



**Exeter City Council**

To the Chair and Members  
of the Scrutiny Committee - Community

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

The Scrutiny Committee - Community will meet on **TUESDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2010**, commencing at **5.30 pm**, in the Rennes Room, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter to consider the following business. If you have an enquiry regarding any items on this agenda, please contact Howard Bassett, Member Services Officer on **Exeter 265107**.

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

Pages

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

1

**MINUTES**

To sign the minutes of the meeting held on 31 August 2010.

2

**DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

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**

To pass the following resolution:

**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 17 and 18 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Act.

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

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

*Details of questions should be notified to the Assistant Chief Executive at least three working days prior to the meeting. Further information and a copy of the procedure are available from Member Services (01392 265107) also on the Council web site.*

<http://www.exeter.gov.uk/scrutinyquestions>

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

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

6                    **MINUTES OF COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY GROUP**

The minutes of Community Safety Strategy Group meetings are circulated after each meeting to Members of this Committee. Members are requested to confirm that they have no queries on the latest sets of minutes circulated (those of 8 September 2010).

They are circulated in advance to enable Members to raise, **before** Scrutiny Committee meetings, any issues of concern or interest which they may wish to have discussed at the Scrutiny Committee and, if necessary, referred back to the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership for a response. Members are also reminded that they may request individual agencies represented at the CDRP to attend a meeting of this Committee to answer any questions or address any concerns.

7                    **REPORTS OF PORTFOLIO HOLDERS**

Councillors D Baldwin (Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Involvement) and RA Hannaford (Portfolio Holder for Environment and Leisure) will present reports on the Scrutiny Committee work programme.

8                    **DOMESTIC WASTE COLLECTIONS AND RECYCLING COLLECTIONS**

The Head of Environmental Health Services will provide a verbal update.

**MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION BY EXECUTIVE**

9                    **PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING POLICY - ANNUAL REVIEW**

To consider the report of the Head of Environmental Health Services - *report circulated*                    1 - 22

**MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY**

10                    **HOUSING STRATEGY 2007-2012**

To consider the report of the Head of Housing Services – *report circulated*                    23 - 42

11                    **EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY 2009-2014**

To consider the report of the Head of Housing Services – *report circulated*                    43 - 52

12                    **HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2008-2013**

To consider the report of the Head of Housing Services – *report circulated*                    53 - 66

13                    **RESTRUCTURING EXETER'S MUSEUM SERVICE FOR THE FUTURE**

To consider the report of the Head of Leisure and Museums – *report circulated*                    67 - 82

**PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

14                    **HALF YEAR RESULTS OF PERFORMANCE MONITORING 2010/11**

To consider the report of the Director Community and Environment – *report circulated*                    83 - 90

15                    **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT STEWARDSHIP TO SEPTEMBER 2010**

To consider the joint report of the Director Community and Environment and Director Corporate Services – *report circulated*                    91 - 96

16                    **COMMUNITY SERVICES - STEWARDSHIP - STEWARDSHIP TO SEPTEMBER 2010**

To consider the joint report of the Director Community and Environment and the Head of Treasury Services – *report circulated*                    97 - 110

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

**MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY EXECUTIVE**

17                    **RESTRUCTURE OF HOUSING NEEDS SERVICE**

To consider the report of the Head of Housing Services setting out proposals for the restructure of the Housing Needs Service to create a new Housing Options Team - *report circulated to Members.*                    111 - 118

18                    **RESTRUCTURE OF THE TENANCY SERVICES TEAM**

To consider the report of the Head of Housing Services setting out proposals for the restructure of the Housing Unit's Tenancy Services Team – *report circulated to Members.*                    119 - 128

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next **Scrutiny Committee - Community** will be held on Tuesday 18 January 2011 at 5.30 pm

**FUTURE BUSINESS**

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

**Membership -**

Councillors Mitchell (Chair), Shiel (Deputy Chair), Branston, Mrs Danks, Hobden, Morris, Mottram, Newcombe, Newton, Robson, Sterry, Wardle and Winterbottom

Find out more about Exeter City Council services by looking at our web site <http://www.exeter.gov.uk>. This will give you the dates of all future Committee meetings and tell you how you can ask a question at a Scrutiny Committee meeting. Alternatively, contact the Member Services Officer on (01392) 265107 for further information.

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



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## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY 9 NOVEMBER 2010

#### EXECUTIVE 23 NOVEMBER 2010

#### PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING POLICY – ANNUAL REVIEW

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report proposes specific changes to the Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy in order to address local needs, as identified in the on-going private sector house condition survey.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 One of the Council's priority objectives is to safeguard and improve the private sector housing stock in Exeter, which is made up of around 42 000 dwellings in the owner-occupied and privately rented sectors. At nearly twice the national average, Exeter has a large private rented sector (18% of the private stock) and large number of houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). The number of HMOs is estimated at 2760 or 5.2% of the private stock, noticeably higher than the national average of 2%. It is in the private rented sector, particularly HMOs, where the poorest housing conditions are found.
- 2.2 Under the Housing Act 2004, the Council also has a legal duty to remove or reduce Category 1 Hazards (e.g. excess cold, severe dampness, and overcrowding) from dwellings in its area, and a discretion to deal with Category 2 Hazards. It has a range of enforcement tools to deal with poor and dangerous conditions in homes. These tools are detailed in the Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy for 2010-11
- 2.3 In addition to enforcement, the Council currently offers financial assistance in the form of a combination of means-tested low interest loans and grants to assist and encourage home-owners to improve their properties and remove hazards. This financial assistance helps home-owners repair and adapt private sector houses, funds energy efficiency measures and supports ExtraLet and private sector leasing by means of private sector renewal grants.
- 2.4 The allocation of budgets for each of the various forms of financial assistance tools were set out in a previous report to Scrutiny-Community on 1 June 2010 and approved by Executive on 15 June 2010 (Minute 61(1) refers).
- 2.5 The Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy (the Policy) also sets out 9 key priorities and actions needed to improve the standards of privately owned properties in the City. These are detailed in Section 5 of the Policy (Appendix I).

#### 3. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE RENEWAL POLICY

- 3.1 The Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy details the forms of financial assistance that will be made available to householders for 2010-11.

- 3.2 There are no changes proposed in respect of any of the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants detailed in the policy as no legislative changes have taken place. All discretionary grants such as Renovation Grants and Home Repair Assistance Grants have largely been replaced by Home Improvement Loans delivered through the Council's partner Wessex Reinvestment Trust; loans now represent the primary financial assistance tool. Discretionary grants have been retained for exceptional circumstances and remain an essential component of the Policy as in some cases loans are not an option.
- 3.3 In order to improve the take up of loans Wessex Home Improvement Loans have made changes to two of the existing loan products by reducing the eligible age for their interest only loan to 60, previously 66, and the interest rollup loan to 66 from 71. They have also introduced a fourth loan type - an interest free loan, which will be made available as a last resort to householders who are adjudged, by Wessex Home Improvement Loans, to be unable to afford full repayments on a capital repayment loan and do not qualify for an interest only or interest rollup loans. It is proposed that these loans should be made part of the financial assistance tools available under the Policy.
- 3.4 The Housing Act 2004 introduced provision for the mandatory licensing of larger HMOs but also introduced 'additional licensing', giving local authorities the discretion to licence HMOs falling outside the scope of mandatory licensing. Initially additional licensing could only be introduced with the approval of the Secretary of State. Earlier this year the need to get the authority from the Secretary of State was removed giving the decision making to the local authority.
- 3.5 As indicated earlier in this report Exeter has a very large number of HMOs, many of which are concentrated in the known student areas surrounding Exeter University. Given the large numbers of HMOs, public concern about perceived anti-social behaviour associated with HMOs and the imbalance of the housing market in the areas of HMO saturation, it is proposed that the feasibility of introducing additional licensing is explored, and a report brought to Community – Scrutiny in the New Year for consideration.
- 3.6 The level of fees for both HMO licensing and for enforcement action have been reviewed and the proposed revised fees will be contained in the Council's list of fees and charges for approval later this year.

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

- 4.1 The amended policy will be funded from the 2010-11 budget allocation. The financial implications of the changes will be closely monitored and the information used to inform the next review of the policy.

#### **5. PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING STRATEGY**

- 5.1 Following the mock inspection of the Council's approach to strategic housing carried out by the Housing Quality Network (HQN) and reported in February 2010, it was identified that there was a need to strengthen the strategic links between private sector housing and the rest of housing services, and a need for the strategic overview for both parts to be better understood below senior management level. In order to help address these points, it would be beneficial for the Private Sector Housing Policy to be more closely aligned and developed alongside the Housing Strategy, sitting as a sub-strategy to the latter.

5.2 This sub-strategy would set the strategic direction over the medium to long term of 5 years, and incorporate policy amendments as appropriate in response to such factors as information on house conditions from our annual Exeter house condition survey, changes in available funding, new legislation and Government policy.

**6. RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) Scrutiny Committee - Community supports and Executive agrees to adopt the changes to the Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy outlined in this report;
- 2) in future, the Private Sector Housing Strategy will be incorporated as a sub-strategy of the Council's overall Housing Strategy, with amendments made as appropriate in order to address local needs and changing government policy.

**HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

S:LP/Committee/1110SCC2  
22.10.10

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

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

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## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING RENEWAL POLICY 2010 - 2011

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

Exeter is the County Town of Devon lying at the junction of the M5, A30 and A38. It has a population of 118,800, and covers 18 square miles.

There are around 42,000 houses in the private sector which is made up as follows

Tenure	Total number of dwellings
Owner occupier	32,324
Private rental	9310

Exeter is a centre of commerce and service industries, is the location for the headquarters of a number of national companies and call centres, and is the home to The University of Exeter. In all there are in excess of 12,000 students attending the University, only half of whom are housed in halls of residence.

The large number of students living in privately rented accommodation result in an unusually high number of Houses in Multiple Occupation in the city, estimated at around 2,760, between 700 and 800 of which fall under the HMO Mandatory Licensing Scheme.

Research has shown that the economic power of students, particularly the fact that they tend to rent houses and share the rent, inflates rent levels overall in the district.

House prices in the City remain high. In July 2010 the average price of a typical terraced house in the City was £193,000 [a decrease of £18,000 since the 2009-10 policy was published] still well beyond the means of many local people, being around ten times the average salary. The recession has obviously affect house prices in the City but has also resulted in a sharp increase in the number of properties being rented, particularly by householders unable to secure mortgages.

Whilst Exeter generally offers a high quality of life, there are still a number of underlying problems that are the cause of significant deprivation in many areas for many residents across the City. By gathering ward and sub-ward information, together with the use of the indices of multiple deprivations 2007 the following can be found:

- 18,000 to 19,000 people, spread over the 6 wards of Newtown, Priory, St David's, Mincinglake, Whipton and Cowick, experience some form of deprivation;
- among these, an estimated 4,900 individuals are mostly at risk, living within the most deprived 10% areas nationally. These individuals are to be found within the vicinity of Sidwell Street and Clifton Road areas in Newtown, in the city centre and parts of Priory;
- nearly 10% of households in the City live with an income below £10,000 and 21% with an income below £15,000;
- the outlying areas of Priory, Whipton Barton, Mincinglake and, to a lesser extent, Cowick and Exwick are ranked most highly for children living in income deprived households.

One of the Council's priority objectives is to safeguard and improve the private sector housing stock in Exeter. The City Council has a vital role to play in influencing private sector house conditions both directly, through policies such as those on houses in multiple occupation, and indirectly through policies relating to the availability of financial assistance to help homeowners maintain their homes or to bring vacant dwellings back into use.

The Council acknowledges the importance of this work and will use its statutory powers fully but sensitively to maintain and improve the housing stock both for the current residents and for future generations, and in order to safeguard the occupants' health and safety.

This document sets out the Council's strategy for dealing with houses in the private sector and follows the guidelines from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002.

This policy is available in paper form or electronically, on the Council's website at [www.exeter.gov.uk](http://www.exeter.gov.uk). If you would find it easier to access this policy in a different format, e.g. large print, please contact Keith Williams, Private Sector Housing Manager on 01392 265777 or [keith.williams@exeter.gov.uk](mailto:keith.williams@exeter.gov.uk).

## **2. THE REQUIREMENT TO PRODUCE A PRIVATE SECTOR RENEWAL POLICY**

The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 [the RRO] came into force on the 18th July 2003 and effectively gives local authorities complete discretion to tailor the financial assistance that they make available to householders to suit local needs, replacing the prescriptive approach previously adopted by the Government.

The RRO also encouraged local authorities to move away from awarding grants as their only means of assisting with the maintenance of the private sector stock by becoming involved with either awarding loans directly or enabling home owners to take up loans through a third party to finance the maintenance and repair of their homes.

Since 2010 Exeter City Council has been offering home improvement loans through a partnership with Wessex Reinvestment Trust, and has built up a loan 'pot' of £883 000. Loans to the value of £207 000 have been administered up to the end of August 2010. This Policy sets out the circumstances in which grants will continue to be awarded and the procedures to be followed when loans are to be offered.

The Housing Act 2004 places a duty on the City Council to "*consider the housing conditions in their district with a view to determining what action to take under their powers to deal with hazards identified under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System [HHSRS] or provide financial assistance for home repair and improvement*".

The Housing Act 2004 also places a duty upon the Council to deal with 'Category 1' hazards, identified by the HHSRS, by the most appropriate means, and a discretionary power to deal with 'Category 2' hazards. The enforcement options available are:

- to serve an improvement notice;
- make a prohibition order;
- serve a hazard awareness notice;
- take emergency remedial action;
- make a demolition order; or
- declare a clearance area.

The Council continues to have a mandatory duty to award Disabled Facilities Grants to valid applicants who need to adapt their homes because of a disability. Currently, the Disabled Facilities Grants regime is subject to a 'root and branch' review nationally.

The policy has been based upon current information in respect of:

- private housing stock condition and void rates, available from the results of the rolling private sector house condition survey results published in 2009 [the 5th annual report];
- house prices and market conditions data, available from Exeter's economic trends report;
- tenure patterns, occupants' circumstances, and the economic and social characteristics of the City, available from the most recent census, House Condition Survey and Housing Needs Survey;
- demand for housing within areas from common housing registers;
- the housing needs of students and key workers.

The policy has also been informed by the Council's own strategies and those of our partners.

### **3. HOW THIS POLICY LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL STRATEGIES AND CORPORATE OBJECTIVES**

#### **Exeter City Council Community Strategy**

Exeter Vision - overall objective:

To be the regional capital of the South West

The Most Relevant Corporate Objectives that link to this strategy, together with the unit objectives of the Private Sector Housing and Grant Section of the Environmental Health Service Unit are:

Theme	Vision Objectives (long term up to 20 years)	Strategic Objectives (medium term up to 5 years)	Objectives of the Private Sector Housing and Grants Sections within the Environmental Health Services Unit
<b>3 Electronic city</b>	To encourage people, business and other organisations to fully embrace the latest technology and use it to improve the way we live and work	3a Improve service delivery through e-enabling Council services	<p>Explore the possibility of receiving grant enquiries/applications through a secure area on the council's web site or making appointments electronically</p> <p>Expand the information available on the web site, including the development of links to useful URLs</p> <p>Develop an electronic version of the landlords newsletter which promotes 'interactivity' with landlords</p> <p>Place useful information for student tenants on the university intranet</p>
<b>6 City of strong communities</b>	To ensure Exeter is a city where every resident is able to play a full and active part in its social, economic, political and cultural life	6a Provide strong and effective community leadership communicating with, listening to and speaking up for the city and all communities within it. Leading by example on key priorities including sustainability, equality, openness and transparency, e-govt, and as a good model employer	Explore the possible uses of renewable energy within the council's housing stock to promote good practice and to lead by example.
<b>7 A city where everyone has a home</b>	To ensure that there are enough well designed and maintained homes, properly managed in an attractive and safe setting for the people of Exeter	7a Promote the provision of affordable homes including those for rent using every possible resource including the planning process	<p>To implement the Private Sector Housing Policy to promote the maintenance of privately owned properties through grants and/or loans.</p> <p>Promote the use of the Handy Person Scheme provided by the Home Improvement Agency</p>

Theme	Vision Objectives (long term up to 20 years)	Strategic Objectives (medium term up to 5 years)	Objectives of the Private Sector Housing and Grants Sections within the Environmental Health Services Unit
		<p>7c Safeguard and improve the private sector housing stock in Exeter</p> <p>7d Promote energy efficiency to all homes and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and fuel poverty</p>	<p>Inspect 200 houses in multiple occupation and bring 95% up to standard within 1 year of inspection</p> <p>Inspect each of the 4 mobile home sites</p> <p>To pro and re-actively monitor the condition of private sector residential properties (including mobile homes and caravans)</p> <p>To identify, with the assistance of other Council departments and external agencies, all the HMOs within the City</p> <p>Develop and support at least two health promotion initiatives in respect of safe housing</p> <p>promote energy efficiency through the grant and/or loan regime and through partnership schemes such as Devon Warm Zones</p> <p>to develop and promote an affordable warmth strategy with the aim of alleviating fuel poverty by 2015</p>
<b>8 Healthy and active city</b>	To promote well-being and prevent ill-health for all, so that every citizen is able to live their life as fully, actively and independently as possible	8a Develop and support health promotion initiatives particularly in respect of physical activity, food hygiene, and housing conditions. Focus on children, elderly and socially excluded groups.	<p>promote energy efficiency through the grant and/or loan regime and through partnership schemes</p> <p>To develop and promote an affordable warmth strategy with the aim of alleviating fuel poverty by 2015</p> <p>Ensure take up of energy efficiency measures in at least 150 properties within the City and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2% and alleviate fuel poverty</p>

Theme	Vision Objectives (long term up to 20 years)	Strategic Objectives (medium term up to 5 years)	Objectives of the Private Sector Housing and Grants Sections within the Environmental Health Services Unit
<b>9 Environment cared for</b>	To protect and enhance Exeter's environment so that it makes a major contribution to quality of life, supports balanced economic growth, and makes a positive contribution to the global environment	9a Establish a sustainable development framework for Exeter through the adoption of an up to date Local Plan for Exeter  9d Promotion of sustainable lifestyles, especially in respect of reducing waste and use of natural resources	Promote energy efficiency through the grant and/or loan regime and through partnership schemes Work in partnership to promote the use of renewable energy  Promote energy efficiency through the grant and/or loan regime and through partnership schemes Work in partnership to promote the use of renewable energy
<b>10 Safe city</b>	To make Exeter the safest city in the south west and to maintain this position	10a Support community safety initiatives, especially in respect of addressing the causes of drug/alcohol misuse and anti-social behaviour in children and young people	Promote home security through the availability of grants and/or loans, and via an accreditation scheme.
<b>11 Excellence in public services</b>	-	Secure the provision, involving partners where appropriate, of high quality, cost effective, customer focused services and in particular: 11b Pursue best value and continuous improvement across key services	To react to complaints, grant enquiries etc. within the specified times  To ensure that all legal notices, complaints etc. are followed up promptly, fairly and with respect to both landlords and tenants  To increase public awareness of the work of the sections and publicise, where ever possible, the results achieved against targets  ensure that performance against national performance indicators can be measured and that top quartile results are achieved

The corporate strategies which are assisting the Vision and Corporate Objectives to become reality include the:

- Housing Strategy
- Community Safety Strategy
- HECA Strategy
- Devon Affordable Warmth Strategy
- Economic Development Strategy
- Empty homes Strategy
- Social Inclusion Strategy
- Crime Reduction Strategy
- Environmental Strategy

All of these strategies have informed this policy.

Regard has also been had to relevant, wider, strategies and policies, including:

- Social care and health strategies
- Employment and broader economic regeneration strategies
- Strategies to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Planning and land use strategies.
- Partnerships and consultation with grant recipients, landlords, Social Services, the voluntary sector etc
- South West Regional Housing Strategy

#### **4 EXETER'S PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING STOCK**

An innovative Private Sector House Condition Survey began in 2005 involving a survey of 650 properties which has been followed up on an annual basis with a rolling inspection. This form of survey allows for very accurate data to be collected. The latest information comes from the 2009 survey results

##### **Dwelling types**

Exeter has a larger percentage of terraced dwellings (39%) than the national average (28.9%) and correspondingly fewer detached and semi-detached houses. Since terraces and converted buildings are predominantly pre-1919 this indicates a potential for problems with disrepair and inadequate amenities. The age of the properties is also likely to have a strong bearing upon the energy efficiency of the housing stock

Dwelling type	Number of dwellings
Detached	4538
Semi Detached	9492
Bungalow	4038
Terraced	16281
Purpose built flats	4996
Converted flat	2289

## Tenure

In terms of the different types of tenure Exeter reflects the national picture very closely. Data, derived from the Census, confirms subjective experience that privately rented housing is concentrated in the inner ward.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) make up a significant proportion of the rented properties in the City. The Private Sector House Condition Survey estimated that there are 2760 HMOs.

The Council has been actively dealing with HMOs for over 25 years and has a good deal of data relating to that part of the stock. Around 200 HMOs are fully inspected each year and many more received other reactive visits. Each property visited is risk assessed and prioritised for inspection. Standards are maintained through a rigorous enforcement regime.

## Condition

Property condition must be considered not only against the HHSRS but also against the Decent Homes Standard. Although that standard was originally developed for social housing it has recently been extended to cover private sector dwellings.

To attain the Decent Home Standard a property must be free from category 1 hazards, be in a reasonable state of repair, have reasonably modern facilities (such as kitchens and bathrooms) and provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort (effective insulation and efficient heating).

The recent house condition survey estimates that, overall, 30.6% of private sector properties are non-decent, as compared with 36.3% in the 2007 English House Condition Survey. It also estimates that the rates of non-decency for owner occupied properties stands at 29% [below the national average of 34.1%] as compared to 36.2% in the private rented sector which is below the national average of 45.4%.

The highest levels of non-decency are to be found in converted flats [66.4%] followed by terraced houses [29.4%], bungalows [29.6%], semi detached houses [26.6%] and detached houses [19.2%].

The primary cause for non decency is, by far and away, poor thermal comfort which accounts for 53.4% of properties failing the Decent Homes Standard, a significant improvement over the 2006 estimate of 62.2%. Excess cold is responsible for 71% of all Category 1 hazards.

The total cost necessary to bring the housing stock in Exeter up to the Decent Homes Standard is £39.9M

Other significant findings of the Private Sector House Condition Survey are as follows:

- 18.9% of dwellings in Exeter contain a Category 1 hazard compared to the national average figure of 23.5%. This percentage represents 6000 houses and 1900 flats
- The total repair cost to eliminate Category 1 hazards is £23.28M
- 5,800 households contain at least one member with a disability; this equates to one in seven households having someone with a disability. It is estimated that the cost of adapting these homes is around £12.87M



## Energy Efficiency

The average SAP (energy efficiency) rating for the private sector dwellings in Exeter is 50, comparable with the average SAP rate in the UK, which is just over 51.

Although this is surprising given the number of older terraced properties in the city it reflects the success that the Council has had promoting energy efficiency through Devon Warm Zones and direct intervention through 'Warm up Exeter' [now rebranded Cosy Devon] and PLEA, [energy efficiency grants for private landlords] schemes and by including energy efficiency measures as a condition of all financial assistance.

Between April 2009, when Cosy Devon was launched, and August 2010, 650 householders in Exeter have been referred for Cosy Devon grants funded jointly by Exeter City Council, Devon County Council and the energy provider 'E-on'.

## 5 KEY PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS

The key findings of the private sector house condition survey form the basis for the priorities to be addressed by this policy.

1. The council will continue to target financial assistance at vulnerable households in order to meet the Government's Decent Homes and Fuel Poverty Targets and to tackle properties with Category 1 hazards. Targeting will be assisted by the indicative maps produced from the data from the house condition survey.
2. The council will continue to encourage the owners of properties to install energy efficiency measures through Cosy Devon, in partnership with other agencies.
3. The council will continue to work in close partnership with Devon Care and Repair home improvement agency to develop services to assist vulnerable and disabled people with the upkeep and adaptation of their homes and will participate in the re-tendering of the Home Improvement Agency so that Agency services of some form remain in place at the end of the current contract in March 2011.
4. The manner in which funding for the provision of facilities for disabled people will be further investigated in view of the potential reduction in the amount of resource available for grants for this purpose in the future.
5. Links with private landlords will be further developed through the existing landlords' forum, newsletters and through the development of a landlord accreditation scheme, in partnership with the University of Exeter.
6. The council will ensure that all licensed properties are inspected and brought up to standard and that the procedure for licence renewal will be in place by July 2011.
7. The inspection regime targeted at converted buildings, particularly those above commercial premises, will continue in order to address the poorest housing conditions.
8. The feasibility of introducing additional licensing in certain areas of the city will be investigated.
9. House conditions in Exeter will continue to be monitored by means of the on going, rolling, house condition survey or a new form of survey being developed by consultants.

## **Mandatory Licensing of certain Houses in Multiple Occupation**

The mandatory licensing of certain HMOs became a requirement on the 6 April 2006, following which the managers of all HMOs with three or more storeys and occupied by five or more tenants had to apply for a licence. Since July 2006 it has been a criminal offence for a landlord to manage an unlicensed HMO, with a maximum fine upon conviction of £20,000.

Licences are for a maximum five year period and specify the maximum number of occupiers or households. The occupancy number will depend on the number and size of rooms and the kitchen and bathroom facilities available. The standards were adopted in 2006.

The following, mandatory conditions, are applied to every licence:

The requirement to:

- produce gas safety certificates annually;
- keep electrical appliances and furniture safe and supply, on demand to the local authority, a declaration to that effect;
- ensure that smoke alarms are installed and kept in proper working order and supply, on demand to the local authority, a declaration as to the condition and positioning of such alarms;
- supply the occupier with a written statement of the terms on which they occupy the property.

The following, discretionary conditions will also apply to licences:

- any additional washing or kitchen facilities needed to comply with the standard to be applied to Licensable HMOs must be installed within 3 years of the licence being granted or within a time limit specified by the City Council, whichever is the sooner;
- any repairs, measures or improvement necessary to bring any individual HMO into compliance with the hazards identifies through the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, including fire precautions, or standards to be applied to Licensable HMOs must be undertaken within a time specified by the City Council.

The manager must have suitable management arrangements in place including:

- a system for tenants to report defects and emergencies and arrangements to respond to those reports;
- a process for dealing with anti-social behaviour occurring within the HMO by tenants or their visitors;
- arrangements for periodic inspections to identify where repair or maintenance is needed and arrangements to carry out essential repairs and maintenance; if the manager of the HMO is not the owner, the owner must sign a declaration stating that adequate funding is available to the manager for repairs;
- the manager must ensure compliance with the Management of HMOs (England) Regulations 2005.

The Landlords of Licensable HMOs who fail to licence their properties will be given every opportunity to submit an application for a licence but where a landlord, without a reasonable excuse, fails to licence a HMO the council will, in all cases, pursue prosecution and apply to the Residential Property Tribunal (RPT), for a rent repayment order to require the landlord to repay any housing benefit payments made in respect of the property. Tenants will also be referred to the RPT for repayment of any rents they have paid.

Where there is no prospect of an HMO being licensed, because of its unsuitability of the property, the proposed licensee not being considered to be 'fit and proper' or the owner's refusal to carry out improvements, the Council will make use of Management Orders:

- Interim Management Orders which enable a Council to take over the management of an HMO, and collect the rent for up to a year.
- Final Management Order which can be applied to the premises for the full term of the licence.

Where an owner of a licensable HMO states in writing that he/she is taking steps to make an HMO non-licensable and states that the HMO will not be licensable within three months the Council will issue a Temporary Exemption Notice. The Council does not wish these notices to be used routinely; therefore, a second notice will only be acceptable in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. A fee, as detailed in the Council's list of fees & charges will be payable in respect of an application for a Temporary Exemption Notice

Licenses cannot be transferred with the result that upon change of ownership or management a full application must be submitted to the Council, together with the full fee as detailed in the Council's list of fees and charges..

Licenses can be varied at the request of the licensee or other persons with an interest in the property. A fee, detailed in the Council's list of fees and charges, will be payable in respect of an application to vary a licence,

### **Housing Act 2004 Enforcement**

The following will also incur charges as detailed in the Council's list of fees & charges:

- Improvement Notices
- Prohibition Orders/Emergency Prohibition Orders
- Emergency Remedial Action Notices
- Hazard Awareness Notices
- Demolition Orders
- Reviewing suspended notices and orders

This will apply in all cases where formal action is considered necessary and is not restricted to notices served in respect of licensable HMOs.

- Pre-immigration visits to determine the suitability of a premises for occupation, including a full HHSRS assessment and production of a letter confirming the outcome of the inspection – full cost payable in advance
- Pre-immigration further visit undertaken following a missed appointment

These charges may be reimbursed under the following circumstances:

- Improvement Notice – full compliance with Notice within the time scale specified in the notice
- Prohibition Order - full compliance with Order within the time scale specified in the Order
- Hazard Awareness Notice – resolution of the hazard within 3 months of service of the Notice

## **THE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY**

### **1 Disabled Facilities Grants [DFGs]**

#### **Mandatory DFGs**

Under this policy mandatory, means tested, DFGs up to a maximum of £30,000 will continue be made available to disabled applicants for the following

- Facilitating access
- Making a dwelling safe for the disabled occupier or persons residing with him/her
- Providing rooms useable for sleeping
- Providing bathrooms
- Facilitating the provision for cooking of food
- Providing heating, lighting and power
- Adaptations to enable a disabled occupier care for a dependant
- Adaptation of common parts
- To provide access to garden

A DFG will only be paid following recommendation by an occupational therapist, who must specify what adaptations they consider necessary and appropriate, followed by a judgement by a grants officer that the adaptations specified are practical and feasible.

In accordance with a General Consent Order issued in 2008 all Mandatory DFGs that exceed £5000 will be subject to repayment conditions and a local land charge for the value of that part of the grant which exceeds £5000, up to a maximum value of £10,000 and the Council will require repayment if the grant recipient disposes (whether by sale, assignment, transfer or otherwise) of the premises in respect of which the grant was given within 10 years of the certified date, having given consideration to:

- the extent to which the recipient of the grant would suffer financial hardship were he to be required to repay all or any of the grant;
- whether the disposal of the premises is to enable the recipient of the grant to take up employment, or to change the location of his employment;
- whether the disposal is made for reasons connected with the physical or mental health or well being of the recipient of the grant or of a disabled occupant of the premises;
- whether the disposal is made to enable the recipient of the grant to live with, or near, any person who is disabled or infirm and in need of care, which the recipient of the grant is intending to provide, or who is intending to provide care of which the recipient of the grant is in need by reason of disability or infirmity.

#### **Discretionary DFGs**

Under this policy discretionary DFG funding may be awarded to 'top up' mandatory DFGs above the grant maxima of £30,000, or to undertake works that are essential for an adaptation being funded by a mandatory grant to be 'fit for purpose' but only for essential works that directly benefit the disabled person. The discretionary portion will only be considered if the measures are supported by appropriate medical advice, and only if a loan from Wessex Home Improvement Loans [see below] is not available. A Discretionary DFG will only be awarded at the discretion of the Head of Environmental Health Services, and to a maximum of £15,000.

Additional conditions, over and above the standard conditions attached to mandatory DFGs, will be applied to require repayment of the full cost of the discretionary element of any financial assistance for a period of 25 years:

- these conditions will be secured by way of a local land charge on the property for the full value of the discretionary grant
- these conditions will be specified on the information made available to the applicant at the time of the initial grant enquiry.

In addition to mandatory DFG 'top-up', there are also discretionary elements that will be considered for financial assistance in conjunction with a loan:

- the provision of safe play areas;
- adapting or providing a room in order for the disabled occupier to work from home;
- to assist the disabled person to move to a more suitable property, where this is considered more cost effective than adapting the current home;
- the installation of domestic automatic sprinkler systems into the homes of the most vulnerable;
- the installation of hard-wired interlinked smoke detectors in the hall and landing areas.

### **Alternatives to adaptations funded by mandatory DFG**

In some cases the payment of a mandatory DFG to undertake adaptations may not be considered the most appropriate course of action, usually because adaptation would not be cost effective due to the size or layout of the accommodation. In such cases grant assistance may be offered, at the discretion of the Head of Environmental Health Services, to assist disabled applicants to move to more suitable accommodation or accommodation which is adapted for the applicant's needs rather than to adapt an unsuitable property. In such cases the level of assistance available will be assessed on the merits of each case up to a maximum £30,000, to cover the ancillary costs of moving home, and any adoptions revised to the new home.

In these cases, DFG will only be available if the applicant first offers their property, at market value or below, to a Registered Social Landlord [RSL]. As for any DFG application, any 'top-up' or funding of discretionary elements will be subject to the same criteria in conjunction with a lesser Wessex reinvestment Trust loan.

## **2 Financial Assistance**

### **Home Loan Policy**

The Council is part of a consortium of Local Authorities in Devon which offers loans in partnership with the Wessex Home Improvement Loans [WHIL], the loans arm of the Wessex Reinvestment Trust. WHIL offer reduced interest loans to low-income households in order to undertake repairs or improvements to address Category 1 and high Category 2 hazards, to enable a property to reach the Decent Homes Standard or to fund discretionary elements for DFGs.

The Council subsidises loans down to 3% so that people on a low income, who would find it difficult to qualify for a normal high street loan can access funds to address hazards and to fund discretionary elements for DFGs.

In order to qualify for a loan a householder must have an income of less than £125 per week, after deducting essential living expenses such as mortgage and utility payments.

Under the contractual arrangements with WHIL they only accept clients referred from the Council. Upon referral WHIL undertake a thorough analysis of the household income and expenditure to determine what level of loan, up to a maximum £15,000, the household can afford to repay.

The loan maximum for permanent residential mobile homes is limited to £3,500 and will be underwritten by the Council. WHIL will only consider a Capital Repayment Loan in respect of such dwellings.

Three types of loan are available:

### **Capital Repayment Loans**

Minimum loan £1000, Maximum £15000

Fixed term up to 15 years

Fixed monthly repayment

Available to all ages

At the end of the term the loan will have been paid off in full

### **Interest Only**

Minimum loan £1000, Maximum £15000

Fixed monthly interest payments

The original loan capital will be re paid either when the house is sold (from the sale proceeds) or upon transfer of the property title

Open to clients aged 60 and over

The loan will continue as long as they remain living in the house

### **Interest Roll Up**

Minimum loan £1000, Maximum £15000

No monthly payments

Open to clients over 66

The loan will continue as long as the client remains in the house

Interest accumulates at 3% yearly compound interest is added to the initial loan capital

The loan and outstanding interest are paid upon sale or transfer of the property title

It takes 22 ½ years for the value of the interest to match the value of the capital lent

Security for all 3 types of loans is by way of WHIL registering a Title Restriction against the title of the improved property, creating an enforceable equitable mortgage

In exceptional circumstances, where householders are assessed as being too poor to make repayments, but who are not precluded from a loan, interest free loans may be offered to address urgent Category 1 hazards. Such loans will be secured in the same manner as the three main loan products

Householders who are found to have an income of more than £125 per week will be advised that they are not eligible for financial assistance and will be advised to seek a loan from a high street lender. At the same time they will receive a copy of the schedule of repairs and improvements prepared by the Grant Officer, and appropriate enforcement action will be considered where there appears little prospect of the Category 1 hazards being addressed.

## **Other Forms of Financial Assistance**

### **Home Repair Assistance**

Discretionary HRA grants may be available to owner occupiers or tenants with a repairing obligation who are:

- over the age of 60
- registered disabled

To address urgent Category 1 hazards and the instillation of reconditioned stair lifts as an alternative to using DFG where following the normal DFG procedure would seriously disadvantage the applicant.

HRA grants will also be available to facilitate the installation of loft insulation either by providing a loft hatch or to pay for the labour associated with clearing the loft space.

The maximum level for HRA assistance is £1200

No grant conditions will be attached to HRA grants and there is no minimum time between subsequent applications as long as the purpose for which the grant is being sought constitutes an emergency or could not have reasonably been foreseen.

### **Renovation Grants**

Discretionary renovation grants, up to a maximum £15,000, may be available to address Category 1 hazards and to achieve 'reasonable state of repair' as described in the Government's Decent Homes Standard but only in conjunction with a loan application. Grants are only available to top up loans or in place of loans where a loan is not offered following the financial assessment undertaken by WHIL. Renovation Grants will not be paid in respect of mobile homes

If the householder does not take up a loan offer made by WHIL no other form of financial assistance will be considered. In such cases not only will financial assistance not be offered but where Category 1 hazards are present enforcement powers will also be used to mitigate the hazard

Renovation grants will only be available to:

- owner occupiers with at least 1 years residency
- first time buyers, who can demonstrate that the application relates to their first home
- tenants with repairing obligations going back at least 3 years

The grants will only be available for the purposes described above and for the following:

- where repairs to the electrical wiring are needed the wiring may also be improved to the latest IEE Wiring Standards;
- providing a loft hatch or to pay for the labour associated with clearing the loft space prior to insulation being installed
- the provision of 5-lever mortice lock to main entrance doors, window locks to ground floor windows and vulnerable windows on other floors, door viewer and chain to the main entrance door
- the provision of hard wired interlinked smoke detectors in the hall and landing areas.

In the event of a discretionary renovation grant being the only financial assistance available (ie WHIL decline to offer a loan) the following will be subjected to the means test:

- all persons named on the deeds, who will be treated as ‘a relevant person’
- all applicants, including those on Income Support and Income Based Job Seeker Allowance.

The same standard conditions prescribed by law for Mandatory DFGs will be applied for 25 years.

In addition the following conditions will be applied for the same 25 year period:

- grants will be paid subject to the condition that maintain buildings insurance
- repayments of grant as a result of breaches of conditions will attract compound interest from the date of the breach at 3% above Bank of England rate.

The conditions will be secured by way of a charge registered against the property at the land registry.

### ‘Sanctuary Grants’

Non -means tested grants will be available, on the recommendation of the MARAC Group to provide a secure sanctuary room within an applicant’s property where there is a demonstrable risk that the householder is at risk of violence from a partner/former partner and that providing a sanctuary room is the most satisfactory course of action. Each grant will be assessed on its own merit and will fund the structural work to a property as recommended by the police.

### Private Sector Renewal Grants

Private Sector Renewal Grants are available to assist private landlords who are either leasing their properties to the Council or are participating in the ExtraLet scheme and to assist charities offering social housing to ensure that their properties attains the Decent Homes Standard and are up to a ‘lettable’ standard.

Unlike other forms of grant assistance, a grant will be ‘clawed back’ over the term of the lease. The amount of claw back is negotiated, as part of the terms of the lease by the Empty Homes Team using the following guidelines.

Amount of expenditure [work costs plus eligible service costs/fees]	Claw back
First £1250	0%
£1001 – 5000	80%
£5001 - £10000	90%
£10000 >	95%



## **Estimates for works in respect of financial assistance**

In respect of all the grants (as opposed to loans) were works will cost in excess of £5,000 three estimates are required; work costing between £500-£5,000, will require two estimates; work costing less than £500 may be done on one estimate providing the estimate appears reasonable to Council's Officers. All the costs quoted are inclusive of VAT. The Head of Environmental Health Services may agree exceptions to this.

## **Consideration of application for grants outside the policy**

The long standing delegated powers mechanism of consideration of applications outside the policy by the Head of Environmental Health Services and the portfolio holder will continue. This process is also the mechanism by which appeals are considered and consideration given to the waiving of conditions. This appeals mechanism is supplemented by the Council's well established corporate complaint procedure.

## **Fees and Charges**

In addition to the actual costs of carrying out works of improvement or repair, other charges necessarily incurred in undertaking works for which financial assistance is given are also eligible for grant assistance.

These include

- Architects' fees
- Certain legal fees
- Surveyors' fees
- Charges for planning permission or building regulations approvals.
- Charges made by agency services for advising on or assisting with a client's applications
- Charges made to cover electrical, gas, asbestos etc safety checks

As with the works themselves, the financial assistance given in respect of these fees is dependent on the provision of a satisfactory receipt or invoice and only reasonable and necessary fees and charges will be eligible for assistance.

The maximum fee levels will be limited to 6% of the overall cost of the eligible works without supervision and 10% with supervision.

## **Energy Efficiency Grants**

Cosy Devon Grants

These grants are jointly by the private sector renewal allocation, Devon County Council and Eon Energy to provide free loft and cavity insulation to the homes of the over 60s, who are not on benefits, and households with a household income of less than £16,000, and subsidised insulation to all other households. They compliment the national Warm Front Grants, which are available to households on benefit.

These grants are administered by Energy Action Devon and form part of Cosy Devon.

## **Private Landlord Energy Action [PLEA] Grants**

PLEA grants are available to all private sector landlords with rented properties in Exeter that are residentially occupied, or available for residential occupation (excluding holiday homes).

Grants take the form of “cash back” to assist with the installation of the following measures up to a maximum of £500:

- new gas central heating systems
- new condensing boiler.
- loft and/or cavity wall insulation
- Hot water tank jacket
- Two low energy light bulbs

S:LP/Committee/1110CC2  
11.10.10

## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY 9 NOVEMBER 2010

#### HOUSING STRATEGY 2007–2012

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To update Members on progress in meeting the targets set out in the revised Housing Strategy 2007–12.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Housing Strategy 2007–12 was approved by Executive in September 2007 following a thorough review of the previous Housing Strategy; including extensive public and stakeholder consultation and an Equalities Impact Assessment. It has been agreed as “fit for purpose” by the Government Office South West” (GOSW).

2.2 The Strategy sets out the actions the Council will take in order to ensure that everyone in the city has the opportunity to live in a suitable home that they can afford. It is organised around the key themes of the Mission Statement: **everyone, home and opportunity.**

Key areas of the Strategy include:

- ensuring that private sector housing in the City is of a reasonable standard;
- managing and improving the Council’s housing stock;
- providing housing advice and preventing homelessness;
- maintaining a register of housing need;
- overseeing the allocation of affordable housing in the city;
- making efficient use of all housing stock;
- enabling the development of new affordable housing, and
- bringing empty property back into use

2.3 The Housing Strategy was informed by the results of the Exeter and Torbay Housing Market Assessment. This examined housing markets across the sub-region and illustrated the problems of affordability and undersupply of both market and affordable housing throughout the area. The Housing Strategy highlights the need for co-ordinated joint action by both housing and planning authorities to tackle these problems. These issues are addressed within the emerging Local Development Framework.

2.4 Since the approval of the Strategy, the downturn in the housing market has had an impact on the housing challenges and how they are tackled. Whilst improved affordability of the owner occupied stock may be a long term benefit of the downturn, in the short-term, prices remain unaffordable for many, whilst access to mortgage finance has become increasingly difficult, particularly for low cost home ownership products and those households without deposits.

- 2.5 The slow-down in the economy has affected the level of new house building in the city. However, because of the stimulus package made available over the last two years many of the sites that had existing planning permission have now been started. Therefore, whilst we believed the downturn in the economy may have reduced the delivery of affordable housing through S106 contributions, the higher levels of grant available through the stimulus package have actually allowed us to increase the numbers of properties through these schemes. However, around 60% of the affordable housing planned over the next 3-4 years is due to be delivered through Planning Agreements and any reduction in the National Affordable Housing Programme will of course have an impact on these schemes.
- 2.6 Officers are waiting for the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review in October before an accurate assessment can be made on how this will affect our programme. It is intended that a report will be submitted to members (as requested at the previous meeting of this committee) in March 2011 setting out how the review has impacted on our existing strategies and what action we intend to take to ensure we maximise the opportunities to provide affordable housing in the future.

### **3. PROGRESS AGAINST TARGETS**

- 3.1 The Housing Strategy includes a Plan setting out actions with specific target dates for completion. The Action Plan is attached as Appendix I and indicates where progress has been made. Some of the highlights include:

- 21 new Council homes on-site, built to high environmental standards
- 302 new affordable homes provided over the past three years, despite the economic downturn
- Intermediate renting scheme trialled and completed
- New Older Persons, Empty Homes, Equality and Diversity and Homelessness Strategies published
- Accessible housing register implemented
- National homelessness targets met
- Housing Supplementary Planning Document agreed
- Protocol agreed with Children and Young Person's services to assist with homeless 16 and 17 year olds
- Devon Home Choice implemented

- 3.2 There are also some challenges in the future that may affect our ability to meet housing need in the city and the actions in the strategy. These are:

- The level of finance available through the National Affordable Housing Programme following the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review
- Potential cuts in Supporting people funding
- Potential cuts in the Council's £350k Homelessness Grant
- Outcome of the Housing Revenue Account subsidy review
- Reduction in Local Housing Allowance levels from 2011 that could result in a rise in housing applications

### **4. RECOMMENDED**

- 1) That the Scrutiny Committee Community notes the progress being made towards achieving targets set out in the Housing Strategy 2007–12 Action Plan.

- 2) A report is submitted in March 2011 setting out the affects of the Comprehensive Spending Review on the Council's Housing Strategy.

## HEAD OF HOUSING SERVICES

S:PA/LP/ Committee/1110SCC6  
26.10.10

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

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



## HOUSING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN PROGRESS

### Owner Key

SHM	Strategic Housing Manager	HEM	Housing Enabling Manager	HOH	Head Of Housing
HNM	Housing Needs Manager	EHM	Environmental Health Manager	JOT	Joint Funded Occupational Therapist
HEO	Housing Enabling Officer	SPM	Special Projects & Tenants Liaison Manager	PPM	Performance & Projects Manager
HPS	Head of Planning Services	HSS	Housing Support Services	TSM	Tenant Services Manager
RTSM	Repairs & Technical Services Manager	EHPM	Empty Homes Partnership Manager		
DAHC	Devon Affordable Housing Co-ordinator				

				Theme 1- Everyone		
Page	Action – Housing Unit Equalities Action Plan	Target	Priority	Owner	Resources	Progress against plan
27	Develop our Housing Equalities and Diversity Action Plan and the Housing Equalities and Diversity Implementation Group to properly reflect our strategic housing role.	October 08	High	PPM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> New group established. Now implementing the actions in the Housing Equality and Diversity Strategy
<b>2</b>	<b>Action – Supported Housing actions</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
2.b	Develop a framework for Supported Housing delivery for Exeter through the Devon Local Area Agreement	March 11	High	SHM	Staff time	Discussions are continuing with the Supporting People team on the affect of any budget cuts to the programme from 2011
<b>3</b>	<b>Action- Housing for people with learning disabilities</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
3.a	Work with Devon Learning Disability Team and Supporting People to identify need and types of accommodation/support required.	March 2009	Medium	SHM	Staff time	Member of staff seconded to the LD team to help with assessments and provide housing options

4	Action- Housing for people with mental health problems	Target	Priority	Owner	Resources	Progress against plan
4.a	Work in partnership to increase the availability of appropriate housing and support services for people with mental health problems living in the community.	March 2009	Medium	SHM	Staff time	Applicants with complex mental health problems are assessed by Joint Agency Special Needs panel and signposted to supported housing or prioritised on Home Choice
	Ensure the Homelessness Strategy addresses the needs of homeless people with mental health problems.	August 2008	High	HNM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> New Homelessness Strategy published and measures included
5	Action- Accessibility	Target	Priority	Owner	Resources	Progress against plan
5.a	Implement policy of all new affordable housing to be built to Lifetime Homes Standards where practicable/viable.	March 08	High	HEM	Staff time/capital resources	<b>COMPLETE</b> The Residential Design Guide requires all new dwellings to be designed to meet the lifetime homes standards. We also ask for affordable homes to be built to this standard when negotiating S106 agreements.
5.b	Evaluate the role of the Occupational Therapist within Housing Services and negotiate further funding from 2009.	March 2009	Medium	HOH	Revenue funding	<b>COMPLETE</b> Funding agreed until 2011
5.c	Increase to £15,000 grant available to owner-occupiers requiring adaptations who move to more suitable accommodation.	October 2007	Low	EHM	Capital funding	<b>COMPLETE</b>
5.d	Develop robust monitoring of demand for and provision of accessible housing in the city.	Oct 2008	Medium	JOT	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> Special Housing Needs database in place to monitor demand. Accessible Housing Register for Exeter in place.



5.e	Seek adoption of a suitable Development Plan Document on Accessible Housing within the Local Development Framework.	March 2008	High	SHM	Staff time	SPD agreed on current policy. New SPD under discussion to compliment the Core Strategy
<b>6</b>	<b>Action- Housing for people with sensory disabilities</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
6.a	Research need for accommodation for people with sensory disabilities and work with housing associations to meet identified need.	March 2009	Medium	HEO	Staff time	Ongoing. Awaiting outcome of DCC Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
<b>7</b>	<b>Action- Older persons housing</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
7a	Undertake a modernisation programme of suitable sheltered housing schemes to ensure they comply with Supporting People standards and provide long-term accessible housing to older people.	March 2012	Low	RTSM	Capital funding agreed	Works will be completed at Amersham Court by November 2010. No further funding has been identified to modernise additional sites.
7b	To develop a comprehensive, cross-tenure Older Persons Housing Strategy in partnership with other agencies and through consultation with older people.	March 2009	Medium	HSM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETED</b> Agreed at September 2010 Executive
7c	To continue to review the Council's sheltered housing and support services for older people in accordance with the emerging Supporting People Older Persons' Strategy.	March 2009	Medium	HOH	Staff time	Review complete. Awaiting final contract terms from Supporting people before seeking Council approval
7e	To work in partnership to develop Extra Care and other innovative models of housing/care provision.	April 2010	Medium	HOH	Staff time/capital funding	<b>COMPLETE</b> Included in the Older Person's Strategy
7d	To consult with black and minority ethnic communities regarding older persons housing needs.	March 2009	Medium	HEO	Staff time and consultation costs	<b>COMPLETE</b> Outcomes included in the Older Persons Housing Strategy

<b>8</b>	<b>Action-gypsies and travellers</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
8a	Identify sites in Core Strategy.	March 2008	High	HPS	Staff time	Pre-submission Core Strategy published in July 2010 identifies the required number of pitches and site selection criteria. Consultation on draft master-plan for Monkerton/Hill Barton and Newcourt in July 2010 includes a number of site options. Discussion on preferred sites programmed for September 2010.
8b	Consult with community regarding preferred models of site provision/management.	March 2010	Low	HPS	Staff time	Will be done when sites are identified. Consultation undertaken with existing Gypsy and traveller community
8c	Work with registered social landlords to secure provision.	March 2011	Low	HEM	Staff time	Awaiting site identification
<b>9</b>	<b>Action- Black and minority ethnic communities</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
9a	Review homelessness/housing advice services in light of findings of the Devon Inclusive Housing Project	June 2009	Low	HNM	Staff time	Being considered as part of the Housing Equality and Diversity Strategy
9b	Develop meaningful and ongoing consultation with Exeter's black and minority ethnic groups on housing issues.	October 08	Medium	HEO	Staff time/revenue funding	Ongoing. There has been difficulty getting BME groups to engage in consultation for various strategies.
<b>10</b>	<b>Action- Faith</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
10a	Research implications of Islamic teaching on loans/interest and possible effect on housing opportunities.	October 08	Medium	HEO	Staff time	As above

11	Action- Children and young people	Target	Priority	Owner	Resources	Progress against plan
11a	To explore and develop opportunities for further consultation and information sharing with young people on housing issues.	March 2009	Low	HNM	Staff time	Facebook and Twitter sites being developed by Housing Needs team – Use made of Young Devon and CYPS consultation results to inform policy (i.e. housing pathway plans)
12	Action- Gender	Target	Priority	Owner	Resources	Progress against plan
12a	To widen housing performance monitoring to include gender.	March 2008	Medium	PPM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> Included in CORE, Housing Advice figures and Tenant Census
12b	To require monitoring by gender of take up of low cost home ownership.	March 2008	Medium	HEO	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> – Zone Agent data system now supplies this data
	<b>Action – Housing issues for gay, lesbian and transsexual people</b>					
13a	Consider housing issues relating to sexuality through the Housing Equalities and Diversity Implementation Group and develop appropriate policies.	October 08	Medium	PPM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> All six strands of diversity are considered by the Housing Equalities Group. The Group monitors the action plan of the E&D Strategy
14	Action- Student Accommodation	Target	Priority	Owner	Resources	Progress against plan
14a	Consult on and adopt Supplementary Planning Guidance seeking to limit further student developments in certain areas.	March 2008	High	HOPS	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> SPG on permissions for conversions to student accommodation agreed. Agreement reached with University on new sites. Guidance was adopted in February 2008.

14b	Investigate setting up an accreditation scheme for student accommodation.	October 2008	Medium	EHM	Staff time	Draft scheme, developed by the University of Exeter is being evaluated for launch in 2011
<b>15</b>	<b>Action- Customer and tenant involvement</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
15a	In partnership with local registered social landlords explore and develop methods of consultation/involvement that can reach all social housing tenants.	October 2011	Low	HOH	Staff time	<b>Delayed. To be undertaken in 2011/12</b>
15b	Develop resident consultation/satisfaction mechanisms to gain feedback on residents' experiences of affordable housing developed through S106 agreements on private developments.	March 2009	Medium	HEM	Staff time	Survey in hand to ascertain what feedback RSL's obtain from new residents.
				<b>Theme 2- Home</b>		
<b>16</b>	<b>Action- Improving quality of private sector housing in Exeter</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
16a	Implement a programme to educate and inform property owners on the benefits of proper maintenance and energy conservation.	March 2009	Medium	EHM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> Information booklet developed and distributed
16b	Assess feasibility of the use of an accreditation scheme or selective licensing for rented properties alongside mandatory HMO licensing.	October 2008	Low	EHM	Staff time	Discussions taking place with planners and members with a view to an options appraisal by December 2010
16c	Extend the existing landlord insulation grant scheme (PLEA) to include non-priority groups, including students (further 3,000 homes).	December 2008	Medium	EHM		<b>COMPLETE</b>
16d	Organise training for landlords regarding energy efficiency and fuel poverty issues and promote grants.	December 2008	Medium	EHM		Training undertaken at landlords forums
<b>17</b>	<b>Action- Achieving excellence in management of council homes</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
17a	Use the recommendations from the mock inspection of the housing service to identify areas for improvement and develop robust, SMART service improvement plans for implementation	<b>March 2008</b>	High	HOH	Staff time/ revenue funding	<b>COMPLETE</b> Mock inspection completed and action plan agreed.
17b	Undertake a full tenants' census and use the data to ensure a tailored and inclusive service.	March 2008	High	PPM	Staff time/ revenue funding	<b>COMPLETE</b> Work underway to use data collected (80% returns)

17c	Research feasibility of the use of incentive schemes to improve rent arrears, anti-social behaviour and tenancy management.	October 2008	Medium	HOH	Staff time/ revenue implications	<b>Now planned for 2011/12</b>
17d	Submit management and performance information to Housemark and commence in-depth benchmarking of services.	March 08	Medium	PPM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE.</b> Data now available and being used
17e	Review and amend existing procedure manuals and undertake refresher training where necessary.	March 2009	Low	HSS TSM RTSM SPM PPM	Staff time	New procedures being developed starting with Tenancy Services. All new procedures uploaded to the intranet and accessible to staff
<b>18</b>	<b>Action- Ensuring high management standards in all affordable housing</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
18a	Develop exemplar policies and appropriate legal frameworks to secure housing management standards in privately managed affordable housing.	June 2012	Low	HEM	Staff time	Some policies developed for specific schemes but now no longer necessary as scheme likely to be managed by RSLs in future
	<b>Action- Council-owned land</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
19a	Deliver 75 new homes on Council land by March 2009. All homes to be built to at least Code for Sustainable Homes level 3 with inclusion of further sustainable measures if possible.	October 2009	High	HEM	Capital resources and staff time	21 new Council homes currently on-site designed to code for Sustainable Homes level 4 and Passiv-Haus Standards. Planning permission granted for a further 23 homes and applications submitted for another 33 homes. Delivery of new homes hampered by HCA funding constraints/cuts. Sovereign H.A to commence construction of 51 homes before January 2011.

20	<b>Action- Downsizing</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
20a	Develop downsizing incentives scheme for other registered social landlords in the city.	March 2009	Medium	HEO	Staff time/capital funding	<b>COMPLETE</b> Scheme introduced but funding is no longer available
20b	In partnership with other agencies explore possibilities for downsizing support in the private sector.	March 2011	Medium	EHM	Staff time	Delayed. Target date changed to March 2011
21	<b>Action – Empty Homes</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
21a	Develop a separate Empty Homes Strategy	October 2008	<b>High</b>	HEM EHMP	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE.</b> Agreed in June 2009 by Executive
22	<b>Action- Sustainability</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
22a	Implement policy that all new affordable housing to meet at least level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes wherever possible.	March 08	High	HEM	Staff time/ capital resources	<b>COMPLETE</b> Implemented through Housing Strategy and in negotiations with developers
22b	Complete and promote current eco-homes exemplar project and identify and take forward further such projects.	October 2009	Medium	HEM	Staff time/ capital resources	<b>COMPLETE</b> The entire partnership programme with Sovereign is being developed to CSH4 plus. Planning granted for 51 homes to be commenced on site by January 2011.
22c	Implement policy that all new affordable housing to be designed according to Secured By Design principles	March 08	High	HEM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> Implemented through Residential Design Guide and in negotiations with developers

22d	Assist Planning department to develop a sustainability checklist and guidance to encourage sustainable construction methods and materials to be adopted in new developments and refurbishments.	Sept 2008		HEM/ HPS	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> Enabling Team have provided input to Planning Department on sustainable design as part of the new Residential Design Guide. Initial work on a Sustainability Checklist has been carried out
22e	Review relevant policies for the management of Council homes, development of new housing and private sector renewal to ensure compliance with the Biodiversity Duty. Develop new policies where necessary to ensure biodiversity is protected.	March 2010	Low	HOH PEHO	Staff time	All new Council house developments are designed and developed with perma-culture landscaping principles to promote species diversity.
Page 33 of 35	<b>Action- Housing types and tenures</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
23a	Explore options and allocate funding to create a supply of 'intermediate' rented housing.	March 2009	Medium	HEM	Staff time/ capital resources	One scheme completed – 6 x 1 bed units. Another scheme currently going ahead for 7+ family units in partnership with RSL.
<b>24</b>	<b>Action- Energy Efficiency</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
24a	All new dwellings to achieve a minimum SAP rating of 75*	March 2010	High	HEM	Staff time/ capital resources	<b>COMPLETE</b>
24b	Continue to improve the energy efficiency of Council houses in the city by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Installing loft and cavity wall insulation into remaining houses not already benefiting;</li> <li>Installing a further 200 gas combination condensing boilers (SEDBUK 'A' rated)</li> <li>Investigating the viability of a trial to install solar water heating into properties receiving renovation grants</li> </ul>	December 2010	High	RTSM	Staff time/ capital resources	Programme Underway – Insulation almost complete. Boiler replacement on target, solar panels installed at 6 properties

					Theme 3- Opportunity	
25	Action- Homelessness	Target	Priority	Owner	Resources	Progress against plan
25a	Revise and update the Homelessness Strategy	August 2008	High	HNM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b>
25b	Reduce homelessness acceptances by 25% by 2010 and 50% by 2015 through improved housing advice and homelessness prevention services.	March 2010/2015	Medium	HNM	Staff time/ revenue & capital resources	2010 targets met
25c	Consult with service users regarding accessibility and quality existing of homeless services in the city.	October 2008	High	HNM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> - fed into Homelessness Strategy
25d	Ensure no young person aged 16 or 17yrs or care leaver up to the age of 21yrs is accommodated in B&B by 2010.	March 2010	High	HNM	Staff time	On Target – now linked to CYPs post Southwark ruling
25e	Reduce the use of temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010	March 2010	High	HNM	Staff time/ revenue	<b>COMPLETE</b> – Target met
25f	Assist in reducing youth homelessness by 50% by April 2008	April 2008	High	HNM	Staff time/ revenue resources	<b>COMPLETE</b> – youth homelessness reduced by 80% since 2005
26	Action- Preventing rough sleeping and repeat homelessness	Target	Priority	Owner	Resources	Progress against plan
26a	Revise the Resettlement Strategy as part of the Homelessness Strategy review; ensuring numbers found on rough sleeper counts remain below 9.	August 2008	High	HNM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> - part of Homelessness Strategy
26b	Review the current partnership agreement between ECC Health/Social Services/Drugs Action Team and secure future funding for the Street Homeless Outreach Team	March 2008	High	HNM	Staff time/ revenue resources	<b>COMPLETE</b> – service now tendered and funding agreed
26c	Work with Supporting People team and other partners to review unmet housing and support needs for the client group and develop a Move-on strategy.	March 2009	Medium	HNM	Staff time/ revenue resources	Some progress. Homelessness Joint Strategic Needs Assessment underway
26d	Ensure that existing accommodation projects accommodating rough sleepers are reconfigured to meet the changing needs of the client group. Ensure additional funding is secured where a need for additional resources is identified.	March 2010	Low	HNM	Staff time/ revenue resources	STAR project established
26e	Develop partnership protocols for information sharing with key partners agencies (mental health, probation, drug agencies)	March 2009	Low	HNM	Staff time	Ongoing through Homelessness Collaboration project



27	Action- Housing advice/homelessness prevention	Target	Priority	Owner	Resources	Progress against plan
27a	Complete review of the housing advice service against the Audit Commissions Key lines of enquiry (KLOE 8) and agree an improvement plan.	October 2008	Medium	HNM	Staff time	HQN Mock inspection completed in January 2010. Action plan agreed. Restructure of team to be reported to members in November 2010
27b	Develop customer feedback mechanisms including mystery shopping	October 2011	Medium	HNM	Staff time/ revenue	Delayed – some work completed Devon Wide with ECC considered 1 <sup>st</sup> of 10 LAs in Mystery Shopping exercise during 2010.
27c	Benchmark housing advice service against peer-group to ensure value for money.	Oct 2008	Medium	HNM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> – peer review completed. HQN value for money benchmarking also completed
27d	Review and update housing advice information leaflets.	March 2008	High	HNM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b>
28	Action- Temporary accommodation and direct lettings	Target	Priority	Owner	Resources	Progress against plan
28a	End use of bed and breakfast for 16 and 17year olds and care leavers up to 21yrs by 2010.	March 2010	High	HNM	Staff time/ revenue	On target – now linked to CYPS post Southwark ruling
28b	Improve methods of customer feedback from clients in temporary accommodation.	October 2008	Medium	HNM	Staff time	In progress – client user groups established
28c	Improve the standard of advice and information provided to tenants in temporary accommodation with the aim of developing a tenant's handbook.	October 2008	Low	HNM	Staff time/ revenue resources	<b>COMPLETE</b>
28d	Ensure that the stock of temporary accommodation meets clients needs whilst also reducing the stock of temporary accommodation by 50% by March 2010	March 2010	High	HNM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> – target met
28e	Ensure temporary serviced accommodation meets level B of Supporting People Quality Assessment by 2009.	March 2009	High	HNM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> – target met
28f	Increase the number of properties available through Extralet to 50 by 31 March 2008.	March 2008	High	HEM	Staff time/ revenue resources	<b>COMPLETE</b> - 75 properties now available

28g	Complete a business plan for the Extralet service by Dec 2007 to secure the long-term future of the Management Agency.	December 2007	High	HEM/HNM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> – now transferred to the Sustainable Lettings Team
<b>29</b>	<b>Action- Allocations</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
29a	Implement recommendations arising from the mock inspection of the Exeter Home Choice service.	October 2008	Medium	HNM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> – Devon Home Choice implemented
29b	Carry out focus groups with successful applicants and applicants on the waiting list to obtain feedback on the standard of service and implement recommendations.	October 2008	High	HNM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> - Feedback mechanism established
29c	Improve information to applicants of alternative housing options in the city through staff training and improved literature.	October 2008	Medium	HNM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> – website updated and staff training carried out
29d	Deliver outreach surgeries at other statutory and voluntary agencies to provide accessible advice to applicants on the Home Choice service and evaluate effectiveness.	October 2008		HNM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> – Ongoing outreach surgeries being held
<b>30</b>	<b>Action- Developing more affordable housing</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Progress against plan</b>
30a	Develop and implement Supplementary Planning Document on Affordable Housing.	March 2008	High	HEM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> – SPD agreed for existing Local Plan. Work continuing on Core Strategy
30b	Implement policy of 35% affordable housing on sites of 15 homes or more with 70% of affordable homes social rented housing and 30% affordable intermediate housing.	March 2008	High	HEM	Staff time	Included in Housing Strategy - to be implemented when Core Strategy submitted. However, 35% affordable housing has been achieved on some sites through negotiations.
30c	Implement policy of financial contribution in the form of commuted sums on developments of between 3 and 14 dwellings.	March 2008	High	HEM	Staff time	To be implemented when Core Strategy submitted.
30d	Develop tools to assess scheme viability.	March 2008	High	HEM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> - Viability study completed. To be updated in 2010/11
30e	Develop model to allocate available public subsidy between Section 106 and Non-S106 sites taking account of targets, developer contributions, site availability and yields	March 2008	High	SHM	Staff time	To be re-visited after the Comprehensive Spending Review.

				Theme 4- Sub-regional issues		
31	Action- Sub-regional Strategy	Target	Priority	Owner	Resources	Progress against plan
31a	Identify mechanisms and funding to take forward the sub-regional Strategic Land Availability and Viability studies and develop sub-regional delivery targets and monitoring systems.	October 2008	High	ETHMA Steering Group	Staff time	Methodology agreed and SLA study underway. Work ongoing to develop joint work at sub-regional level.
31b	Submit a bid on behalf of partner authorities for a sub-regional choice-based lettings system.	October 2007	High	HOH	Staff time/ revenue funding	<b>COMPLETE</b> – Devon Home Choice implemented
Page 392				<b>Additional Actions – Creating additional lettings of Affordable Housing</b>		
				<b>Action</b>		
32a	Acquire completed homes that private developers cannot sell and create intermediate rent and social rent	October 2009	High	HEM	Staff time, capital funding	On-going. Units purchased at Fountain House and Monks Road and RNSD
32b	Bring forward affordable housing on S106 sites where developer has market units 'on hold'	March 2010	High	HEM	Staff time, capital funding	Ongoing. Additional units obtained with the help of ECC grant at Royal Naval Stores, Crossmead the Rugby Club
32c	Identify sites under 14 units that have planning consent for private development and find ways of bringing forward for affordable housing	March 2010	High	HEM	Staff time, capital funding	Currently identifying sites.

32d	Set up Devon-wide Community Land Trusts scheme	March 2010	Medium	DAHC	Staff time	<p>Insufficient funds to take proposals forward. The Community Council of Devon are monitoring work in Dorset and Somerset to set up an umbrella CLT. Resonance and Wessex Community Assets have formed a two year partnership to pilot a support business for Community Land Trusts across Somerset and Dorset. The 'action research' project is being supported by the Carnegie UK Trust, which promotes sustainable rural communities, using funding secured from the Department for Communities and Local Government.</p>
32e	Support development of STEPs housing project in partnership with Exeter Community Initiatives	March 2009	Medium	HEO	Staff time, capital funding	<p>Voluntary sector fundraising has not reached the levels required to secure accommodation. One development site was identified but not pursued fully due to pre-application planning issues, the search for appropriate sites continues.</p>
32f	Convert hard-to-let sheltered housing to permanent or temporary affordable housing for non-elderly	March 2010	High	HOHS/HEM	Staff time, capital funding	<p>Option appraisal mechanism included in the Housing Asset Management Strategy</p>

32g	Encourage tenants to use space rooms for lodgers	October 2008	Medium	EHM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> – Booklet published
32h	Convert shared ownership units that are difficult to sell in the current market to rented units and explore feasibility of Rent-to-buy	October 2009	High	HEM	Staff time, capital funding	No surplus shared ownership units have been identified to date.
32i	As prices in second-hand market decline purchase second-hand street properties to convert to affordable housing.	October 2010	Medium	HEM	Staff time, capital funding	Prices in second-hand market have increased resulting in the conversion to affordable housing becoming cost prohibit and not offering value for money.
32j	Making better use of all stock through Conversions and Extensions	October 2010	High	EHM RTSM	Staff time, capital funding	For 2010/11 the Council has identified one property. If works progress, the extension will be completed by April 2011. Because of funding restrictions it is unlikely that anymore properties will be extended.
32k	Encouraging Mutual Exchanges	Sept 2008	High	HNM	Staff time	<b>COMPLETE</b> – Council now signed up to the national Homeswapper scheme
32l	Encouraging Private Landlords to take people off the Housing Register (LetStart)	July 2008	High	HMN	Staff time	Scheme no longer funded

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## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY 9 NOVEMBER 2010

#### EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY 2009-2014

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members on progress in delivering the Empty Homes Strategy.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Empty Homes Strategy 2009-2014 was approved by the Executive in June 2009 following an extensive public and stakeholder consultation.
- 2.2 The Strategy sets out how the Council will seek to maximise housing opportunities across the city by identifying empty properties, working with their owners and bringing them back in to use.

Key areas of the Strategy include:

- Finding viable solutions to bring empty properties back into use
- Using empty commercial space through conversions of offices, warehouses schools, churches etc
- Using enforcement powers where an owner refuses to respond to any requests for help and assistance to bring their property back into use.
- Partnership working to maximise opportunities to tackle empty properties.
- Provide affordable housing for those in housing need through the EXtraLet and Private Sector Leasing Schemes.
- Improving housing standards for those properties joining the Council's housing schemes.

#### 3. PROGRESS AGAINST TARGETS

- 3.1 The Empty Homes Strategy includes a detailed plan setting out the action, target date, priority, and lead officer. A copy of the action plan is attached as Appendix I and summarises the progress made against each action.
- 3.2 Members will see that a number of actions have been successfully completed or are currently being implemented. These include:
- i) Extralet and Private Sector Leased Scheme still popular with landlords and helping the Council to reduce the use of temporary accommodation
  - ii) Former Admiral Inn at Alphington completed and occupied
  - iii) Long-term empty at Oxford Road nearing completion
  - iv) Council's Downsizing Scheme remains popular. New over-55's accommodation generating interest through Devon Home Choice
  - v) 15 long-term empties have been identified and work is on-going to bring them back into use
- 3.3 There are also some actions which we are unable to pursue at this time. The main reasons for this are:

- i) Homes and Community Agency funding for Empty Homes has been delayed pending the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review
- ii) No further renovation grant funding available at this time
- iii) Empty Homes service funding through housing associations currently under negotiation for 2011 onwards
- iv) Funding through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for re-modelling the Council's sheltered housing schemes now exhausted. Awaiting the outcome of the national HRA review.

3.4 As Members can see the ability to pursue a number of key actions will depend on the outcome on the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review and the level of future funding that will be available for bringing empty properties back into use and providing new affordable housing generally. Once the out come of the spending review is known a report will be submitted to Members outlining what can be achieved through this, and other housing strategies, and what schemes/actions will need to be reviewed.

**4. RECOMMENDED:** That Scrutiny Committee Community

Notes the progress being made towards achieving targets set out in the Empty Homes Strategy 2009-2014 Action Plan.

#### HEAD OF HOUSING SERVICES

S:PALP/Cttee/1110SCC5  
22.10.10

#### COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

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

Empty Homes Strategy 2009-2014



## EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2009-2014

					LEAD	PROGRESS
					OFFICER	JULY 2010
ACTION	TARGET	PRIORITY	RESOURCES			
<b>STRATEGY</b>						
1	Review progress against the Empty Homes Strategy action plan.	Annually	Medium	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager	Review to Scrutiny in November 2010
2	Create a suitable strap line for the Empty Homes Strategy.	Proactive line which encapsulates the aim of the strategy	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager	<b>COMPLETE:</b> Agreed: Eliminating Empty Properties in Exeter
3	Empty Homes Action Plan.	Monthly	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager	Monitored at Strategic Housing Management Group
<b>PROGRAMME</b>						
1	Return properties empty for more than six months to use.	40 per year	Medium	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Negotiator	<b>7 properties back into use.</b> More resources have been put into this area and a comprehensive enforcement procedure manual is due to be completed at the end of September 2010.
2	Negotiate with the Homes and Communities Agency to secure funding for empty homes grants.	100 units before the end of 31 March 2014	Medium	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager	<b>10 units complete.</b> No more funding available - awaiting outcome of the comprehensive spending review – October 2010
3	Negotiate with internal council departments for renovation grant funding.	Subject to availability	Medium	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager	No funding available at present

4	Identify long term empty properties (over 2 years) which could be brought back into use using enforcement powers from the Housing Act 2004 (Empty Dwelling Management Orders).	6 per year	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Negotiator	<b>2 Completed</b> , 1-on site. 15 in pipeline
5	Identify funding in the council's Affordable Housing Capital Programme for use on empty properties and the creation of other housing solutions.	£200,000 to be spent on off-the-shelf purchases by 31 March 2010	High	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager	Very little interest from RSL's. Looking to change from social rented to intermediate rent to make a more viable package
		£108,500 to be spent on purchase of move-on properties	High	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Enabling Officers	<b>COMPLETE</b>
		£18,000 on family housing conversion in Rifford Road	High	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager	<b>COMPLETE</b>
		£249,000 on the rehab of the former Admiral Inn	High	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager	<b>COMPLETE</b>
		£100,000 as a leasing pot to provide further private sector leased homes in Exeter (target = 10 units)	High	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager	<b>COMPLETE - 10 units</b>
		£30,000 for the leasing of an 'eyesore' property in Oxford Street	High	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager	On-site, due for completion November 2010

		£150,000 allocated on Laings rehabilitation	High	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager	<b>3 completed</b> , 3 due to transfer, 1 in pipeline.
6	Identify funding for the EXtraLet scheme.	£80,000 to be spent by September 2009. Consider extra commuted sum money	Medium	Staff time / capital funding	Housing Needs Manager	£200,000 allocated from the affordable housing Capital Programme to fund works to privately owned properties to be used by EXtraLet over next 2 years

					LEAD	PROGRESS
					OFFICER	JULY 2010
ACTION	TARGET	PRIORITY	RESOURCES			
7	Maintain Empty Homes Partnership for the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Region.	Annually	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager	Looking at building a new Partnership with RSL's. Meetings arranged with registered providers to consult. Completion end March 2011
8	Continue to promote downsizing to free up properties for families in the Exeter area and help prevent under-occupation.	Council target of at least 25 moves per year. Budget of £50,000	Medium	Staff time / capital funding	Housing Enabling Officers	Ongoing. 7 Completed so far this year.
		RSL target of at least 20 moves per year. Budget of £50,000 (2008-10)	Medium	Staff time / capital funding	Housing Enabling Officers	This scheme is no longer running as there is no funding available. Take up by RSL's was slow

9	Promoting the creation of resident landlords within the city willing to take in lodgers.	20 lodgers in 2009-10	Medium	£5,000 spent on officer time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager	<b>COMPLETE</b> - Becoming a Resident Landlord Booklet produced April 2009 (300 produced) / Accompanying leaflet for City services completed. Good demand for booklet. Unable to measure how many new lodgings have been created.
10	Create a register of landlords and potential lodgings as a housing option.	Create list	Medium	Staff time	Housing Needs Manager	Due to the range of outlets for the Lodgers booklet/leaflet this has been difficult to measure. However, the Crashpad and Nightstop scheme (part funded by ECC) help young people into lodgings in the city
11	Promote and monitor the STEPs programme run by Exeter Community Initiative.	Work with STEPs to come up with funds and 2 properties for affordable housing	Medium	Staff time / capital funding	Housing Enabling Officers	Project now established. Transferred to Exeter Shilhay for managing and development.
12	Conversion of under-used or hard to let sheltered housing blocks.	10 possible guest room conversions	Medium	Staff time / capital funding	Head of Housing Services / Housing Enabling Manager	Contained in Housing Asset Management Strategy - options being explored. However, funding through HRA may be difficult.
13	Tackle restrictive lettings practices.	Persuade some Housing Associations to change practices which restrict letting of flats to people with children	Medium	Staff time	Housing Needs Manager	<b>COMPLETE</b> - restrictions have been relaxed as far as is practical.

SERVICE IMPROVEMENT, INFORMATION & TRAINING						
1	Prepare and implement a service improvement plan	31 December 2009	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager	<b>COMPLETE</b> - New SIP agreed and being monitored
2	Obtain and review council tax lists to identify empty properties.	February / June / October. (Every 4 months)	Medium	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Negotiator	Changes in working practices mean we will be updating monthly - more staff resources being put in to increase activity
3	Conduct street surveys to identify vacant units over shops and empty buildings.	Fore Street, Heavitree / Cowick Street, St Thomas to be thoroughly surveyed by 31 March 2011	Medium	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Negotiator	Survey not completed. However maps have been put in place showing where the reported empty homes are and will be updated monthly as appropriate
4	Ensure the Empty Property database is kept up to date in order to establish the capacity for linking the data to broader regeneration.	Monthly	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Negotiator	Ongoing
5	Remain abreast of changes in legislation and best practice as discussed by the Government, the Empty Homes Agency and the National Association of Empty Property Practitioners.	Continuous process	Medium	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager	Ongoing. Awaiting new guidelines and finding from Coalition Government

6	Continue to build staff skills and knowledge.	Continuous process	Medium	Staff time	Housing Enabling Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Negotiator	RIEP funding bid monies are funding an enforcement training package including interpersonal skills required for all aspects of enforcement and building a toolkit for use by officers. Exeter and the partner councils along with Dorset, Devon and some Cornwall officers will benefit. The ten day course over 6 months is due to start in September and conclude in February 2011
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					LEAD	PROGRESS
					OFFICER	AS OF JULY 2010
	ACTION	TARGET	PRIORITY	RESOURCES		
7	Empty Homes Partnership Newsletter	Every 6 months	Medium	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager	Fourth issue completed and on the empty homes website pages
8	Advertising	Consider additional resources to facilitate publicity	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager	Publicity Plan agreed. Limited response on advertising new advertisements due to start in September 2010.
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>						
1	Aim to reply to all calls / emails relating to empty properties within 2 days.	200 per month. Subject to number of messages	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Negotiator	July 2010 1057 calls received 98.2% answered within 18 seconds.

2	Secure revenue funding for the administration of the Empty Homes Partnership beyond 2011 subject to Local Government reorganisation of Devon.	7 Resident Social Landlords and 2 District Councils plus Exeter City Council by 2011	Low	Staff time / capital funding	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Officer	LGR Abandoned. One RSL has pulled out of the Partnership. Reviewing the funding of the other RSL's. Mid Devon have signed up for a further 3 years. East Devon - beginning negotiations (September) to renew the Service Level Agreement
3	Continue to host the Empty Homes Partnership meetings.	Every 6 months	Medium	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Officer	Last meeting held in June. Next meeting due November 2010
4	Continue to host the South West Empty Homes Forum.	Every 6 months	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Officer	Forum held in June. Next forum - 17 November 2010
<b>CONSULTATION</b>						
1	Empty Homes Strategy 2009-2014 to be placed on the Council's website for public view and comment.	Subject to approval from Committee	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Officer	<b>COMPLETE</b>
2	Review and revise Empty Homes Strategy in light of comments from the public.	Subject to approval from Committee	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Officer	<b>COMPLETE</b>

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## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE COMMUNITY 9 NOVEMBER 2010

#### HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2008-2013

## 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members on progress in meeting the targets and actions set out in the Homelessness Strategy 2008-13.

## 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Homelessness Strategy 2008 - 2013 was approved by the Executive in September 2008 following a complete review of the previous Strategy; that included extensive public and stakeholder consultation and an Equalities Impact Assessment.
- 2.2 The Strategy sets out the actions the Council will take in order to ensure that everyone in the city has the opportunity to live in a suitable home that they can afford.

Key areas of the Strategy include:

- Prevention of Homelessness and a reduction in the numbers of households in temporary accommodation
  - Reducing the need for anyone to sleep rough in the city
  - To increase housing options to all those in housing need and looking to move on from supported accommodation
  - To specifically reduce youth homelessness
  - To increase access into the private rented sector
  - To increase client and agency involvement with the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy
- 2.3 The adoption of the initial strategy followed extensive public consultation and consultation with over 200 service users. This consultation is being repeated in November 2010 to inform a strategy refresh. The review of the strategy will also take the implications of the comprehensive spending review on 20 October 2010 into account.

## 3 PROGRESS AGAINST TARGETS

- 3.1 The Homelessness Strategy includes an action plan to measure progress and an updated plan is attached as Appendix I to this report. Some of the actions completed within the plan are:
- Benchmarking/peer review completed of existing housing advice services
  - Exeter hosting the Devon wide Enhanced Housing Options Project funded by £250k of Government grant
  - Street Homeless Outreach Team reviewed and re-tendered to the Shilhay Community
  - Creation of the Short Term Accommodation and Resettlement scheme (STAR) to help reduce rough sleeping

- Improved range of housing options available to help reduce the number of households requiring temporary accommodation.

3.2 In addition to this the headline performance indicators are,

- Reduction of households in Temporary Accommodation to 130 as of 31/03/2010 compared to 350 households in 2005
- In 2009/10, 34% of all households approaching the service had their homelessness prevented using a range of alternative housing options
- Rough sleeping figures have declined to 6 in November 2009

3.3 Although Members may wish to note that in Quarter 1 of 2010/11 the Homelessness Service saw the following increase in demand.

- New approaches to housing advice have increased by over 20%
- Homeless preventions have increased by over 50%
- Homeless acceptances have increased by 30%
- Home Choice applications have increased by nearly 40%
- The number of households on the housing register has increased by 12% in three months

3.4 There are also a potential number of pressures and challenges facing the service in the future depending on the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review and other changes to national policy. These include:

- Changes to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) – currently estimated to be an average 17% lower next year. This could lead to an increase in arrears among private sector tenants and result in higher eviction rates. It may also discourage more landlords from taking tenants who rely on LHA in the future.
- Cuts to Supporting People contracts – estimated to be at least 30% next year. This will limit some of our current homelessness prevention and support options and could lead to an increase in the use of temporary accommodation.
- Government Homelessness Grant – currently £350k. There is still uncertainty as to what will happen to this grant. Any cuts to this grant will impact directly on a range of homelessness support and prevention options leading to more people being housed in temporary accommodation.
- Changes to Housing Benefit Subsidy for temporary accommodation. This is currently very generous and helps some accommodation schemes to break-even. Central Government cuts to this will impact on the Council's costs.

**5 RECOMMENDED** that the Scrutiny Committee Community notes:

- (1) Progress being made towards achieving targets set out in the Homelessness Strategy 2008-13 Action Plan.
- (2) The increased demand being placed on homelessness services as a result of the economic climate.

HEAD OF HOUSING SERVICES

S:PA/LP/ Committee/1110SCC7  
22.10.10

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

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

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## Homelessness Strategy Action Plan

Ref	Task	Who is Responsible	Target Date	How it will be Measured	Completed?/Next Step
<b>Priority 1 - Prevention of Homelessness and the reduction of numbers in temporary accommodation</b>					
1.1	To fund external mediation service to target family evictions	ECC, Devon Homeless Managers' Groups	April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mediation Service in place and working successfully.</li> <li>• Reduction in need for homeless apps from this area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Looking to reconfigure Young Persons' Prevention Posts to cover these roles at no additional cost</li> </ul>
1.2	To carry out a peer review of Housing Advice service across Devon	ECC, Devon Homeless Managers Group, Shelter	October 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in repeat homeless applications across the county</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Completed</b> - feedback available - 1/10 in Devon Authorities</li> </ul>
1.3	To work towards an 'enhanced housing options' approach	ECC	April 2009/ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in repeat homelessness</li> <li>• Non housing agencies at panels</li> <li>• Employment/training opportunities on Home Choice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Completed</b> - CLG bid successful for Devon £250k over 2 years - project to end April 2011</li> </ul>
1.4	To undertake a case audit of all homeless applications in the past 2 years as a result of domestic violence and to make recommendations on which LAs to contact to discuss joint working	ECC, Women's Refuge	April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit completed</li> <li>• Reduction in successful preventions of domestic violence approaches by 25%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Completed</b> -</li> <li>• No common themes identified or areas where cases are approaching from</li> <li>• Limited on what pro-active work can take place</li> </ul>
1.5	To continue to promote the sanctuary scheme and assist with the implementation of a Devon-wide scheme	ECC, Women's Refuge	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of Devon-wide scheme</li> <li>• Reduction in homeless applications as a result of domestic violence by 25% by April 2010</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devon-wide scheme in place</li> <li>• RSL Sanctuary Protocol in place</li> </ul>

1.6	To promote increased take up of debt advice provision including on mortgage arrears – through Homemaker post	ECC, Homeless Collaboration	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in homeless preventions through debt advice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preventions now number 30 for mortgage advice work</li> <li>• Service being fully used</li> <li>• No increase in homeless applications from Owner Occupiers</li> </ul>
1.7	To explore with RSL's opportunity for a mortgage rescue package	ECC, RSL joint action plan	December 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting up of a mortgage rescue scheme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Completed</b> - No major interest, however, sole provider – Westcountry Housing</li> </ul>
1.8	To expand the work of the Family Intervention Project into RSL and temporary accommodation	ECC, RSL joint action plan	April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25% reduction in approaches from families evicted from RSL accommodation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No funding available to do this – not a key area as evictions from temp accommodation are relatively low</li> </ul>
1.9	To improve the content of the Housing Advice Web-pages and Leaflets	ECC	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased hits on website by 25% by April 2010 and 50% by April 2012</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Completed</b> -</li> <li>• New Leaflet produced</li> <li>• Website now accurate and updated</li> <li>• Facebook and Twitter accounts to be developed</li> </ul>
1.10	To engage with non housing agencies in the city to make them aware of the Housing Advice service	ECC, Homeless Collaboration	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in earlier approaches to the service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation produced for roll out</li> </ul>
1.11	To produce a discharge policy with Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital	ECC, Hospital	April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy in place and being used</li> <li>• Reduction by 25% of all presentations as a result of institutional discharge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part of Street Homeless Outreach Team Action plan</li> </ul>

Ref	Task	Who is Responsible	Target Date	How will it be Measured?	Completed?/Next Step
<b>Priority 2 - To reduce the need for anyone to sleep rough in the City</b>					
2.1	To set up review group of rough sleeper section of strategy to meet bi-monthly	SHOT	September 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meetings in place</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
2.2	To set up a forum for multi agency approach to individuals with complex needs	SHOT	December 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi agency meetings being held regularly</li> <li>Attendance from relevant services</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
2.3	Explore panel approach to referrals into hostels	SHOT	December 2008 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation completed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Built into Individual Budget Work - multi agency assessment under way</li> <li>Work to be included as part of Supporting People pathway review</li> </ul>
2.4	Setting up protocol with the police to manage drug related incidents in accommodation	SHOT	April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protocol in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actioned for new SHOT contract with Shilhay</li> </ul>
2.5	Maximise the amount and range of street based outreach	SHOT	April 2009 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better engagement with hard to reach clients</li> <li>More services / advice available on street</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing – Engaged with church and voluntary groups to increase awareness - now providing outreach</li> </ul>
2.6	Develop a core training package available to service providers on managing complex needs	SHOT	April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Core training package developed</li> <li>Good take up of training from service providers</li> <li>Good feedback from training</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
2.7	To undertake a street needs audit and profile rough sleeping population in wider Devon	SHOT	September 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Street Needs Audit completed</li> <li>Devon-wide audit completed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Completed</b> - and report published – Devon-wide audit planned</li> </ul>

2.8	To redevelop reconnection policy	SHOT/St Petrocks	July 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New reconnection policy in place</li> <li>• At least 5 successful reconnections a month</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Completed</b> - now with St Petrocks</li> </ul>
2.9	Provide more options for direct access, first stage accommodation for rough sleepers	ECC	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 10 PSL units identified for this use</li> <li>• Supported Lodgings model drafted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Completed</b> - 23 individuals have now benefitted from the Council's STAR lettings project (Short Term Accommodation and Resettlement)</li> </ul>
2.10	Explore use of Common Assessment Framework (CAF)	DCC/ECC	April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAF in place</li> <li>• Less cherry picking of clients</li> <li>• One set of application/referral forms in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Supporting People through pathway group</li> </ul>
2.11	Pilot Personalised Budgets work	SHOT/ECC/NDDC	September 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 rough sleepers off the street through support funded by personalised budgets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Completed</b> - evaluation available on ECC website</li> </ul>
2.12	Promote rough sleeping work county-wide	ECC/SHOT/DHMG	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More provision for non priority households</li> <li>• Rough sleeping on agenda county-wide - with pilot post to oversee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Completed</b> - NHS now hosting Devon-wide rough sleeping role</li> <li>• Simultaneous street counts to be carried out in Devon November 2010</li> </ul>
2.13	Explore use of training flats with RSLs for clients moving on or those rough sleeping	ECC	April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 2 flats used for this purpose</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No real interest from RSLs</li> <li>• Probationary tenancies to be trialled in ECC stock</li> </ul>
ECC - Exeter City Council SHOT - Street Homeless Outreach Team		DCC - Devon County Council NDDC - North Devon District Council		DHMG - Devon Homeless Managers Group	



Ref	Tasks	Who is Responsible	Target Date	How will it be Measured?	Completed?/Next Step
<b>Priority 3 - To increase Housing Options available to all clients in housing need and to those needing to 'move on'</b>					
3.1	To increase the number of providers involved in panels	ECC, SHOT, Accommodation Providers	April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased mobility between accommodation</li> <li>Less 'silting up' of accommodation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Completed</b> – RSLs and Landlord Services now involved</li> </ul>
3.2	To provide private sector options at the move on panel	ECC, Smartmove	April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 1 move a month into the private sector from the move on panel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Completed</b> – Smartmove now on board</li> </ul>
3.3	To provide increased incentive on HomeChoice Register to remain at home	ECC	Dec 2008 – now Dec 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in need for homeless applications from family evictions by 25% by April 2010</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Completed</b> - as part of Devon Home Choice</li> </ul>
3.4	To promote the range of Housing Options and Housing Advice available through the HomeChoice Scheme	ECC	April 2009 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in take up in Mutual Exchange, Down-Sizing, Affordable Ownership and Private Rented options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website and advert amended to promote options</li> <li>Potential to use Housing Options Wizard in partnership with Cornwall Home Choice</li> </ul>
3.5	To offer the adaptation or extension of properties as an housing options available through Home Choice	ECC	December 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in take up of Disabled Facilities Grant, Housing renewal Grant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Completed</b> – budget no longer available</li> </ul>
3.6	To continue to promote a 'positive outcome following a negative decision' for homeless households	ECC	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All households given a negative decision to be offered an alternative housing option with 75% provided with a viable option which avoids any period of homelessness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outcomes currently at 50% for last year – 2009/10</li> </ul>

Ref	Task	Who is Responsible	Target Date	How will it be Measured?	Completed?/Next Step
<b>Priority 4 – To reduce Youth Homelessness</b>					
4.1	To ensure LPSA reward money is reinvested in youth homelessness	DCC, ECC	September 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All of reward money reinvested in youth homelessness.</li> <li>Funding of a county wide mediation service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commitment now made by DCC that money will be reinvested in youth homelessness</li> </ul>
4.2	To increase the number of supported lodgings opportunities for young people	ECC, Young Devon	April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An increase in supported lodgings placements by 25%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Completed</b> – Lodgers Scheme leaflet produced and being monitored</li> <li>DCC have supported lodgings tender on hold so no scope for specific increase</li> </ul>
4.3	To include employment/training opportunities in tandem with move on for young people who require it	ECC	April 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presence at panels from relevant agencies</li> <li>At least 1 young person a month moving on with employment/training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job Centre Plus involved as part of Enhanced Housing Options project</li> </ul>
4.4	To identify the resources required to offer practical housing units to all young people in supported accommodation	ECC, Accommodation Providers	April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources required established and viability of proposal decided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not financially possible</li> </ul>
4.5	To proactively engage in the drawing up of a shared protocol between Housing Needs and CYPS	ECC, DCC	September 2008 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The production of a universally accepted and practical protocol</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Completed</b> - requires further review</li> </ul>

4.6	To continue the joint funding with social services of the Young Persons; Advice Worker and the Young Person's Mental Health Worker	ECC, DCC	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued funding of post</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commitment secured</li> </ul>
4.7	To continue to support the work of voluntary agencies in raising homelessness issues in schools	ECC, Meaningful Occupation Project, Community Housing Aid, St. Petrocks	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased take up of programme by schools</li> <li>Indirect long term benefit in reducing need for homeless services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work commissioned in conjunction with DCC</li> </ul>

Ref	Task	Who is Responsible	Target Date	How will it be Measured?	Completed?/Next Step
<b>Priority 5 – To increase access into the private rented sector</b>					
5.1	To increase the number of properties being offered to the Extralet scheme	ECC	April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional 50 properties in 2010/11</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target to reach over 100 by 31 March 2011</li> </ul>
5.2	To expand the Extralet Scheme to allow applicants to source their own properties	ECC	April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All eligible applicants waiting for scheme skilled up in sourcing their own properties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Completed</b> - under LetStart scheme. Further programme under consideration - resources permitting</li> </ul>
5.3	Explore use of HMO's as move on accommodation for young people	ECC, Environmental Health	April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 1 HMO opportunity to be advertised through Home Choice and targeted at young people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work put back to link with potential capital money available under LPSA reward – bid to be put in.</li> </ul>
5.4	To explore the option of providing a single point of contact in the city for landlords who wish to let their property to vulnerable clients	ECC, Smartmove, PORCH	April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Options discussed and evaluated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work now being undertaken as part of Devon wide Enhanced Housing Options Project</li> </ul>
5.5	To make sure support is in place to enable the private rented sector to be a viable long term housing solution	ECC, Smartmove	April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All clients referred into the private rented sector to be offered support package including 'upskilling'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part of Supporting People review of floating Support</li> <li>15 young people targeted for specific move on and support</li> </ul>
5.6	To create a 'spend to save' protocol to cover payments made to secure/maintain private rented accommodation	ECC	September 2009 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protocol In Place</li> <li>Increase of 25% of homeless preventions through access to private rented accommodation by April 2009</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>120 Households assisted since April 2008 under LetStart Scheme</li> </ul>

Ref	Task	Who is Responsible	Target Date	How will it be Measured?	Completed?/Next Step
<b>Priority 6 - To increase agency and client involvement in the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy</b>					
6.1	To set up a service user forum to meet regularly to give feedback on all aspects of service provision in the city	ECC, Accommodation Service/ Providers	December 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>User Group in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial Consultation held at Glencoe – regular events to be held quarterly</li> </ul>
6.2	To carry out a client survey to identify where advice and options 'drop in' services may be placed in the city	ECC	April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment carried out of viable locations for drop ins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultation planned for November 2010</li> </ul>
6.3	To make greater contact with BME group advocates to research relatively low take up of prevention services	ECC, Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer	April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit of need and supply in the city carried out for Gypsy and Traveller Groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target revised as now part of Devon wide work.</li> </ul>
6.4	To carry out research into why Gypsy and Traveller Groups are not approaching the service and invite greater involvement with the strategy	ECC, Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer	April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit of need and supply in the city carried out for Gypsy and Traveller Groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target revised as now part of Devon wide work.</li> </ul>
6.5	To set up a Homelessness Strategy review group	ECC	August 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good Attendance</li> <li>Strategy updated regularly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not followed up as sufficient meetings already exist within city. Annual review sufficient.</li> </ul>
6.6	Service Level Agreements to be drawn up between statutory services based on the objectives of the strategy.	ECC	December 2008 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction of 25% by 2010 of unplanned approaches where client has had previous involvement with other service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing – SLAs in place but can be improved, specifically with CYPS and Adult Social Care.</li> </ul>
6.7	To identify viability of common assessment and referral processes	ECC, Homelessness Collaboration, SHOT	April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Viability study made into use of service</li> <li>Financial Cost identified for electronic system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing as part of work with Supporting People.</li> </ul>

6.8	To review CLG grant money spend on prevention initiatives	ECC	April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and comparison of effectiveness of individual services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue Quarterly liaison meeting with funded services</li> <li><b>Completed</b></li> </ul>
6.9	To review Exeter's existing SP funded services under the new strategic framework	ECC	December 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review completed and a clear view of services required based on needs analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Completed</b> – prioritisation work undertaken and recommendations made to DCC</li> </ul>

S:LP/Committee/1110SCC7 Appx I  
8.10.10

## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY 9 NOVEMBER 2010

#### RESTRUCTURING EXETER'S MUSEUM SERVICE FOR THE FUTURE

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To set out proposals for changes to museum staffing and to operational policies in preparation for the re-opening of the Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM), and to report on the Renaissance in the Regions programme as it affects RAMM.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Since 2003, Exeter City Council's Museum Service has received extensive funding from the national Renaissance in the Regions programme. The Museums Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) which administered the programme has signalled that it will end in its present form on 31 March 2011, the date the current funding agreement expires. In December 2007, RAMM closed for a major refurbishment and extension project, which should have been completed during 2010, but which has been delayed for reasons Members will be familiar with. It is now due to re-open to the public towards the end of 2011, and a formal opening date of 14 December 2011 has been fixed for some time.
- 2.2 Either the end of Renaissance or the re-opening of RAMM would have necessitated major changes to staff and operational arrangements, but the fact that they now coincide in a financial year in which the City Council's resources will be under enormous strain, means that these changes must be radical and highly focused. This report attempts to set out the detailed situation in relation to both, to offer options for the Committee and Council to consider and to recommend a way forward which will maximise the benefit from the new RAMM and from the successor programmes to Renaissance.
- 2.3 The report will recommend a new staffing structure, based on the permanent staff needed to operate the new building and the service as a whole, an approach to using any transitional funding available from Renaissance in the way most serviceable to the City Council, and will recommend new opening hours, and also consider whether charging for entry might be a useful way of reducing the overall cost of the museum.
- 2.4 With other services of the Council making substantial cuts or ceasing to exist altogether, it is difficult for the museum to demonstrate savings, since it is effectively having to use a zero based budget approach, since the plant, the building and the staffing will all be new. The overall aim is to be able to set the most affordable budget possible for the museum service which also allows the new building to be as effective and high profile as possible. A notional operating budget was constructed as part of the successful Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid, and this has been set as the base point from which savings will be made.

#### 3. RENAISSANCE IN THE REGIONS

- 3.1 Appendix I provides a brief history of Renaissance in the Regions, a national funding stream which has done much both to transform RAMM and many other museums at a professional level (standards of documentation and collections care for example),

but more importantly to build capacity for RAMM to provide more and better services: education, childrens' activities, outreach – and to devote additional resources to the quality of the capital project which has been its exact contemporary.

- 3.2 MLA (due to be abolished on 31 March 2012) has recently announced that it intends to re-shape Renaissance drastically, doing away with the regional hub model, and replacing it with a small number of “core museums” in major conurbations, with a parallel challenge fund for other museums to bid for. Although the current funding agreement runs out on 31 March 2011, MLA have signalled two transition years, during which current hub museums would be weaned off the present allocations; a funding reduction of 10% – 20% in 2011/12 and a further 50% in 2012/13. The conditions placed on this transitional funding appear to be, at the moment less onerous than more recent regimes, and although MLA have yet to give any details, will probably make allowance for redundancy costs.
- 3.3 At the time of writing, before the spending review announcements on 20 October, it is far from clear how MLA are able to be so certain of their ground, and indeed so generous, when other spending programmes are under severe strain, and no other decisions have been made. As it is also possible that the actual operational implications of the spending review will not be apparent by the time this Committee meets, all assertions on future external funding must be assumed to be conditional at the very least.
- 3.4 Fortunately this fits well with the strategy for future staffing and managing the development project and the normal operation which is set out in further detail below. Broadly the aim is to create a new permanent staffing structure at the minimum level required to operate the public service, with additional services provided by Renaissance staff as and when finance is available.

#### **4. CHARGING FOR ENTRY**

- 4.1 One way of reducing the net cost of the museum service is to charge for entry, either to the main museum, or for temporary exhibitions. Appendix II goes into some detail about what that might mean for RAMM.
- 4.2 While charging is well within the Council's capacity and competence, it would significantly reduce the numbers visiting the museum. Just charging visitors not resident in Exeter would be widely acceptable but would also inevitably reduce casual local visits, as some sort of filter system would be needed, requiring visitors to carry a card, or other identification with their address.
- 4.3 Appendix II sets out what income might be available and discusses the pros and cons of charging together with some options.
- 4.4 The museum already charges for educational visits of course, and it is recommended that this continue. If there is no Renaissance support for the education function however, the museum will have to charge the full cost of visits, or seek subsidy elsewhere – the County Council for example. Until the full economic cost has been calculated it is not possible to establish whether the service would be viable, but it is recommended that the service be run on a full recovery basis or not at all.

#### **5. OPENING DAYS**

- 5.1 Before its closure, RAMM opened 6 days a week, from 10am to 5pm, and was closed on Sundays. Although no guarantees were given, the Council promised that it would



consider Sunday opening once the project was complete. Funding reductions now mean that 7 day opening would not be sustainable, but that does not mean that the museum should not be open on Sundays when visitors would have more time to browse. The Council should therefore consider two options: 6 day opening, Tuesday to Sunday, or 5 day opening, Wednesday to Sunday. It is unlikely that either will offer huge energy savings over 7 day opening, but will require significantly fewer staff. In either option it will be important to ensure that terms of employment of front of house staff at least and possibly others are altered to include weekend working at standard rates. Both options will be costed in the ongoing budget preparations; no decision needs to be made until next spring.

- 5.2 Further consideration would be needed to determine whether the schools programme would be able to run on weekdays when the museum was closed to the public.

## **6. PHILOSOPHY BEHIND THE PROPOSED STAFFING STRUCTURE**

- 6.1 More detailed staffing proposals will be put before the Executive Committee shortly, but this committee will want to see how this new structure will work and whether it will be able to deliver the Council's vision.
- 6.2 We aim firstly to re-divide the permanent core staff from project based and externally funded staff. This distinction has always been maintained in terms of contracts, but in the 7 years that Renaissance has been running, operationally there has been little difference. With RAMM re-opening however there is a need to identify the core staff who will run the building and the service. Appendix III sets out an early design of how that will be structured, and which roles it will contain.
- 6.3 Two key principles inform the structure. The first is that the main priority for next few years at least is the successful operation of the new building as a public destination. Other aspects of museum operation are equally important, but they will have to take a back seat, as the Council and the service make the most of the huge capital investment. In fact most backroom services have been well-served during Renaissance, leaving the museum in good shape as far as its collections care, record keeping, storage, general policy etc go, although it must be made clear that those functions will all gradually deteriorate again if completely ignored. However we believe that there is scope to cut back on all those activities while the attractions of the building are exploited.
- 6.4 The second is that the senior members of the new team, which is smaller than the old permanent team, will all have the task of actively seeking and then managing externally funded projects. As Appendix I suggests, there is a good chance that Renaissance will survive in the form of project funding, which will have to be bid for. All key staff will be expected to have or develop skills in making applications and in implementing short or medium term projects.
- 6.5 Work is already underway to write the new job descriptions, carry out the job evaluations and cost the structure, in time to bring a report to Executive in early December. Interviews and appointments to the new structure will take place during December so that all other staff can be given notice of the potential end of their contracts on 31 March 2011.
- 6.6 Once the core staff are appointed however, we would proceed to use the transitional Renaissance funding to appoint as many of the other staff as possible to assist principally with the preparation of RAMM for opening. These posts would taper off

with the transitional funding, but then there would be some future openings from the challenge fund, if it does happen as suggested from April 2012.

- 6.7 The core staff would be divided into three teams. The Content Management team would look after the collections, the displays and exhibitions, including RAMM's expanding web presence. Audience Development would look after marketing, design, education and crucially for the future, business development – a new role to co-ordinate the search for project funding but also to deal in general fundraising to support the core revenue budget. Finally Operational Services would include front of house and building management, conservation, technical support and volunteer co-ordination. The latter is again very important as the museum will be relying on greater numbers of volunteers in the future almost certainly.

## **7. FUTURE CHALLENGES**

- 7.1 For some years it has been apparent that the existing policy of deposition of archaeological finds from development sites in Devon has been unsustainable as far as the museum goes. It already has a large collection of such finds, of variable importance, but all tied to planning agreements with developers. However there is a substantial backlog of material currently held by Exeter Archaeology, which it has little or no room to keep, quite apart from the fact that it is meant to be deposited. There is a moratorium on accepting any more material from any archaeological contractor at the moment, because of the pressure of the project, but by 2012 we will have to face the issue. The formal stores will be almost full by then and would in any case not be able to handle the many metres of shelving which these archives contain. It will then be time to consider the overall policy, both of maintaining the existing archive, but more importantly of accepting material from digs. Storage is expensive, although these archives do not have to be in the city centre, and could be shared with other museums.

## **8. CONCLUSIONS**

- 8.1 There is a need to restructure the staffing radically to create a core team to manage the new museum and work with the new funding regime. There is a need for the core team to have commissioning and external funding skills. Most of the team should be required to work five days out of seven.
- 8.2 It is likely that there will be transitional Renaissance funding into 2012/3, so that some additional capability can be managed.
- 8.3 RAMM should open on Sundays once it opens again. It should close on Mondays and possibly on Tuesdays.
- 8.4 The education function should be self-funding.
- 8.5 There is scope to charge for general entry, and this will be explored in more detail.
- 8.6 The Council will need to address the issues of archaeological archives in early 2012.

## **HEAD OF LEISURE & MUSEUMS**

S:PA/LP/ Committee/1110SCC1  
22.10.10

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

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

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## RENAISSANCE AND RAMM

Renaissance began in 2002 with three pilot regions, of which the South West was one: RAMM was one of five south west museums to join the so-called hub – a formal partnership which then proceeded to set up new projects and schemes across all facets of museum operations, including exhibitions, staffing, marketing, outreach, collections care but in particular education. This latter was especially welcome for Exeter since as a City Council funded museum it had always been difficult to offer a proper education service in the absence of any County Council funding. A new education team was set up, and has run very successfully ever since.

From the very beginning Museums, Libraries & Archives Council (MLA) made the point that Renaissance was meant to be a permanent feature of museum funding, and some councils and independent museums indeed absorbed Renaissance funded staff into their permanent structures. In Exeter we have never done that, always believing that national funding at local level could not be relied upon to that extent. There has always been clarity between the locally and nationally funded strands of work, although of course staff with time-limited contracts build up employment rights in the same way as their permanently employed peers, to the extent that as we come to a significant change point, all staff need to be treated in more or less the same way.

As if to emphasise the point that Renaissance funding was indeed volatile, MLA changed its general nature over the years, and its size and scope were also affected by the two Comprehensive Spending Reviews which have taken place during its life to date. Funding reduced when the scheme became a national project rather than three regional pilots, and has reduced again as MLA have top-sliced it to make up for their own loss of permanent funding at national level. In its current manifestation, the funding agreements for which run out on 31 March 2011, Renaissance is a tightly monitored and controlled set of individual and group projects subject to constant interference from MLA.

The Department of Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) announced a major independent review into Renaissance during 2008. This praised a great deal of what had been accomplished by the scheme, but was extremely critical of the scope, nature and utility of the vast quantities of data collected during the scheme. The review also, contrarily many thought, proposed replacing the regional hub model with a smaller number of “core museums”, intended to be beacons of excellence, but with no geographical focus. In addition the report proposed a “challenge fund” for all museums. MLA adopted this report and has pursued it since, although without adding a great deal to the detail. This model has now been presented to DCMS as the way forward for Renaissance, even though the Government announced in July that MLA was one of the first quangos to be abolished; it will however stay in existence until 31 March 2012, to oversee the transition from old Renaissance to new. No announcement has yet been made as to where the residual functions of MLA will go. These include operating the Government’s Indemnity, and its Acceptance in Lieu (of inheritance tax) schemes, as well as other devolved government tasks and the Museum Accreditation. It seems most likely that the Arts Council England will take over these schemes and an oversight role for the sector as a whole.

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## Note on Charging Visitors

### Summary

When the museum closed it had about 250,000 visits per year, probably made up of about 100,000 people visiting once or more. 60% or so of those were children. Around half of these were Exeter residents; a further quarter from within Devon and the remaining quarter from further afield – tourists and other visitors to the City.

We were somewhat unusual among museums in that a large proportion of our visitors were from the lower social groups (in fact the profile of visitors matched that of the city overall, an unusual achievement) and we had a high number of repeat visitors, particularly parents with young children but also others attracted by the unusually high number of temporary exhibitions we offered. Children who came on educational visits often returned bringing their parents.

The difficult estimate is how many of those visitors would return if there were to be charging. The best guess is somewhere between 30% and 40%. This is borne out by the experience of Hull Museums Service who introduced charges and saw their visitor numbers drop by 60%. The service has subsequently made entrance free again. Moreover some recent research done by Birmingham estimated that they would lose between 60% and 70% of their visitor numbers if they introduced charges. The table below shows what the income might be from a range of visitor number, at a range of prices. If the museum were not to charge for children then our estimate would be that the museum would receive, at the most, 75,000 paying (ie adult) visits.

The number of visits itself is dependent on the price of course, and again it is impossible to guess how much people would pay. A figure of £4 reflects what other similar museums are charging, but of course it is impossible to compare value for money when making that assumption.

75,000 adult visitors at £4 a head would render £190,000 of net income, (assuming VAT at 20% and an annual cost of £60,000 for additional staff) which would need to be offset by a loss in catering income. At 250,000 visitors our research suggests that income from the catering operator would be about £32,000, and at 150,000 visits, with adults paying and children not, it is likely that this would reduce to less than £10,000, leaving a net income of around £170,000 – not insignificant. Not charging Exeter residents would reduce this net income to around £85,000.

### Costs of Charging

In order to charge efficiently and fairly, we would need to make some physical changes to the reception areas, acquire new tills and appoint additional staff. The physical changes would be needed to ensure everyone went past the desk and the till. It is likely that completely new tills would be required, because there will be a need to produce tickets rapidly – otherwise, even with reduced visitor numbers there will be unacceptable queues. Those who currently staff the reception desk are fully occupied usually, so we would need to strengthen the presence. The new museum is designed to operate with two entrances. It may be possible to use one door only for those will season tickets or pre-purchased tickets of some sort, but it would be irritating for anyone who has to go round the building to pay. It would also be possible to look again at the policy of having two entrances, although the building has now been designed with two in mind.

To cover this work, taking holidays and illness into account, at least three additional staff, and possibly more, would be required, which is a regular cost of about £60,000. There would also be a need for additional accountancy time, as the money would have to be counted, banked, and generally managed. This cost would be reduced if the museum reduces again to one entrance, or if it were to devise a scheme to restrict paying visitors to a single door.

The cost of equipment and alterations would be around £20,000 to £30,000 as a one off, plus some ongoing maintenance and replacement, as well as the costs of handling and accounting for considerably more cash than has been the case.

There would be a significant effect on our catering income and charging may make it difficult to attract a caterer.

### Legal Issues of Free Entry for Residents

There appears to be no legal reason why we should not discriminate between residents and non-residents. In order to do so we would have to set up some sort of system, either to make residents prove their residence at each visit, or, more likely, to let them join a residents only club on submission of a couple of household bills. The former would have the potential to cause hold-ups at reception, whereas the latter would require a constant low level operation to renew memberships. The former would be hard to enforce for children and young people. It would be possible to charge for the residents' club, offering unlimited visits for say £10. Either route would probably cause initial bad publicity from the residents of the surrounding villages, and possibly from those who work in city but don't live in it. It would also be possible to offer a season ticket to people from outside the City who are regular visitors.

Another option to consider would be to allow free entry on a particular day each week. This is a model often used in mainland Europe; it is difficult to assess its effect on income.

### Possible Charging and Income Levels

Traditionally about 50% to 60% of visits are made by those who come from outside the city, so if a policy of charging only non-residents were to be adopted, the income levels shown below would fall by half. If there are no charges for children then the figures need to be halved again.

### Possible Income Levels

No of visitors		£3	£4	£5	£6	£7
250,000	gross	750,000	1,000,000	1,250,000	1,500,000	1,750,000
	Net of vat (20%)	625,000	833,000	1,087,000	1,042,000	1,458,000
	<b>Net of enabling revenue costs</b>	<b>565,000</b>	<b>773,000</b>	<b>1,027,000</b>	<b>982,000</b>	<b>1,399,000</b>
200,000	gross	600,000	800,000	1,000,000	1,200,000	1,400,000
	Net of vat	500,000	667,000	833,000	1,000,000	1,166,000
	<b>Net of enabling</b>	<b>440,000</b>	<b>607,000</b>	<b>773,000</b>	<b>940,000</b>	<b>1,106,000</b>



		revenue	costs				
175,000	gross	525,000	700,000	875,000	1,050,000	1,225,000	
	net	437,500	583,000	729,000	875,000	1,021,000	
	<b>Net of enabling revenue costs</b>	<b>377,500</b>	<b>523,000</b>	<b>669,000</b>	<b>815,000</b>	<b>941,000</b>	
150,000	gross	450,000	600,000	750,000	900,000	1,050,000	
	net	375,000	500,000	625,000	750,000	875,000	
	<b>Net of enabling revenue costs</b>	<b>315,000</b>	<b>440,000</b>	<b>565,000</b>	<b>690,000</b>	<b>815,000</b>	
125,000	gross	375,000	500,000	625,000	750,000	875,000	
	net	312,500	417,000	521,000	625,000	729,000	
	<b>Net of enabling revenue costs</b>	<b>252,500</b>	<b>357,000</b>	<b>461,000</b>	<b>565,000</b>	<b>669,000</b>	
100,000	gross	300,000	400,000	500,000	600,000	700,000	
	net	250,000	333,000	417,000	500,000	583,000	
	<b>Net of enabling revenue costs</b>	<b>190,000</b>	<b>273,000</b>	<b>357,000</b>	<b>440,000</b>	<b>523,000</b>	
75,000	gross	225,000	300,000	375,000	450,000	525,000	
	net	187,500	250,000	312,000	375,000	437,500	
	<b>Net of enabling revenue costs</b>	<b>127,500</b>	<b>190,000</b>	<b>252,500</b>	<b>315,000</b>	<b>377,000</b>	
50,000	gross	150,000	200,000	250,000	300,000	350,000	
	net	125,000	167,000	208,000	250,000	292,000	
	<b>Net of enabling revenue costs</b>	<b>65,000</b>	<b>107,000</b>	<b>148,000</b>	<b>190,000</b>	<b>232,000</b>	

## Current Charges

Random selection of museum charges.

The price for a single adult at Norwich Castle (a lot bigger than RAMM) is about £7, and they have around 150,000 visitors.

Dorchester £6.50.

Royal Cornwall does not charge, but used to do so until it became part of the Renaissance Hub. *(The museum estimates that its visitor figures increased by 30% to 40% when charges were withdrawn about 5 years ago)*

Bristol – free

Derby - free

Doncaster – free

Dudley – free

Gloucester – free

Grosvenor Museum Chester – free

Harris Museum Preston – free

Hereford Museum – free

Hull Museums – free. (The Council tried imposing charges but lost some 60% of their visitors. We are seeking further information about this)

Ipswich Museum – free

Lightbox Woking – free (some exhib charges)

Museum of Hartlepool – free

Museum of Somerset, Taunton Castle – opening 2011 – free

Newbury – free

Plymouth – free

Portsmouth – free

Reading Museum – free

Russell Cotes – free, but ask for £3

Southampton - Adults - £2.50; Children - £1.50; Children under 7 - Free  
Family tickets - £5.50; Concessions - £1.50

Torre Abbey, Torquay – Adults £5.75; Children £2.45; under 5's free

Tullie House, Carlisle - Adults £4.00; Children 18 years and under free; Concession £2.50 (*we are seeking further information about the make-up of their audience*)

Wakefield Museum –free

Worcester City Museum – free

## **Charging for Exhibitions**

It is much more common to charge for temporary exhibitions than for general entry to museums nowadays, with charges varying to reflect the cost of the exhibition itself and its expected popularity. With particularly popular shows it can be a way of rationing entry to ensure that everyone has space to enjoy the event. It would not be advisable to charge both for general entry and for temporary shows.

It can be the case however that even when an exhibition covers its costs, it is seen by relatively few people, as only a proportion of visitors will choose to spend money on the “additional” attraction.

### **Other Effects**

The effect of charging for income on catering income was referred to above. Expected income would reduce as a result of the smaller numbers visitors, but also as a result of them having had to pay to get in. Given the size and scope of the potential commercial offer to run catering in the museum, it is possible that charging, and the uncertain effect that would have on visitors, would deter catering companies from tendering, since they would be expected to fit out the facilities at their own cost.

Politically it might be difficult to justify charging Exeter residents at the point of re-opening RAMM, given the long period of closure and the high cost of the refurbishment. Although charges will be the result of reductions in revenue funding, residents may consider that they are being charged to visit a museum they have already paid for through their Council Tax.

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15.10.10

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**RAMM Proposed New Structure**

**3 Teams:**

<b>Content Management</b>	<b>Operational Services</b>	<b>Audience Development</b>
Curatorial Lead	Administration	Business Development
Curator	Conservation	Design
Assistant Curators	Technical Support	Learning
Exhibitions	Visitor Services	Marketing
Information & Communication Technology	Volunteer Support	

Notes

These are roles not posts, although it is likely that there would be only one post per role, with the key exception of visitor services where there would be a team of front of house staff to manage and maintain the new building.

A manager for each team would be appointed from within the team.

Volunteers are already a vital part of the museum's activities, and it is important to ensure that they are trained and managed by a single person most of the time.

Business Development is the only new role in the list; the intention is to devote more time to working with potential donors and sponsors and with the commercial market for meetings and conferences via this post.

Each post will have built into it the requirement to seek external project funding, and to manage a shifting team of short term project funded staff and volunteers to achieve their key objectives.

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## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY 9 NOVEMBER 2010

#### HALF YEAR RESULTS OF PERFORMANCE MONITORING 2010/11

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To report the half year figures for those statutory and local performance indicators that relate to services provided by the Community and Environment Directorate.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Performance indicators are used to measure progress against the Council's strategic objectives. Regular monitoring ensures that the Council is on track to meet its targets. It also assures that remedial action is taken where necessary.
- 2.2. Local indicators are chosen by the Council to reflect specific priorities and to provide useful management information. National Indicators are prescribed by the Government. In October 2007, the Government published a set of 198 National Indicators which replaced all previous indicators. The majority of these apply to single tier/county councils. Currently the future of the National Indicator Set is uncertain, with many likely to be deleted.
- 2.3. Members play an important role in reviewing performance and ensuring data quality. The attached tables contain figures for those national and local indicators that relate to services supplied by the Community and Environment Directorate. Commentary is provided on the results to give context and to explain any variance from targets and any remedial action taken.

#### 3. PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

- 3.1 Of the 25 indicators collected by the Community and Environment Directorate, 6 are below their half year target, 6 are on target and 13 are above target. 10 of these indicators have performed worse in the half year 2010/11 compared with the half year 2009/10. One indicator has remained the same and 14 indicators have improved.

#### 4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1. That Members consider the report and identify where further information is needed on any indicators.

HEAD OF POLICY UNIT

Originator: Gill Wheelwright

S:PA/LP/Cttee/1110SCC12  
15.10.10

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

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

None

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# Performance Summary Half Year 2010/11

## How to interpret the performance report



Performance is shown as a comparison to the half year target. A tolerance is set for each indicator, allowing performance to be shown as on target even if it is below target by 10 percent.

The following symbols are used.

-  The green star shows that performance is better than target
-  The blue circle shows that performance is on target, within the tolerance
-  The red triangle warns that performance is below target by more than 10%
  
-  The green tick indicates that the half year figure for 2010/11 is better than the half year figure for 2009/10
-  The black arrow indicates that there is no change between the half year figure for 2009/10 and 2010/11
-  The red cross indicates that the half year figure for 2010/11 is worse than the half year figure for 2009/10

Performance Summary						
Community & Environment	13	6	6	14	1	10



Performance Indicator	Service	Year End 09/10	Actual Q1 10/11	Actual Q2 10/11	Half Year 10/11	Target Half Year 10/11	Performance Half Year 10/11	Compared to Half Year 09/10	Target Year End 10/11	Commentary
NI 155 Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	Housing	158	33	23	56	60			120	

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SO1: Ensure that there are enough well-designed, well-maintained and affordable homes in the city

Performance Indicator	Service	Year End 09/10	Actual Q1 10/11	Actual Q2 10/11	Half Year 10/11	Target Half Year 10/11	Performance Half Year 10/11	Compared to Half Year 09/10	Target Year End 10/11	Commentary
NI155 Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	Housing	158	33	23	56	60			120	
NI156 Number of households living in temporary accommodation	Housing	130	148	163	163	138			125	The increase in households in temporary accommodation reflects the general rise in homeless presentations seen by the service. Whilst the proportion of households actually accepted as homeless has remained the same, because we are seeing higher numbers presenting we are having to house more households in our temporary accommodation.
NI158 % non-decent council homes	Housing	7.12	5.62	5.12	5.12	5			5	Decent Homes target will be met by the end of the year (except where tenants have refused the work).
LPI HO12 Total number of homes delivered via enabling	Housing	140	9	46	55	82			165	This target measures all other properties procured via the enabling team excluding new builds. The figures are mainly made up of new PSL and Extralet properties plus any empty homes brought back into use. Due to a slow down in landlords willing to offer their properties to the Council for rent performance to date is below target. However, further advertising and targeting has helped to increase enquiries and the number of landlords willing to join the scheme has also increased.
LPI HO14 % Homechoice refusals as a proportion of all offers	Housing	0.79	0	7.14	7.14	5			5	All refusals are now recorded and monitored to detect any trends or problems with our empty properties and adjustments made accordingly.

SO2: Enhance and protect the environment, reducing the causes & minimising the impact of climate change										
Performance Indicator	Service	Year End 09/10	Actual Q1 10/11	Actual Q2 10/11	Half Year 10/11	Target Half Year 10/11	Performance Half Year 10/11	Compared to Half Year 09/10	Target Year End 10/11	Commentary
NI191 Residual household waste per household (kg)	Environmental Health	483.45	123	123	246	246.25	★	✓	492.49	Figure derived from best estimate. Actual data will be confirmed by DCC and updated.
NI192 Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	Environmental Health	36.2	34	34.81	34.81	40	▲	✗	40	Figure derived from best estimate. Actual data will be confirmed by DCC. Achieving a 40% recycling rate based upon weight will be very challenging in the current economic climate; paper and glass yields have dropped as sales of newspapers and bottled products have declined, and both of these recyclates form the bulk of weight we collect. In addition, industry has been more motivated to reduce the weight of packaging (which is a good thing), so for example, cooking oils are more often packaged in plastic rather than glass bottles.
BV063 Average SAP (Energy Efficiency) rating of the council's dwellings	Housing	68.52	69.14	69.17	69.17	68.41	★	✓	68.41	
SO3: Further improve the character of the city and facilities for culture & leisure										
Performance Indicator	Service	Year End 09/10	Actual Q1 10/11	Actual Q2 10/11	Half Year 10/11	Target Half Year 10/11	Performance Half Year 10/11	Compared to Half Year 09/10	Target Year End 10/11	Commentary
BV170a Visits to / usage of museums per 1000 population	Leisure and Museums	2355.95	979.49	1551.98	2531.47	1291.38	★	✓	1679.71	A substantial museum programme has been organised while the RAMM building is closed, but most contact has occurred off museum premises.
BV170b No. visits to museums in person per 1000 population	Leisure and Museums	156.51	9.18	21.03	30.21	21.46	★	✗	34.09	Although the half year target has been exceeded, numbers are lower than last year due to the closure of the temporary gallery in Exeter Central Library.
BV170c No. pupils visiting museums & galleries in organised school groups	Leisure and Museums	19713	4904	2676	7580	2656	★	✓	9100	A substantial museum programme has been organised while the RAMM building is closed, but most contact has occurred off museum premises.

SO4: Maximise the potential of all our citizens by tackling social disadvantage and deprivation										
Performance Indicator	Service	Year End 09/10	Actual Q1 10/11	Actual Q2 10/11	Half Year 10/11	Target Half Year 10/11	Performance Half Year 10/11	Compared to Half Year 09/10	Target Year End 10/11	Commentary
LPI HO1 Homelessness acceptances as a % of new approaches to housing advice	Housing	6.89	8.29	7.19	7.71	12.5	★	✘	12.5	
LPI HO13 Total number of homelessness preventions	Housing	474	170	128	298	250	★	✔	500	
SO7: Use resources effectively & provide high performing, value for money services that focus on customer needs										
Performance Indicator	Service	Year End 09/10	Actual Q1 10/11	Actual Q2 10/11	Half Year 10/11	Target Half Year 10/11	Performance Half Year 10/11	Compared to Half Year 09/10	Target Year End 10/11	Commentary
BV212.05 Average time to re-let local authority housing (in days)	Housing	25.85	18.91	18.6	18.7	21	★	✔	21	
LPI HO5 % of responsive repairs completed within target timescales	Housing	98.02	98.13	97.47	97.76	98	●	✘	98	This slight reduction in performance coincides with the end of the existing repairs contracts. Despite being a time of great change this figure demonstrates that our previous contractors managed to meet their commitments right up until the last day.
LPI HO7 Arrears as a % of debit	Housing	1.25	1.55	1.62	1.62	1.8	★	✔	1.1	
LPI HO8 Service charge arrears as a % of the total service charge income	Housing	12.72	15.22	11.96	11.96	11.5	●	✘	11	True arrears have fallen by over 3% since the end of Quarter 1. However, the arrears percentage remains higher than last year because the debit has decreased by £58,000 due to lower service charges.
LPI HO15 Number of outstanding gas services at period end	Housing	0	0	1	1	0	▲	✔	0	Our target is to have no outstanding gas services across the housing stock at any one time. However, with one service outstanding out of a total of 4,700 services annually this figure still represents good performance.

SO8: Promote an extremely positive image & reputation & ensure high levels of customer satisfaction

Performance Indicator	Service	Year End 09/10	Actual Q1 10/11	Actual Q2 10/11	Half Year 10/11	Target Half Year 10/11	Performance Half Year 10/11	Compared to Half Year 09/10	Target Year End 10/11	Commentary
NI160 % of council tenants satisfied with overall landlord services	Housing	84	84	84	84	85			87	
NI182 % of business customers who are satisfied with local authority regulation services	Environmental Health	92.8	92.6	94.7	94.7	92			92	Satisfaction of businesses by the way the Council's officers regulate their compliance is very strong, indicating a healthy relationship with businesses and adherence to better regulation principles.
LPI CD9 % of tenants satisfied with the way housing programme works were organised by the council	Contracts & Direct Services	97	98	98	98	99			99	
LPI CD10 % of tenants provided with the min of 2 wks notice of planned maintenance on their homes	Contracts & Direct Services	98	98	98	98	100			100	
LPI AB1 Customer satisfaction with direct contact with Bereavement Services	Contracts & Direct Services	96.15	95	96.3	96.3	85			85	
LPI AB2 Customer satisfaction with written information from Bereavement Services	Contracts & Direct Services	93.75	95	95	95	85			85	
LPI AB3 Customer satisfaction with Bereavement Services Website	Contracts & Direct Services	82.69	76	89.6	89.6	85			85	

**EXETER CITY COUNCIL**  
**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY**  
**9 NOVEMBER 2010**

**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT**  
**STEWARDSHIP TO SEPTEMBER 2010**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To advise Members of any major differences, by management unit, between the original budget and the outturn forecast for the first six months of the financial year up to 30 September 2010 in respect of the Housing Revenue Account.

**2. STEWARDSHIP TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2010**

2.1 During this period the total of the budget variances indicate that there will be a net deficit of £420,553 which will need to be funded from the HRA working balance at 31 March 2011. However, this represents a reduction of £222,017 compared to the budgeted reduction to the working balance of £642,570. It is estimated that the working balance will stand at £2,261,176 at 31 March 2011.

2.2 The main variations by management unit are detailed below:

	£
<b>2010-2011 ESTIMATED TRANSFER FROM THE WORKING BALANCE</b>	<b>642,570</b>
<b>85A1 MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>36,430</b>

An upgrade to the system for recording and managing results of the housing condition stock surveys has resulted in additional expenditure of £14,000.

A legal requirement to produce Energy Performance Certificates for each council dwelling has resulted in additional staff costs for a building surveyor to assess the energy performance of dwellings as they become void or mutually exchanged.

Additional costs have also been incurred in respect of consulting tenants in accordance with regulations put in place by the Tenant Services Authority. Surveys were issued to tenants in July to seek their views on the service currently provided and how it can be improved and tailored to what local tenants really want.

It is forecast that an overspend in the cost of the quarterly Insight newsletter to tenants and leaseholders will occur, which is partly due to the additional inserts in the Summer edition for the annual tenants conference and the new maintenance contract.

However, forecast overspends within this management unit have been partially offset by savings from vacant posts within the Repairs and Technical Team and the retirement of a

Neighbourhood Warden in June.

**85A4 REPAIRS FUND CONTRIBUTION**

0

This budget provides for the cost of repairs and maintenance to council dwellings.

When a council dwelling becomes empty works are undertaken to ensure it meets both a national habitable standard and a tenant agreed lettable standard. It is forecast that a £200,000 saving will be achieved in the cost of repairs to empty council properties, due to lower than budgeted level of void properties and a lower average cost of repair per void property.

This saving will enable an additional £200,000 revenue contribution to capital to be made towards the financing of the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme.

**85A8 RENTS**

(209,000)

It is forecast that additional rent from council dwellings of £200,000 will be collected during the financial year. This is due to a combination of factors, which include; a lower than budgeted level of void properties, a reduction in the number of council properties sold under the Right-to-Buy scheme and loft conversions and property extensions have resulted in certain dwellings attracting a higher rental income.

Upon a change of tenancy, the opportunity is also taken to amend the rent charged to Government guideline rent levels, which will help to accelerate rent convergence with other public sector housing bodies. This has also contributed to the higher than budgeted level of rent collected.

A further £9,000 additional rental income is expected to be received in respect of other HRA properties following the renegotiation of leases.

**85B1 GOVERNMENT SUBSIDY**

(128,847)

There is a £25,466 reduction in the subsidy payable for 2010/11 as a result of a change to the interest rate, from 2% to 1.5%, that local authorities are expected to receive on capital receipts, which has the affect of reducing the negative subsidy required to be paid in accordance with the HRA subsidy determination.

A refund of £103,381 has also been received from the Department for Communities and Local Government in respect of subsidy paid during 2009/10.

**85B2 INTEREST**

79,400

It is estimated that there will be a reduction in investment interest income achieved by the Council's external investment fund managers due to lower interest rates.



**2010-2011 SECOND QUARTER FORECAST DECREASE IN  
WORKING BALANCE**

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**£420,553**

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**3. RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 That the Scrutiny Committee – Community note the content of this report

DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES

DIRECTOR COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT

CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE  
COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

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

None

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**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT STEWARDSHIP  
2010-2011**

**APRIL 10 TO SEPTEMBER 10**

Code	Approved Annual Budget	Current Outturn Forecast	Variance To Budget
	£	£	£
85A1 Management	2,825,610	2,862,040	36,430
85A3 Sundry Lands Maintenance	260,480	260,480	0
85A4 Repairs Fund Contribution	9,066,360	9,066,360	0
85A6 Capital Charges	0	0	0
85A8 Rents	(15,359,490)	(15,568,490)	(209,000)
85B1 Government Subsidy	4,006,520	3,877,673	(128,847)
85B2 Interest	(156,910)	(77,510)	79,400
85B4 <b>Variance in Working Balance</b>	<b>(642,570)</b>	<b>(420,553)</b>	<b>222,017</b>
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Working Balance</b>	<b><u>1 April 10</u></b>	<b><u>31 March 2011</u></b>	<b><u>£ 2,261,176</u></b>
	<b>£ 2,681,729</b>		<b>£ 2,261,176</b>

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## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY 9 NOVEMBER 2010

#### EXECUTIVE 23 NOVEMBER 2010

#### COMMUNITY SERVICES STEWARDSHIP TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2010

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report advises Members of any material differences by management unit to the revised budget.

#### 2. STEWARDSHIP TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2010

- 2.1 The current forecast suggests that net expenditure for this committee will decrease from the revised budget by a total of £502,820 which represents a variation of 4.09% from the revised budget.
- 2.2 The budgets for 2010/11 included a provision of 0.7% for the pay award. The current position is that Local Government Employers have not offered a pay award for the current year.
- 2.3 The main variations by management unit are detailed below:

<b>2010-11 REVISED ESTIMATE</b>	£ 12,301,760
<b>81A1 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION</b>	(4,810)

A saving is expected to arise in staff pay if there is no pay award (see para 2.2 above). Additional income has been received from Unison in respect of an officer's union duties. This is partially offset by a shortfall in income from litter fines, and vehicle maintenance costs in excess of the estimates.

<b>81A2 CLEANSING SERVICES</b> (see separate operational accounts)	(21,950)
---	----------

A saving is expected to arise in staff pay if there is no pay award (see para 2.2 above).

Income from garden waste collections exceeds the estimates.

#### **Action Point**

The estimates for 2011/12 will reflect the higher level of income from garden waste collections.

<b>81A3</b>	<b>LICENSING, FOOD, HEALTH &amp; SAFETY</b>	110
	<p>The vehicle licensing team has incurred the cost of a survey of unmet demand for which there was no budget; this will be covered by a transfer from the earmarked reserve.</p> <p>The income from premises licences is expected to be less than that included in the estimates.</p> <p>A reduction in staffing costs will arise as a result of the retirement of an officer.</p>	
<b>81A4</b>	<b>PUBLIC SAFETY</b>	(9,250)
	<p>A saving has arisen in respect of staffing costs mainly due to vacancies in the Community Patroller service.</p>	
<b>81A5</b>	<b>COUNTRYSIDE</b>	(1,970)
	<p>On 1<sup>st</sup> September 2010, management of the River and Canal was transferred to the Economy and Development Directorate and any variance from the estimates will be reported to that Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The Countryside service received compensation from South West Water.</p>	
<b>81A6</b>	<b>GROUNDS MAINTENANCE</b> (see separate operational accounts)	10,430
	<p>Income from events and sports is expected to be less than the estimates. A post is currently undergoing Job Evaluation, and, pending the outcome, is being covered by an agency officer, leading to an overspend. This will be partially offset by the saving which is expected to arise in staff pay if there is no pay award (see para 2.2 above) and the resignation of an officer who will not be replaced. There is also expected to be a saving on National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR).</p> <p>The operational accounts are expected to result in a saving as a result of not filling the vacant apprentice post.</p>	
<b>81A7</b>	<b>MUSEUMS SERVICE</b>	(1,230)
	<p>A saving is expected to arise in staff pay if there is no pay award (see para 2.2 above).</p> <p>Income from the Museum is expected to exceed the estimates, partially offset by a reduction in income from events at St Nicholas' Priory.</p> <p>These are partially offset by the cost of extending the insurance cover during the Royal Albert Memorial Museum project beyond the original completion date.</p>	

<b>81A8</b>	<b>CONTRACTED SPORTS FACILITIES</b>	(470,000)
	<p>A new contract for management of the sports facilities came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010 and is expected to result in material savings in the current year and future years. The outturn forecast reflects the estimated impact for the current year on this Committee. There will however be a negative impact on Resources Committee as a result of additional discounts arising on NNDR. This is estimated at £20,000, and has been reflected in the outturn forecasts for that Committee.</p>	
<b>81A9</b>	<b>OTHER SPORTS FACILITIES</b>	(19,590)
	<p>Changes in personnel, including the retirement of the Leisure Manager, will lead to a saving on staff costs.</p> <p>Consultants' fees have been incurred as a result of the new leisure contract, but these will be funded by a transfer from an earmarked reserve.</p> <p>S106 income was received in respect of staff costs for developing play areas.</p>	
<b>81B2</b>	<b>CEMETERIES &amp; CREMATORIUM</b>	0
	<p>There are no material variances to report this quarter.</p>	
<b>81B3</b>	<b>PROPERTIES</b>	0
	<p>There are no material variances to report this quarter.</p>	
<b>81B5</b>	<b>SPORTS &amp; PLAY DEVELOPMENT</b>	1,400
	<p>A VAT adjustment relating to income in an earlier year has resulted in a reduction in income.</p>	
<b>81B6</b>	<b>RECYCLING</b> (see separate operational accounts)	(148,720)
	<p>A saving is expected to arise in staff pay if there is no pay award (see para 2.2 above).</p> <p>Income from the sale of recyclates is expected to exceed the estimates, and the cost of freight and gate fees are both expected to show savings. While the prices at which materials are currently being sold exceed those assumed for the estimates, the volatility of these prices makes it difficult to predict the outturn.</p> <p><b>Action Point</b></p> <p>The estimates for 2011/12 will reflect a higher level of income from the sale of materials, and the savings in freight costs and gate fees.</p>	

<b>81B9</b>	<b>ADMINISTRATION SERVICE</b>	28,000
	<p>Redundancy costs will arise as a result of the restructure of this service. The council has applied to capitalise these costs and the result of this will be reflected in the December stewardship.</p>	
<b>81C1</b>	<b>HOME IMPROVEMENT GRANTS</b>	7,000
	<p>There is a reduction in the level of income forecast to be received in respect of Improvement Grant administration, due to a reduction in the number of applicants requiring technical assistance, an increase in the number of grants relating to housing association properties which do not attract an administration fee and a lower than anticipated level of referrals from occupational therapy.</p>	
<b>81C2</b>	<b>ADVISORY SERVICES</b>	155,550
	<p>An overspend is forecast in respect of serviced temporary accommodation due to a higher than inflationary increase in rental payments, backdated rental payments and the cost of procuring an additional self contained family room to meet increasing demand.</p> <p>The number of landlords registered on the Council's ExtraLet Scheme has reduced, which has resulted in a reduction in income. Landlords have withdrawn from the scheme in order to sell their properties and it is proving difficult to attract new landlords.</p> <p>Consultants' fees associated with damp and condensation issues at Shaul's Court, an upgrade to the fire door windows for CCTV purposes and a reduction in income due to a particularly severe reduction to the Local Housing Allowance, will result in an overspend. The rental amounts have been reduced to meet the Temporary Accommodation Housing Benefit Subsidy Levels therefore achieving less income for Advisory Services but ensuring the Council's Housing Benefit department can reclaim the full cost of benefit claims from the DWP.</p> <p>An overspend in the cost of cleaning Shaul's Court and Glencoe are also forecast due to the need for a thorough clinical clean on vacation of units.</p> <p>Increased demand for housing advice has resulted in a higher than budgeted level of expenditure in respect of tenants' removal expenses and the 'Spend to Save' scheme.</p>	



### **Action Plan**

- To incorporate the monitoring of the ExtraLet Scheme into the remit of the Temporary Accommodation Working Group, so that number of properties on the scheme can be monitored and the impact on budgets identified earlier

**81C3 HOUSING ENABLING 58,750**

There is a reduction in the amount of revenue expenditure which can be capitalised in relation to the Council Own Build sites at Sivell Place and Merlin Crescent, in accordance with capital accounting regulations.

The flexible retirement of the Strategic Housing Manager has resulted in a saving in this management unit.

There have been costs which exceed the budgets but which will be met from the Empty Homes and Housing Market Assessment reserves.

**81C4 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING 0**

There are no material variances to report.

**81C6 CONTRACTS AND DIRECT SERVICES 0**

There are no material variances to report. The costs of this unit are fully recharged to its clients, and there is therefore no direct impact on this committee.

**2010-11 EXPECTED FINAL OUTTURN 11,885,480**

**EXPECTED TRANSFERS TO / (FROM) RESERVES (86,540)**

**EXPECTED TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE 11,798,940**

### **3. RECOMMENDED**

That Scrutiny Committee – Community note this report.

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY  
AND ENVIRONMENT

HEAD OF TREASURY SERVICES

S:PA/LP/Committee/1110SCC8  
27 October 2010

**COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE  
CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE**

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

None

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BUDGET	SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGETS AND VIREMENTS	NOTIONAL CHARGES***	REVISED BUDGET	MU CODE	MANAGEMENT UNIT (MU) DESCRIPTION	OUTTURN	OUTTURN VARIANCE
£	£	£	£			£	£
563,240		9,160	554,080	81A1	ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	549,270	(4,810)
3,769,500		389,610	3,379,890	81A2	CLEANSING SERVICES	3,357,940	(21,950)
398,630		(7,890)	406,520	81A3	LICENSING, FOOD, HEALTH & SAFETY	406,630	110
866,910	8,500	82,660	792,750	81A4	PUBLIC SAFETY	783,500	(9,250)
186,620		800	185,820	81A5	COUNTRYSIDE	183,850	(1,970)
2,030,890	8,000	293,290	1,745,600	81A6	GROUND MAINTENANCE	1,756,030	10,430
1,796,040	4,500	195,170	1,605,370	81A7	MUSEUMS SERVICE	1,604,140	(1,230)
1,279,280	65,000	433,220	911,060	81A8	CONTRACTED SPORTS FACILITIES	441,060	(470,000)
89,020		(13,270)	102,290	81A9	NON-CONTRACTED SPORTS FACILITIES	82,700	(19,590)
342,190		22,050	320,140	81B2	BEREAVEMENT SERVICES	320,140	0
44,590		13,580	31,010	81B3	PROPERTIES	31,010	0
258,950		(4,850)	263,800	81B5	SPORTS & PLAY DEVELOPMENT	265,200	1,400
572,270	19,390	111,730	479,930	81B6	RECYCLING	331,210	(148,720)
0		(10,610)	10,610	81B9	ADMINISTRATION SERVICE	38,610	28,000
39,040		(130)	39,170	81C1	HOME IMPROVEMENT GRANTS	46,170	7,000
717,830		(15,810)	733,640	81C2	ADVISORY SERVICES	889,190	155,550
295,580		(10,150)	305,730	81C3	HOUSING ENABLING	364,480	58,750
333,670		(2,550)	336,220	81C4	PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING	336,220	0
77,570		0	77,570	81C5	SUNDRY LANDS MAINTENANCE	77,570	0
0		(13,820)	13,820	81C6	CONTRACT & BUILDING SERVICES	13,820	0
0		(6,740)	6,740	81C7	DIRECTOR COMMUNITY/ENVIRONMENT	6,740	0
<b>13,661,820</b>	<b>105,390</b>	<b>1,465,450</b>	<b>12,301,760</b>		<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>11,885,480</b>	<b>(416,280)</b>

\*\*\* Includes:

Capital Charges  
 FRS17 Pension Costs

VARIANCES ON TRANSFERS TO / (FROM) EARMARKED RESERVES

- 81A9 (10,000)  
 - 81A3 (41,890)  
 - 81C3 (34,650)

OUTTURN AFTER ADJUSTING FOR MOVEMENTS ON RESERVES ETC **11,798,940**  
 REVISED BUDGETS **12,301,760**  
 ADJUSTED OUTTURN VARIANCE **(502,820)**

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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