

EXECUTIVE

Tuesday 15 September 2015

Present:

Councillor Edwards (Chair)
Councillors Denham, Hannaford, Leadbetter, Owen, Pearson and Sutton

Apologies:

Councillor Morris

Also present:

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Deputy Chief Executive, Assistant Director Customer Access, Assistant Director Environment, Corporate Manager Property, Systems Lead Housing and Democratic Services Manager (Committees)

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MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 26 June, 14 July and 11 August 2015 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as correct.

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest were made.

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PRESENTATION OF PETITION - 'REFUGEES WELCOME IN EXETER'

A petition 'Refugees Welcome in Exeter' with over 1,300 signatories was presented to Executive by Councillor Packham who had been handed the petition at the rally held in support of helping refugees on the Cathedral Green on Saturday 12 September 2015. The petition urged the Council to respond to the current Refugee crisis.

Councillor Packham commented that all Local Authorities had a part to play in housing the refugees and raised concerns regarding the grants from Central Government which was only for one year.

The Leader acknowledged receipt of the petition and moved that the petition be sent to the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition to make them aware of the concerns of residents of Exeter regarding the Refugee crisis.

This was unanimously agreed by Members.

A Member raised concerns regarding the funding available from Central Government to support Refugees, which is for one year only.

RESOLVED the Exeter City Council forward the petition to the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition to make them aware of Exeter residents concerns regarding the Refugee crisis and seeking the appropriate funding for Local Authorities to meet the Government's commitment to accepting more Refugees.

REVIEW INTO THE COUNCIL'S POLICY FOR ALLOCATING SOCIAL HOUSING

The report of the Assistant Director Customer Access was submitted advising Members of the findings and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group convened to review the Council's allocation of social housing in 2014 and the subsequent public consultation. The Task and Finish Group had highlighted a desire for the allocation system to be clearer for those in housing need and to cut out waste within the system. The consultation had run for seven weeks with 240 responses received. As a result of the public consultation and discussions with officers, three of the five recommendations from the Task and Finish Group were proposed.

The Assistant Director Customer Access clarified that in the report 'B and E' should read 'Band E' and further clarified that the proposal was to remove Band E only and not Bands B and E.

In response to a Member, the Systems Lead Housing clarified that the Devon Home Choice policy had been amended to take into account the legislation regarding the housing of Armed Forces families.

The Portfolio Holder for the Housing Revenue Account clarified that while there would be additional priority for working households, they would need to meet the criteria.

Members supported the proposed amendments.

Scrutiny Committee – Community considered the report at its meeting on 8 September 2015 and its comments were reported.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the allocation policy be amended:-

- (1) to remove Band E to restrict eligibility for housing to those with an evidenced housing need within the policy;
- (2) to remove applications where people do not bid for 12 months or refuse three properties deemed suitable for their needs; and
- (3) to give additional priority for working households to bid for properties in areas where there are high levels of unemployment.

PROPOSALS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER

The report of the Assistant Director Environment was submitted advising Members on the process and consideration to the implementation of a Public Spaces Protection Order in the City Centre area of Exeter. The report sought agreement to enter into consultation with the public and relevant stakeholders on the draft proposals for a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) with the findings to be brought back at the end of this year, with recommendations as to the implementation, or otherwise, of a Public Spaces Protection Order.

Members were circulated with a revised appendix two and an updated plan outlining the areas to be consulted on for a proposed PSPO. The additional areas proposed to be consulted as a result of feedback from Members and officers were Belmont

Park, the river side and open space from the Quay and along Bonhay Road, Black Aller Island, St Thomas Church and Prospect Place.

In response to Members, the Assistant Director Environment clarified that because of the draconian nature of the new powers there was a need for clear justification to be shown when introducing an Order. Its application should not be wholesale although this did not mean that other specific areas of the City could not be considered for a PSPO were it justified in the future. The PSPO would not apply to permitted areas outside of licensed premises.

Members supported the consultation with the public and relevant stakeholders on the draft proposals for a PSPO.

Scrutiny Committee – Community considered the report at its meeting on 8 September 2015 and its comments were reported.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the content of the draft Public Space Protection Orders, in the area defined by the circulated map and to also include Belmont Park, the river side and open space from the Quay and along Bonhay Road, Black Aller Island, St Thomas Church and Prospect Place, with the prohibitions and actions (contained in the circulated Appendix II), be approved;
- (2) the views of the public and other stakeholders be sought through public consultation, and the findings be brought back to Scrutiny Committee – Community, Executive and Council at the end of 2015; and
- (3) as a result of the public consultation recommendations on the adoption or otherwise of a Public Spaces Protection Order be submitted to Council for approval.

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EXETER CITY FUTURES TRANSFORMING EXETER THROUGH DATA

The report of the Chief Executive & Growth Director was submitted providing Members with an overview of initial plans and direction of travel for Exeter City Futures. This was an ambitious, long-term vision of how to transform Exeter into a sustainable city of the future through the use of pioneering technology and data analytics. The Scrutiny Committee – Economy had received a presentation by Andromeda Capital and supported the project.

The Portfolio Holder for Economy and Culture commented that this programme would contribute to the broad-based Innovation Exeter economic development programme promoting business growth and increased investment. The project was a joint endeavour by Andromeda Capital, Exeter City Council and Devon County Council.

Members welcomed the way forward and supported the programme.

Scrutiny Committee – Economy considered the report at its meeting on 10 September 2015 and its comments were reported.

RESOLVED to endorse:-

- (1) Exeter City Futures as a vehicle for better understanding and addressing the transportation, energy and health challenges and opportunities facing the city;
- (2) the Exeter bid for the 'Internet of Things' demonstrator city competition; and
- (3) the communications framework outlined in the report to begin engagement with the Exeter population about the overarching ambition of Exeter City Futures. This framework includes an initial public engagement programme.

96 **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 the following item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1,2 and 3 of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Act.

97 **CORPORATE PROPERTY ASSETS RESTRUCTURE**

The report of the Corporate Manager Property was submitted advising Members of the findings of a business case which examined the outcomes of the service review conducted by the Corporate Property Assets Manager in relation to the Corporate Property Assets unit. The restructure proposals looked to ensure that the Corporate Property Maintenance Strategy could be delivered in the most effective and efficient method.

Members welcomed this proposed restructure and supported the consultation.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the business case for the Corporate Property Assets unit restructure, as set out in the report, be agreed; and
- (2) the Corporate Property Assets Manager be authorised to proceed to the first consultation stage, in accordance with the Council's Organisational Change Policy.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.00 pm)

Chair

The decisions indicated will normally come into force 5 working days after publication of the Statement of Decisions unless called in by a Scrutiny Committee. Where the matter in question is urgent, the decision will come into force immediately. Decisions regarding the policy framework or corporate objectives or otherwise outside the remit of the Executive will be considered by Council on 20 October 2015.