part of changing attitudes and behaviour towards environmental issues.

Tenants cannot make decisions about issues such as the correct use of their heating or the most appropriate energy tariff unless they are given the correct information.

Visiting officers are in a prime position to help offer advice and guidance to occupiers on energy use and any other environmental issues. Training will be offered to all these officers on an annual basis so that the advice they offer is current and relevant.

The council will undertake to develop an energy and sustainability advice leaflet that will be supplied to tenants at accompanied lets and at other times when visiting officers call to properties. These measures will help occupiers to make informed choices on the way their homes are used.

### Funding

Partnering arrangements with a variety of organisations such as EDF (formerly SWEB), British Gas, Centrica, Scottish and Southern and Climate energy have been in place for some years. These arrangements have been successful in obtaining over £800,000 of external funding for energy efficiency measures including:

- Loft and wall cavity insulation. This programme is being completed at a faster rate than would otherwise have been possible and allowed capital spending to be targeted elsewhere.
- Fuel switching
- Energy efficiency boilers
- External insulation
- Low-energy light bulbs

Future reviews of the Housing capital programme will ensure funding is made available to continue improving the energy efficiency of the stock. For example, the current Asset Management Strategy signals a change to our existing programme from 2010 to ensure we target those properties with expensive and inefficient heating system and replace them with new efficient forms for heating.

### Renewables

Currently the payback for carrying out one-off renewable projects is fairly long term because of the cost of the technologies involved.

However if the authority is determined to reduce its overall carbon emissions then this is an area it will have to consider a lot more critically in the future. Housing Services will constantly review the use of renewable energy technology when it carries out major refurbishment programmes and it will encourage the use of such technologies with its new build partners.

At the moment there is limited funding available for renewables and the process for bidding can be bureaucratic and cumbersome. However, this situation is likely to change as new Government programmes are introduced and therefore funding streams will be constantly monitored.

### Conclusion

This document underlines Housing Services' commitment to providing good quality, energy efficient and affordable homes to people in housing need. It acknowledges the impact its actions can have on the wider environment and it will work to reduce any adverse impact in the future.

It is intended that this document is used as a baseline statement and that the Energy and Sustainability Group will now work to establish an action plan that will set targets, goals and objectives to develop and enhance this strategy.

November 2009

S:LP/Committee/1109SCC3 Appx I

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**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY  
10 NOVEMBER 2009**

**EXECUTIVE  
24 NOVEMBER 2009**

**DOWNSIZING INCENTIVES FOR COUNCIL TENANTS**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek Members' agreement to implement an amended downsizing incentive scheme for Council tenants to improve the management of the housing stock and increase the supply of family housing to applicants on the Home Choice register.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At its meeting on 13 March 2007 the Executive agreed a policy to encourage tenants who currently under-occupy their Council home to downsize to more suitable accommodation. The policy outlined a number of incentives that would be provided including cash payments together with help, advice and support services.
- 2.2 Since its implementation the policy has proved popular with tenants seeking to transfer to smaller properties. Indeed, during the two years 2008/09 and 2009/10 a total of 112 tenants have taken advantage of the scheme. These moves have released 6, 4-bed properties, 62, 3-bed properties and 44, 2-bed properties to families currently on the Home Choice register.
- 2.3 However, the scheme has also been a victim of its own success. In both these years we have needed to exceed the original budget in order to maintain the scheme. This over-spend was agreed because the increase in family housing becoming available was having a positive impact on the housing register and in particular the number of families in temporary accommodation. We were also able to fund these overspends from savings made elsewhere within the housing revenue account.
- 2.4 Unfortunately, this position could not be maintained in 2009-10. Because of increases in our subsidy payment to Government and a decrease in income from investments, we are no longer able to fund any overspend in this budget. Therefore, when the 2009-10 budget of £50,000 was reached in August the scheme was suspended.
- 2.5 Whilst cash incentive payments are no longer available, we have found an additional £20,000 to pay removal fees for those people still willing to move but who require some financial assistance with the actual move. Advice and support is also being maintained through the dedicated Tenant Liaison Officer.
- 2.6 As a result of the above, and the scheme's continued popularity with tenants, a review of the scheme has been undertaken in order to make it more sustainable in future years. A copy of the revised scheme has been attached as Appendix I.

**3. PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 At the time of the review there were 161 applicants on the Home Choice register wishing to downsize. It is expected that this demand will increase once the new Council own-build properties start to be constructed together with other new over 55's schemes on the Council's in-fill sites.

- 3.2 Demand for family size properties also remains strong on the Home Choice register. Whilst demand for two-bedroom properties is the highest, the waiting time for families requiring three-bedroom properties is the longest given the lack of supply of this size of property. As a result the need for a downsizing policy remains as strong today as it was in 2007. Indeed, given the total procurement costs of new build properties the downsizing scheme continues to demonstrate excellent value for money and provides positive outcomes for both downsizing tenants and families on the Home Choice register.
- 3.3 Given its popularity, and the limited funding available for the scheme, the main change being proposed is a reduction in overall cash incentive payments. This will allow the annual budget to fund more moves and help release higher numbers of family homes. Therefore, a tenant moving from a three bedroom to a one-bedroom property will receive a maximum payment of £1,500 cash incentive, including any removal fees. This total amount represents a saving of over £1000 on the current scheme for a similar move. Advice and support will also be available from the Tenant Liaison Officer as before. To many of our tenants this is as important as the cash incentive.
- 3.4 As before the total amount actually paid to the tenant will depend on any rent arrears or any repairs re-charges on the property after the tenant has moved.
- 3.5 Another proposal in the new scheme is that any tenant downsizing into new purpose built accommodation – such as the new Council own-build properties – will not be eligible for a cash incentive payment but will qualify for removal costs and advice and assistance from housing staff. Given that these properties will be highly energy efficient, and therefore cheap to run, and will be fully accessible with modern appliances it is believed this will be incentive enough for existing tenants wishing to move from their large family properties.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 An annual budget of £50,000 will continue to be made available within the Housing Revenue Account to make downsizing payments to tenants.

#### **5. RECOMMENDED:**

- 1) that Scrutiny Committee – Community supports and Executive agrees to adopt the amended policy document, *Reducing Under-Occupation in the Council's Housing Stock – Incentives for Downsizing*.

HEAD OF HOUSING SERVICES

S:PA/LP/ Committee/1109SCC5  
30.9.09

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

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



## Exeter City Council

# Reducing Under-Occupation in the Council's Housing Stock Incentives for Downsizing

## 1 Introduction

Within the Council's housing stock there are a number of tenants under-occupying their home. Many will be elderly who have seen their family grow up and leave home leaving them to reside in a three or four-bedroom property.

Of course many of these tenants will want to remain in the family home. It contains many happy memories and allows space for family and friends to visit. However, there are also a number of people who find living in such a large property difficult. Some will have mobility problems and require expensive adaptations to remain, others will just be overwhelmed by the daily maintenance a large property presents. In such cases the Council should do all it can to help tenants move to more suitable accommodation, whether it be within our own stock or that of a partner housing association.

To help with the stress and worry of moving it is important that we make the process as easy as possible for these tenants. Having a named contact point to talk to and help arrange removals will ease the process and ensure elderly tenants don't suddenly decide to refuse an offer of smaller accommodation. Help with the move and financial incentives all help in this respect and may encourage more people to downsize into more suitable accommodation. Whilst such incentives will place additional burden on the Housing Revenue Account it will also reduce the need for complex and expensive disabled adaptations in future years. It will also help to increase the supply of family housing for those people on the Home Choice register.

## 2 Incentive packages for those wishing to downsize

Where a tenant is identified who is eligible for help and assistance under this package the Estate Officer will talk with the tenant to explain the package of incentives and housing options available and leave information for them to read at their leisure.

Where a tenant expresses a wish to explore the possibility of moving, and they require help and assistance throughout the process, they will be referred to the Council's Tenant Liaison Officer (TLO), who is part of the Tenant Participation and Special Projects Team. The TLO will provide a range of assistance, tailored to the tenants actual needs.

### **Home Choice Applications:**

All tenants who wish to move must be registered with Home Choice. This process in itself can be daunting, therefore, where appropriate, staff, or the TLO will offer help to complete the form and bid for suitable properties.

Any tenant who is currently under-occupying their home will automatically be awarded Red band status and given 25 years waiting time. This will ensure they have a very high level of priority when bidding for properties. However, this policy will change in early 2010 when the new Devon Home Choice scheme is implemented. Under this new scheme only those under-occupying their home by two or more bedrooms will be eligible for the high

needs band. Those under-occupying by just one bedroom will be placed in the medium needs band.

To maintain a steady supply of two, three and four bedroom homes, Exeter City Council will continue to advertise suitable properties to those on the housing register who are seeking to down-size and give them the highest level of priority over other applicants.

The tenant will be given the choice of either bidding for properties of their choice in the normal manner, nominating an advocate to bid for properties on their behalf (this could be a family member, close friend, health visitor, Age Concern representative etc) or being placed on the Auto-bid system.

Throughout the process the TLO will maintain contact with the tenant to ensure they understand the process and are actively bidding.

### **Financial Incentives**

Once a tenant has been successful for a property of their choice we will ensure that they receive intensive help, support and assistance to make the move as smooth and as stress free as possible.

However, it is also recognised that moving home can be costly and a major disincentive to tenants wishing to downsize. The Council will therefore offer cash incentives to downsizing tenants to help pay for the move. The total amount available for each move will depend on the following:

- The size of property being released as a result of the move
- The specific circumstances of the tenant
- Any rent arrears owing
- The condition of the property being released

Examples of the maximum cash incentive available are:

- Downsizing by two or more bedrooms (i.e. 4 bed property to 2 bed or 3 bed property to 1 bed) = **Maximum £1500 cash incentive**
- Downsizing by one bedroom (3 bed property to 2 bed or 2 bed property to 1 bed) = **Maximum £1000 cash incentive**

This cash incentive can be used to purchase any item the tenant requires to move into their new home. This could include new carpets, curtains, white goods, telephone connection, etc. In all cases the TLO will offer to purchase these goods for the tenant and pay for them direct from the cash incentive.

The actual cash incentive payable will be at the discretion of the Tenant Liaison Officer, depending on the circumstances outlined above. Before any move an assessment will be made by the TLO of the total cash incentive payable and the tenant made a formal offer of the appropriate amount.

The cash incentive will also include paying for removal fees. The Council will source the contractor who provides the best value for this service and pay them direct. In some cases a full packing service may also be offered, particularly if the tenant is frail or disabled.

### **Property Incentives**

Where the tenant is moving to another Council property it is important to make the property attractive to the tenant. The Council has adopted a Lettable and Habitable

standard for all its empty properties that must be met before the new tenant moves in. This standard includes the decoration of two rooms within the property. However, in certain circumstances, where a property needs a level of decoration above this standard the TLO can offer this as part of the overall incentive package. Where appropriate, the TLO will also assess the tenant's eligibility for inclusion on the Council's assisted gardening scheme and assisted decoration scheme.

### **3 New build properties**

Across the city the Council and its housing association and private developer partners are providing new build properties, many of which will be suitable for tenants who are looking to downsize. This is particularly true of the large number of purpose built, fully accessible 'over 55' year old schemes that will be attractive to older tenants living in large family houses. In the case of the Council's in-fill sites the properties will also be at the leading edge of thermal efficiency and provide warm and cheap to run homes. They will also contain modern facilities and appliances.

Where tenants are looking to downsize into new properties the cash incentive outlined above will not be payable. However, the Council will pay a maximum of £500 towards the tenants removal costs and continue to provide advice and assistance to the tenant where required.

### **4 Adaptations**

In some cases a tenant will require a number of minor adaptations to be completed in their property to ensure they are able to live independently and comfortably after their move. Where the property is a Council property the TLO will liaise with the Technical Officer to see what needs to be done and the process to be followed. It is important that wherever possible such adaptations are completed within a short period of the tenant moving. In some cases the work may need to be done before occupation and every effort should be made to accommodate this.

Where the tenant is moving to a housing association property the TLO should contact Devon County Council's Care Direct service or the county-wide Home Improvement Agency to check on their eligibility for assistance. The tenant's new landlord will also have their own policy for dealing with such requests.

### **5 Arrears and Recharges**

The Council has a number of policies around rent arrears and recharging tenants for the removal of rubbish or repairs at their previous property.

As a standard rule tenants are not allowed to transfer to another property if rent arrears exist on their account. However, if a tenant is downsizing this rule can be waived on condition that the arrears are cleared from the total cash incentive payable.

Where large amounts of rubbish or furniture are left in the tenants previous property after they have moved out, or re-chargeable repairs are identified that require attention as part of the void works, the cost of these will be calculated and deducted from the cash incentive.

Where a tenant is disabled or elderly and has difficulty in clearing their property or carrying out repairs that fall within their responsibility the TLO in consultation with the relevant Technical Officer can agree to waive these recharges as part of the incentive package.

## **6 Incentives for tenants requiring disabled adaptations**

Disabled tenants who require an adaptation to their property in order to live independently can apply for such alterations through the Council's Disabled Adaptations scheme. In many cases where an OT's assessment identifies a need the Council will do its best to ensure the adaptation is done. However, there are limited resources for undertaking adaptations and this can lead to a backlog of work that may take up to 12 months to complete.

In many cases the tenant's needs are better met by moving to more suitable accommodation that will give them a better quality of life. However, most tenants are reluctant to move from their home despite the potential wait for work to be undertaken.

In all cases the OT, Estate Officers and Technical Officers should be trying to persuade tenants to undertake a move to more suitable accommodation so that the adaptation will not be required thereby helping us to stretch out budgets further. In these cases the above incentives for downsizing will apply.

Where someone is moving to a similar sized property that has already been adapted and is therefore suitable for their needs the Council will pay a £1000 disturbance allowance plus the removal costs.

## **7 Budget**

It is proposed that from the 1 April 2011 the Tenants Downsizing Incentive Scheme will be allocated a total of £50,000 per annum. Should this amount be exhausted before the end of the financial year the scheme will be closed until the next years allocation is available.

## **8 Compensation for Improvements**

Under the Compensation for Improvements regulations 1994 tenants who have undertaken certain specified improvement works to their properties (e.g. installation of kitchens, bathrooms, heating etc) may be entitled to compensation when moving from their property. The amount of compensation payable depends on the original costs of the improvements, how long ago it was installed and its notional life. Where the TLO believes the tenant maybe entitled to compensation under his scheme they will issue the tenant with the application form and help them complete it.

A separate budget exists for compensation payments under this scheme.

Version 2 – October 2009

S:LP/PA/Cttee/1109SCC5 Appx I  
30.9.09

**EXETER CITY COUNCIL**  
**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY**  
**10 NOVEMBER 2009**

**EXECUTIVE**  
**24 NOVEMBER 2009**

## **FUNDING OF NEW TECHNOLOGY FOR EFFICIENCY GAINS IN CLEANSING SERVICES**

### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek approval for the introduction of new technology and working practices as outlined in this report with the initial costs being met from external funding of £110,000 from SWRIEP and up to £127,100, subject to confirmation of final prices from systems providers, from the Council's LGR and Mobile Working budget.

### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 During 2008 Cleansing Services, supported by the Council's mobile working project consultant, conducted a review of its key communication processes with a view to making greater use of automation, integration and mobile technology.

- 2.2 During the review in 2008 Cleansing Services identified two major parts capable of deriving the most benefit from technological and process improvement, namely:

Part A) in-cab technology and hand-held mobile technology for use by both vehicle-based and on-foot outdoor workers; and

Part B) a Customer Relation Management (CRM) link between the Council website and back and front office systems for use by customers and office based staff.

- 2.3 Subsequently, the Council has been successful in bidding for £110,000 external funding from South West Regional Improvement and Efficiency Programme (RIEP) for Part A, on the grounds of innovation and improved efficiency of the service offered to customers.

### **3. THE BENEFITS FROM NEW TECHNOLOGY**

- 3.1 The introduction on in-cab and other mobile devices for staff in the field (Part A) will give significant qualitative improvements to the service and potential financial savings. The key objective identified in Part B was to create more effective and efficient electronic communications between the Council website, Cleansing Service's database and the Customer Service Centre systems.

- 3.2 A detailed appraisal of the costs and benefits of Parts A and B are contained in Appendix I: Business Case for Improving Customer Service & Freeing Capacity for Future Demand through Efficiencies supported by Technology Enhancements.

#### **4 PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 To purchase the technology outlined in Paragraph 2.2 above and detailed in Appendix I, commencing this financial year using £110,000 external funding secured from SWRIEP and up to £127,100, subject to confirmation of final prices from systems providers, from the Council's LGR and Mobile Working budget.

#### **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The efficiency gains generated by the investment of £110,000 external funding and £127,100 internal funding, will be derived by increased income generation of £46,100 per annum and staff savings of £26,900 per annum. This gives a predicted return on investment of 32.7% (see Appendix I).

#### **6 RECOMMENDED**

That Scrutiny Committee – Community support and Executive approve

- (1) the introduction of new technology and working practices as outlined in this report with the initial costs being met from external funding of £110,000 from SWRIEP and up to £127,100, subject to confirmation of final prices from systems providers, from the Council's LGR and Mobile Working budget.

HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

S:PA/LP/ Committee/1109SCC18  
23.10.09

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

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

# EXETER CITY COUNCIL

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES - CLEANSING

### Business Case for Improving Customer Service & Freeing Capacity for Future Demand through Efficiencies supported by Technology Enhancements

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 During 2008 Cleansing Services, supported by the Council's mobile working project consultant 'Annite', conducted a review of its key communication processes with a view to making greater use of automation, integration and mobile technology.
- 1.2 A service improvement team (SIG) consisting of management and staff representatives was formed to critically examine processes and work practices and identify areas where benefits could be realised through the introduction of leaner working practices supported by new technology.
- 1.3 During the review in 2008 the SIG identified two major parts capable of deriving the most benefit from technological and process improvement, namely:
- Part A) in-cab technology and hand-held mobile technology for use by both vehicle-based and on-foot outdoor workers; and
- Part B) a Customer Relation Management (CRM) link between the Council website and back and front office systems for use by customers and office based staff.
- 1.4 Subsequently, the Council has been successful in bidding for £110,000 external funding from South West Regional Improvement and Efficiency Programme (RIEP) for Part A, on the grounds of innovation and improved efficiency of the service offered to customers. The Council's bid was one of 8 successful bids from a field of over 80. This bid was linked to the successful implementation of the internal Part B bid. In effect, this has strengthened the internal bid by improving the value for money aspect of the project for the Council. These two project parts are described below.

#### 2. CLEANSING SERVICES

- 2.1 Cleansing Services is the largest service within the Council with 170 employees, delivering key front-line services of refuse collection, recycling and street cleansing to every citizen, as well as operating income-deriving services to fee-paying customers (both trade and domestic). Public satisfaction with these services has a direct impact upon the reputation of the Council, the City's attractiveness to visitors, the desirability of businesses to locate in Exeter, and the feeling of well-being by citizens.
- 2.2 Exeter enjoys high satisfaction levels with its services for waste collection (84%) and in the recent Place Survey, refuse collection and environmental cleanliness of the street scene were issues that the public in Exeter clearly rated as important to them.
- 2.3 The service handles a very large number of customer interactions; predominantly telephone calls averaging over 3,000 per month, which are channelled through the Cleansing Administrative Team. At the onset of this project, the Team's capacity to cope with the peaks of demand was often severely tested.

## **Future demand on the service**

- 2.4 The demand on Cleansing Services is set to grow year on year and more dwellings and roads and footpaths are built. Within the Regional Spatial Strategy, Exeter's dwelling stock is predicted to rise from 51,390 (2008) to 64,987 by 2026, with an annual growth of 1.31% equal to 673 dwellings per year. This will produce greater demand on the refuse/recycling collection, street cleansing and litter collection functions, and consequential demand upon the Administration Team, principally from telephone transactions.
- 2.5 This demand can either be met by increasing the Administrative Team complement by 1 FTE in the medium term, or introducing technological solutions to better cope with this demand. Failure to implement either will result in the team being over-burdened and unable to respond to all callers in a timely fashion, which in turn will generate more failure demand calls and risk the reputation of the service and the Council. It will also divert resources away from managing and proactively growing the income-generating parts of the service.

## **3. SCOPE OF PROJECT**

- 3.1 The scope of the project was to examine the range of processes that were undertaken by the service and to identify key areas where the introduction of a technology solution could produce significant benefits in efficiency and effectiveness; it also sought to identify other improvements in the processes examined. These benefits would be realised in both cashable terms and/or improved service delivery.
- 3.2 The project aims concentrated on improving customer services by using electronic communications to enable reduced administrative handling of service requests, and improved internal communications between operations. These improvements will enable the following key benefits to be realised:
- significant substitution of telephone transactions with customers with electronic transactions that are automated;
  - significant reductions in failure demand calls from the public (e.g. missed bins, fly-tipping, graffiti);
  - reductions in unnecessary operational responses to failure demand calls (e.g. missed bins due to customer failings);
  - growth in income-deriving transactions to be accommodated within existing resources in the medium term;
  - predicted growth in customer demand from year on year increases in Exeter's population and housing development to be accommodated within existing administrative resources in the medium term;
  - enhanced service from more timely responses to street scene issues derived from officer/operative led reporting in the field, rather than public-led complaints;
  - health and safety gains, reduction in accident claims and potential insurance premium gains, derived from the use of in-cab technology in route mapping.

## **4. SERVICE IMPROVEMENT GROUP AND QUICK WINS**

- 4.1 The Service Improvement Group (SIG) that was facilitated by the external consultant critically examined a range of processes and identified some 'quick wins', which were then implemented during the review period; these contributed significantly to a reduction in the number of customer contacts made via telephone. During Q3

2007/08 Cleansing Services handled 10,363 incoming telephone calls, whereas it handled 8,246 calls during Q3 2008/09 – a reduction of 20% for the same period. There are no comparative statistics at this time for the number of incoming emails, however, anecdotal evidence is that email traffic has also noticeably reduced.

- 4.2 Many of the 'quick wins' have consisted of making greater use of the functions enabled by CONFIRM (the principal database), for example 'Letter Monitoring' is no longer a separate exercise requiring a dedicated member of staff to track and record. It is now part of normal routine operations carried out and recorded in CONFIRM by administrative staff and supervisors. This information is now also directly accessible by the Environmental Health Administration Team, which has removed the need for special reports to be compiled.
- 4.3 Another 'quick win' has been achieved through enabling customers to access standard forms and service requests via the Council website, for example trade customers are now able to download, complete and email forms directly to Cleansing Services without having to use traditional paper and postal based methods. However, this improvement has not completely removed the need for multiple data handling as information captured in this way is not able to be automatically transferred from the website to CONFIRM or FRONTLINE (the Customer Service Centre database).
- 4.4 A further 'quick win' is one where our Customer Service officers now actively encourage commercial customers to set up direct debits, which has reduced the number of 'failure demand' calls with regard to payment collections. However, without a fully automated online facility on the Council website there is still a high level of manual handling required when setting up direct debits.
- 4.5 As part of the review Cleansing started to gather and report management information, which does not traditionally form part of National and Local BVPI reporting requirements, e.g. telephone and email traffic, website hits, etc. This information has given the Cleansing Services management team valuable information about overall demand for its services.

## **5. PART A – WIRELESS TECHNOLOGY**

- 5.1 This part examined the use of wireless in-cab technology and hand-held mobile technology for use by outdoor workers, to radically improve operational communications so that the service moves away from reacting to external communication in an information vacuum, and moves to a position where the service is informed and able to work proactively.
- 5.2 This technology will help customers and staff to transact using instantly available and up-to-date information and service progress reports. On the ground, this will mean that street scene issues such as fly-tipping can be effectively reported in a timely manner for action, so forestalling 'failure demand' requests from the public, and accurate information about bin presentations can be quickly relayed to office systems to permit management decisions based upon accurate information about missed bins.

### **Service benefits**

5.3 The introduction on in-cab and other mobile devices for staff in the field will give significant qualitative improvements to the service and potential financial savings. The key improvements that will be facilitated are as follows:

- a) to enable crews to provide accurate and 'instant' information about operational issues to improve the information customer service advisors are able to give to callers;
- b) to enable new or changing service requirements for elderly or disabled people to be instantly communicated to crews;
- c) allow for informed modelling of rounds by enabling reference points to be recorded geographically, indicating potential hazards and other considerations and allowing better risk assessment and planning of safer rounds;
- d) give audible driver instructions about the round as the vehicle progresses, which will be particularly valuable any new employee or agency driver, and help reduce missed bins and vehicle accidents;
- e) to improve the skills and capability of both administrative and outdoor Cleansing Service staff;
- f) to enable crews to report a whole range of street scene issues at any time of the day, so that the Cleansing Services and other parts of the Council can deal proactively with issues before they become a issue reported by the public;
- g) to improve customer satisfaction - faster transaction times, up-to-the-minute and accurate information, quicker feedback;
- h) reduced 'failure demand' leading to fewer customer driven contacts with the Council, and a reduction in operational responses where the customer is at fault (e.g. for failing to present their bin);
- i) rationalisation of data exchange leading to a reduction of multiple data entries by Council staff;
- j) improved management information so that senior executives and managers are better able to direct service improvements where required;
- k) capturing the know-how so that internal IT Services use the experience gained to roll out self-services to other Exeter City Council departments;
- l) sharing the learning gained from this project with neighbouring local authorities to help improve the self-service capability for waste management services in the region, and enhancing the reputation of the Council.

#### **Financial benefits**

5.4 These improvements can give financial benefits in operations that currently are either difficult to quantify because they are spread over a range of activities, and/or are a corporate rather than a service saving (e.g. insurance premiums). However, there is confidence that potential savings will be derived from:

- reducing the number of 'missed bin' special visits by 400 p.a., giving a saving in vehicle fuel and releasing resources that can be usefully deployed on income earning activities (e.g. special waste collections), used to enhance responses to fly-tipping reports, or diverted to substitute for a reduction in existing resources;
- reducing the transaction time on missed bin calls, which will be diverted to further supporting income generating transactions;
- reducing the large number of refuse collection vehicle accidents (RCV), particularly those caused by agency drivers, thereby reducing claims made against the Council with potential to reduce insurance premiums overall (an indicative saving has not been sought at this stage), and lost time on RCV repairs.

5.5 To translate these potential savings into real posts, the following administrative and operational posts have been identified:

- 0.5 FTE Cleansing Support Officer (Grade 5), giving a potential revenue saving of £11,303 (SCP 19 mid-point of grade, with oncosts at 27%);
- 1 FTE Cleansing Operative (Grade 1), giving a potential saving of £15,636 (SCP 6 mid-point of grade, with oncosts at 27%).

This will give a total annual saving of £26,939.

## 6. PART B – CUSTOMER RELATION MANAGEMENT LINK

6.1 The key objective identified in Part B was to create more effective and efficient electronic communications between the Council website, CONFIRM (Cleansing Service's database) and FRONTLINE . By creating "invisible" harmony between the Council Website, FRONTLINE and CONFIRM it will be possible for:

- a customer to log a service request (e.g. missed bin) on the Council website, or at the Customer Service Centre, or via Cleansing Services;
- details would be directly updated from the website into FRONTLINE;
- FRONTLINE would create a job in CONFIRM to deal with the issue;
- CONFIRM would report back on each completed stage of the job;
- staff could access FRONTLINE or CONFIRM to get a progress report for the customer;
- Customer Service Centre staff will also be able to track service requests logged directly into CONFIRM in order to inform any customer query

### Service Benefits

6.2 There are a number of key benefits that will be derived from this linkage, which will reduce operator resources in dealing with customer transactions; these are described below:

- the full range of Cleansing's customer services to be fully transacted via the Council's website, (e.g. waste transfer notes, orders, missed bins reports, collect and return requests, brown bin hire and service requests, setting up of direct debits, etc.);
- service requests captured on the Council's website to be automatically transferred to CONFIRM via FRONTLINE;
- service requests logged directly on FRONTLINE but destined for Cleansing Services to be automatically routed to and updated in CONFIRM;
- improved data management through central logging, monitoring and customer feedback relating to customer service requests (i.e. two-way updates between CONFIRM and FRONTLINE);
- back and front office roles to be managed more effectively and efficiently;
- releasing capacity to enable proactive marketing of the Council's commercial waste management services, thereby increasing customer base and income;
- generation of email and SMS text communications with customers using CONFIRM and/or FRONTLINE (to help prevent failure demand and improve awareness through social marketing messages);
- greater collaboration and integration between the Customer Service Centre and Cleansing Services, which should improve customer handling.

## Financial benefits

- 6.3 The ability for Cleansing Services to automate and integrate more of its customer transactions through the application of a CRM link, means that managers and staff will be in a position to concentrate more of their efforts on achieving additional income from the two potential revenue streams outlined below. The two revenue streams, namely Trade Recycling and Domestic Garden Bin Hires will offer significant opportunities for income growth.
- 6.4 **Trade recycling** - Cleansing Services will have the capacity to divert some of its current resources to provide a Saturday sack/tape collection service for trade recycling customers. With careful targeting, there is also a real opportunity to increase the number of customers on some of our existing collection days. In addition, further customer growth potential has been identified with larger businesses requiring a Eurobin collection for recyclates.
- 6.5 **Garden bin hire** - two vehicles and crews provide garden waste collection services. There are 6,300 registered customers paying an annual hire fee, but also around 28,000 bio bags sold to individuals for ad hoc collections. Many of the potential registered customers are already likely to be using the garden sack service, and an emphasis would be placed on replacing the more expensive ad hoc collections with registered customers, whilst expanding on the options of receptacles to suit different customer needs.
- 6.6 **Savings potential** - the ability for Cleansing Services to automate and integrate more of its customer transactions through the application of a CRM link also means that the current administrative establishment may not need to be increased to cope with the extension of cleansing services to properties due to be built in Exeter over the next 3 to 5 years. Without this technology the administrative establishment is likely to need to be increased by at least 1 additional person at a total employment cost of £20,000 per annum (this potential cost has not been included in any calculations of the return on investment).
- 6.7 Table 1 below sets out the potential annual revenue and savings that will mitigate the capital and revenue costs.

**Table 1 – Potential additional annual revenue income**

Description	Revenue/ Savings	Comments
Trade Recycling	£14,500	Assumes additional income beyond 2009/10 target (+100 customers at average annual revenue of £145/customer)
Domestic Garden – additional customers = 1,213 @ £26/bin customer (rounded to nearest £10)	£31,600	Assumes 20% (modest growth) based on trends since service inception. 6,067 customers at end 2008 is used as the baseline
0.5 Cleansing Support Officer 1 Cleansing Operative	£26,900	Includes all employment costs
<b>TOTAL POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL INCOME</b>	<b>£73,000</b>	

## **Qualitative Business Benefits**

6.8 The following qualitative business benefits have been identified:

- the integrated CRM link will enable domestic and business customers to transact a greater range of services fully on the Council's website thereby enabling a higher quality of customer service;
- the automatic updating of transactions between the website, FRONTLINE and CONFIRM will enable an increased volume of transactions with minimal or no additional administrative handling;
- the integrated and automatic updating of service progress in FRONTLINE and CONFIRM will enable Council customer service advisors to provide up-to-the minute progress reports to callers;
- electronic communications will reduce postage costs and paper trails and thereby enhance the use of DIP technology and electronic storage facilities;
- automation will give access to more timely, accurate and evidence based data to identify at an early stage, potential problem areas and inform management decisions;
- automated and integrated electronic communication channels - emails and SMS – out of CONFIRM/FRONTLINE will enable more timely communications with customers and will also provide an opportunity for direct marketing to commercial customers;
- the CRM link will be a necessary building block for facilitating the wireless mobile technology described in Part A.

## **7. ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY OPTION**

7.1 Since this project commenced, an alternative technology option has been identified that may offer substantial benefits beyond those realisable with the current identified solution, and at a lesser cost. This option provides an alternative integration solution for both Parts A and B, that for both front-office to back-office and mobile applications. The provider for this option has provided integration solutions in one third of UK local government organisations.

7.2 If this alternative option is chosen, then there is likely to be a reduction in both capital and revenue costs, and a corresponding improvement in the investment return.

7.3 There is also the potential to utilise the real-time, bi-directional integration delivered from this project to the many other back-office applications within the Council, and in relation to any mobile working. This could realise considerable savings for the Council when applied to other existing and future integration solutions.

7.4 For the purposes of this project, an assessment will be made of this alternative solution, and a decision made at an early stage to follow the most appropriate option.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

8.1 The provision of an integration solution to back and front-office systems together with mobile working for Cleansing Services will derive an investment return of 32.7% (Appendix IV). This investment return may be enhanced by the realisation of potential financial savings that can be delivered by the mobile working technology.

- 8.2 This project will bring in substantial funding of £110,000 from South West RIEP, which has been granted following close scrutiny of a business case showing the improvement gains that can be realised.
- 8.3 There are also considerable qualitative benefits to be derived for the service, and real reputation benefits for the Council, from progressing with this project.

## **9 RECOMMENDATION**

- 9.1 Approval be given to the introduction of new technology and working practices as outlined in this report with the initial costs being met from external funding of £110,000 from SWRIEP and up to £127,100, subject to confirmation of final prices from systems providers, from the Council's LGR and Mobile Working budget.

## APPENDIX I: RISK PLAN

There are a number of risks associated with achieving the revenue income streams, as set out in the table below.

	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
1	Project funding delayed	Potential revenue income eroded during first year, thereby extending payback period	Low	Robust business cases formed to secure funding, and early approval sought.
2	Automated processes not fully understood and mapped out	Unable to maximise automation of administrative function	Medium	Project team chosen and tasked to ensure a good understanding of the processes
3	Customers unable to set up direct debits on website	Unable to maximise benefits of automated payment transactions	Medium	Process 'test-driven' comprehensively prior to launch.
4	Insufficient business development expertise	Lack of expertise to identify, develop, implement and monitor achievement of business development goals	Medium	Programme Management principals utilised to ensure individual projects are properly co-ordinated.
5	Insufficient marketing and selling expertise	Unable to proactively market and sell to target markets for trade recycling and garden bin customers	Medium	Marketing plan formulated. Staff concerned with selling, to be given appropriate training.
6	Fail to get customers to set up direct debits (manually and electronically)	Transaction time reductions not achieved, and service delivery interruptions continue through non-payment of invoices	Medium	Marketing plan formulated to seek customers and encourage direct debit payments. Consideration given to fee differentials to encourage take up.
7	Current economic downturn	Domestic residents may be deterred from converting to garden bin hire service	Medium	Marketing plan formulated.
8	Additional trade recycling customers not acquired in a managed way	Erratic workloads for collection crews and the MRF	Low	Regular reviews of customer growth patterns instigated, and remodelling of rounds effected accordingly.
9	Technological solutions more complex than anticipated	Project implementation delayed. Increased costs encountered to resolve complex problems.	High	Appropriate level of IT expertise committed to project. IT programme closely monitored and reviewed.

**APPENDIX II : TIMELINE FOR PROJECT**

Review integration requirements with LAGAN & CONFIRM, and prepare technical roadmap for implementation	LR, IT Services, Customer First Manager & service providers	Q4 2009/10
Prepare route map for automating communication of all key services	MT, LR, LH, PL, FT, DH & Customer First Mgr	Q4 2009/10
Review all current website materials to ensure coordinated messaging and transaction facilities	LR with each process owner, including Customer First Mgr	Q4 2009/10
Prepare Business Development Plan	MT, LR, PL, FT, LH, DH	Q4 2009/10
Set up web-based automated transaction processes including: email alerts, SMS, direct debits and online payments	LR, IT Services & Customer First Mgr, Finance	Q1 2010/11
Enhanced online transactions fully operational	LR with each process owner	Q2 2010/11
Train Cleansing Services and Customer First staff to manage the automated processes	LR with each process owner	Q2 2010/11
Implement Business Development Plan	PL/FT, DH	Q3 2010/11
Monitor Business Development Plan	LR	Ongoing from Q3 2010/11

## APPENDIX III : FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

### Summary of Capital Costs:

Part A - Capital funding to be provided by SWRIEP

In-Cab wireless devices	£ 80,000	
Wireless mobile devices	£ 10,000	
Integration and development	<u>£ 20,000</u>	
Total Capital Requirement ... ..		<b><u>£110,000</u></b>

### Summary of Capital Funding:

Match capital funding for Part A provided by Exeter Council as follows:

CRM Software	£ 70,000	
Integration and development	<u>£ 30,000</u>	
Total match capital funding ... ..		<b><u>£100,000</u></b>

### Revenue Funding:

Revenue funding will be supplied by Exeter City Council as follows:

CRM technology (Part A)	£ 10,000	
In-cab/mobile technology (Part B)	<u>£ 11,640</u>	
Total Revenue funding ... ..		<b><u>£ 21,640</u></b>

### Capital Costs & Annual Revenue Costs

Setting up a CRM link for the first time in the Council, together with allowing citizens and businesses to set up Direct Debits on the Council website is a corporate objective, namely to enable customers to deal with the Council via electronic means.

The software and implementation costs of each of the FRONTLINE and CONFIRM service providers have been included in this business case, as set out in Tables A and B below. The tables also include IT Services capital and revenue costs for:

- internal integration between the website, FRONTLINE and CONFIRM;
- full integration with Payments, including the setting up of Direct Debits online;
- SMS software and a dedicated SMS server.

N.B. The above costs do not include a contingency element, and costs may vary from those original provided by the system suppliers.

**Table A – Capital Costs**

Description	Indicative Cost	Comments
CONFIRM CRM software and implementation (round to nearest £10)	£28,230	Pitney Bowes quotation
FRONTLINE CRM software and implementation	£36,530	Supplied on 12.03.09
ECC IT Services – 80 days @ £386/day, including Payments	£30,880	Supplied on 12.03.009

integration		
SMS Software and dedicated SMS server (if proceeded with).	£ 2,000	Estimated on 22.08.08
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL COST</b>	<b>£97,640</b>	

**Table B – Annual Revenue Costs**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Indicative Cost</b>	<b>Comments</b>
CONFIRM CRM (rounded to nearest £10)	£ 3,890	Pitney Bowes quotation, dated 18.08.08
FRONTLINE CRM	£ 4,100	Supplied on 12.03.09
ECC IT Services	£ 1,930	5 days @ £386/day
<b>TOTAL REVENUE COST</b>	<b>£ 9,920</b>	

**APPENDIX IV:**

**INVESTMENT RETURN OVER 5 YEARS**

**Capital Costs**

Confirm CRM Software  
 Frontline CRM Software  
 SMS Software  
 IT Development Costs  
  
 Software for Waste Collector  
 In-cab technology  
 Wireless devices  
 IT Development Costs  
  
 Less RIEP funding

	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Total
Confirm CRM Software	28,230					28,230
Frontline CRM Software	36,530					
SMS Software	2,000					
IT Development Costs	30,880					30,880
Software for Waste Collector	15,000					
In-cab technology	64,800					
Wireless devices	9,350					
IT Development Costs	10,000					
Less RIEP funding	(99,150)					
						0
<b>Total</b>	97,640	0	0	0	0	97,640
Depreciation	5 years					

**Revenue Costs**

**Expenditure**

Supplies and Services  
     Confirm CRM  
     Frontline CRM  
     In-cab Technology  
     Hosted Data Service  
  
 Support Services  
  
 Depreciation

	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Total
Supplies and Services						
Confirm CRM	3,890	3,890	3,890	3,890	3,890	19,450
Frontline CRM	4,100	4,100	4,100	4,100	4,100	20,500
In-cab Technology	8,640	8,640	8,640	8,640	8,640	43,200
Hosted Data Service	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	15,000
Support Services	1,930	1,930	1,930	1,930	1,930	9,650
Depreciation	19,528	19,528	19,528	19,528	19,528	97,640
<b>Total Revenue Expenditure</b>	41,088	41,088	41,088	41,088	41,088	205,440
<b><u>Revenue Income</u></b>						
Trade Recycling		(14,500)	(14,500)	(14,500)	(14,500)	(58,000)
Domestic Garden		(31,600)	(31,600)	(31,600)	(31,600)	(126,400)
Reduced costs		(26,900)	(26,900)	(26,900)	(26,900)	(107,600)
RIEP Funding	(11,640)					(11,640)
<b>Total Revenue Income</b>	(11,640)	(73,000)	(73,000)	(73,000)	(73,000)	(303,640)

**Net Revenue Cost / (Income)**

29,448	(31,912)	(31,912)	(31,912)	(31,912)	(31,912)	(98,200)
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**Cumulative Cash Flow**

107,560	56,120	4,680	(46,760)	(98,200)	(98,200)
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**Investment Return**

-30.2%	32.7%	32.7%	32.7%	32.7%
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## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMUNITY COMMITTEE 10 NOVEMBER 2009

#### EXECUTIVE 24 NOVEMBER 2009

### REPLACEMENT OF HOME CALL EQUIPMENT

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

- 1.1 To notify Members of a forthcoming withdrawal of support by the Council's current provider for its Home Call equipment and systems, and to seek approval to purchase new equipment and systems in this financial year.

#### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Three main services are delivered by the Council's Control Room, the CCTV operation, the out of hours telephone call centre for the Council, and the Home Call service. The Home Call service is provided by the Controllers, linking with the service's 7 Retained Wardens in the field, with 2018 vulnerable clients. The service operates 24 hours of the day, every day of the year.
- 2.2 The Current Home Call monitoring equipment was installed in 2000 and was purchased and maintained by a specialist provider. Recently the provider has given formal notice that they are unable to support this present system after April 2010. They have also given subsequent notice that they will be unable to maintain the service's uninterruptible power supply (UPS), which would render the service vulnerable to power supply failure. This would mean that the service would not be able to be reliably sustained from April 2010.
- 2.3 Home Call currently generates an income of £154,000 each year from dispersed alarms with an additional income of £67,000 per annum from Supporting People in respect of alarms in the Council's own sheltered housing sites. There is good potential for this income to increase if we can increase the number of customers.
- 2.4 An evaluation of the financial implications of being unable to support the Council's sheltered housing and Home Call clients led officers to conclude that replacement of the system is necessary and that this has to be complete by 30 March 2010.

#### **3. CURRENT SERVICE & OPTIONS**

- 3.1 In the previous 12 months the Control Room has responded to 44,260 Home Call requests, so the service is well used and valued by clients. The current alarm receiving equipment is based on an older software platform. The equipment providers have given notice that they are not able to support this platform after April 2010. Without around the clock maintenance the service is vulnerable to equipment failure and the loss of our ability to receive and respond to Home Call and Sheltered Site emergency alarms for approximately 2,000 vulnerable clients.
- 3.2 Changes in the British Standards governing alarm protocols have resulted in a significant amount of development work demanded of manufacturers and the current system is simply too old to warrant the associated development cost. This leaves the Council with a number of options in regard to this discretionary service:

- discontinue the service;
- lease new equipment;
- purchase new equipment; or
- out-source the service.

### **Discontinuing the service**

- 3.3 The service is delivered jointly with two other Control Room services - CCTV monitoring and the Council's out of hours contact centre. The synergy between these three services works well, with each supporting the other and with officers (Controllers) multi-tasking. Removing one of the services would not realise any savings in staff costs, without a reduction in the delivery of the other services.
- 3.4 The service generates substantial income of approximately £221,000 per annum. The drive by Government is for an expansion of Telecare systems and Telehealth (using proactive monitoring equipment to monitor someone in their home) to meet the needs of a growing elderly population, therefore demand for service will grow in future. Any discontinuation of the service will see the immediate reduction in income, and the opportunity for building the client base and generating greater value for money will be lost.
- 3.5 The Council has over 2,000 vulnerable clients who make great use of and value the service, 90% of clients are satisfied or very satisfied with the service. There would be a reputational cost in withdrawing the service, as well as a contractual liability until all annual contracts run their course.
- 3.6 For the reasons given above, this option has been discounted.

### **Direct Purchase**

- 3.7 The option to replace the equipment through direct purchase now appears the most attractive of the remaining options. The equipment has a predicted life of five to six years, which makes this option comparative with leasing over a 5 year term, but more competitive than leasing over a six year term (see Appendix I for cost comparison).
- 3.8 The cost of purchase is an estimated £51,000 in year 1, with annual maintenance costs of estimated at £13,000. Most providers would offer either a 1 year or 2 year warranty within the purchase price, therefore for comparison, maintenance costs are shown from year 3.
- 3.9 At the end of life of the equipment, a decision would be made whether to purchase or lease further equipment. The life of the current equipment has continued over an 8 year term, therefore, officers are confident that the need to re-purchase or lease would not be required until year 7.
- 3.10 Based upon a 6 year term, the purchasing option would cost £102,441, which includes 4 years of maintenance contract. An annual maintenance charge of £17,000 is currently paid to the existing provider.
- 3.11 Purchasing the equipment at £51,000 would fall below the EU threshold for tendering. A thorough review of the market has been conducted and competitive prices obtained. A detailed assessment of each supplier has been undertaken that is in accordance with Public Contracts Regulations 2006.

## **Leasing**

- 3.12 Two leasing options were considered, a 3 year and 5 year term, however, as the 5 year term is clearly cheaper, this has been used for comparison. The annual leasing costs of the hardware and systems is £28,055, giving an overall cost of £140,634 over 6 years (this assumes the first year of a new lease at year 6 will be at the same level as before). There is no annual maintenance cost as this is incorporated into the lease agreement.

## **Out-sourcing**

- 3.13 The option of contracting the service out to a third party provider was examined, but the cost of this service rendered this option financially unsound. In addition, the extra customer care that is currently provided to clients in relation to non-core service calls, would be expensive to provide for through a contractor.
- 3.14 As with the option to discontinue the service, there is little potential to generate a staff cost saving with contracting out. The Council would still have to market and run Home Call as a service. The inter-relation between the other Control Room services results in staffing costs being particularly competitive, when compared to an external provider.
- 3.15 The cost of outsourcing is estimated at £327,600 for a 6 year term, which makes it the least favourable of the options.

## **Uninterruptible power supply**

- 3.16 Due to the present provider withdrawing from maintenance of the UPS, it will be necessary to replace this at a capital cost of £7,800, whichever option is chosen. Indications from a potential provider confirm that this cost will include ongoing maintenance for the 6 year term (the current provider charges a maintenance fee for this service of approximately £1,000 per annum).

## **Accreditation**

- 3.17 The Telecare Services Association (TSA) is the UK national organisation that represents such services as Home Call, and accreditation with the TSA is a sign of a well run Telecare organisation. TSA aims to promote and support the Telecare industry and highlight the benefits of Telecare for consumers. The TSA has almost 300 members, primarily from Local Authorities, Registered Social Landlords and private sector suppliers. TSA members give support to the majority of the 1.5 million service users who benefit from Telecare in the UK. In short to medium term, the industry will face a drive for accreditation as commissioning bodies such as Supporting People require this.
- 3.18 The Control Room service is currently working towards gaining TSA accreditation. Once gained, there is an ongoing annual revenue cost to accreditation of approximately £2,500. It will be necessary for the Council to obtain accreditation in the short-term in order to be able to continue and expand the operation of the service in the medium and longer term. It is likely that the service will need to gain accreditation in 2010/11.
- 3.19 There is good potential to expand the service and increase income substantially and generate surplus. Any significant expansion in customer base would require additional staff resources to ensure the service is properly operated, however, a business case would be made to fund these resources through the income generated.

3.20 The Control Room service as a whole is currently being reviewed with a proposal to reduce staff compliment from 13.4 FTE to 11.2 FTE; consultation with trades union and staff commenced on 8 October 2009. This is subject to a separate report to Scrutiny Committee – Community.

#### **4. PROPOSAL**

4.1 It is therefore proposed that new Home Call alarm equipment including an uninterruptable power supply is purchased in this financial year.

4.2 It is also proposed that the service obtains the Telecare Services Association accreditation.

#### **5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

5.1 In order to purchase new Telecare equipment and systems and a replacement UPS, an adjustment to the 2009/10 Capital Programme would be required and funding sought from borrowing that would give an annual revenue cost of approximately £12,000 over a five year term. The income generated from the service will meet this revenue cost.

5.2 The maintenance costs of the equipment over that term, together with the annual cost of TSA accreditation will be met from income generated by the service.

**6. RECOMMENDED** that Scrutiny Committee supports and Executive approves:

- (1) an adjustment to the 2009/10 Capital Programme to include capital funding of £58,800 from new borrowing, with an ongoing revenue cost of £12,000 for 5 years, for the purchase of new Telecare equipment and systems, and the purchase of a UPS in 2009/10 to replace the existing before March 31st 2010;
- (2) revenue funding of £2,500 from the General Fund Revenue from April 2010 to maintain accreditation with the Telecare Services Association;
- (3) the service expanding its customer base subject to the available resources of the service.

HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

S:PA/LP/ Committee/1109SCC19 v2  
13.10.09

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

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

<b>APPENDIX I : COMPARISON OF COSTS BETWEEN OPTIONS</b>							
<b>Option</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Year 6</b>	<b>Total</b>
Purchase	50,428	Zero	13,000	13,000	13,000	13,000	<b>£102,428</b>
Leasing	23,439	23,439	23,439	23,439	23,439	23,439	<b>£140,634</b>
Out-sourcing	49,400	52,000	54,600	57,200	57,200	57,200	<b>£327,600</b>

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# Agenda Item 11

## Schedule of Parking Tariffs

### EXETER CITY COUNCIL EXISTING (2009) AND PROPOSED (2010) CHARGES – CAR PARKS Charges apply 7 days a week 8am–6pm (except Topsham car parks where charges apply 9am–5pm)

1.	<u>SHORT STAY PAY &amp; DISPLAY</u>	<i>Length of Stay</i>	<u>Mon – Sat</u>		<u>Sunday</u>	
			Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed
(a)	Guildhall	} 0-1 hour	£1.60	£1.60	£1.50	£1.60
		} 1-2 hours	£2.30	£2.30	£2.30	£2.30
		} 2-3 hours	£3.00	£3.10	£3.00	£3.00
		} 3-4 hours	£5.80	£5.90	£3.00	£3.00
		} 4-5 hours	£8.00	£8.00	£3.00	£3.00
		} Over 5 hrs	£10.30	£10.60	£3.00	£3.00
(b)	Bampfylde Street † Mary Arches Street Harlequin Centre Broadwalk House Smythen Street * Bartholomew Terrace	} 0-1 hour	£1.00	£1.10	£0.90	£0.90
		} 1-2 hours	£2.00	£2.00	£2.00	£2.00
		} 2-3 hours	£3.00	£3.10	£3.00	£3.00
		} 3-4 hours	£5.00	£5.30	£3.00	£3.00
		} 4-5 hours	£7.00	£7.20	£3.00	£3.00
		} Over 5 hrs	£10.00	£10.00	£3.00	£3.00
(c)	Civic Centre King William St (Dks A-I) Magdalen Street	} 0-1 hour	£0.80	£0.80	£0.80	£0.80
		} 1-2 hours	£1.30	£1.40	£1.30	£1.40
		} 2-3 hours	£2.20	£2.20	£2.20	£2.20
		} 3-4 hours	£4.60	£4.60	£2.20	£2.20
		} 4-5 hours	£6.20	£6.30	£2.20	£2.20
		} Over 5 hrs	£9.80	£10.00	£2.20	£2.20
(d)	King William Street (Decks J to K after 10am)	} 0-1 hour	£0.80	£0.80	£0.80	£0.80
		} 1-2 hours	£1.30	£1.40	£1.30	£1.40
		} 2-3 hours	£2.20	£2.20	£2.20	£2.20
		} 3-4 hours	£2.40	£2.40	£2.20	£2.20
		} 4-5 hours	£3.40	£3.50	£2.20	£2.20
		} 5-6 hours	£3.90	£4.00	£2.20	£2.20
		} Over 6 hrs	£5.70	£5.80	£2.20	£2.20
(e)	Fore Street Heavitree (Max stay 3 hours)	} 0-1 hour	£0.30	£0.30	£0.30	£0.30
		} 1-2 hours	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70
		} 2-3 hours	£0.90	£0.90	£0.90	£0.90

† 6pm–11.30pm staffed- £1 \* Reserved for residents after 6pm

2.	<u>MEDIUM STAY PAY &amp; DISPLAY</u>	<i>Length of Stay</i>	<u>Mon – Sat</u>		<u>Sunday</u>	
			Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed
(a)	Topsham Quay Charging period 9am-5pm	} 0-1 hour	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70
		} 1-2 hours	£0.80	£0.80	£0.70	£0.70
		} 2-3 hours	£0.90	£0.90	£0.70	£0.70
		} 3-4 hours	£1.10	£1.20	£0.70	£0.70
		} Over 4 hrs	£1.70	£1.70	£0.70	£0.70
(b)	Matthews Hall Topsham Charging period 9am-5pm	} 0-1 hour	£0.70	£0.70	£1.30	£1.40
		} 1-2 hours	£0.90	£0.90	£1.30	£1.40
		} 2-3 hours	£1.30	£1.40	£1.30	£1.40
		} 3-4 hours	£3.90	£4.00	£1.30	£1.40
		} Over 4 hrs	£6.50	£6.60	£1.30	£1.40
(c)	Holman Way	} Up to 2 hrs	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70
		} 2-4 hours	£0.90	£0.90	£0.70	£0.70
		} Over 4 hrs	£1.70	£1.70	£0.70	£0.70

(d)	Tappers Close	}	Up to 2 hrs	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70
		}	2-4 hours	£0.90	£0.90	£0.70	£0.70
		}	Over 4 hrs	£1.70	£1.70	£0.70	£0.70
(e)	Cathedral & Quay	}	0-1 hour	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70
		}	1-2 hours	£1.00	£1.10	£1.00	£1.10
		}	2-3 hours	£1.70	£1.70	£1.70	£1.70
		}	3-4 hours	£2.40	£2.40	£1.70	£1.70
		}	4-5 hours	£3.40	£3.50	£1.70	£1.70
		}	5-6 hours	£4.00	£4.10	£1.70	£1.70
		}	Over 6 hrs	£5.70	£5.80	£1.70	£1.70

### 3. LONG STAY PAY & DISPLAY

			<u>Mon – Sat</u>		<u>Sunday</u>		
			<i>Length of Stay</i>				
			Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed	
(a)	Fairpark	}	0-1 hour	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70
	Triangle	}	1-2 hours	£1.00	£1.10	£1.00	£1.10
	Howell Road	}	2-3 hours	£1.50	£1.60	£1.50	£1.60
		}	3-4 hours	£3.40	£3.50	£1.50	£1.60
		}	Over 4 hrs	£5.70	£5.80	£1.50	£1.60
(b)	Belmont Road	}	Up to 1 hr	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70
	Bystock Terrace	}	1-2 hours	£2.80	£2.80	£1.00	£1.10
		}	2-4 hours	£2.80	£2.80	£1.50	£1.60
		}	Over 4 hrs	£5.70	£5.80	£1.50	£1.60
(c)	Parr Street	}	Up to 4 hrs	£2.80	£2.80	£1.00	£1.10
		}	Over 4 hrs	£5.70	£5.80	£1.50	£1.60
(d)	Richmond Road	}	Up to 1 hr	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70
	<b>Residents' use only</b>	}	1-2 hours	£2.80	£2.80	£1.00	£1.10
	<b>after 6pm</b>	}	2-4 hours	£2.80	£2.80	£1.50	£1.60
		}	Over 4 hrs	£5.70	£5.80	£1.50	£1.60
(e)	Okehampton Street	}	Up to 1 hr	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70	£0.70
		}	1-2 hours	£1.00	£1.10	£1.00	£1.10
		}	2-4 hours	£1.50	£1.60	£1.50	£1.60
		}	Over 4 hrs	£2.50	£2.50	£1.50	£1.60
(f)	Haven Banks	}	Up to 4 hrs	£0.90	£0.90	£0.90	£0.90
		}	Over 4 hrs	£1.50	£1.50	£1.50	£1.50
	Coaches	}	Any period	£2.80	£2.80	£2.80	£2.80

### 4. SEASON TICKETS

	Existing	Proposed
Quarterly season tickets for commuter car parks	£235.00	£240.00
Special Annual Residents Parking permits	£115.00	£115.00
Bartholomew Terrace Annual Business Parking permits	£185.00	£190.00
Cathedral & Quay Annual Business Parking permits	£515.00	£525.00

### 5. STAFFED EVENING PARKING

	Existing	Proposed
Mary Arches Street - between 6pm and 11:30pm	£1.00	£1.00

### 6. CLARENCE HOTEL

	Existing	Proposed
24 hour parking permits for use by hotel guests	£7.50	£7.50

### 7. CREDIT CARD ONLY

Bampfylde Street/Broadwalk/Guildhall/Magdalen Street/ Mary Arches/Smythen Street	}	For	£7.00
Howell Road		Tariffs	
		Over	£5.50

## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ECONOMY 12 NOVEMBER 2009

#### EXECUTIVE 24 NOVEMBER 2009

### FUNDING OF CONCESSIONARY FARES

#### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This paper advises Members of the recent consultation paper issued on the funding of concessionary fares for 2010/11 and seeks advice on what response to make to the Department for Transport.

#### 2.0 INFORMATION

- 2.1 As Members are aware, whilst the Department for Transport (DfT) initiated a consultation earlier this year on the long term administration of the concessionary fares scheme for implementation from April 2011, the issue regarding the existing underfunding of a range of “hub” authorities around England has remained a high profile concern. The Council has made repeated representations, in conjunction with the City’s MP, that the funding formula is inequitable and requires urgent review. A delegation met the previous Transport Minister, Paul Clarke, in December 2008 and more recently in September of this year a further delegation met the current Transport Minister, Sadiq Khan to press home those concerns once again.
- 2.2 It is therefore very pleasing that the DfT have now issued a consultation paper which sets out their proposals for 2010/11 and seeks responses from authorities, which need to be submitted by 30 December. The consultation paper has been drafted following full returns provided by all of the travel concession authorities in the first year of operation of the new nationwide scheme. The Introduction to the review acknowledges that an examination of the data shows that there are some distributional issues associated with the grant and that “some authorities may have received insufficient funding to cover their additional costs whilst others may have received significantly more than required”. This echoes the advice provided by our transport consultants, TAS, early in 2009 with their interim findings that some authorities were making significant gains, with barely any increase in costs arising from the new concession, and other authorities were making significant losses against costs being incurred. It should be emphasised that the government review concludes that, overall, there is sufficient funding in total to meet the additional costs of the extended concession to local authorities.
- 2.3 The core of the consultation paper is as follows. The DfT emphasises that it is not in a position to retrospectively adjust allocations already made in 2008/09 or for 2009/10 because of course this would create significant uncertainty for a financial year that is past and another which is close to its end. The new proposals are designed to ensure that the available funding is fairly distributed across the country and the revised allocation uplifts the amount paid to those authorities which have experienced shortfalls. The proposed changes in funding are based on comparing the actual costs incurred by authorities in 2008/09 with the previous year under the old scheme in 2007/08. Their assessment also

allows for increase in costs between 2008/09 and 2010/11.

- 2.4 A series of four questions are asked as part of the consultation and the proposed response is shown on the attached schedule in Annex 1. The consultation also asks that the authorities provide any available evidence to support their view on the size of the cost burden which was created by the new concession, and officers intend to do this. Members are asked to agree the draft response in Annex 1 or to advise on any appropriate amendment.
- 2.5 It is important to point out that the additional £1.65 million, which this revised distribution provides to the City, is less than the estimated gap in funding for 2010/11, which is £2.11 million. Nevertheless, in a situation where there has been no adjustment to the funding formula for the previous and current financial years, it is suggested that this proposed settlement is warmly welcomed as it addresses a very large part of the financial gap that has been created. Moreover, Members need to be aware that no further funding is being put into the total amount of Special Grant nationally which still stands at £222 million for 2010/11. So, the 96 authorities which gain in funding are balanced almost exactly by the 94 authorities which will lose. Insofar as a third of those losing authorities are the 33 London Boroughs who may well lobby heavily against any such change in the formula, it is important to be seen to warmly welcome the proposed formula for 2010/11.

### **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The proposal, if endorsed by Parliament, would provide £1.65 million of additional funding for concessionary fares, but the authority will still need to identify budget savings totalling £1 million. These reductions are not of the severity that would have been necessary had the formula remained unchanged. Members also need to be aware that the DfT will need 2-3 weeks to analyse the responses to this consultation and will then need to lay an Order before Parliament for approval. Given that authorities will be setting their Council Tax in February, this does indeed indicate a very challenging timetable for authorities to cope with.

### **4.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 Scrutiny is asked to comment on the proposed response to the DfT and Executive to endorse it.

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

**ECONOMY & DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE**

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

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

None

*Question 1: Is the proposed revised distribution of special grant funding for 2010/11 preferable to the original distribution?*

**Response**

The City Council is strongly of the view that the revised distribution proposed in the consultation document is much fairer in targeting additional grant to authorities which are incurring significant additional costs. The original special grant funding formula which has operated for 2008/09 and 2009/10 has not adequately addressed the problem of “hub” authorities, whereas from an inspection of the “losers” and “gainers” list using the new formula, this is now substantially addressed by the revised formula.

*Question 2: Are there any factors which mean the revised distribution does not accurately reflect the additional costs of the improved concession being incurred by individual authorities? If yes, please provide details.*

**Response**

It is a matter of fact that the authority will incur expenditure in 2010/11 of £2.11 million in excess of the previous grant funding available and that the new formula will provide additional grant to the tune of £1.65 million. The City Council operates almost entirely the same rules as the national minimum scheme apart from one specific concession, which is to provide free travel for people who are blind or registered disabled. This concession was made after an equalities audit which concluded that the withdrawal of this provision under the previous Devonwide scheme would be a significant inequality. Insofar as this concession costs in the region of only £15,000 per annum, the revised funding formula does still leave a gap of £0.46 million in the necessary funding. Without more detailed analysis of the formula behind the revised distribution that is proposed, we have been unable to comment on any of the factors that need to be taken into account.

*Question 3: Are there any reasons why quarterly returns on year-to-date actual and full-year forecast spending on the statutory minimum concessionary travel scheme could not be provided?*

**Response**

The City Council thinks it is highly appropriate to institute a system of quarterly reports in order that the DfT is fully aware of the costs being incurred by TCAs.

*Question 4: Are there any reasons why annual returns providing details of the reimbursement arrangements entered into with bus operators could not be provided?*

**Response**

The City Council is happy to support this request.

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