Exeter City Council

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Our ref:
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To the Chair and Members
of the Executive

A meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** will be held in the Rennes Room, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter at **5.30 pm** on **TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2013** to consider the following business. If you have an enquiry regarding any items on this agenda, please contact Rowena Whiter, Member Services Manager on **Exeter 265110**.

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

Pages

AGENDA

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

1 **APOLOGIES**

To receive apologies for absence from Committee members.

2 **MINUTES**

To sign the minutes of the meetings held on 20 November and 4 December 2012.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors are reminded of the need to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests that relate to business on the agenda and which have not already been included in the register of interests, before any discussion takes place on the item. Unless the interest is sensitive, you must also disclose the nature of the interest. In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, you must then leave the room and must not participate in any further discussion of the item. Councillors requiring clarification should seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer prior to the day of the meeting.

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

RESOLVED that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of item 13 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part I, Schedule 12A of the Act.

5 **2013/14 COUNCIL TAX BASE AND NNDR1**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Finance. 1 - 4

(Report circulated)

6 **HOUSING RENTS 2013/14**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Finance and the Assistant Director Housing and Contracts. 5 - 6

Scrutiny Committee – Community will consider the report at its meeting on 15 January 2013 and comments will be reported.

(Report circulated)

7 **TACKLING HOMELESSNESS**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Housing and Contracts. 7 - 12

Scrutiny Committee – Community will consider the report at its meeting on 15 January 2013 and comments will be reported.

(Report circulated)

8 **VACANT STUDENT ACCOMMODATION**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Housing and Contracts. 13 - 16

(Report circulated)

9 **EAST DEVON LOCAL PLAN DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT - CONSULTATION**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director City Development. 17 - 20

(Report circulated)

10 **DRAFT CITY CENTRE STRATEGY FOR EXETER 2013 - 2022**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Economy. 21 - 48

Scrutiny Committee – Economy will consider the report at its meeting on 17 January 2013 and comments will be reported.

(Report circulated)

11 **CIVIC PROPERTIES - SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

To consider the report of the Assistant Director Housing and Contracts and the Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support. 49 - 50

(Report circulated)

12 **APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO SERVE ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

To consider the appointment of representatives to serve on the outside bodies set out in the schedule. 51 - 52

(Report circulated)

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

No representations have been received in respect of the following item in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

13 **FUTURE ROLE AND FUNDING OF THE GROWTH BOARD DELIVERY TEAM**

To consider the report of the Strategic Director on proposals for supporting the Growth Point Delivery Team for the next three years. 53 - 58

(Report circulated to Members)

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting of the Executive will be held on **Tuesday 5 February 2013** at 5.30 pm in the Civic Centre.

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

Membership -
Councillors Edwards (Chair), Denham, Fullam, Hannaford, Mrs Henson, Martin, Sheldon and Sutton

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

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

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EXETER CITY COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE
22 JANUARY 2013

2013/14 COUNCIL TAX BASE AND NNDR1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To set the 2013/14 Council Tax base in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012.

1.2 To seek approval that the Council's estimate of Business Rate Income (NNDR1) for the next financial year and following years is delegated to the Assistant Director Finance and subsequently distributed to all Members.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, Exeter City Council as a billing authority will be issuing Council Tax bills to occupiers of property in March 2013, effective from 1 April.

2.2 As a first step to calculating the Council Tax itself, the City Council is required by legislation to determine a tax base by the 31 January for the following financial year.

2.3 Based on a valuation list received from the Valuation Officer, the calculation, in simple terms, involves three steps, namely :

i. the determination of the number of chargeable dwellings;

ii. an assessment of disregards, premiums and discounts, and

iii. the equivalent number of band D properties and a collection rate.

2.4 The calculation of the Taxbase now includes the impact of the new Council Tax Support Scheme, which significantly reduces the Council's income from Council Tax but is then offset, in part, by a new Council Tax Support Grant. Additionally a number of technical changes have been made. The Council Tax Support Scheme and Technical Changes were approved by the Executive in December 2012. In order to reflect the increased risk of non-recovery, which may result from the move to Local Council Tax Support, the Collection Rate has been reduced to 97% from 98% last year.

3. COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2013/14

3.1 The appropriate figures for Exeter are set out in table 3.1 and in Appendix A. It is estimated that the equivalent number of Band D properties (Gross taxbase) for 2013/14 (including the reduction in dwellings owing to the Council Tax Support Scheme) will be 34,866, a reduction of 4,155 over 2012/13.

3.2 To this figure the estimated collection rate of 97% for the year is applied, which results in a Council Tax base of 33,820, a reduction of 4,421 over the 2012/13 figure of 38,241.

Table 3.1 – Taxbase 2013/14

Taxbase	2013/14 Gross Taxbase	2013/14 Net Taxbase (97%)
Taxbase to be used in calculating the council tax for 2013/14	**34,866**	**33,820**

4. BUSINESS RATES RETENTION

4.1 Under the new Business Rates Retention funding from April 2013 the Council (as before) has to provide DCLG with an estimate of its Business Rate Income for the forthcoming year. However due to the changes in the funding and the local/central share, DCLG require the estimate (completed on a NNDR1 form) to be compiled and formally submitted by January 31st. The Council must also share this information with Devon County Council and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service who are also affected. DCLG have stated that, in their view, the decision to approve the NNDR1 can be delegated to the section 151 Officer and this report seeks approval for such delegation.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 In accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Exeter City Council as its tax base for the year 2013/14 shall be 33,820.

4.2 That the section 151 Officer is delegated responsibility to approve the Council's NNDR1 return by 31 January 2013.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FINANCE

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

APPENDIX A

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

2013/14 TAX BASE

	BAND	TOTAL	A relief	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
LINE 1	No. OF CHARGEABLE DWELLINGS	48,909	17	9,424	13,815	12,452	7,269	3,527	1,593	788	24
LINE 2	No. OF DISCOUNTS	-10,814	-2	-3,936	-3,557	-2,102	-792	-262	-112	-49	-2
LINE 3	No OF ADDITIONS (TECHNICAL CHANGES)	188	0	37	64	48	19	13	4	3	0
LINE 4	WHOLE No. EQUIVALENT CHARGEABLE DWELLINGS	38,283	15	5,525	10,322	10,398	6,496	3,278	1,485	742	22
LINE 5	FRACTION TO APPLY TO ARRIVE AT BAND D EQUIVALENTS		5/9 ths	6/9 ths	7/9 ths	8/9 ths	1	11/9 ths	13/9 ths	15/9 ths	18/9 ths
LINE 6	**BAND D EQUIVALENTS (PER CTB1)**	**34,890**	**8**	**3,683**	**8,028**	**9,243**	**6,496**	**4,006**	**2,145**	**1,237**	**44**
	LESS HARDSHIP RELIEF	**-24**									
	TOTAL BAND D EQUIVALENTS	**34,866**									
LINE 7	**COLLECTION RATE**	**97.00%**									
LINE 8	**EXETER CITY COUNCIL TAX BASE**	**33,820**									

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EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY
15 JANUARY 2013

EXECUTIVE
22 JANUARY 2013

HOUSING RENTS 2013-14

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To recommend a rent and service charge increase from 1 April 2013 for Council dwellings and garages.

2. Government Guideline Rent Increase

2.1 The Government abolished the Housing Revenue Account subsidy system and introduced self-financing in April 2012, which has resulted in housing authorities now retaining all their rents, so that they can support their own stock from their own income. The rental policy of the authority post self-financing is therefore a major factor in the viability of long term business plans.

2.2 Whilst the Council is free to set its own rents, the Government has maintained the Housing Benefit 'limit' rent which limits the amount of rent a landlord can recover through the housing benefit subsidy system. Increases above the 'limit rent' would have an adverse impact on the amount of housing benefit received.

2.3 The Government is keen for local authorities to continue working towards the social rent policy, whereby convergence with housing associations will be achieved by 2015-16. Rents will then follow the same formula as for housing associations; currently an increase of RPI + 0.50% per annum. Rents set in line with the Government's social rent policy remain below the 'limit rent' and ensures that maximum housing benefit subsidy is receivable by the Council.

2.4 In order to achieve the Government's social rent reform it will be necessary to implement an increase of 3.1% plus a convergence factor to reflect the number of years to rental convergence. For 2013-14 this equates to an average increase of 6%, which equates to £4.05 per week over 52 weeks.

2.5 Rents are collected over 48 weeks, and this will result in an average rise of £4.39 per collection week for 2013-14.

2.6 The Government recognised concerns that the social rent reform would result in large increases for some tenants and therefore introduced a 'limit' to rent rises for individual tenants, so that annual increases are limited to RPI plus 0.5% plus £2 per week in any year. The proposed rent increase for 2013-14 keeps rent rises for Exeter City council tenants below the 'limit'.

2.7 The rent per property is calculated using a national formula that reflects property size, location, condition and local earnings.

3. Service Charge Increase

3.1 These charges cover services and facilities provided by the authority to tenants and which are not covered by their rent. Service charges reflect additional services which may not be provided to every tenant, or which may be connected with communal facilities. Different tenants receive different types of service reflecting their housing circumstances.

3.2 The current Government guidelines are that service charges should only be increased by RPI plus 0.50%. For 2013-14 this equates to an increase of 3.1%. Increases above this may be made on rare occasions when an authority has increases in costs outside its control, such as increases in fuel costs.

3.3 Service charges will therefore increase by 3.1%, with the following exceptions:

- 2.5% increase in respect of cleaning communal areas in line with anticipated rises in cleaning contract costs
- 0% increase in respect of communal electricity at Weirfield House
- 0% increase in respect of water at Magdalen Gardens
- 14% increase in respect of heating at Toronto House due to rise in consumption and gas costs (heating system programmed to be replaced during 2013-14)

4. Garage Rent Increase

4.1 Rentals of non-dwellings, such as garages, are outside the scope of the Government's social rent reform and therefore it is not necessary to add a convergence factor to the annual inflationary rent rise. An increase of RPI + 0.50% will be made in-line with rises to most service charges.

5 RECOMMENDED

5.1 That Scrutiny Committee supports and Executive approves that:

5.1.1 Rents of Council dwellings are increased from 1 April 2013, by an average of 6% which includes a general inflationary increase of 3.1% together with the phased introduction of the Government's rent restructuring proposals.

5.1.2 Service Charges are increased by 3.1% with the exception of charges specified in paragraph 3.3 above.

5.1.3 Garage rents are increased by 3.1%

ANDY STARK
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FINANCE

SARAH WARD
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
HOUSING & CONTRACTS

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

None

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY
15 JANUARY 2013

EXECUTIVE
22 JANUARY 2013

TACKLING HOMELESSNESS

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To update Members on the flexibilities created by changes to Homelessness Legislation made as part of the Localism Act.

1.2 To seek Member approval on the proposed use of these new flexibilities.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 There has been an historic link between Part 7 (Homelessness) and Part 6 (The allocation of affordable housing) of the Housing Act 1996. This link was enshrined in legislation through reasonable preference categories. This requires local authority allocations policies to give priority for social housing allocations to, among other prescribed groups, people who are homeless and to people owed the main homelessness duty under S193.

2.2 The Department of Communities and Local Government advises that the changes to homelessness legislation included in the Localism Act 2011 enable local authorities to take a strategic view of all suitable accommodation available in their area in relation to homelessness duties and social housing allocations, with the potential to make better use of available accommodation resources to meet housing need.

2.3 The intended outcome is to enable local authorities to make better use of the private rented sector to provide suitable accommodation as a settled home that can bring the homelessness duty to an end. This is likely to reduce the need for temporary accommodation and free up more social lets for other people in housing need on the housing register.

3. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

3.1 The Localism Act will permit local authorities to meet their homelessness duty by providing good quality private rented homes. This option can provide an appropriate solution for people experiencing a homelessness crisis, whilst freeing up social homes for people in real need on the waiting list. The new provisions represent powers available to local authorities should they choose to adopt them – local authorities will not be under a duty to adopt the new provisions.

3.2 **Sections 148 and 149 of the Localism Act 2011** were introduced through a commencement order on November 9th 2012. The new provisions will not be applicable retrospectively. This means that applicants to whom a full homeless duty is accepted (i.e., households who are eligible for public funds, are genuinely homeless, have a priority need, have not made themselves homeless and have a local connection to Exeter) prior to the sections coming into force will not be subject to the new power to discharge duty into the private rented sector.

3.3 These private rented offers must meet the following criteria,

- The tenancy offered must be for at least 12 months
- The accommodation must be suitable in the view of the Local Authority.

In order to maximise consistency across Devon the Devon Housing Options Partnership of the 10 Devon Local Authorities have agreed a property standard which needs to be met in order to discharge the homeless duty. This standard will apply for all homeless applicants in Devon. A copy of the draft standard is included at Appendix 1 to this report. The standard is due to be signed off by February 2013.

3.4 In addition to this, Local authorities will be under a 're-application' duty if accommodation provided under the new S193(7F) is lost unintentionally within 2 years. This means we will automatically be required to provide accommodation to any household whose duty had been discharged into the private sector if they become homeless from the address through no fault of their own.

3.5 Applicants have the right to request a review of the suitability of Private Rented Sector Offers and to appeal to the County Court on a point of law if they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the review.

4 FINANCE

4.1 It is not considered that there will be any additional cost to the council of implementing these changes in the short term (next 12 months), as all applicants receiving this offer would be residing in temporary accommodation in any case. However, if this is successful the numbers of applicants moving into private rented properties will increase and this will require managing. It would therefore be practical to propose that we seek to make these private rented offers through the council's EXtraLet scheme and therefore retain the management fee which can be used to fund addition officer resources if required.

5. PROPOSAL

5.1 Whilst officers hold that this is a beneficial opportunity and we should be seeking to exercise this flexibility, its success does depend on supply of suitable properties. Last financial year the council accepted 75 households to whom we owed the full homeless duty. This figure was a reduction from 111 in the previous financial year. The main reason for this reduction was the use of private rented properties to help prevent homelessness. Therefore our current supply of private rented options is being exhausted in just preventing homelessness; therefore limiting the opportunity to use it to discharge the duty we then may go onto owe those whose homelessness could not be prevented. Therefore, it is not expected that the offer of private rented accommodation will be made to all homeless applicants, as we will not have the supply of suitable properties. However it is proposed that we use it whenever a suitable property becomes available and as long as the property offered is suitable we make the offer regardless of the households' cause of homelessness or household composition. When a property becomes available we will seek to offer it the most recently accepted homeless applicant to minimise disruption to those who have been waiting longest, are settled in temporary accommodation and are closest to receiving an offer of permanent affordable housing. However members may wish to comment on this and make an alternative proposal.

5.2 As stated above it is proposed that the majority of these offers are made through the EXtraLet scheme as it then provides an income to the council which enables us to resource the management of the tenancies and provide greater security to private tenants.

5.3 However there maybe cases where the council if approached by a private landlord who wishes to find a tenant but manage the property themselves. We propose that this is acceptable as long as the property condition meets that outlined by in Appendix 1 and the landlord is considered to be a fit and proper person after consultation with the council's Environmental Health Team.

6 RECOMMENDED that

Scrutiny Committee:-

a) notes this report; and
b) in respect of 5.1, advises whether this is appropriate or whether these offers should be made differently; and

requests Executive to:-

1) approve the use of the new flexibilities as proposed above;
2) consider and support the Committee's views in respect of 5.1; and
3) agree that officers monitor the use of the flexibilities and report back to Members in 12 months time.

SARAH WARD
Assistant Director Housing and Contracts

S:PA/LP/Cttee/113SCC5
3.1.13

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

None

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Appendix One -

PROPOSAL TO MAKE USE OF NEW FLEXIBILITIES MADE AVAILABLE UNDER THE LOCALISM ACT TO TACKLE HOMELESSNESS

Devon minimum property standards – December 2012 – detailed requirements

This standard has been developed by members of the DHOP and DPSHG; prior to the publication of The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012 (SI 2601).

The Devon standard differs slightly from the Suitability Order, but the standard set is higher.

Devon minimum standard		Explanatory notes
1.	Property to be free from Category 1 hazards (as defined by Housing Health and Safety Rating System) and in reasonable tenantable condition	<u>Reasonable tenantable condition means:</u> • Must be in a reasonable state of repair • Is clean and in good decorative order • Floor coverings are in a reasonable condition and clean. The floor surface in the kitchen must be readily cleansable. • There are reasonably modern kitchen facilities (less than 20 years old), with adequate space, food storage and preparation surfaces and a suitable layout. • There is a reasonably modern (less than 30 years old) and appropriately located, bathroom and WC • All furniture supplied by the landlord complies with Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988 • Electrical equipment supplied has an up to date PAT • Garden and outside areas are in good order, with suitable waste/recycling storage provided

2.	Energy performance certificate (EPC) provided	Band E or higher rating ie 39 or above.
3.	Smoke detector present and suitably sited on every floor of the property	Must be 10 year sealed battery unit, or preferably hard wired.
4.	Suitably located audible carbon monoxide detectors are present, with British or European Kitemark or Loss Prevention Certificate board (LPCB) approval mark.	Needed where solid fuel or gas appliances present, but not for balanced fuel outlets. Annual testing of detectors required. The manufacturer's instructions should be followed in relation to the location of the detectors.
5.	A gas certificate is required	All gas appliances tested at least annually
6.	An electrical certificate is required	Dated within last 5 years, with at least 12 months remaining
7.	Bedroom sizes are adequate for the stated occupation	Minimum recommended bedroom sizes are: • Single person – 6.5 sq metres for bedroom where communal living room available or 8 sq m where single bedsit with no communal living room • Two person – 10.22 sq metres = 110 sq ft - Bedroom standard– same standard as Housing Benefit /Devon Home Choice: • Children can share a bedroom up until 10 years of age regardless of sex • Same sex children or adolescents can share a bedroom up to 21 years of age • People require their own room when they are 21 years of age
8.	Separate electric and gas meters are provided to the property, where these services are supplied. A separate water meter is desirable, but if not present, the water charge payable by the tenant is clear.	

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE
22 JANUARY 2013

VACANT STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek approval to negotiate a lease on two blocks of student accommodation (96 bedspaces in total) for use as additional short term housing options for single people and couples, managed partly through the council's EXtraLet scheme and partly as leased temporary accommodation.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 There is currently an oversupply of purpose-built student accommodation for the University and the university expects this to continue for several years.

2.2 The University has approached the Council and offered us the opportunity to take a medium term lease of 10 years or to purchase the freehold of 96 bedspaces of student accommodation across two sites in the city.

2.3 Both sites are owned by Signpost Homes and leased to the University until 2029 & 2032. A lease would need to be negotiated with the University.

Housing Need

2.4 There is a compelling need to increase the supply of social rented housing in the city. In the last 12 months only 457 properties were let in Exeter through Devon Home Choice. As of 1 December 2012 the housing register was as follows:

HOUSING NEED

	A	B	C	D	E	Total
1 Bed	4	253	124	1703	1099	**3183**
2 Bed	3	293	300	189	781	**1566**
3 Bed	0	93	163	59	234	**549**
4 Bed	0	43	35	12	24	**114**
5 Bed	0	5	1	1	3	**10**
6 Bed	0	0	0	0	1	**1**
7 Bed	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
8 Bed	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
Total	**7**	**687**	**623**	**1964**	**2142**	**5423**

2.5 The need for one bedroom accommodation accounts for over half the households on the register. Within this, the large majority of applicants are in the lower housing needs bands. However, the assessment of their housing need is made in line with the Devon Home Choice policy and makes no allowances for affordability of the accommodation.

2.6 We have written to all applicants in need of a one bedroom property on the register in Bands C, D and E asking if they would be interested in the offer of private accommodation under our management. We have received 73 positive responses. Whilst this appears disappointing, this offer was made prior to the university's offers and therefore was an enquiry as to whether the applicant would be interested in accommodation with a shared kitchen and bathroom. Given the high demand for affordable good quality well managed rented accommodation in the city it is likely that there would be additional demand and also wider demand amongst people not on the housing register.

Completions

2.7 Over the past three years, 473 new affordable homes have been provided in partnership with registered providers, developers and the voluntary sector. These new homes are valuable to help to meet the need, but more homes are required. Only a certain amount of new affordable housing can be delivered via s106 planning agreements, due to the way that the volume house builders wish to control the flow of new housing into the market place.

Use of the Accommodation

2.8 Most of the accommodation would be managed under the EXtraLet scheme to provide affordable private rented housing for those currently living at home with family and unable to afford to rent or buy themselves, typically those in Bands D and E who face a long wait for housing with Devon Home Choice.

2.9 Additionally, a proportion of the properties would replace current bed and breakfast provision and be used as a combination of homeless prevention and temporary accommodation for single people who are either accepted as homeless or at risk of being made homeless. It is not proposed that these schemes should replace the use of Shauls Court where we would continue to accommodate more chaotic and high needs homeless applicants.

2.10 It is proposed that the proportion should be 70% under the EXtraLet Scheme and 30% used as temporary accommodation.

The Accommodation

2.10 Two former student blocks have been offered. Bonhay House is a 31 bed scheme made up of 24 studio flats and 7 en-suite rooms with a shared kitchen. King Edwards Studios is a 65 bed scheme made up of all studio flats.

Valuation

2.11 A valuation exercise has been undertaken both on the basis of a 10 year lease and a freehold purchase.

3 PLANNING ISSUES

3.1 The occupation of the smaller Bonhay House scheme is unrestricted and there would be no issue in using this property for social housing purposes.

3.2 The occupation of King Edwards Studios is limited to students by a s106 agreement. This s106 agreement would need to be varied in order to use this property for social housing purposes. This would need to be in place before we took over the property.

4 FINANCE

4.1 This report is seeking permission to progress negotiations and we are not yet at a point where the university has committed to a lease cost. We would not however undertake any agreement unless it was cost neutral to the council, that is to say that the rental income (factoring in voids and bad debt) would exceed the lease, management and maintenance costs throughout the duration of the lease. This would certainly be more cost effective than providing alternative temporary accommodation for single people in bed and breakfasts where the council makes an average weekly loss of at least £100 per person. By using 32 of these bedspaces for temporary accommodation the council will make a modest saving of around £2,500.

4.2 We would also seek to secure break clauses within the lease to mitigate against any risk to the council if, for example, the schemes did not prove popular and were under-occupied. Without agreements on these break clauses we would not enter in any agreement with the university.

4.3 The freehold purchase of this accommodation would, most likely, cost in excess of £3m and there is no provision for this in the capital budget. This option is not recommended.

5 PROPOSAL

5.1 To pursue a change of use for King Edwards Studios so that it can be used for social housing purposes

5.2 To negotiate a 10 year lease with the University for both sites, with the caveats set out at 4.1 and 4.2.

6 RECOMMENDED

6.1 That Executive approves:

(1) The negotiation of a 10 year lease on both schemes, subject to the variation of the s106 and to the schemes being cost-neutral to the council
(2) A request to the Assistant Director City Development and the Chair of Planning Committee to agree a variation of the s106 agreement on King Edwards Studios
(3) That the accommodation should be used mainly for properties managed under the EXtraLet scheme with the remaining properties being used as temporary accommodation to prevent homelessness

SARAH WARD
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HOUSING AND CONTRACTS

<u>**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)**</u>
Background papers used in compiling this report:-
None

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EXETER CITY COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE
22 JANUARY 2013

EAST DEVON LOCAL PLAN DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT
CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED SUBMISSION PLANNING DOCUMENT

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To formulate a response to the ‘Proposed Submission’ document that is being published by East Devon District Council.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Members will recall that East Devon District Council consulted on a Consultation Draft Local Plan early last year. Executive approved a response to that document in February. East Devon has since taken an amended version of that document forward and approved their Local Plan 2006 - 2026 for submission to the Secretary of State for public examination.

2.2 East Devon had made some significant changes in preparation of the Consultation Draft Local Plan. 7,400 houses were proposed for the West End; a significant reduction from the 11,500 that the draft Regional Spatial Strategy’s evidence base deemed necessary to support the prosperity of the sub-region.

2.3 Exeter City Council’s response to the Consultation Draft Local Plan expressed concern over the reduction in the scale of growth and urged that growth should be maximised in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. It also pointed to the need for key infrastructure investments and the relative importance of enabling development (eg. land north of Blackhorse facilitating the Tithebarn Lane Link Road).

2.4 This paper concentrates on proposals for growth at East Devon’s West End (shown on the map at Appendix 1). The economic prosperity of the sub region is inextricably linked to the growth of the City. Such growth is now, and will be increasingly in the future, dependent upon policies adopted in adjoining authorities, particularly East Devon.

3 SCALE OF HOUSING GROWTH

3.1 Through their Proposed Submission document, East Devon intend to carry forward the housing proposals that were set out in the earlier Consultation Draft. This means 7,400 new houses in the West End to 2026 as follows:

Cranbrook: 6,000
North of Blackhorse: 600
North of Pinhoe: 800

3.2 Beyond allocations and planning permissions at Cranbrook for 6,000 houses to 2026 the Proposed Submission document does now indicate provision for an additional 1,500 houses beyond the plan period (7,500 in total). These are envisaged to be delivered on the South West side of the new settlement towards Exeter between 2026 and 2031.

3.3 However, other expansion options have been discounted. Previous proposals for a new settlement of up to 4,000 dwellings along the A3052 (Sidmouth bound) are considered undeliverable because of prohibitive infrastructure costs (principally highways and transport links). This justification appears reasonable and the District Council do commit to keep options for development in this area under review.

3.4 More significantly, earlier ‘Preferred Options’ consultation stage proposals for 2,200 homes north of Blackhorse have also been diluted. In that area the Proposed Submission Local Plan now shows only 600 dwellings, which have been brought forward through the recent ‘Tithebarn Green’ planning application. The application was supported by Exeter City Council Planning committee in December and East Devon resolved to approve it this month.

3.5 Whilst the Proposed Submission Local Plan does maintain significant levels of proposed West End growth in the face of substantial opposition to such development, it will be important that there is sufficient capacity to meet the sub-region’s growth potential. Identifying additional development locations (including land north of Blackhorse) as ‘reserve’ sites would help spread the risk of under-delivery at Cranbrook and would mean that additional housing could be brought forward should a shortfall arise.

4 EMPLOYMENT PROVISION

4.1 The scale of new employment land proposed for the West End remains consistent with previous iterations of the plan. It includes provision for 85ha as follows:

Cranbrook: 15ha
Exeter Science Park: 25ha
Skypark: 40ha
Airport Business Park: 5ha

4.2 This scale of proposed development broadly accords with evidence prepared jointly on behalf of Exeter City Council and East Devon District Council.

5 TIMELY INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION

5.1 The Proposed Submission East Devon Local Plan incorporates a firm commitment to securing investment in the new infrastructure that will be critical to sustainable delivery of growth in the West End. A strong track record of delivery has already been established through early on site projects like the energy centre adjacent to Cranbrook and other enabling infrastructure including the M5 J29 improvement works.

5.2 The Plan incorporates a commitment to key infrastructure. This includes the ‘Phase 3 Tithebarn Lane Link Road’; strategic green infrastructure such as the Clyst Valley Regional Park and strategic cycle routes, both of which will connect to facilities within Exeter.

5.3 Such commitments are strong but detail that will be set out in an Infrastructure Delivery Plan has yet to be finalised. It will be important to continue working with East Devon and other service providers towards a Delivery Plan that helps to secure good development within both administrative areas. Alongside this, clear funding arrangements will need to be agreed in maximising the early provision of essential infrastructure.

5.4 Away from the West End, joint infrastructure planning work should include further investigation of opportunities for a new transport interchange that serves the northern corridor into the city from Crediton. This is something that the Exeter City IDP already identifies.

6 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Executive is recommended to agree that the City Council's response to East Devon District Council is based upon the following four principles. This approach was supported by Planning Member Working Group on 8 January 2013:

i) Support for the overall development strategy and the commitment to development growth east of Exeter, particularly the provisions for economic development;

ii) Welcoming the commitment to large scale housing development in the West End but seeking additional 'reserve' provision north of Blackhorse on land that has previously been identified as deliverable;

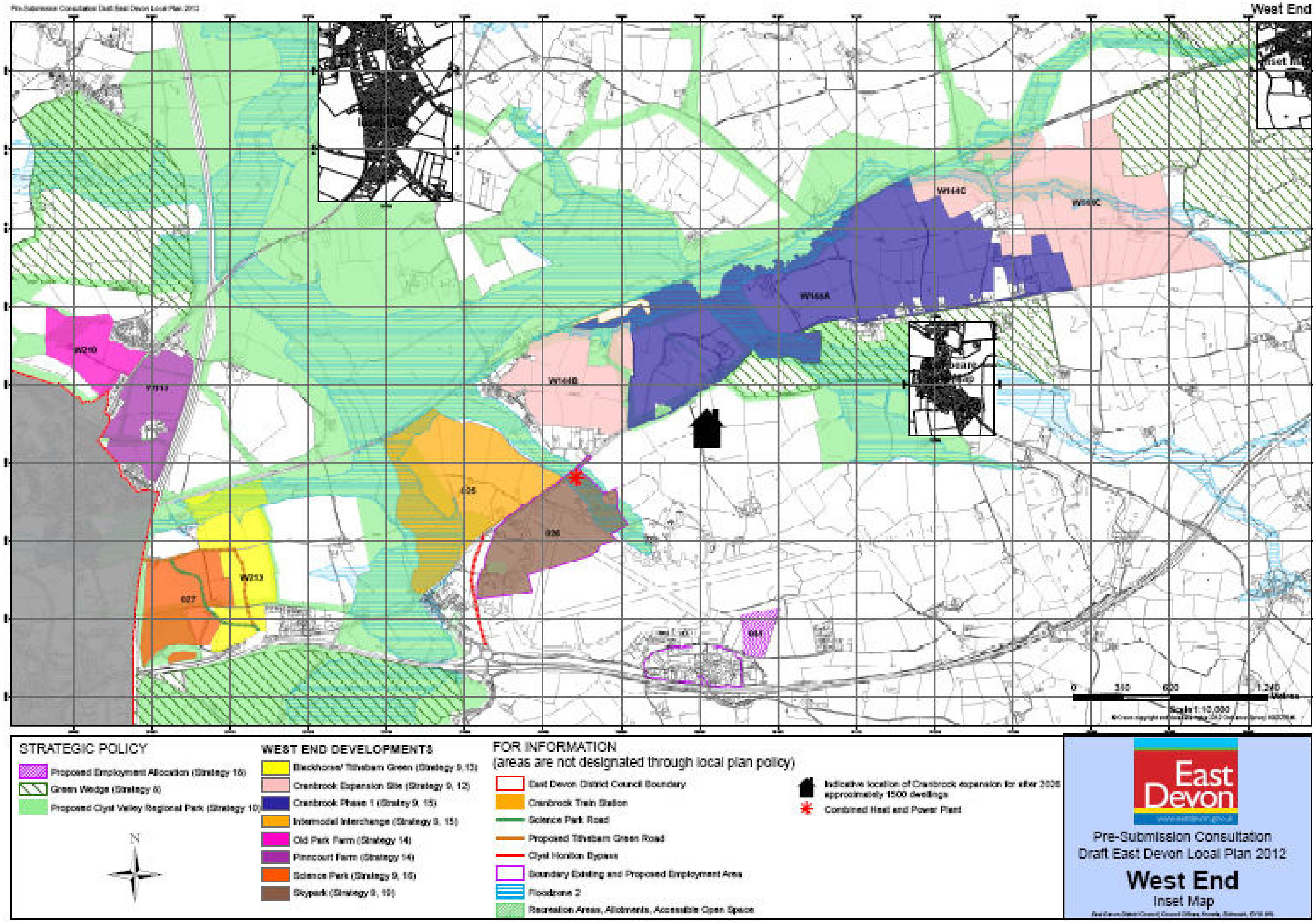
iii) The City Council's commitment to ongoing joint working and cooperation between the authorities and other service providers to deliver comprehensively planned sustainable communities that help to fully realise the sub-region's growth potential;

iv) A commitment to work closely with East Devon and other service providers on respective infrastructure delivery plans; identifying and agreeing funding arrangements that seek to maximise the early provision of essential infrastructure.

RICHARD SHORT
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR CITY DEVELOPMENT

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

APPENDIX 1; EAST DEVON WEST END PROPOSALS



EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ECONOMY
17 JANUARY 2013

EXECUTIVE
22 JANUARY 2013

DRAFT CITY CENTRE STRATEGY FOR EXETER 2013-2022

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To update Members on preparation of a new City Centre Strategy to cover the period 2013/22.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The case for a new City Centre Strategy received the backing of the City Centre Management Partnership Board (CCMPB) in May 2012 and initial consideration has been given to key strategic themes and potential project strands during the course of the year.

2.2 The current City Centre Strategy (covering the period 2007/12) has reached a conclusion and a framework is needed to maintain the momentum of City Centre change, renewal and investment for the coming 5-10 year period. The new City Centre Strategy needs to relate to the Exeter Vision and to map out timescales for key developments and activities. An outline timetable for development of this strategy is attached.

2.3 The draft Strategy is very much a discussion document which will inevitably change to reflect the realities of resource availability and the capacity to deliver proposed actions. In short the context for the Strategy is difficult:

- The most significant squeeze on the public finances in decades,;
- A decade of major economic progress for the City Centre – which, in spite of the major contribution to the economic welfare of the city, now provides the challenge of complacency with a widespread view that continued economic progress is a given;
- A likely focus of City Council capital expenditure on the swimming pool element of Bus Station site redevelopment;
- The need for a re-gearing in the relationship between business and public authorities on the funding of 'city centre management' initiatives. A Business Improvement District will be an essential pre-requisite for moving forward many of the project strands envisaged in the draft City Centre Strategy.

2.4 A draft City Centre Strategy is attached. It is envisaged that this will provide the basis for in-depth dialogue with a range of stakeholders and key partners. Development of the strategy document will be an iterative process as the views and comments of the key agencies, business community and the City Council are collated during the consultation phase. The Strategy will be overseen by a reconstituted City Centre Management Partnership comprising active representation from the business community covering the relevant sectors and areas of the City Centre, from Princesshay and Guildhall centres, the City Council, Police and County Council. Once agreed each body will need to account for progress on those aspects of the Strategy for which they are responsible.

3 STRATEGY CONTENT

3.1 The City Centre Strategy has been drawn together with the following structure:

- A brief introduction on the current City Centre offer, a summary of progress during the last five year period, an assessment of the city centre's current competitive position (including a City Centre SWOT analysis), a summary of key development aims during the next 5-10 years and an Action Plan.

- Strategy purpose – which can be identified as four-fold:
  (1) To provide a clear timetable for the Strategy (to cover the ten year period – up to 2022, although the primary focus is initially on the first 5 years);
  (2) To present a positive case for City Centre inward investment (and re-investment by existing businesses);
  (3) To set out clear aims and project objectives for the CCMP and its partners, including the delivery of a City Centre Business Improvement District which is a critical element of providing the necessary resources for achieving desired progress during the coming 5 year period;
  (4) To clearly set out partners and lead agency responsibilities for the implementation and delivery of the Strategy Action Plan.

- Action Plan targets are summarised under the following key aims:
  (1) Securing and building on Exeter City Centre's competitive advantage.
  (2) Giving a better first impression.
  (3) Delivering a vibrant centre which offers attractions for all.
  (4) Achieving an even safer environment.
  (5) Securing a vibrant, welcoming and safe evening economy.

- A series of projects have been identified that will help deliver progress against the above. Action Plan projects, and indeed the Strategy as a whole will have to strike a balance between aspirations that are challenging yet realistic and priorities which are essential and the means has to be found to deliver them.

4. OWNERSHIP & DELIVERY

4.1 For the City Centre Strategy to be successful it must have widespread ownership – and this will need to include a clear commitment to the aims and project delivery from not only City Council units, but also from partners to include Devon County Council, the Police, the business community and Chamber of Commerce. By definition, some project streams have the potential to be challenging to the City Council.

4.2. Draft projects carry a clear indication of lead agency/organisation/business, lead individual, timescale and likely funding streams. Project details at this stage remain very much work in progress.

4.3 The projects list contains a number of aspirations that can be identified as 'kite flying' – it's hoped that this will help secure a period of robust debate and dialogue amongst partners prior to finalisation of the City Centre Strategy in Spring 2013.

5. **TIMESCALE & CONSULTATION**

5.1 The objective will be to secure a published City Centre Strategy by June 2013 although it will be important that the finished document has had sufficient consultation and support before finally being signed off.

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6. **RECOMMENDED that**

6.1 Scrutiny Committee – Economy

(i) Members note progress on City Centre Strategy development to date and comment on proposed themes and proposed project work streams.

(ii) Members support development of the City Centre Strategy development on the timetable proposed.

6.2 Executive approve the draft City Centre Strategy as the basis for public engagement and consultation with key stakeholders.

RICHARD BALL
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ECONOMY

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)
Background papers used in compiling this report:-
None

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Competitive, Attractive, Dynamic – Delivering A Further Decade Of Change, Renewal and Investment
A City Centre Strategy for Exeter, 2013-2022

1: Introduction

1.1 With a retail catchment of over a million people, Exeter is a key, and rapidly expanding, regional centre. The economic, social and cultural role played by the city cannot be underestimated and the rapid expansion of the City Centre – and the city as a whole – over the last decade has the potential to continue during the next decade and beyond. The economic track record of the City as a whole is impressive:

- Exeter is in the top 2% in the UK for its rate of growth in job creation. Between 2000 – 2009, the wider Exeter and the Heart of Devon area created an additional 15,000 jobs, representing a 12% increase and Exeter itself increased by 24%;
- Exeter is an employment hub. In terms of job density where the number of jobs in an area is divided by the number of working age residents, Exeter outperforms most UK locations for job density and is positioned 10th overall in the UK;
- Between 2008 and 2012, Exeter was in the top 10 nationally for job creation; all achieved whilst 76% of all locations throughout the UK saw actual job losses;
- The UK Competitiveness Index confirmed that Exeter has seen the greatest improvement against all other UK locations. With further significant developments planned, the Exeter economy is in a strong market position to grow further.

1.2 Taken alongside the unique combination of natural and historical resources, close proximity to beautiful countryside and strategic transportation links, the strength of the Exeter economy provides a sound base for a further decade of city centre change, renewal and investment. It is critical to recognise, however, that whilst the strength of the City Centre economy – and indeed the city economy as a whole – is a South West success story, the challenge of tackling national misconceptions about Exeter is a very real one.

1.3 The position of Exeter in the UK retail hierarchy is already significant (currently ranked at 38 within the top 50 UK centres). Since 2007 Exeter has made sound progress in securing a strong position within the national retail rankings and against a backdrop of recent changes to the methodology for calculating the retail rankings it is anticipated that Exeter will move on to underline its regional position of strength and cement its position within the premier league of UK cities.

1.4 CACI uses a number of measures to rank UK centres:

a. *Physical distance to (or time taken to reach) the centre*;

b. *The 'Attractiveness' of the centre's facilities'* – scored by looking at turnover from multiples and department stores in each centre, by counting independent comparison goods retailers in each centre and the count of 'footfall generators' (such as banks and restaurants) in each centre;
c. *Level of competition*;
d. *Population, 'Demand' and Spend*.

The CACI retail rankings are increasingly important, with a growing trend towards major retailers focusing their investments in a reducing number of large centres. It's essential that Exeter is in a strong position to continue to attract such investment and securing the highest possible retail ranking will underpin work to secure further retail investment.

There is a real opportunity for Exeter to significantly improve its retail ranking. A top 35 position within the retail hierarchy is the target for Exeter during the next decade, post completion of the mixed use redevelopment of the Exeter Bus and Coach Station – with the focus being to drive the city clearly in to the top 30.

1.5 Although the City Centre has made significant progress in delivering major improvements to its retail offer over the last decade, progress on the leisure and cultural offer has been less dynamic. Redevelopment of the Bus Station site offers an opportunity to start to re-address this imbalance, but next steps of change through West Quarter development will be critical in maintaining the process of achieving the broadest possible City Centre offer. Proposed development of the Bus Station site provides a real opportunity to further improve the attraction of people not just to visit the content of the new development but to make the City Centre even more of a destination for a wider cross section of the population at different times. The benefits are intended to be widespread from an increase in footfall and longer time spent staying and enjoying what the City Centre as a whole has to offer.

1.6 The City Centre acts as a shop window for the city – showcasing the economic vibrancy of the city as a whole and the strength of the local community that underpins that vibrancy. The first and ongoing impressions and experiences that City Centre visitors get provide key messages on whether the city welcomes its visitors and is a good place to stay, on whether it's safe, on whether it's vibrant and fun, on whether it's unique and different (as opposed to identikit and uninteresting) and on whether it's a good place in which to do business and invest.

1.7 The growth in the number of City Centre residents has been a key feature of City Centre development during the last decade – underpinning increased City Centre vibrancy and safety.

1.8 It is vital that the City Centre is seen as ever more welcoming, vibrant, safe and clean and that, through building links with local community organisations, charities, schools and community groups, it also links to the local community and strengthens community loyalty to the City Centre.

1.9 This strategy sets out a vision for the next decade of City Centre change, renewal and investment and, together with the associated action plan, sets out a series of priorities that will be of benefit to Exeter City Centre and all its users. The strategy sits within the context of 'A City Centre Vision For A Green Capital' published in April 2011. The City Centre Vision set out:

- a number of development framework principles, designed to emphasise and build on those principles that are, or could be, memorable and great about Exeter;
- "Four Big Moves" or development projects that represent one way of delivering change, within the context of the agreed development framework principles, and driving City Centre development and growth forward.

1.10 This Strategy is owned by the City Centre Partnership – comprising Exeter City Council, Devon County Council, City Centre businesses, Devon and Cornwall Police and key transport providers.

1.11 Importantly, the City Centre Vision recognises the importance of delivering growth and investment whilst at the same time ensuring the City Centre doesn't lose its fundamental character and appeal. Together with an associated action plan, this City Centre Strategy maps out timescales and specific projects that will move the City Centre towards delivery of key Vision principles and 'big moves'. The Strategy also sits alongside the Exeter Place Marketing Strategy, the 2012–2016 Exeter Visitor Strategy and the forthcoming Exeter Cultural Strategy 2013-18.

1.12 This strategy document begins with a brief contextual analysis for Exeter City Centre as it is today, summarises key areas of progress against the 2007 – 2012 City Centre Strategy and then sets out both key strategic aims for the period 2013 – 2018 and a clear set of projects within an associated Action Plan. A set of core indicators are set out within the Action Plan which will be used to monitor progress against the Action Plan, with annual progress reports to be considered by the City Centre Management Partnership.

2: Previous Strategy

2.1 The previous Exeter City Centre Strategy covered the period 2007 – 2012 and set out a vision for a City Centre that:

- built on the things that made it distinctive and gave it competitive edge;
- delivered a positive first impression, particularly in the quality, sustainability and accessibility of its built environment;
- offered facilities and attractions that would enhance the vibrancy, diversity, status and prosperity of the city;
- provided, as a matter of course, a safe environment for all City Centre users.

2.2 Even though the Strategy spanned the period of the most challenging economic downturn in living memory, the period has been one of significant progress for the City Centre:

Development

- Princesshay development completed – and a successful launch period followed-up with continuing healthy trading;

'Retail' Investment

- the opening of John Lewis;
- the opening of a range of other key retailers including Hollister, Republic, Urban Outfitters and Jack & Jones;

Travel/Access

- the refurbishment of King William Street Car Park – and its re-opening as John Lewis Car Park;
- an increase in patronage on both Stagecoach Park & Ride services and the First Great Western Tarka & Avocet lines (Exmouth – Exeter passenger numbers (Avocet Line) grew by 32.4% between 2006/07 and 2011/12 and Barnstaple – Exeter passenger numbers (Tarka Line) grew by 73.2% between 2006/07 and 2011/12;

Improvements for Pedestrians

- the delivery of a bigger pedestrianised zone at the heart of the City Centre – creating a much more pedestrian-friendly shopper and visitor environment;
- pedestrian improvements in Paris Street – delivering better connectivity between High Street and Sidwell Street & the Bus Station;
- pedestrian improvements and delivering a significantly improved environment in Sidwell Street;
- the delivery of a more pedestrian-friendly Cathedral Yard and Close;
- the delivery of significant improvements in High Street – making the area a much more attractive shopping environment;

Economic Performance

- retail vacancy rates remaining consistently better than the national position, with current rates running at approximately half the national average;

Visitor Attractions/Improvements

- significant progress on the delivery of City Centre café culture – with an increase in the number of City Centre cafes and restaurants and a marked increase in the volume of outside seating in areas across the City Centre;
- the re-opening of the Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM), after an extensive – and widely lauded refurbishment (and the awarding of the Museum of the Year 2012 to RAMM);
- the opening of two new City Centre hotels – Southernhay House and The Magdalen Chapter – and the opening of a new Premier Inn at St David's Station;
- the opening of Exeter Visitor and Tickets within the Princesshay development and the opening of a new visitor centre for the city's Underground Passages.

3: Current Position

3.1 There is much to celebrate about Exeter City Centre – at the heart of an attractive, connected, fast-developing city. Over the last decade, the development of the City Centre has mirrored the development of the city – moving from a place perhaps seen as slightly provincial towards a leading regional centre, with a City Centre that is increasingly the investment location of choice for key retailers west of Bristol.

3.2 There is a fantastic level of support within the city community for the growth and increasing vibrancy of the City Centre – essential as the City Centre continues to negotiate a period of radical change, renewal and investment. In embarking on further change, renewal and investment it is important that we build upon the existing strengths of the City Centre as set out in the bullet points below under the broad aims of the new strategy:

Aim 1 – securing and building on Exeter City Centre's competitive advantage – as *it*

- delivers a good – and constantly improving – mix of national brand names and an excellent range of unique and independent retailers;
- has an extensive catchment area;
- is compact and relatively easy to access, with rail services, bus provision and the Park and Ride facilities, arguably the best of any major centre in the South west peninsula;

Aim 2 – giving a better first impression – *the City Centre has*

- a built environment that is generally good and is getting better, with the delivery of an on-going programme of high-quality public space improvement work;
- valuable green 'lungs' at the heart of the City Centre (Cathedral Green, Southernhay, Northernhay and Rougemont Parks and a range of 'hidden' green pocket spaces across the City Centre);

Aim 3 – delivering a vibrant centre which offers attractions for all – *the city*

- plays host to a unique and vibrant cultural calendar, has experienced strong growth in its food and restaurant sector and, through the recently re-opened award winning Royal Albert Memorial Museum, offers historical and contemporary collections of national significance;
- is undergoing a radical period of redevelopment and change – building on the award winning Princesshay scheme;
- has a rich historic fabric, with the Cathedral and its Close, the wider City Centre and the Quayside providing a unique context for current and future regeneration work;
- lies in close proximity to other significant tourist attractions and some of the most stunning coastal and country locations anywhere in the country;

Aim 4 – achieving an even safer environment,

- the city can lay claim to 'safe city' status, with low crime rates and a focus on partnership working to drive crime rates down still further;

Aim 5 – securing a vibrant, welcoming and safe evening economy

- Exeter has an evening economy café culture that has grown exponentially over the last decade and continues to go from strength to strength.

3.3 Although there are many City Centre strengths and opportunities, there are weaknesses and threats too. A SWOT analysis of Exeter City Centre is set out in Appendix A. Making progress with the 'big moves' set out within the Vision and delivery of the Action Plan aims and projects will make a major contribution towards addressing the highlighted weaknesses and threats. It is essential that the City Centre is seen not only as a key regional shopping destination, but also that it significantly strengthens its role as a leisure and cultural location of choice.

3.4 Despite the many positives, the physical environment in which Exeter City Centre operates is an increasingly competitive one. It is essential therefore, that the City Centre adapts, expands and develops to meet the challenges presented both nationally and regionally. This City Centre Strategy begins to map out the necessary next steps in realising the aspirations articulated within the 'City Centre Vision For A Green Capital'.

3.5 Whilst Exeter City Centre has continued to markedly improve and cement its regional competitive position during the last decade, the City Centre is susceptible to many of the same risks as other towns and cities across the UK. The threats from the exponential growth of online shopping, from ever-increasing customer expectations around shopping as a leisure activity, from mobile technologies and from recessionary pressures are of major significance. Successful centres of the future must act as more than simple retail and visitor hubs – being innovative and adapting their offer within a constantly changing marketplace.

3.6 The recent Portas Review contains a range of extremely stark statistics – as challenging for Exeter as for other UK town and city centres. Although internet sales currently account for less than 10% of all retail sales some estimates suggest that e-commerce accounted for nearly half of all retail sales growth in the UK between 2003 and 2012, as internet access has become more widespread. Sales over mobile devices (dubbed 'm-commerce') have grown at an extraordinary rate – more than 500% in the last two years. By 2015 we'll see more than £40 billion a year being spent over the internet and through mobile devices, compared with virtually nil in 1997. During the last decade the amount of out-of-town retail floor-space has risen by 30%, whilst the amount of in-town floor-space has fallen by 14%.

3.7 E-commerce and m-commerce clearly pose a threat, but there are opportunities too and an increasing recognition that what matters to retailers is achieving the right blend of on-line and 'bricks and mortar' retailing. It is worth noting that:

- Both Amazon and E-Bay – who have been key leaders in the march of on-line retailing are seeking a presence on the UK High Street;
- Increasingly a number of retailers recognise that a website presence is a key driver for shop sales;

- 88% of consumers purchase ‘offline’ – either as a ‘True Offliner’ (only views products in-store and only buys in-store) (***31%***) or as a ‘RoPo’ (***57%***) (informs purchases online, but buys offline);
- The challenges presented by e-commerce and m-commerce are driving more empowered consumers – empowerment that can be used to the advantage of town and city centres in relation to driving changes to opening hours, the retail experience and retail mix.

3.8 The challenges of e-commerce and m-commerce are in their own right significant, but when layered with the challenges that remain to the UK economy, the threats and challenges to the City Centre economy, and the retail economy specifically, remain significant. The most positive of forecasts for the UK economy show economic growth in 2013 at not much more than 1% and, whilst there is more positive news on retail inflation and consumer spending, the environment for retailers is likely to remain challenging for the foreseeable future. The ‘John Lewis effect’ is, in part, protecting the Exeter City Centre economy from the worst excesses of the UK recessionary pressures, but Exeter cannot remain immune from the challenges facing the UK economy as a whole.

3.9 Exeter City Centre, as with other UK town and city centres, has immeasurable social as well as economic value. With the City Centre acting as a shop window for the city as a whole, some of the underlying social challenges that the wider community faces present themselves in the City Centre and a strong City Centre economy is only possible based on a strong community. The challenge of binge drinking and the impact that has on at least perceptions of safety in the evening is an increasing issue for the community as a whole. A key area for action during the lifespan of the Strategy will be Aim 5 (securing a vibrant, welcoming and safe evening economy), with particular progress needed on this front to ensure the City Centre is the shop window needed for the city as a whole.

3.10 Virtually every member of the city community depends on the City Centre for meeting friends and colleagues, for shopping, for entertainment & cultural activity and for the role the centre fulfils as both a transport hub and a hub for the public services. Individuals depend on the City Centre for jobs. Businesses depend on the City Centre for survival, profits and growth.

3.11 The City Centre offers an abundance of opportunities for growth, local employment, wealth and social interactions that are invaluable to the city. Whilst ‘retailing’ is the economic engine for the City Centre, the continued success and vibrancy of the City Centre will be utterly dependent on the continued loyalty of the city community and that loyalty will only remain if the City Centre clearly delivers as an accessible and sustainable ‘service centre’ for the community as a whole.

3.12 There is no room for complacency about the City Centre, its past success and its value. With convenience and ‘leisure’ shopping likely to become ever-more critical drivers of consumer behaviour, there must be a hard-headed approach to the importance of constant change to remain ‘ahead of the game’.

3.13 It is clear that if the positive momentum behind City Centre change, renewal and investment is to be maintained, the City Centre Strategy and Action Plan projects must undertake the following in order to deliver the aims as set out below:

1 – Securing and building on Exeter City Centre's competitive advantage

- Maintain a momentum of change, renewal and investment that builds on the Princesshay and John Lewis developments and ensures the City Centre continues to strengthen its position in the regional and national retail hierarchy.
- Ensure there is a focus on strengthening the whole of the City Centre linear 'urban spine' (from Exe Bridges to the top of Sidwell Street) – reinforcing the city's unique layout and ensuring that all City Centre quarters are strengthened through on-going City Centre investment.
- Ensure Exeter is the investment location of choice for retailers looking to move west of Bristol.
- Ensure there is an environment of encouragement and support for City Centre businesses wishing to invest and strengthen their city presence.
- As part of a wider transport and environmental strategy, reduce peak-hour congestion and address the resulting impact on air quality and the pedestrian environment.
- As part of the transport and environmental strategy, constantly review access to the City Centre, working to ensure the right balance between private cars and public transport and looking at both the supply of City Centre parking and pricing mechanisms – ensuring that the transportation mix encourages visitors and maximises City Centre dwell time.
- Strengthen partnership working, recognising that the most dynamic change and renewal can only be delivered with effective joint working.

2 – Giving a better first impression

- Deliver the best possible City Centre 'gateway' experiences (for example at St David's Station & Central Station, at Exeter Bus Station and at Exe Bridges).
- Improve the quality, maintenance and management of public space so that the City Centre becomes an *even* friendlier and an *even more* attractive and accessible place, with the right balance between city vibrancy and 'quiet spaces'.
- Ensure the varied parts of the City Centre feel truly connected – with the City centre an easy and pleasurable place for visitors to navigate and with every encouragement for visitors to discover every unique element of the` City Centre.

3 – Delivering a vibrant centre which offers attractions for all

- Keep retail at the heart of the city.
- Do more to ensure that external perceptions recognise the true retail and cultural individuality and character of Exeter City Centre.
- Support the development of creative events and initiatives in the City Centre.

- Focus on creating opportunities and jobs – ensuring that, through investment in skills and training, local people (particularly young people and those wishing to return to work) have the opportunities to share in City centre success.
- Ensure that the City Centre continues to grow in strength as a ‘hub’ at the centre of the Heart of Devon tourism offer.
- Deliver ‘vibrancy for all’ – ensuring that the retail and entertainment offer is attractive to all sections of the population.

4 – Achieving an even safer environment

- Do more to make people *feel* safe in the City Centre, 24 hours a day.
- Deliver specific projects to tackle head-on the minority of individuals who engage in criminal activity, anti-social behaviour and disorder, both during the day and at night.

5 – Securing a vibrant, welcoming and safe evening economy

- ‘Connect’ the day-time and evening economy – holding more and more people in the City Centre post 6pm.

3.14 It is also clear that the squeeze on public finances will remain for the period of the Strategy and beyond and that without the delivery of a Business Improvement District and the business community fully stepping up to the plate there will be significant difficulties in the maintaining the positive momentum achieved in the City Centre over the last decade.

4: Aiming To Turn Vision Into Reality

4.1 Many Exeter people – and the Exeter business community – are passionate about what they see as ‘their City Centre’, and ‘their High Street’. They will often disagree on what’s wrong and what’s right with the City Centre, but the passion they hold is a power to harness and generate ideas and innovative proposals for moving the City Centre forward. This Strategy and associated Action Plan will only be marked as a success if it inspires more businesses in the City Centre and those responsible for its development and maintenance as a whole to embrace change and renewal and to work ever more closely together on the delivery of radical management and innovative project delivery.

4.2 Green Vision aims are aspirational, but key to moving the City Centre forward. Of particular importance are the four ‘big moves’ set out within the Vision. As the momentum of City Centre change and renewal is maintained, it is vital that the Vision is kept in sight as change is delivered.

4.3 The four “Big Moves” – ‘Space For Growth’, ‘Balancing The Effects Of Growth’, ‘A New Place On The River’ and ‘A Sense Of Arrival’ – provide a framework for the Action Plan. The delivery of Action Plan objectives and projects will make a significant contribution to realisation of the Vision. Further detail on each of the "Big Moves" is set out below.

4.4 ***Space for Growth.*** The most obvious location to extend and develop the City Centre is outside the city walls.

4.4.1 The Development to the east of the city wall adjacent to Princesshay provides a significant opportunity for the next phase of City Centre change, renewal and investment (the East Quarter).

4.4.2 The Bus and Coach Station is one of the key arrival points into the city and redevelopment of the East Quarter will need to incorporate a re-developed bus station offering a much improved arrival experience. Not only will the redevelopment of the 'Bus Station' site offer a state-of-the-art new transport interchange, the site offers the city the opportunity to deliver a significantly enhanced City centre leisure offer and the best possible gateway in to the City Centre.

4.4.3 There are a number of different potential forms new East Quarter development could take. Work on moving forward with East Quarter development has already commenced with enhancement of the Paris Street/Sidwell Street junction. There is potential for further improvement of public space at the Paris Street/Sidwell Street junction and for significant further enhancement of Sidwell Street.

4.4.4 Beyond Cheeke Street there would be a transition in character between the new city quarter and 'St Sidwell's' – a mixed use quarter with a reduced scale, local and specialist shopping facilities, food and drink outlets and student accommodation.

4.5 ***'Balancing the Effects of Growth'.*** Parts of the existing City Centre are not working as well as they could.

4.5.1 In particular, blocks to the west of South and North Streets and the Harlequins Shopping Centre off Paul Street are prime city centre locations that have the potential for significant improvement

4.5.2 Whilst commercially successful, the Guildhall Shopping Centre is a very large 'inward looking' development which has blank facades facing out on to two strategically important streets (North Street and Paul Street) and blocks attractive views towards the City Centre.

4.5.3 Investment in the Guildhall area is a critical second "Big Move". Guildhall development is critical in balancing changes proposed in the East Quarter.

4.6 ***'A New Place on the River' & 'A Sense of Arrival'.*** The third and fourth 'Big Moves' relate to the interface between the City Centre and the Rive/Exe Bridges ('A New Place on the River') and delivering the best possible arrival points for the City Centre ('A Sense of Arrival'). The importance of delivering the best possible first impressions for the City Centre is identified as a key Strategy aim.

4.7 ***‘A New Place on the River’.*** This is the most aspirational of the “Big Moves”. There is a recognition that the City Centre largely turns its back on the riverside, with major roads separating the City Centre from the historic Quayside. ‘A new place on the river’ would provide an additional destination at the junction of the spine that runs through the City Centre and the River Exe.

4.8 ***‘A Sense of Arrival.*** A number of key gateways in to the City Centre currently fall short of providing the best possible first impressions of the City Centre.

4.8.1 At present Western Way creates a physical barrier between the City Centre and neighbourhoods in the south-east. Equally, the arrival experience from central rail and bus stations is poor, with surface car parking and a narrow alleyway providing the initial route to the City Centre from St David’s Station and a poor environment to the front of Central Station. The bus station is unattractive and surrounded by post-war development in need of redevelopment.

4.8.2 Opportunities exist for the creation of new public space and development to the front of St David’s Station. At Central Station there are plans for the creation of a new pedestrian-friendly forecourt. Delivery of an excellent Bus Station will be addressed within the context of East Quarter development.

4.9 In addition to the four “Big Moves”, there are a opportunities for environmental enhancements in a number of ‘pockets’ across the City Centre – improvements that would better cement together disparate elements of the City Centre and provide momentum in delivering the more substantial remodelling of the Centre. Pocket areas where change, to underpin bigger strategic change, is needed include:

- Northernhay Place;
- Library ‘squares’ and interconnecting ‘concrete canyons’ of the Cultural, or Castle, Quarter;
- Clock Tower;
- West Street.

4.10 Section 5 of this Strategy document comprises an Action Plan. The Action Plan will be reviewed – and re-issued – on a rolling two year basis throughout the lifespan of the Strategy.

4.11 Action Plan projects are set out within five broad aims:

1 – Securing and building on Exeter City Centre’s competitive advantage;
2 – Giving a better first impression;
3 – Delivering a vibrant centre which offers attractions for all;
4 – Achieving an even safer environment;
5 – Securing a vibrant, welcoming and safe evening economy.

4.12 Delivery of a BID itself will also represent a key work strand during the first part of the Strategy. In addition to unlocking essential funding to enhance the marketing, vibrancy, safety, maintenance and cleanliness of the City Centre, a City Centre Business Improvement Project will also set out to deliver:

- the most effective possible route for ensuring that the voice of business is heard loud and clear during a further decade of radical change;
- a mechanism for harnessing the enthusiasm, vision and ideas of the widest possible cross-section of the City Centre community;
- a ‘shared agenda’ on delivering the City Centre change agenda;
- the best possible environment for nurturing and harnessing the growth potential of independent businesses.

4.13 The Strategy is published at the time of the most significant squeeze on the public finances in decades. Neither core Strategy objectives or projects will be deliverable without a clear re-alignment of expenditure on City Centre enhancements, promotion & marketing, maintenance and competitive positioning between local authorities and the business community. Progress on delivering a Business Improvement District will be an essential step in this realignment.

4.14 Progress on Strategy impact will be measured through a basket of PI measures which will include:

- Retail vacancy rates – monitoring report every other month;
- Car Park ticket sales (City Council) – monitoring monthly, quarterly and annually;
- Park & Ride usage;
- Retail takings benchmark analysis – monitoring quarterly;
- Visitor figures for Exeter Cathedral, RAMM, and other attractions – monitoring monthly/quarterly;
- Footfall monitoring, Princesshay & Guildhall Shopping Centre.

Section 5 – Action Plan

Aim 1 – Securing & Building Exeter City Centre's Competitive Advantage				
Project	**Year**	**Lead Partners**	**Cost Estimate**	**Outcomes**
Business Improvement district (BID)	Autumn 2013 target for BID ballot	Chamber of Commerce City Centre businesses Exeter City Council Devon County Council	BID campaign - £15k	To strengthen the City Centre's competitive position, improve marketing and promotional activity, increase day visitor numbers, increase awareness of the Exeter 'offer' and enhance City Centre safety, security and cleansing & maintenance.
Redevelopment of the Bus Station	2014 start date – Phase 1	Exeter City Council Land Securities Stagecoach		To deliver a step-change in the City centre leisure and retail offer and deliver a sate-of-the art bus station and modern swimming pool complex
West Quarter Development Strategy	2015	Fore Street Business Collective Exeter City Council Devon County Council		To identify a programme of measures to enhance Fore street and the West Quarter – leading, in turn, to improved perceptions of what the West Quarter has to offer and, in due course, to improvements to footfall and trading levels
Customer-convenient trading hours	Annual Progress Report	City Centre businesses Stagecoach Exeter & Heart of Devon Hoteliers & Restaurants Association Exeter City Council	Minimal	To improve the link between the day-time and evening economies and to broaden the character of the latter by strengthening the café culture and extending opening hours. To deliver an improved ambience and reduce the incidence of alcohol-related anti-social behaviour.
Street Committees	Annual Progress Report	City Centre businesses Devon County Council Devon & Cornwall Police	Minimal	To strengthen engagement with businesses in 'secondary' retailing areas – jointly identifying promotional strategies, delivering local 'ownership' of the change process and identifying a range of business opportunities.
Review of Sidwell Street Market	Options Report – July 2013	Exeter City Council Sidwell Street Market Traders		Identification of opportunities for growth and enhancement of Sidwell Street Market within the context of Sidwell Street/Bus Station redevelopment

Project	Year	Lead Partners	Cost Estimate	Outcomes
Visitor Coach Parking Strategy	Report – July 2013	Exeter City Council Heart of Devon Tourism Partnership		To enhance the City Centre visitor experience
Retailer inward investment targeting	Reviewable targets list First list 2013	Exeter City Council Chamber of Commerce City Centre businesses City Centre landlords	£8,000	To further strengthen Exeter's competitive position by strengthening the representation of significant retail names in the city
Park & Ride expansion		Devon County Council		To deliver easier access to the City Centre, improving travel options for visitors, shoppers and city workers.
Year-round Markets		Exeter City Council	Nil cost	To deliver increased City Centre vibrancy with a year-round series of specialist markets – building on the delivery of the 2012 Cathedral Christmas Market
Improved presentation of vacant retail units	On-going	Exeter City Council City Centre Manager Private landlords	£15,000	To enhance the visitor experience.
Regular PI monitoring and reports	Annual Progress Report	City Centre Manager Exeter City Council City Centre businesses	Minimal	To ensure the decision-making process is well informed, with reliable and up to date information on City Centre performance
Sunday Trading Hours	As legislation comes forward	City Centre businesses Exeter City Council	Nil	To capitalise on any long-term changes to the Sunday trading regulations – strengthening the City Centre's competitive position
Aim 2 – Giving A Better First Impression				
Central Station Forecourt enhancement	2013	Exeter City Council Devon County Council Network Rail	£660,000	To deliver the best possible first impression to City Centre visitors and ensuring a sense of 'arrival'.
West Quarter enhancements	2015	Exeter City Council Local businesses Devon County Council	To be determined	To strengthen West Quarter as a key hub of independent businesses and café culture, driving footfall and 'signposting' West Quarter businesses
Connecting Fore Street, the 'West Quarter' & the Quayside	2015	Exeter City Council Devon County Council	To be determined	To deliver improved pedestrian spaces by improving accessibility through, and minimising the impact of traffic in, the West Quarter. In turn this will strengthen the attractiveness of the area to visitors and shoppers.

Project	Year	Lead Partners	Cost Estimate	Outcomes
Exeter St David's Station Forecourt	2015	Exeter City Council Devon County Council		To deliver the best possible first impression to City visitors and to ensure a vibrant space delivering the sense of arrival in a city of regional significance.
Street Scene – 'Scores on the Floors' Scheme and other partnership working	2014/2015	Exeter City Council City Centre businesses Chamber of Commerce	To be determined	Building on the success of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, to encourage businesses to take more care with their own external housekeeping – refuse provision, customer litter, flyposting and graffiti. A scheme that rates and recognises tidy premises should help bring about a cleaner, brighter City Centre and a more attractive and successful trading location.
Taxi Forum	2013 and on-going	Exeter City Council	Minimal – individual project costs to be determined	Recognising that taxis are a critical part of the smooth operation of the City Centre, a developing Taxi Forum will provide the opportunity to strengthen dialogue with the taxi trade and in turn to work with the taxi trade to: ❖ Deliver the best possible customer service, with well informed drivers aware of all that the City Centre has to offer, of City Centre attractions and events and of City facilities; ❖ Ensure that taxi provision (including the location of City Centre taxi ranks) is convenient and clearly 'signed'; ❖ Promote a positive and distinctive image for Exeter taxis.

Project	Year	Lead Partners	Cost Estimate	Outcomes
City Champions/Ambassadors	2015	Exeter City Council Chamber of Commerce Exeter & Heart of Devon Hoteliers & Restaurants Association City Centre businesses	Minimal	To ensure that 'city gatekeepers'/first points of contact have a good knowledge of Exeter City Centre (facilities, attractions and history). This will be achieved through provision of targeted training and information to taxi drivers, hoteliers, bus drivers and other 'frontline' staff. In turn, this will lead to improved perceptions of Exeter as 'friendly' and 'safe', leading to increased return visits and trade.
Improvement to Cathedral & Quay Car Park/City Centre links through South Street	2017	Exeter City Council Devon County Council	Costed programme to be devised	To enhance the visitor experience and significantly improve first impressions of the City Centre
City Centre 'Hidden Pockets' (for example Coombe Street, Parliament Street & The Mint)	2017	Exeter City Council Devon County Council	Costed programme to be devised	To deliver targeted improvements and signage to the 'interesting' hidden City Centre public spaces, leading to enhanced perceptions of the individuality and diversity of Exeter and enhancing the attractiveness of – and visitors enjoyment of – the City Centre.
Public Toilet provision (to include Community Toilet Scheme) Consideration to be given to 'Loo of the Year' award scheme in 2014.	On-going	Exeter City Council	Costed programme to be devised	To strengthen provision of public toilets in terms of quality and accessibility – and improve the visitor experience.
'Chuggers' Policy	2013	Exeter City Council Exeter Chamber of Commerce Charity Commission	Minimal	To enhance the visitor experience by agreeing controls on 'chugger' activity in the City Centre, with a code of conduct to strike the right balance between charitable donations and the number of pitches, numbers of chuggers and number of days on which 'chuggers' are permissible.

Project	Year	Lead Partners	Cost Estimate	Outcomes
Aim 3 – Delivering a vibrant City Centre that offers attractions for all				
Castle Quarter – delivery/strengthening of a cultural quarter in the City Centre	2014 – completion of feasibility study/delivery strategy	Exeter Phoenix Exeter City Council Devon County Council Exeter Chamber of Commerce	Costs to be identified	To strengthen the overall offer of the City Centre – ensuring visitors are encouraged to visit the greatest possible range of city attractions and maximising City Centre dwell time.
Street Trading – Review of street trading/street trading regulation across the City Centre	2013	Exeter City Council Devon County Council Exeter Chamber of Commerce City Centre businesses	Costs to be identified	To recognise the potential of appropriate street trading to enhance the vibrancy of the City Centre; to use designated street trading and 'street food' areas as a mechanism for drawing footfall in to 'secondary' retailing areas such as Castle Street and the Cultural Quarter & Fore Street and the West Quarter.
Review of use of Northernhay & Rougemont Gardens and Southernhay	2013	Exeter City Council Exeter Chamber of Commerce Devon County Council	Costs to be identified	Significant opportunities for increasing use of green spaces at the heart of the City Centre, delivering enhanced City Centre vibrancy and making a significant contribution to the safety and attractiveness of key City Centre green spaces.
Christmas Market	2012 – first year	Exeter Cathedral Exeter City Council Exeter Chamber of Commerce Exeter & Heart of Devon Hoteliers & Restaurants Association	Minimal Income opportunities	To strengthen the attractiveness of Exeter as a visitor destination during the Christmas shopping period, with an annual Christmas Market. Year-on-year growth to be delivered.
Christmas Lights	On-going	Exeter Chamber of Commerce Exeter City Council Corporate business sponsors City Centre businesses - BID	£70,000 annually	To secure new funding streams that deliver Christmas Lights that are unique, innovative and support the city's competitive position.

Project	Year	Lead Partners	Cost Estimate	Outcomes
Renovation and regular Summer use of Northernhay bandstand	2014	Exeter City Council Lottery funding Corporate business sponsors	£50,000	To deliver increased vibrancy in and use of Northernhay Gardens – reducing incidents of anti-social behaviour and encouraging wider use of a key City Centre park.
City Centre WiFi and 4G	2014	City Centre businesses Exeter City Council Private sector providers City Centre landlords	Costs to be identified	Delivering a more business friendly City Centre.
Aim 4 – Achieving an Even Safer Environment				
Expansion of Exeter Businesses Against Crime (EBAC). Annual Improvement Plan	Annually	City Centre businesses Exeter City Council	Nil cost to public sector. Annual costing of improvement plan	To deliver a safer, more welcoming, City Centre and ensuring the City Centre becomes less of a target for shoplifters, criminal activity & anti-social behaviour
Extend the EBAC radio network to cover all City Centre pubs and clubs and other venues where appropriate	2014	City Centre businesses Exeter City Council Devon & Cornwall Police Licensed Victuallers Association	Minimal cost to Council Cost to business of approximately £450 per radio	To deliver a safer, more welcoming, City centre during the evening period
Child Safe Zone – Expanding scheme beyond the Guildhall Shopping Centre/Princesshay scheme	2015	City Centre businesses Exeter City Council Devon & Cornwall Police	BID dependent Costs to be identified	To deliver a more family-friendly shopping environment, further strengthening competitive position over other regional shopping locations.
Aim 5 – Securing a welcoming, vibrant and safe evening economy				
Deliver active Exeter Night time Economy Group	On-going	City Centre businesses Exeter City Council Devon & Cornwall Police	Costs to be identified on a project by project basis	To deliver improvements to the Exeter evening economy, ensuring the City Centre is an attractive and safe place in the evening for the broadest possible cross-section of the community.

Project	Year	Lead Partners	Cost Estimate	Outcomes
Top 10 problem premises – regular review and publication of information. A willingness of Responsible Authorities to seek formal reviews where appropriate	On-going	Devon & Cornwall Police Exeter City Council	Minimal cost	To secure the safest possible evening economy environment, ensuring a positive reputation for the City Centre as a visitor destination during the evening and night-time period.
To examine the potential of Early Morning Alcohol Restriction Orders	2014	Devon & Cornwall Police Exeter City Council City Centre licensees City Centre businesses	Costs to be identified, but likely to be significant. Implementation would be likely to result in significant savings in relation to policing costs and cleansing/maintenance costs	A new power that should be considered. Likely to reduce 'pre-loading'. Significant improvements anticipated in safety – and perceived safety – of City Centre. Anticipated impact on broadening-out the attractiveness of the City Centre at night to the widest possible cross-section of the community.
H20 Project	2013 On-going development	Devon & Cornwall Police Exeter City Council City Centre businesses	Minimal cost – to be met by individual businesses	Evidence form other locations is that water machines offering free water to customers has a significant impact in reducing drink related anti-social behaviour and crime. An initial trial has been successfully run in the City Centre, with the trial achieving such success that it's being used as a model for Devon-wide action. The objective is now to broaden the benefit in Exeter by ensuring city-wide take-up in clubs and pubs.
Taxi Rank Provision	On-going	Devon County Council Devon & Cornwall Police Exeter City Council	Costs to be identified	Rank location, size and management have a major proven impact on safe and efficient dispersal of late-night economy users.

Project	Year	Lead Partners	Cost Estimate	Outcomes
Licensing of Sex Establishments – Review	2013	Exeter City Council Devon & Cornwall Police	Nil	To consider what role sex establishments (sex shops and sexual entertainment venues such as lap-dancing clubs) play in the City Centre.
Purple Flag Award	2014/2015	Devon & Cornwall Police Exeter City Council University of Exeter Exeter Businesses - BID	Costs to be identified	Achieving Purple Flag status – the measure of the safest and most welcoming UK towns and cities at night – would deliver a range of benefits for the City Centre. Benefits would include: ❖ A raised profile and an improved public image for the City Centre; ❖ Increased visitor numbers; ❖ Increased expenditure; ❖ Further reductions in levels of crime and anti-social behaviour; ❖ The delivery of a more successful mixed-use economy.
Taxi Marshalls	2015	Devon & Cornwall Police Exeter City Council University of Exeter Exeter Businesses - BID	Costs to be identified	To secure the safest possible evening economy environment, ensuring a positive reputation for the City Centre as a visitor destination during the evening and night-time period.
Betting Shops – Review of Policy/Provision	2014	Exeter City Council	Nil	To consider what role betting shops play in the City Centre, ensuring that over-provision does not detract from the core City Centre retailing area.

STRENGTHS	***WEAKNESSES***
Exeter Economy Strength of Exeter professional and business services and business quarters & East Devon Growth Point progress, including the development of Cranbrook **Location** Strategic location within South West Region Proximity to the Coast (particularly the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site), Exmoor, Dartmoor **Access** Access to, and within, the City Centre is generally good – *although see also Weaknesses and Threats* Good – and improving – rail links Range of key rail services running to heart of City Centre, with excellent access to CBD from Central Station **Retail Mix** Mix of major retailers and independents **'Townscape'** Compact City Centre 'core' – easy to navigate and 'understand' Attractive hidden 'pockets' – such as St Catherine's Almshouses Historic, interesting, buildings and townscape Cathedral Green **Safety** City Centre generally considered to be 'safe and secure' Excellent network of CCTV **Eating/Drinking** Great – and improving – mix of good quality cafes and restaurants **Public Art** **Car Parking** Quality of Car Parking stock and amount of user-friendly 'pay on foot' parking **Pedestrian Signage** **Park & Ride** – Good, & improving, provision **Facilities** Strong cultural facilities – RAMM, Bike Shed Theatre, Phoenix, Spacex Gallery Good heritage offer – Cathedral, Quayside, Underground Passages, City Centre churches, City Wall Excellent green lungs at the heart of the City Centre – Rougemont, Northernhay, Southernhay **Education** Top 10 University – major driver for City Centre economy	**Access** *Perception* of City centre as challenging to access *Perception* of Exeter as remote form key national population centres **'Townscape'** Large elements of 50s redeveloped City Centre – specifically Sidwell Street, Bus Station, 'top' of Fore Street Blank return frontages on Queen Street, adjacent to High Street 'Presence' of Guildhall Shopping Centre on Queen Street 'Concrete Canyons' of Cultural Quarter – Musgrave Row, area around Central Library, Telephone Exchange 'Linear' City Centre City Centre 'gateways' arguably give a poor impression of the City Centre **Park & Ride** – lack of provision to serve northern City Centre catchment **Business Engagement** Lack of a City Centre **BID** **Eating/Drinking** Remaining focus on evening economy businesses with a sole focus on drinking in specific areas of the City Centre **Pedestrian Signage** – questionable as to whether signage drives footfall to 'secondary' retailing areas **Facilities** Poor provision for teenagers - & arguably for families with young children **Opening Hours** Poor offer **Retail Mix** *Perception of* 'Clone City' **Web** Weakness of information on City Centre shopping provision **Public Art** – some needs 'refreshing'

OPPORTUNITIES	***THREATS***
BID Support for a City Centre BID will unlock substantial additional income streams for the promotion, marketing and enhancement of the City Centre. **Access** Park & Ride – opportunities from delivery of Park & Ride to serve northern City Centre catchment Strengthening of tourism with increasing capacity of and expansion of Exeter Airport **Gateways** Improvements to key City Centre gateways – Western Way/Paris Street roundabout, St David's Station, Central Station Opportunities for 'gateways' to some shopping areas – specifically Castle Street, Fore Street & 'West Quarter' **Retail Mix** Could be significantly enhanced John Lewis effect Opportunities arising from the development of new, specialist, markets **Opening Hours** Significant opportunity for extending opening hours Connecting day and night time economies **'Public Spaces'** Opportunity to make more of public spaces – specifically Cathedral Green Opportunities from further driving 'pedestrianisation' agenda forward **Townscape** Opportunities to drive more obvious pedestrian 'circuits' to offset disadvantages of 'linear' City Centre 'Interpretation' of historic core/City Walls Development of iconic new buildings **More celebration of what's great about Exeter!** **Information & Communication** Opportunities to turn more businesses/business people/city workers in to City Centre 'ambassadors'/'information experts' **Festivals & Culture** Opportunity to grow festivals offer and year-round cultural activity Development of Exeter as a hub for the performing arts within the region **Eating & Drinking** Opportunity to grow reputation of Exeter as a centre for gastronomy **Facilities** Growing the 'Castle Quarter' offer – strengthening interface between RAMM, Phoenix, Library & Castle Improving City Centre hotel offer	**'Townscape'** Large elements of 50s redeveloped City Centre – specifically Sidwell Street, Bus Station, 'top' of Fore Street Blank return frontages on Queen Street, adjacent to High Street 'Presence' of Guildhall Shopping Centre on Queen Street 'Concrete Canyons' of Cultural Quarter – Musgrave Row, area around Central Library, Telephone Exchange 'Linear' City Centre City Centre 'gateways' arguably give a poor impression of the City Centre **Safety** Risk to CCTV effectiveness from staff availability for monitoring Continuing reductions in Police numbers **Opening Hours** Failure to connect day and night time economies likely to result in inability to change 'dynamic' of City centre at night **'Spaces'** 'Pedestrianisation' agenda may result in increasing congestion on the edge of the city centre and on key 'cross City Centre' routes **Access** Increases in car parking charges may impact on City Centre's competitiveness Failure of Exeter Airport to reach growth opportunities, with loss of business and tourism to Bristol hub *Perception* of City centre as challenging to access *Perception* of Exeter as remote form key national population centres **Image** Exeter perceived as old-fashioned, traditional & sleepy **Multi Purpose City Centre Venue** – Corn Exchange capacity limiting **Economy/Market Conditions** Ongoing challenges to retailing from tough recessionary pressures Risks to local economy from public sector cuts Reduced visitor numbers to Exeter as a result of people finding cheaper holidaying options elsewhere in the UK/in Europe **BID** Failure of City Centre businesses to support

CITY CENTRE STRATEGY
KEY MILESTONES/DEADLINES 2013

	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY
Project Identification/Document Review				Revisions to projects summary Revisions to Strategic elements			
Meeting/Committee Consideration	Draft for public/business consultation to: ECC Scrutiny Committee – Economy **17/01** ECC Executive **22/01**				To ECC Scrutiny Committee, Economy for final ratification **30/05**	To CCMPB (June), ECC Executive (**18/06**) for final ratification	
Consultation	← Discussion with Key partners and business community →			Assimilation of consultation responses			
Launch							↔

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EXETER CITY COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE
22 JANUARY 2013

CIVIC PROPERITES - SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To note the decision taken by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to agree to install photovoltaic arrays on four Council roof areas, which would help reduce the carbon emissions, meet pledges made as required by the Climate Change Act, demonstrate a culture of carbon awareness, as well as providing an on-going reduction in the Council's energy costs.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Members will be aware of the Government's pledges to reduce the reliance on carbon energy and use sustainable energy methods.

2.2 Following the need to remove the wind turbines from the roof of the Civic Centre on safety grounds, officers have been looking at the opportunity to take advantage of the roof space and utilise proven sustainable technology that will produce long term savings. Other sites have also been explored.

2.3 In view of the changes in the financial incentives available for such schemes, the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council has taken the decision to approve four schemes. In accordance with the Council's constitution, such a decision needs to be reported to the Executive at the earliest opportunity.

3. PROJECT BACKGROUND

3.1 Crucial to the project is the Government's Feed-In-Tariff scheme (FIT), which is a policy that is used to dramatically increase the use of renewable energy, by providing a long term financial incentive for investment. Under the scheme energy companies are obligated to pay an inflation linked payment, based upon the number of Kilo-watt hours for electricity generated from renewable sources. The FIT is designed to last 25 years. Due to the popularity of this scheme, the FIT has already been reduced from that previously offered and this payment continues to be cut by the government. If the Council was to undertake this project, it needs to be done now, as the FIT scheme will be further reduced for new projects after April 2013.

3.2 In addition to the FIT, photovoltaic installations also bring a saving in reduced utility bills, as well as an additional payment from the sale of any surplus kWh fed back onto the national grid (Export Tariff).

3.3 To date, the only civic building fitted with a solar array is at Belle Isle Nursery which was commissioned in October 2011. The solar array, incorporated into a new Tractor Shed roof, is producing results 41% higher than the original design proposal and will bring in an income of £4500 - £5000 this year alone. The return reflects FIT payments which are considerably higher than the current payments and those that apply to the other proposals and electricity exported back to the grid. In addition, there is a further saving from reduced energy bills, in the region of £7,000 per annum, as a result of the electrical energy generated on site.

4. WHAT CAN BE DELIVERED

4.1 The following table shows the agreed installation sites together with the installation costs and projected income levels over a 20 year period:-

	PV Size	Cost	Income (20yr)	Payback
The ARC	40kw array	£41,132	£212,619	5.1 yr
MRF	50kW array	£49,723	£265,864	4.8 yr
Oakwood House	24kW array	£24,993	£128,176	5.0 yr
The Civic Centre	70kW array	£87,464	£292,052	6.0 yr
Total		*203,312*	*898,711*	

5. PROPOSALS

5.1 The proposals give an opportunity for the Council to fully embrace renewable energy on four of its largest buildings. Whilst accepting and understanding the Council's current financial position, the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council agreed that, due to the short lived opportunity to receive an income for the generation of the energy which, together with the anticipated saving in energy costs, proceeding with the proposal immediately would assist the Council's overall revenue budgetary situation. The level of CO_2 emissions which would be saved is considerable and reaffirms this Council's on-going commitment to carbon reduction.

5.2 Installation costs of approximately £230,000 (installation costs plus a small contingency) would be required to install this level of photovoltaic array on the buildings listed above. It has agreed that rather than incur additional borrowing requirements for the Council (approximately £10,000 per annum) the costs be met from the New Homes Bonus funding.

5.3 It should be noted that the proposals are intended to fall within permitted development requirements and do not therefore need planning permission.

RECOMMENDED

1) That the actions of the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council as detailed in this report be noted.

2) That further opportunities of sustainable photovoltaic arrays on Council assets be explored where schemes provide a similar return, and are sought by Property Managers.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HOUSING & CONTRACTS
CORPORATE MANAGER, DEMOCRATIC AND CIVIC SUPPORT

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

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE
22 JANUARY 2013

APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO SERVE ON OUTSIDE BODIES

BODY AND TERM OF OFFICE	PROPOSED REPRESENTATIVES	NUMBER OF MEETINGS PER ANNUM	TERMS OF REFERENCE
Royal Devon and Exeter Healthcare NHS Trust 3 years	Cllr Shiel 31.03.2013	4	To advise and influence this development of the RD&E as an NHS Foundation Trust.

CORPORATE MANAGER DEMOCRATIC AND CIVIC SUPPORT
15 JANUARY 2013

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Agenda Item 13

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