

## SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ECONOMY

10 September 2015

### Present:

Councillor Brimble (Chair)

Councillors Lyons, Branston, Brock, Crew, Harvey, Henson, Prowse, Robson and Vizard

### Apologies:

Councillors Bull, Wardle and Williams

### Also present:

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Assistant Director Public Realm, Economy and Tourism Manager, Principal Accountant Service (PM), Visitor Facilities Officer and Democratic Services Officer (Committees) (SLS)

### In attendance:

Councillor Sutton	- Portfolio Holder City Development
Councillor Denham	- Portfolio Holder Economy and Culture
Glen Woodcock	- Andromeda
Laurence Oakes-Ash	- Andromeda
Paul Wilson	- Devon County Council Highways Department
Spencer Dicks	- Devon County Council Highways Department
Aiden Hugo-Johnson	- River and Canal Trust
Graham Holland	- River and Canal Trust

#### **44 Minutes**

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2015.

#### **45 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of discloseable pecuniary interest were made.

#### **46 Questions from Members of the Council Under Standing Order 20**

In accordance with Standing Order No 20, a question was put by Councillor Prowse on the future of the Exeter Car Boot Sale on its current site at Marsh Barton, and also whether the proposed maintenance depot and ancillary buildings and works on the Park and Ride site at Marsh Barton had been considered at a Members' Delegation Briefing prior to Planning Committee on 27th July 2015. A copy of both questions had previously been circulated to Members, and these, together with the replies were appended to the minutes.

#### **47 Request Made Under Standing Order 18 - Highways Coordination**

Councillor Shiel had requested that an item be placed on the agenda under Standing Order 18 to address his concern about the coordination and management of roadworks taking place in the city. He felt that there was an element of disengagement and was concerned about the impact on the road network in the city.

Paul Wilson (Highways Coordination and Special Events Manager) and Spencer Dicks (Senior Highways Coordination Officer) from Devon County Council attended to respond.

Spencer Dicks advised that the County Council coordinated work with the utility companies, but did face different engineering challenges. He assured Members that both the County and the utility companies had to adhere to strict budgets and did not wish to occupy the highway any longer than was necessary. Collectively, the utilities had a statutory right to work on the County Council network to access apparatus, and served timely notice apart from when there was an emergency or unplanned works to safeguard against danger to person or property. Direction was offered on the most suitable timing to ensure the flow of traffic, avoiding traffic sensitive streets, movements around schools, businesses, residential areas, and bus routes and to be mindful to minimise noise pollution.

Spencer Dicks responded to a Member's question if a lack of manpower might be a factor, stating that the planned duration of works reflected the actual time needed, and that the request for work could be challenged. Paul Wilson responded to an enquiry about inked markings left on the pavement on Magdalen Road following recent roadworks, advising that they had been made to help identify the different utilities and he would take this up with the utility company. He also noted a Member's suggestion that the more traditional methods of communicating prospective road works were no longer as effective and that social media and, particularly, twitter would be more helpful to commuters to give them an opportunity to consider alternative routes.

Members thanked Paul Wilson and Spencer Dicks for attending the meeting.

#### 48 **Canal and River Trust Presentation**

The Assistant Director Public Realm referred to the aspiration to develop a strategic approach to the development of Exeter's waterways, including the river and canal, through the retention of an Exeter Waterways partnership. She introduced Aiden Johnson-Hugill and Graham Holland from the Canal and River Trust organisation who made a presentation. They discussed how the waterways could add value to an area and also outlined what the Canal and River Trust could offer Exeter Canal. The Canal and River Trust looked after a variety of infrastructure on the canal network including locks, bridges, docks and reservoirs and provided many examples of their local contribution by preserving history and sites of scientific and environmental interest, as well as creating more leisure and employment opportunities. Aiden Johnson-Hugill responded to a comment on the possibility of alleviating transport issues by using the waterway, stating that there were no practical opportunities for carrying freight and no link through to other canal waterways.

Graham Holland provided a status report on the existing condition of the Exeter Canal, which was deemed to be in a good condition, with the two key lock gates being well maintained. Further survey work on both the embankment and also the navigation depth and profile would be required. The condition of the canal basin, cycle pathway and towpath was acceptable.

A brief outline of the income generation possibilities was made including:-

- Community engagement and volunteering
- Availability of expertise
- More investment in facilities

- Provision of a long term managed vision and strategy to offer some security for the Canal
- Ecological safeguarding

The Assistant Director Public Realm referred to the need to develop a strategic vision for the river and canal in Exeter and consider ways to take this forward. It was noted that a further report to develop this work would be presented to the Scrutiny Committee - Economy in November.

Members thanked Aiden and Graham for their informative presentation.

Scrutiny Committee - Economy requested that the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Culture in consultation with the Leader write to the Canal and River Trust to commence dialogue and extend a formal invitation to explore the potential for future joint working to develop a strategic vision for the river and canal in Exeter.

#### 49 **Portfolio Holder Statements 2015/16**

Councillors Sutton and Denham presented progress reports on priorities within the City Development and the Economy and Culture Portfolios respectively.

##### City Development

Councillor Prowse declared a personal interest as a Member of Devon County Council.

Councillor Sutton as Portfolio Holder corrected one of the priorities relating to the concept of Exeter as a City Lab, pioneering technology and innovative use of data which should be removed from the City Development portfolio and included within the Economy and Culture Portfolio.

- adequate infrastructure in south west Exeter was key to the whole city and should be in place in advance of any planned housing. She welcomed any opportunity to press for its delivery through robust engagement with Devon County Council and Teignbridge District Council. She envisaged that groups such as Alphington Forum and others would make practical representations to Devon County Council over the proposed site of the footpath and cycle path on Loram Way.
- there was planning consent for IKEA, but no start date had been advised.
- she would speak to the Principal Project Manager Infrastructure Delivery about any funding possibilities to improve the surface of the cycle path at Duckes Marsh.
- the broader issues of how the city and university could work together in partnership particularly in relation student accommodation had been discussed. The University had an accommodation policy, and the Council's Article 4 Directive had started to redress the imbalance in the community, but in certain areas it remained a challenge. However, more accommodation was coming back into private ownership through the freeing up of HMO's and family houses.

The Chair welcomed the opportunity to set up a University Task and Finish Group to further foster good relations.

## Economy and Culture

Councillor Denham as Portfolio Holder highlighted the following:-

She confirmed that work to progress Exeter City Futures work with Andromeda and key partners would be added as a priority within her portfolio.

- there was genuine consensus that the authority was working in a more joined up way with East Devon, Mid Devon and Teignbridge District Councils to progress the knowledge economy. They were also looking to develop a working relationship with Amdromeda Capital.
- further work with the Exe Estuary Management Board was reassuring to utilise its expertise and she was pleased there had been an initial contact with the Canal and River Trust to consider a strategic vision for the river and canal.
- the pay on foot ticket system had freed up staff to better enforce and manage car parks.
- Members' views over future meetings of the Cost of Living Forum were sought and it was agreed that further debate on cost of living topics could always be brought forward through other task and finish groups. It was considered that the planned January meeting was not required.

She made the following responses to Members:-

- a number of Exeter businesses now paid the living wage, but were reticent in sharing their experience. It was good to see examples from the hospitality sector and it was hoped that other businesses could be persuaded to face the challenge.
- work continued with the organisers of events celebrating the Rugby World Cup 2015 at Exeter Castle particularly in respect of access and licensing issues. Success as a Host City for Rugby World Cup 2015 meant the event running smoothly, an increase in the number of visitors and support for local rugby, including the burgeoning woman's rugby teams as part of identifiable legacy work. The Rugby Empowering Employment Programme (REEP) targeted young people between 16 and 24, with a successful pilot and transition to Business Empowering Employment Partnership (BEEP) as part of a sustainable plan to foster and support this activity.
- as a member of the Exeter BID Board she would ask her colleagues for the consideration of later trading hours and also revisit the City Centre Strategy.
- there had been a greater uptake of shops on South Street, due, in part, to initiatives such as the pop-up shops and some businesses had gone on to trade elsewhere in the city. In the longer term, there will be a report on the future of this part of the city. She welcomed the suggestion to survey visitor activity, including coach arrivals, particularly in the South Street area.

Scrutiny Committee – Economy noted the achievements and priorities presented for both City Development and the Economy and Culture Portfolios.

## 50 **Exeter City Futures Transforming Exeter Through Data**

The Chief Executive & Growth Director introduced a report which provided an overview of initial plans and direction of travel, as part of a joint endeavour with Andromeda Capital and Devon County Council, entitled 'Exeter City Futures', which will use pioneering technology to solve many of the issues facing the city. The report also outlined details of the Exeter bid for the Innovate UK 'Internet of Things'

demonstrator city competition with details how this would link with the overall Exeter City Futures vision.

Glen Woodcock and Laurence Oakes-Ash from Andromeda Capital were welcomed to the meeting and referred to the use of pioneering technology and data analytics to address transportation, energy and health related challenges facing the city, which would also ensure the economic and environmental sustainability of Exeter. The presentation also considered the opportunity for Exeter to become recognised as a model for others and enhance its reputation as a leader in this field. The programme should contribute to the broad-based Innovation Exeter economic development programme promoting business growth, increased investment and creating higher paid employment.

A Member welcomed the opportunity that the initiative would bring to address transport issues in and around the city, and hoped that better integration of the public transport system would include innovations such as smart ticketing and real time bus and train timetables being developed. Glen Woodcock explained that a public consultation exercise and the inclusion of specialist agencies would help to frame the overall project. Andromeda had been talking to a range of companies and representatives, as part of the 'Internet of Things' bid, which includes both public and private sector. They hoped that a key measurable benefit would be to solve real problems more efficiently and cheaply.

Scrutiny Committee – Economy supported the report and requested that Executive endorse:-

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

## 51 **Budget Monitoring (First Quarter)**

The Principal Accountant submitted the report advising Members of any material differences to the revised budget in respect of the Economy Services revenue and capital budgets. The net expenditure for this Committee would decrease from the revised budget by a total of £103,040, after transfer from reserves and revenue contributions to capital. This represented a variation of 13.1% for the revised budget and included supplementary budget of £637,460 already agreed by Council. The current Economy Capital Programme was detailed in an appendix to the report with a total spend of £139,687 with £101,879 of the programme potentially accelerated from 2016/17. Potential areas of budgetary risk were also highlighted in the report.

The Principal Accountant responded to a Member's advance questions relating to the apprentices employed by the City Council. It was noted that seven apprentices had completed their training, three had moved to other positions outside of the City Council, one had decided to travel and one other had not completed their training. Two apprentices had gained positions in business administration at the Civic Centre. Clarification on the grants in respect of Countess Wear Hall was also provided, there had been approval of £120,000 as part of an original joint bid with Wear United and Countess Wear Community Hall. A Member also sought information on the number

and any associated legal costs of planning appeals won or lost by City Development. The Member was advised that this information would be made available to him. He also provided a breakdown of the Section 106 monies used for the Swift Tower, and confirmed that the sums related to both the current and previous financial years.

Scrutiny Committee – Economy noted the report.

## 52 **Exeter Business Improvement District Update**

The Economy and Tourism Manager presented the report updating Members on the Exeter Business Improvement District (BID) and developments with the company since the previous committee report in January 2015. The BID had now been established with Board members drawn from a wide range of sectors. Councillor Denham had been appointed from Exeter City Council.

A Member welcomed this exciting venture, but he hoped that every effort would be made to support and encourage the independent sector as well as using the empty shop units. He also referred to the efforts made to ask traders to extend their trading day, and if another approach might be made through the BID. A coordinated approach was required and there may be an opportunity to pursue this aim on the back of the Guildhall redevelopment when the restaurant quarter opens next year. The Economy and Tourism Manager responded to the plans for the Christmas lights as this was the last year for the current contract to be delivered. The BID then had responsibility to deliver Christmas lights in Exeter city centre.

Scrutiny Committee - Economy noted the report and the programme of activity within the Exeter BID Company Business Plan as detailed in Section 10 of the circulated report.

## 53 **Rugby World Cup Update 2015**

The Economy and Tourism Manager provided an update on the forthcoming Rugby World Cup 2015 event. More detail was available on [exeter.gov.uk/rwc2015fanzone](http://exeter.gov.uk/rwc2015fanzone)

The Fanzone, has a capacity of 5,000, was due to open in Northernhay Gardens for 13 days from 18 September to 31 October showing 25 matches across England and Wales (including the three matches at Sandy Park). There will be dedicated members of staff in the Fanzone to assist the 96 trained volunteers. Entry would be free and there would be a full programme of music and entertainment including pre/post match live entertainment, on site rugby/sports activity, with bars and local food available to purchase. The Event management plan has been signed off by England 2015, there had been close cooperation between the City Council's City Development, licensing and waste management services to ensure the smooth running of the event. There will be a celebratory welcome to the five teams from Tonga, Georgia, Namibia, Romania and Italy with a parade on Saturday 10 October and the RWC final in the Fanzone on 31 October with a musical finale and pyrotechnics. It was anticipated that there will be £3.5 million additional spend in the city during RWC with 165,000 additional visitors, but the figure would ultimately generate £39 million of additional economic activity in Exeter, with investment in capital projects such as the redevelopment at Sandy Park.

Plans were already in place to maximise the legacy potential including the following:-

- the launch of BEEP on 1 October at the Innovation Centre. It should be noted that 12 of the 13 young people that took part in the two programmes were now in employment or training.

- the My First Rugby Ball initiative has been picked up nationally and had received funding from the Literacy Board.
- Cash for communities projects were starting to be delivered.
- two full teams of Topsham Ladies rugby were up and running and will be going into the league structure.
- grants had been received directly from the RFU for Crediton and Sidmouth Rugby Clubs to improve their club houses.
- progressing with the development a Rugby 7's league in Exeter in partnership with the RFU, Active Devon, Chiefs Community, Exeter College and The University of Exeter.

Marketing activity included the development of a press pack around legacy activity and for the Fanzone. The Express & Echo will be producing a RWC supplement. Further information is also available on [www.visitexeter.com](http://www.visitexeter.com) and [www.heartofdevon.com](http://www.heartofdevon.com) website / social media / e-newsletter. Every effort will be made to collect email addresses and postcodes from people attending the Fanzone and the three matches at Sandy Park. Every effort will be made to encourage ticket holders to use public transport. The Economy and Tourism Manager responded to a Member's comment on the parking arrangements and referred to the inclusion of a Park and Ride at Westpoint. The city was dressed with flags etc and additional signage planned for the approach road to Sandy Park. She provided a response to a Member's comment about the level of dressing outside of the city and in relation to two bridges on the approach into the city centre.

Scrutiny Committee – Economy welcomed the report.

#### 54 **Exeter Commercial Property Register**

The Economy and Tourism Manager presented a report which detailed Exeter City Council's handling of investment and relocation enquiries during the previous 12 months. She also updated Members on the enhancements being made to the Exeter Commercial Property Register. The report provided an opportunity to update Members on progress made in improving the toolkit available to attract and respond to business relocation and inward investment enquiries. An expansion of the service to help deliver a one stop shop covering East Devon, Mid Devon and Teignbridge (Exeter & the Heart of Devon) local authority areas was currently being explored, with financial and staffing contributions from each local authority. If the Register was expanded to cover the Exeter & Heart of Devon geographical area it would include approximately 900 properties on the website, ensuring an even higher profile online.

The Economy and Tourism Manager responded to a Member's comment on the encouraging number of enquiries and subsequent relocations. She would pass on a Member's thanks to the Senior Economy and Tourism Officer for her hard work and involvement in the Growth and Marketing Task and Finish Group.

Scrutiny Committee - Economy noted the report.

#### 55 **Tourism Facilities Services (Performance Monitoring)**

The Visitor Facilities Officer presented a brief overview on the performance of the tourism facilities – and Exeter Visitor Information & Tickets (EVIT), the Underground Passages, Custom House Visitor Centre and the Red Coat Guided Tours have all had a very busy year. EVIT's focus had evolved from simply providing tourist information and face to face content to offering Box Office facility, and supporting the growing trend of web enquiries, emails and phone contact. Although EVIT primarily

remains as an information function for residents and visitors, it was always exploring new ways to generate additional income, and the report detailed a number of new initiatives. Other particular successes over the last year had been the Underground Passages awarded a Certificate of Excellent from Trip Advisor and the growing popularity of a number of seasonal events, including the renowned ghost walks on 31 October. The Red Coat Guides too, had a notable year of success and have always been highly valued by the public, attracting over 15,000 visitors on their tours.

The move of the Quay House Visitor Centre to the Custom House, through a partnership with the Exeter Canal and Quay Trust has had a positive impact and although the building was not fully occupied, it had already generated an increased income stream. It was anticipated that future funding could be obtained from English Heritage to develop the facility further into a more encompassing visitor attraction in its own right.

Scrutiny Committee - Economy noted the report.

**56 Legacy Leisure Minutes**

The minutes of the Legacy Leisure Working Group held on 23 June were received and noted.

**57 Exeter Highways and Traffic Orders Committee Minutes**

The minutes of Devon County Council's Exeter Highways and Traffic Order Committee held on 28th July 2015, which had been circulated for information were noted.

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 9.10 pm

Chair



**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ECONOMY**  
**10 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR PROWSE UNDER STANDING ORDER 20 to**  
**PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ECONOMY AND CULTURE**

Councillor Prowse submitted the following question:-

Would the Portfolio Holder please detail all discussions prior to the Planning Committee meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> July regarding the future of the Exeter boot sale in the event of the application being approved that may have taken place with Officers of this Council and Councillors likely to have had an input. Pursuant to the application being approved can the Portfolio Holder detail any current plans regarding the future of the boot sale at its current site and with whom those discussions are taking place?

Councillor Denham replied in the following terms:-

The Markets & Halls team were made fully aware of the planned development. The Events, Facilities and Markets Manager met with the Leader of the Council, and the Chief Executive and subsequently with the Portfolio Holder to discuss the effect on the market of the possible relocation of the bus depot.

It was agreed that, should planning permission be granted, we would look at how best we could assure continued delivery of the market. The Events, Facilities and Markets Manager discussed the market with staff at The Matford Centre with a view to identifying an alternative location for the market or the best way to deliver the market on the current site with less space available.

Consideration was given to moving the market to Sowton Park & Ride but this was discounted because of several factors:

- the extent of the area available at Sowton varies little, if at all, to the area which would be available at the Matford Centre post bus depot development.
- the Sowton site is not a secure site and it is essential for the market to be organised on a secure site. The management of the market would be made far more difficult with an open site.
- the infrastructure for the market is all in place at The Matford Centre (such as the boundary fence, toilets, catering service, and refuse collection). The Matford Centre is a City Council site and the infrastructure is utilised throughout the week in the operation of the centre.
- The roads around the Sowton site are already very busy on a Sunday. The increasing number of Exeter Chiefs games being played on Sundays and the expected opening of Ikea will only add to congestion.

No other alternative suitable site was identified and it was agreed to look at how the market could continue to be organised on the present site.

The Events, Facilities and Market Manager together with the staff members involved with the organisation of the market have been carrying out consultation with the following groups:

- Public attending the market to buy items from car boot sellers and market traders.

- Market traders attending the market.
- Charity groups who assist with the organisation of the market.

This consultation was carried out to ascertain the best way to organise the event with reduced space available. A survey of the buyers and traders was undertaken at the market and an email survey was carried out for the charity/community organisations.

The objective was to find out:-

- how buyers travelled to the market.
- where those who drove parked their vehicles.
- whether they would be likely to attend the market if car parking space was reduced.
- why buyers attended the market – was it for the car boot sale, the market traders or both?
- what products people regularly purchased at the event.
- whether traders would be interested in attending a smaller market
- whether charities/community groups would still value the market as a fund raiser if fewer helpers were needed and the charity donation was reduced to reflect this.

This consultation was nearly complete and an analysis of the responses will be made with a view to deciding on how best the market can be delivered when the bus depot development commences. A written update would be provided to ensure Members were kept advised. Officers continue to speak to Devon County Council to see if there can be a relaxation of the parking restrictions on one side of Matford Park Road on Sundays. Officers were able to coordinate a site visit. Councillor Prowse advised that he would like to take up the site visit invitation.

**QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR PROWSE UNDER STANDING ORDER 20 to PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CITY DEVELOPMENT**

Councillor Prowse submitted the following question

In connection with planning Application No 15/0387/03, proposed maintenance depot and ancillary buildings and works at the Park and Ride Site Exeter (Marsh Barton) can the Portfolio Holder confirm that this application appeared on a delegation briefing prior to the application being dealt with at Planning Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

Councillor Sutton replied in the following terms:-

There was no requirement to have reported to Delegation Briefing, and the application was not presented. The purpose of Delegation Briefings is to brief on applications that officers are minded to approve under delegated powers, specifically applications ward members request be brought to a meeting, City Council applications not subject to objections and proposed officer approvals of applications subject to objections.

The application was presented to Planning Committee. It was advertised by press notice and site notices and by letter. No objections on the grounds of loss of space for the Car Boot Sale were received.