



Exeter City Council

A meeting of **EXETER CITY COUNCIL** will be held at the **GUILDHALL, HIGH STREET, EXETER** on **TUESDAY 21 APRIL 2015**, at 6.00 pm, at which you are hereby summoned to attend. The following business is proposed to be transacted:-

	Pages
1 Minutes	
To sign the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 20 January 2015, the Ordinary Meeting held on 24 February 2015 and the Special Meetings held on 24 February and 25 March 2015.	3 - 16
2 Official Communications	
To receive minutes of the following Committees and to determine thereon:-	
3 Planning Committee - 2 March 2015	17 – 24
4 Planning Committee - 30 March 2015	25 – 28
5 Licensing Committee - Special - 16 March 2015	29 – 34
6 Scrutiny Committee - Community - 3 March 2015	35 – 48
7 Scrutiny Committee - Economy - 5 March 2015	49 – 54
8 Scrutiny Committee - Resources - 18 March 2015	55 – 60
9 Audit and Governance Committee - 11 March 2015	61 – 66
10 Strata Joint Executive Committee - 3 February 2015	67 – 68

Office of Corporate Manager Democratic & Civic Support

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| 11 | Strata Joint Scrutiny Committee - 12 March 2015 | 69 – 72 |
| 12 | Executive - 17 March 2015 | 73 – 78 |
| 13 | Executive - 14 April 2015 (To follow) | |

A plan of seating in the Guildhall is attached as an annexe

Date: Monday 13 April 2015

Karime Hassan
Chief Executive &
Growth Director

NOTE: Members are asked to sign the Attendance Register



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Office of Corporate Manager Democratic & Civic Support			
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THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF EXETER CITY COUNCIL

Guildhall
Tuesday 20 January 2015

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor (Cllr Prowse)
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Cllr Newby)
Councillors Baldwin, Bialyk, Branston, Brimble, Brock, Bull, Choules, Clark, Crew, Dawson, Denham, Donovan, Edwards, Foggin, Fullam, George, Hannaford, Henson, Holland, Laws, Leadbetter, Lyons, Mitchell, Owen, Pearson, Raybould, Robson, Sheldon, Shiel, Spackman, Sutton, Tippins, Wardle, Williams and Winterbottom

1 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Morris.

2 **ELECTORAL REVIEW OF EXETER**

The Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support introduced the report detailing the Council's initial submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England on the future size and electoral cycle of the City Council. The City Council was required to undertake an electoral review of the City as more than 30% of its wards had a +/-10% variance from the average electorate. A cross party Electoral Review Steering Group had been established to consider the way forward with regards to the number of Councillors and the cycle of Elections.

The Leader, seconded by Councillor Sutton, moved the recommendation. In supporting the recommendation the Leader stated that the proposal for 39 Councillors and Elections by thirds was the right way forward to deliver and manage the services and responsibilities of the Council and the requirements of a growing city. To continue with the current cycle of Elections by thirds meant that the political parties were constantly engaged with the electorate and the Boundary Commission had advised that coterminosity with County Wards was not necessary.

Councillor Leadbetter, seconded by Councillor Baldwin moved an amendment that:-

- (1) Exeter City Council should comprise 36 Councillors; and
- (2) Exeter City Council should switch to All Out Elections every four years.

He stated that the reasons for the amendment were that all out elections every four years would give the ruling group an opportunity to plan ahead and provide some stability without the annual change and upheaval the present system created. This system would give electors a break from constant electioneering and allow them to judge the track record of the ruling group over a period of four years. Constant change and upheaval every year does not allow for a clear assessment of achievement.

The proposal for 36 Councillors would save money and it would be less confusing to the electorate to retain the names of the existing 18 wards, although with revised boundaries, as this would tie in with the new Devon County Council (DCC) division boundaries.

36 Councillors in 18 wards, with nine County divisions, was the most logical solution. All-out elections would give residents a break from yearly elections and the ruling group would have the opportunity to put forward policies which it could develop within a stable four-year period.

In supporting the amendment, some Members felt that setting the number of Councillors at 36 with elections being every four years would deliver savings to the Council with a reduction in Members' Allowances and in the costs of running an election. This amendment would also mean that the city boundaries would tie in better with the new DCC division boundaries and therefore be less confusing for the electorate.

The majority of Members supported the recommendation of the Electoral Review Steering Group which would ensure that the Council could continue to meet the needs of the electorate and deliver its services. There would be an increase in the electorate across the City as a result of the development proposals and this would increase workloads for Councillors, therefore 39 Councillors would be the more appropriate number required to meet the increase demands upon them. By having elections by thirds it ensured that the electorate were fully engaged in the democratic process and it also meant there were always experienced Councillors which provided continuity. Whilst coterminosity was helpful, it was not essential and that the new City wards did not necessarily have to be influenced by the geography of the County Divisions.

The Leader stated that there would be approximately 7,000 more electorate in the city by 2021 and therefore it was essential that the Council had the right number of Councillors to serve its residents. As the City Council had other elections - General, County, European, Police and Crime Commissioners there would be minimal cost savings when compared to having elections every four years.

The amendment was put to the vote and lost.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) Exeter City Council should comprise 39 councillors; and
- (2) Exeter City Council should continue to undertake its elections by thirds.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 6.55 pm)

Chair

THE MEETING OF EXETER CITY COUNCIL

Guildhall
Tuesday 24 February 2015

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor (Cllr Prowse)
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Cllr Newby)
Councillors Baldwin, Bialyk, Branston, Brimble, Brock, Choules, Clark, Dawson, Denham, Edwards, Foggin, Fullam, George, Hannaford, Henson, Holland, Laws, Leadbetter, Lyons, Mitchell, Morris, Mottram, Owen, Pearson, Raybould, Robson, Sheldon, Spackman, Sutton, Tippins, Wardle and Williams

1 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bull, Crew, Donovan, Shiel and Winterbottom.

2 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2014 were taken as read and signed as correct.

3 **PLANNING COMMITTEE - 8 DECEMBER 2014**

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 8 December 2014 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Bialyk and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 8 December 2014 be received.

4 **PLANNING COMMITTEE - 5 JANUARY 2015**

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 5 January 2015 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Bialyk and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 5 January 2015 be received.

5 **PLANNING COMMITTEE - 2 FEBRUARY 2015**

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 2 February 2015 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Bialyk and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 2 February 2015 be received.

6 **LICENSING COMMITTEE - 3 FEBRUARY 2015**

The minutes of the Licensing Committee of 3 February 2015 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Dawson and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Licensing Committee held on 3 February 2015 be received.

7 **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY - 21 JANUARY 2015**

The minutes of the Scrutiny Committee - Community of 21 January 2015 were presented by the Deputy Chair, Councillor Newby and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee - Community held on 21 January 2015 be received.

8 **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ECONOMY - 22 JANUARY 2015**

In respect of Minute 11 (Update on the Exeter Visitor Strategy 2012 – 2016), Councillor Branston declared a disclosable pecuniary interest as an employee of South West Tourism Power Marketing.

The minutes of the Scrutiny Committee - Economy of 22 January 2015 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Henson and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee - Economy held on 22 January 2015 be received.

9 **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - RESOURCES - 28 JANUARY 2015**

The minutes of the Scrutiny Committee - Resources of 28 January 2015 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Baldwin and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee - Resources held on 28 January 2015 be received.

10 **EXECUTIVE - 27 JANUARY 2015**

The minutes of the Executive of 27 January 2015 were presented by the Leader, Councillor Edwards and taken as read.

In respect of Minute 9 (Rugby World Cup 2015 Update) and in response to the Chair of Scrutiny Committee Economy, the Leader confirmed that the Scrutiny Committee Economy would be updated on the position with regards to the European Rugby seven a-side tournament at its next meeting.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Executive held on 27 January 2015 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

11 **EXECUTIVE - 10 FEBRUARY 2015**

The minutes of the Executive of 10 February 2015 (with the exception of minute 11 which had already been considered as part of the Council's deliberations on its budget 2015/16) were presented by the Leader, Councillor Edwards and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Executive held on 10 February 2015 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

**NOTICE OF MOTION BY COUNCILLOR HOLLAND UNDER STANDING ORDER
NO. 6**

Councillor Holland, seconded by Councillor Baldwin, moved a Notice of Motion in the following terms:-

Exeter City Council resolved to:-

Explore the viability of allowing members of the public to ask questions of this Council at its commencement of Full Council Meetings. This may or may not include questions written in advance. In addition, to consider that the same facility to be afforded at Executive Meetings which may only be restricted to "agenda items".

In presenting the Notice of Motion, Councillor Holland stated that this motion sought to engage with the public and encourage them to come along to Council meetings. The public should be able to table questions to Full Council, having submitted them in advance by mid-day on the Friday prior to Full Council, the question and answer part of the agenda should last no longer than 30 minutes. He had bench marked public speaking against other local authorities such as Devon County Council, East Devon District Council, Rotherham, West Yorkshire and Newcastle under Lyme. He asked that the Council support this motion to enable the public to ask questions at Council.

During discussion the following points were raised:-

- public speaking was already in place at Exeter Board and the Council's Planning and Scrutiny Committees
- the Council does engage with its residents an example being the budget consultation in the Express and Echo – which had received over 5,000 responses
- some Members felt that it would be the same few people raising questions and would be used for promoting political views
- Councillors were elected to represent their residents and the majority of the public were too busy to attend Council meetings.

Councillor Baldwin, in seconding the motion, stated that the public engagement at Exeter Board, Planning Committee and Scrutiny Committees worked well and that, as long as questions at Council did not dominate meetings, there should be a mechanism in place to allow questions from the public.

Whilst the majority of Members opposed the motion, other Members felt that there was a need to enable the public to ask questions at Council.

The Motion was put to the vote and lost.

(The meeting commenced at 6.35 pm and closed at 7.00 pm)

Chair

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THE SPECIAL MEETING OF EXETER CITY COUNCIL

Guildhall
Tuesday 24 February 2015

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor (Cllr Prowse)
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Cllr Newby)
Councillors Baldwin, Bialyk, Branston, Brimble, Brock, Choules, Clark, Dawson, Denham, Edwards, Foggin, Fullam, George, Hannaford, Henson, Holland, Laws, Leadbetter, Lyons, Mitchell, Morris, Mottram, Owen, Pearson, Raybould, Robson, Sheldon, Spackman, Sutton, Tippins, Wardle and Williams

1 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bull, Crew, Donovan, Shiel and Winterbottom.

2 **BUDGET 2015/16**

Minute 11 (2015/16 Council Tax Base and NNDR1) of the meeting of Executive held on 27 January 2015 was taken as read and adopted.

Councillor Edwards, the Leader of the Council, moved and Councillor Sutton seconded the resolution as set out in the agenda and circulated papers in respect of the Council Tax for 2015/16.

The Leader stated that the city had enjoyed the country's highest level of growth productivity and that as the engine of the local economy direct investment in the city centre was essential. The Council was committed to delivering a swimming pool and leisure complex on the bus and coach site and would continue to work with Crown Estates to achieve this redevelopment. He advised that the funding cuts from central government were amongst the most severe the Council had faced and the Council had to contend with a 15.6% reduction in Government Formula Grant in setting the budget for 2015/16.

The Leader outlined the Council's achievements to date which included 3,468 new homes earning the Council £10.2 million in New Homes Bonus; 58 affordable homes since April 2014; increase in visitor numbers and spend in the city; redevelopment of the Guildhall shopping centre; investment made by the University in the city; decision of the Met Office to invest in a super computer at the Science Park; commitment of the Council to small business and traders and the construction sector; the sporting achievements within the city and the forthcoming Rugby World Cup; the partnership working of the Exeter Health and Wellbeing Board; the energy saving measures implemented; and working with Teignbridge and East Devon District Councils for the development of the Greater Exeter Area. For next year's budget, the Council had made another £1.4 million of savings to revenue costs by a combination of restructuring and efficiency savings. This had been achieved without a reduction in front line services although this would become more challenging over the next four years.

The Leader continued that the budget proposed aimed to deliver the necessary savings to protect and maintain as far as possible the services which the citizens of Exeter needed the most. The recommendation set out in the papers would result in the setting of a City Council tax of £135.05 for a Band D property, an increase of 1.99% over the previous year, equivalent to an additional £2.63 per year or 5p per week. This would still mean that Exeter City Council had the lowest District Council Tax in Devon.

During discussion the following points were raised:-

- the council would still need to look to work in a more efficient way to protect front line services during the difficult financial times ahead
- the continuing housing development in the city was welcomed as was the investment by the University and Met Office
- support for keeping Council Tax under the 2% Government Cap
- New Homes Bonus monies had been used to deliver local infrastructure projects and to support community groups.

A Member commented that the Council had not actually had a cut in Central Government Grant with the income that it had received in Business Rates and New Homes Bonus monies; there had been a reduction in front lines services; and that he could not support the impact that the interest on borrowing would have on the revenue budget.

RESOLVED:-

To pass the following resolution

- (1) That the following, as submitted in the Estimates Book, be approved:-
 - (a) the Revenue estimates for 2015-2016;
 - (b) the Capital programme for 2015-2016;
- (2) that it be noted that, at the meeting of the Executive on the 27 January 2015, the Council calculated the figure of 34,750, as its council tax base for the year 2015-2016 in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992;
- (3) that the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2015-2016 in accordance with Sections 31A of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992:-
 - (a) £107,445,000 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2)(a) to (f) of the Act;
 - (b) £102,752,012 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3)(a) to (d) of the Act;
 - (c) £4,692,988 being the amount by which the aggregate at (3)(a) above exceeds the aggregate at (3)(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year;
 - (d) £135.05 being the amount at (3)(c) above divided by the amount at 2 above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year;
 - (e) Valuation Bands

A	B	C	D
£90.03	£105.04	£120.04	£135.05
E	F	G	H
£165.06	£195.07	£225.08	£270.10

Being the amount given by multiplying the amount at (3)(d) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- (4) That it will be noted that, for the year 2015-2016, Devon County Council, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall and the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority have stated the following amounts on precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 83 of the Local Government Act 2003, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:-

Devon County Council
Valuation Bands

A	B	C	D
£774.18	£903.21	£1,032.24	£1,161.27
E	F	G	H
£1,419.33	£1,677.39	£1,935.45	£2,322.54

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall

A	B	C	D
£112.98	£131.81	£150.64	£169.47
E	F	G	H
£207.13	£244.79	£282.45	£338.94

Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority
Valuation Bands

A	B	C	D
£52.28	£60.99	£69.71	£78.42
E	F	G	H
£95.85	£113.27	£130.70	£156.84

- (5) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (3)(e) and (4) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby set the following amounts as the amounts of council tax for the year 2015-2016 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

Valuation Bands

A	B	C	D
£1,029.47	£1,201.05	£1,372.63	£1,544.21
E	F	G	H
£1,887.37	£2,230.52	£2,573.68	£3,088.42

In accordance with Standing Order 30 a named vote on the Resolution was recorded, as follows:

Voting for:

Councillors Baldwin, Bialyk, Branston, Brimble, Choules, Clark, Dawson, Denham, Edwards, Foggin, George, Hannaford, Henson, Holland, Laws, Leadbetter Lyons, Morris, Mottram, The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillors Owen, Pearson, Raybould, Robson, Sheldon, Spackman, Sutton, Tippins, Wardle and Williams.

(30 Members)

Voting against:

Councillors Brock, Fullam and Mitchell,

(3 Members)

Abstain:

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor

(1 Members)

Absent:

Councillors Bowkett, Bull, Donovan Crew, Shiel and Winterbottom.

(6 Members)

The Resolution was carried.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 6.35 pm)

Chair

THE SPECIAL MEETING OF EXETER CITY COUNCIL

Guildhall
Wednesday 25 March 2015

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor (Cllr Prowse)
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Cllr Newby)
Councillors Baldwin, Bialyk, Branston, Brimble, Brock, Bull, Clark, Crew, Denham, Donovan, Edwards, Foggin, Fullam, George, Hannaford, Henson, Holland, Laws, Leadbetter (part meeting), Lyons, Mitchell, Morris, Mottram, Owen, Pearson, Raybould, Robson, Sheldon, Spackman, Sutton, Williams and Winterbottom

3

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bowkett, Choules, Shiel, Tippins and Wardle.

4

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF EXETER

The Corporate Manager Democratic & Civic Support introduced the report detailing the Council's proposed submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) on the new ward boundaries for the City. The Council had resolved on 20 January 2015 that the City Council should comprise of 39 Councillors with elections to continue by thirds. The cross party Electoral Review Working Group had met to discuss the proposed ward boundaries and had put forward proposals for 13 wards, each ward to be represented by three councillors, thus ensuring equality in voting across the city. The proposal had also taken into account the LGBCE's criteria which included reflecting the interests and identities of local communities.

The Leader stated that the cross party working group had met on two occasions to put together a submission that could be agreeable to the political groups on the Council. In response to comments received on the Council's proposed submission, he proposed an amendment to the recommendation with regards to the proposed Duryard, Magdalen and Priory and Topsham wards. The reasons for the amendments were:-

- Duryard – to be split into two wards, St James to be a two Member ward and Duryard to be a one Member ward. This gives recognition to the fact that the existing ward of St James is unique in having an adopted Neighbourhood Plan
- Magdalen – the ward to be named 'Newtown and St Leonards' to reflect the two major communities
- Priory and Topsham – retention of the existing boundaries along Topsham Road meaning reduced change to this community.

The Leader stated that anyone with an interest in the Boundary Review could put forward their submission to the LGBCE for consideration, the closing date for submissions were 30 March.

The Leader moved the recommendation with the amendments; this was seconded by Councillor Owen.

A Member stated his party did not support the Council's submission and would be submitting their own Party's proposals to the LGBCE.

Councillor Brock moved an amendment that the proposed Riverside ward should be named St David's and Riverside. The reason for the amendment was that she had received a formal request from the St David's Neighbourhood Partnership to retain the identity of St David's.

The Leader confirmed that this amendment was acceptable.

Councillor Lyons proposed an amendment that the proposed ward of Stoke Hill should be named St Katherine's after the priory which is on the edge of the proposed ward.

The Leader stated that this amendment was not acceptable.

The majority of Members supported the submission with the proposed amendments as the ward boundaries reflected the interests and identities of the local communities. The three Member wards would not be too large to affect representation even if they were politically split, as experience showed. The ward names were for electoral purposes only and would not require a change to the names of historic sites or areas of the city.

Some Members did not support the proposal as they had concerns regarding the formation of large, three member wards and that the loss of historic ward names would cause confusion with the electorate.

Members thanked all officers involved in putting this submission together.

In response to Members, the Corporate Manager Democratic & Civic Support stated that the report and submission had been published on the City Council's website in accordance with the Access to Information Regulations. The LGBCE had written to all community associations within the City and the consultation had been publicized in the Express and Echo. He outlined to Members the implications of the proposed changes put forward for the Duryard ward which would result in the one Member ward voting only once every four years and the two Member ward voting every two years.

RESOLVED that that the proposed ward boundaries, as indicated on the map and narrative attached to the report, form the Council's official submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, in response to its current consultation on the electoral review of Exeter together with the following amendments:-

- (1) Duryard - to be a St James – two member ward and Duryard - one member ward;
- (2) Magdalen – to be named 'Newtown and St Leonards';
- (3) Priory and Topsham – the boundaries revert back to the existing boundaries along Topsham Road; and
- (4) Riverside - be named St David's and Riverside.

In accordance with Standing Order 27(1), a named vote on the recommendation was called for, as follows:

Voting for:

Councillors Bialyk, Branston, Brimble, Bull, Clark, Crew, Denham, Edwards, Foggin, Fullam, George, Hannaford, Laws, Lyons, Mitchell, Morris, Owen, Pearson, Raybould, Robson, Sheldon, Spackman, Sutton and Williams.

(24 Members)

Voting against:

Councillors Baldwin, Donovan, Henson, Holland, Mottram, the Deputy Lord Mayor and Winterbottom,

(7 Members)

Abstain:

Councillor Brock and the Lord Mayor.

(2 Members)

Absent:

Bowkett, Choules, Dawson, Leadbetter (left before the vote), Shiel, Tippins and Wardle.

(7 Members)

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 6.50 pm)

Chair

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PLANNING COMMITTEE

Monday 2 March 2015

Present:

Councillor Bialyk (Chair)
Councillors Spackman, Denham, Edwards, Lyons, Mitchell, Sutton, Williams and Winterbottom

Apologies:

Councillors Choules, Newby and Raybould

Also Present:

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Assistant Director City Development, Principal Project Manager (Development) (MH), Highway Development Management Officer and Democratic Services Officer (Committees) (HB)

14

MINUTES

The minutes of the Special Meeting held on 8 December 2014 and the Ordinary Meetings held on 5 January and 2 February 2015 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as correct.

15

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made by Members.

16

PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 14/2155/01 - THE VINES, GIPSY LANE, EXETER

The Assistant Director City Development presented the application for outline planning permission with all matters reserved except access for 17 houses including 10 age-restricted houses designed for older people.

The Monkerton/Hill Barton Masterplan identified the site as being within the picturesque ridge requiring a strong landscape structure to be retained. The Exeter Local Plan requirement was for 10% public open space and 10.6% would be provided within the illustrative layout. More public open space could be secured but this would be at the cost of the affordable housing proposed and, on balance, it was considered that the quantum of affordable housing, linked with the public open space offer, was an acceptable site-specific solution. There had been an original objection from the County Council to access via Gipsy Hill Lane. Permanent and construction access would now be from the north via a development by Linden homes which had already been approved. The Assistant Director City Development corrected the report as the affordable housing required should be a representative mix of that in the proposed development.

Mrs Carleton spoke against the application. A paper she had prepared earlier in the day was tabled and Members provided with additional time to absorb the detail after the presentation by Mr Yeo below who was in support of the application. She raised the following points:-

- the National Planning Policy Framework states that "Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate

otherwise” and “proposed development that conflicts should be refused”
There are many reasons why this application conflicts with the Development Plan in addition to those of the NPPF. The paper goes on to say that sustainable development should meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This application seriously threatens the needs of the present and with excessive journey miles threatens future generations;

- The application does not conform to the accessibility criteria set out in the schedule of the Local Plan. Figures are inaccurate and put other entries in the application in doubt. There is no sustainable transport for this development. Paragraph 21 NPPF states “Support existing business sectors”. Core strategy CP10 refers to “Meeting Community Needs” and “No loss of community facilities”;
- the development, if it goes ahead, seriously threatens the existence of the hotel. The hotel has for many years enjoyed a full licence. It can take just one complaint of noise from The Vines to enable the Council to revoke the licence or to impose restrictions that would make it impossible to continue trading. The proposals put forward by the Council for the applicant to undertake an evaluation regarding noise are unhelpful. The evaluation should have been undertaken before the application was submitted. The Officer has chosen the wrong section in the planning guidance;
- Core Strategy CP17 states “reinforce the east west ridgeline” The application conflicts with this policy;
- LS1 of the Local Plan states that “development which would harm the landscape setting of the City will not be permitted. Proposals should maintain local, distinctiveness and character”;
- a planning application has already been refused on the application site. Unlike other developments that have been granted planning permission, this site is on Gipsy Hill and is a recognised land mark. The Masterplan describes the ridgeline as an area of “outstanding natural beauty”;
- The Vines is an inappropriate site for retirement homes. It borders the motorway, link road and hotel. It is on the edge of a business park, close to an industrial estate, and has 35% affordable houses. This is a world apart from the Blue Cedar Home’s in the seaside resort of Budleigh Salterton. The applications has been changed from retirement homes for the over 65’s to age restricted for over 55’s;
- the Council want 2,500 houses by 2026. This applicant already has approval for 1,680 homes and with two other approvals make at least 2,140. There is another 11 years to go for just 360. The 17 houses should not be considered as material. There are so many more suitable sites for retirement homes; and
- the reasons stated together with further comments given make approval of the application unlawful.

The Assistant Director responded stating that the reference to the Exeter Local Plan Policy LS1 - protecting the landscape setting of Exeter - had been within the 2005 Adopted Plan but this had been superseded by the Core Strategy which allocated 2,500 homes within the Monkerton area. He advised that the report stated that the application was consistent with the Development Plan and was not in conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework nor the Core Strategy. With regard to the claim that the proposal would not be sustainable in transport terms, he stated that the site access would be within 90 metres of the Tithebarn Link Road which would have a bus service and the site was about 500-600 metres from Pinhoe Railway Station. Further, there would also be footway/cycle way links along the Tithebarn Link Road. It would not be appropriate to undertake a noise impact assessment at present but at a later stage to inform layout. An assessment would not threaten the

principle of development but may lead to necessary mitigation measures such as insulation and design of the scheme.

The applicant had consent for 1,680 homes within the Monkerton area but some of this consent was in Tithebarn Green in East Devon. The City Council was currently short of its 2,500 target. With regard to the provision of homes for the elderly, this application was only one of two to have come forward at Monkerton and the other, McCarthy and Stone, was yet to be delivered. The Monkerton area was suitable for affordable developments. The application was not unlawful.

Mr Yeo spoke in support of the application. He raised the following points:-

- Blue Cedar Homes is an Exeter based development company specialising in building housing for the elderly;
- the proposal at The Vines would provide a balanced mix of properties, to help meet the housing needs of the City. The 17 dwellings will deliver much needed specialist elderly housing, together with affordable and family housing;
- believe that such a scheme within this part of the city, will be a very positive step to help encourage a balanced community and to meet the specific needs of people in later life;
- the Vines is a sustainably located infill development site, that is part of the Hillbarton and Monkerton Master Plan area, that the Council approved for development;
- Work is now well advanced on the construction of the Tithebarn Link Road. Linden Homes are shortly to commence construction on the land adjoining the Vines, which in due course will form the access to this development. Planning and Highways officers are satisfied that this is appropriate and that it reduces traffic on the Gypsy Hill Lane; and
- there are no technical issues affecting the delivery of the proposal and ask that this application be approved.

Members considered the tabled paper and the Assistant Director City Development responded to the issues within. He stated that the development would be sustainable as it accorded with the concept of sustainable development as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Council's Core Strategy and there were no environmental and traffic implications which would make the proposal inherently unsustainable. With regard to the landscape setting, the Core Strategy allocation and the Monkerton Master Plan allowed development on the ridge line as part of the provision of 2,500 homes. The draft Development Delivery Development Plan Document identifying the site as a ridgeline park carried little weight. The access ultimately proposed through the Linden Homes development would mean that traffic would not access via Gypsy Hill Lane other than to The Vines development and conditions were proposed to cover permanent and construction access. The traffic assessment with the application showed a modest volume of vehicular traffic per hour and, essentially, there would be no additional traffic on Gypsy Hill Lane as a result of the application.

Mrs Carleton submitted a further note to the Chair, the Assistant Director responding as follows:-

- with regard to the criteria in the Local Plan for a bus stop to be within 500 metres of the site, the site was within 90 metres of the entrance to the Tithebarn Link Road and although the exact site had not yet been identified there would be a bus stop on this road; and

- the Monkerton Master Plan identified a strategic allocation for 2,500 homes and included the concept of a picturesque ridge with development in high quality landscaping.

Members commented that the principle of development was acceptable but felt that the developer should be requested to make reasonable changes to construction hours on weekends. When building properties closest to the Hotel disruption to the business should be kept to a minimum. The proposal would help meet the City's housing needs including the need for retirement accommodation in the Pinhoe area. Members also felt that, with the proximity of bus and train services, there was no evidence to support the claim that the development was not sustainable

Responding to the Chair, the Assistant Director City Development confirmed that the advice of Environmental Health officer on proposed mitigating measures to limit sound noise from the hotel would be obtained after the completion of the noise impact assessment survey and that this would be reported back to a Delegation Briefing.

The recommendation was for approval subject to the conditions as set out in the report.

RESOLVED that, subject to the successful completion of a Section 106 Agreement under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to secure open space provision, a District Heating Scheme and 35% affordable housing, the Assistant Director City Development be authorised to grant outline planning permission with all matters reserved except access for 17 houses including 10 age-restricted houses designed for older people, subject also to the following conditions:-.

- 1) C07 - Time Limit – Outline
- 2) C01 - Standard Outline
- 3) C04 - Outline - Exclude Details
- 4) No part of the development hereby approved shall be commenced until a vehicular access to the north (as indicated on drawing 430 SK2) and a vehicular route to/from the Tithebarn Lane Link Road have been provided in accordance with details that shall have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.
REASON: To ensure that a safe and suitable access is achieved and to protect the function of the primary cycle network, in accordance with paragraphs 32 and 41 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 5) There shall be no vehicular access for any traffic, including construction traffic, related to the site onto Gipsy Hill Lane except that serving the existing property 'The Vines'.
REASON: To restrict the levels of traffic on Gipsy Hill Lane, in accordance with Section 4 of the National Planning Policy Framework
- 6) No development shall take place until a Construction and Environment Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Notwithstanding the details and wording of the CEMP the following restrictions shall be adhered to:
 - a) There shall be no burning on site during demolition, construction or site preparation works;
 - b) Unless otherwise agreed in writing, no construction or demolition works shall be

carried out, or deliveries received, outside of the following hours: 0800 to 1800 hrs Monday to Friday, 0800 to 1200 hrs on Saturdays, and not at all on Sundays and Public Holidays;

c) Dust suppression measures shall be employed as required during construction in order to prevent off-site dust nuisance.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to throughout the construction period.

REASON: To ensure the amenity of the neighbourhood

- 7) No development shall take place on site until a full investigation of the site has taken place to determine the extent of, and risk posed by, any contamination of the land and the results, together with any remedial works necessary, have been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The building(s) shall not be occupied until the approved remedial works have been implemented and a remediation statement submitted to the Local Planning Authority detailing what contamination has been found and how it has been dealt with together with confirmation that no unacceptable risks remain.
REASON: To ensure any contaminated land is identified and mitigation measures are undertaken
- 8) Prior to commencement of the development, the applicant shall submit a noise assessment for approval by the LPA. If, following the above assessment, the LPA concludes that noise mitigation measures are required, the applicant shall then submit a scheme for protecting the proposed development from noise. This shall be based on the results of the above assessment and shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before development commences. All works that form part of the scheme shall be completed before any of the permitted development is occupied.
The applicant should aim to achieve at least the standards for internal and external noise levels specified in BS8233:2014 Sound Insulation and Noise Reduction for Buildings.
REASON: To ensure the amenity of the area is protected.
- 9) The development hereby approved shall not commence until details of the proposed finished floor levels and overall ridge heights of the dwellings, in relation to an agreed fixed point or O.S. datum have been submitted to, and been approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details
REASON: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and the residential amenities of future occupants.
- 10) Unless it is demonstrated in writing prior to commencement that it is not viable or feasible to do so, the buildings comprised in the development hereby approved shall be constructed so that their internal systems for space and water heating are capable of being connected to the proposed decentralised energy (district heating) network. Prior to occupation of the development the necessary on site infrastructure shall be put in place for connection of those systems to the network at points at the application site boundary agreed in writing by the LPA.
REASON: To ensure that the proposal complies with Policy CP13 of Council's Adopted Core Strategy and paragraph 96 of the NPPF and in the interests of delivering sustainable development.
- 11) At Reserved Matters Stage, a Landscape and Environmental Management Plan should be produced to define how habitats and features are to be retained and managed into the future to secure biodiversity enhancement, in accordance with the NPPF. This document should demonstrate compliance with the integrated biodiversity enhancements noted in the Adopted Exeter City Council Residential Design Guide.

REASON: To ensure the protection of landscape and habitats on the site.

- 12) C34 - Landscape Scheme – Outline
- 13) C38 - Trees - Temporary Fencing
- 14) C12 - Drainage Details
- 15) C11 - Sewage Disposal
- 16) C57 - Archaeological Recording

17

**PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 14/4806/03 - LAND AT AND TO THE EAST OF
HILL BARTON ROAD, EXETER**

The Principal Project Manager (Development) (MH) presented the application for the construction of a new roundabout access junction from Hill Barton Rod and associated landscaping and infrastructure works.

Members were circulated with an update sheet - attached to minutes. Sixty two objections had been received about the roundabout that would provide access to a development of 750 new homes which form part of the 2,500 homes planned for Monkerton/Hill Barton. The update sheet summarised an additional late representation and legal advice. Legal advice was that the application was correctly made, needed to be determined and had no impact on outline consent. Originally a traffic light controlled junction had been proposed but the acquisition of additional land had facilitated an alternative approach in the form of a three arm roundabout. This approach was considered preferable in terms of highway safety.

Mr Mariott spoke against the application. He raised the following points:-

- owner occupier of 121 Hill Barton Road for 40 years;
- proposal has resulted in a huge number of objections;
- the Parsons Brickernhoff Stage I Road Safety Audit states that a relaxation to one step below the desirable minimum for visibility was sought;
- inaccurate basis of the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit. Traffic census taken before provision of extra homes in the area and with upwards of 5,000 homes in total to be provided when development in the area is complete;
- insufficient analysis and assessment of potential impacts - based on unrepresentative surveys/studies i.e. outside term times/busiest hour;
- roundabouts not appropriate in residential areas on grounds of capacity/visuals, inconvenient to pedestrians, inappropriate Toucan crossing and hazardous for cyclists;
- four major roundabout junctions in the area - Monkerton, Countess Wear, M5 and Moor Lane which all utilise traffic controlled junction which also should be applicable in this junction; and
- inappropriate design.

The Highway Development Management Officer responded to the issues raised relating to Highway matters. A roundabout was a more sustainable and safer option to a signalised right turn junction on to Hill Barton Road given the traffic flow in this area. To facilitate crossing a toucan crossing would provide for movement across Hill Barton Road to the south of the junction and crossing facilities on the splitter islands would be provided on the north and eastern arms. Speed would be reduced in the long term. It would have overall benefits in terms of the wider traffic network,

reduce emissions and improve road safety. He stated that the access right out of Leypark Road onto Hill Barton Road would be successfully incorporated into the new scheme.

He confirmed that the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit was appropriate and the analysis of the application was based on suitable base line traffic data related to the wider area. It was acceptable for the standard to be below Design Manual for Roads and Bridges levels in this case

Mr Fayers spoke in support of the application. He raised the following points:-

- Hill Barton Consortium have applied to change the existing approved signalised right turn junction on to Hill Barton Road to a roundabout.
- this was now possible because the Consortium had acquired Hill Barton House since the original approval and this provided additional land in which to construct a suitable roundabout. This was a far preferable means of access compared to a signalised traffic junction; and
- the roundabout provides far greater flexibility in capacity and will provide for a more even flow of traffic along Hill Barton Road than traffic lights.

The recommendation was for approval subject to the conditions as set out in the report.

RESOLVED that planning permission for the construction of a new roundabout access junction from Hill Barton Road and associated landscaping and infrastructure works be **APPROVED**, subject to the following conditions:-.

- 1) C05 - Time Limit - Commencement
- 2) C15 - Compliance with Drawings
- 3) C35 - Landscape Scheme
- 4) C37 - Replacement Planting
- 5) C38 - Trees - Temporary Fencing
- 6) C57 - Archaeological Recording
- 7) A Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMP) shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development on site and adhered to during the construction period. This should include details of monitoring and mitigation measures to control the environmental impact of the development during the construction and demolition phases, including site traffic, the effects of piling, and emissions of noise and dust. The CEMPs should contain a procedure for handling and investigating complaints as well as provision for regular meetings with appropriate representatives from the Local Authorities during the development works, in order to discuss forthcoming work and its environmental impact.
Reason: In the interest of the environment of the site and surrounding areas.
- 8) Construction work shall not take place outside the following times: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Fridays); 8am to 1pm (Saturdays); nor at any time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays.
Reason: In the interests of the amenity of occupants of nearby buildings.
- 9) The development hereby approved shall be implemented in accordance with the recommendations set out in Section 4 of the submitted Ecology Statement dated October 2014.

Reason: In the interests of protecting and improving existing, and creating new wildlife habitats in the area.

18 **LIST OF DECISIONS MADE AND WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS**

The report of the Assistant Director City Development was submitted.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

19 **APPEALS REPORT**

The schedule of appeal decisions and appeals lodged was submitted.

He referred to the likely submission of appeals in respect of the Moor Lane Junction and Waddington Park on Exeter Road, Topsham, the latter being in respect of non determination as a result of a decision awaited in respect of the Home Farm appeal.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

20 **SITE INSPECTION PARTY**

RESOLVED that the next Site Inspection Party be held on Tuesday 17 March 2015 at 9.30 a.m. The Councillors attending will be Choules, Lyons and Mitchell.

Additional Information Circulated after Agenda Dispatched - circulated as an appendix

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 7.10 pm)

Chair

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Monday 30 March 2015

Present:

Councillor Bialyk (Chair)
Councillors Spackman, Denham, Edwards, Lyons, Mitchell, Newby, Raybould, Sutton,
Williams and Winterbottom

Apologies:

Councillor Choules

Also Present:

City Development Manager, Principal Project Manager (Development) (MH) and Democratic Services Officer (Committees) (HB)

21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made by Members.

22 PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 14/4857/03 - 30 MARLBOROUGH ROAD, EXETER

The City Development Manager presented the application for a new dwelling on land adjacent to No. 30 Marlborough Road, Exeter.

The recommendation was for approval subject to the conditions as set out in the report.

RESOLVED that planning permission for a new dwelling on land adjacent to No 30 Marlborough Road, Exeter be **REFUSED** as the proposed dwelling would occupy an atypically small and prominent plot within Marlborough Road and would appear cramped and intrusive within the street-scene to the detriment of the character and appearance of the St Leonard's Conservation Area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Paragraphs 64, 131-134 and 137 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy CP17 of the Exeter Core Strategy and Policies C1 and DG1 of the Exeter Local Plan First Review.

23 PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 14/2066/01 - LAND NORTH OF EXETER ROAD, TOPSHAM, EXETER

The Principal Project Manager (Development) presented the application for a phased development of a 60 bed residential care home, 47 assisted living apartments and 55 age restricted dwellings.

Councillor Leadbetter, having given notice under Standing Order No 44, spoke on the item. He referred to the huge concerns of Topsham residents regarding the continual erosion of the green space between Exeter and Topsham and called for the protection of the Topsham Gap. He supported the recommendation for refusal.

Mr Russell spoke against the application. He raised the following points:-

- if the Topsham Gap is lost, Topsham will no longer be separated from Exeter;
- developments of this land should be resisted in accordance with the Council strategic housing policy up to 2026;
- over 1,000 Topsham residents oppose this development;
- with other developments at Newcourt and forthcoming proposals from Aldi and Heritage Homes there will be increased pressure on the local infrastructure;
- support Council stance at the Home Farm inquiry and its opposition to development on this site; and
- allowing this development will open the floodgates for further developments.

It was noted that the Council had received notification from the Planning Inspectorate that the applicant had appealed against the non-determination of the application by the Council within the prescribed period (i.e. 13 weeks from the submission date). In connection with the appeal, the Council was required to indicate what its decision would have been. Consequently, the purpose of the report was to seek a resolution from the Committee as to what its decision would have been were it free to determine the application.

The recommendation was for refusal.

RESOLVED that the Committee is minded to **REFUSE** planning permission for a phased development of a 60 bed residential care home, 47 assisted living apartments and 55 age restricted dwellings for the following reasons:-

- (1) the proposal is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework 2012, Exeter City Council Core Strategy 2012 (the Vision, Spatial Strategy and policies CP1, CP3 and CP16), Exeter Local Plan First Review 1995-2011 (saved policies H1, H2 and LS1) and the emerging Exeter Draft Development Delivery DPD 2013 (policies DD9 and DD30) because:-
 - (i) it would result in development outside the identified strategic locations for growth contrary to the Statutory Development Plan for the area,
 - (ii) the proposal would harm the landscape setting of the city through development on the strategic gap between Topsham and Exeter that would contribute to the coalescence of the two settlements, and it would set an undesirable precedent for other nearby residential development within the strategic gap that individually, or collectively, would harm the character of the area and setting of the historic settlement of Topsham; and
- (2) in the absence of a planning obligation in terms that are satisfactory to the Local Planning Authority, and which makes provision for affordable housing, the proposal is contrary to Exeter Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2012 policy CP7, and Exeter City Council Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2014.

APPLICATION NO. 14/4750/07 - FLAT 8, EXETER CASTLE, EXETER

The City Development Manager presented the application for internal alterations to create mezzanine floors and installation of 3 No. roof-lights.

He reported that English Heritage had re-iterated its objection to the revised plans.

Members were circulated with an update sheet - attached to minutes.

Mr Gollop spoke in support of the application. He raised the following points:-

- purchased the Castle in 2013 and passionate about its use as a family home and re-instatement for use by the community with the intention of bringing the whole site to life;
- will continue to develop the facilities at Exeter Castle for weddings, corporate events, food festivals as well as offering luxury accommodation and will partner with stakeholders and the local community to develop as hub for business and social events and intend to invest in the long term protection of the Castle; and
- accept error made in proceeding with works without permission having not received the correct guidance and advice and have since worked in accordance with advice of planning officers.

The recommendation was for approval subject to the conditions as set out in the report.

RESOLVED that planning permission for internal alterations to create mezzanine floors and installation of 3 No. rooflights be **APPROVED**, subject to the following conditions:-

- 1) C08 - Time Limit - L.B. and Conservation Area.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in strict accordance with the submitted details received by the Local Planning Authority on 16 March 2015 (*ArchitEXE Ltd dwg. no. 13/29/02E*), as modified by other conditions of this consent.
Reason: In order to ensure compliance with the approved drawings.

LAND TO THE REAR OF CRAWFORD HOTEL, ALPHINGTON ROAD, EXETER

The City Development Manager presented the application for a development of four dwellings (three terrace units and one detached).

He advised that the Environment Agency had no objection on flood prevention and drainage grounds.

Members were circulated with an update sheet - attached to minutes.

Councillor Clark, having given notice under Standing Order No 44, spoke on the item. She read out a letter from a resident of Percy Road on behalf of the residents of Percy and Courtenay Roads raising the following points:-

- support the building of houses and the nature of the development but opposed to the proposed access which will impact adversely on public safety and quality of life;

- the existing parking situation is very difficult and will increase in severity through the use of Percy Road for access purposes;
- the increased traffic will disrupt a quiet residential area and with parking on both sides of the road the additional traffic will present a danger to residents, especially children;
- will lead to the use of Percy Road by heavy goods vehicles including delivery vehicles and construction traffic which will increase noise and dangerous road conditions; and
- the solution is for an access off Retail Park Close which will reduce impact on local residents.

Councillor Clark endorsed the above points and added:-

- 16 residents have objected on the website and have spoken to five;
- do not object to the development but to the proposed access and many residents refer to an access to the rear as the ideal solution rather than use of the narrow cul de sac of Percy Road;
- the Highway officer did not object but was not aware at the time that there was an option of utilising City Council land to facilitate an alternative access - this would offer both a short and long term answer to the benefit of residents.

Members considered that a preferable solution would be to access the site from Retail Park Close which could also allow an extension of the site and thus an increase in its capacity for development.

The recommendation was for approval subject to the conditions as set out in the report.

RESOLVED that planning permission for a development of four dwellings (three terrace units and one detached) be **DEFERRED** for discussions with the City Council regarding the possibility of access from Retail Park Close.

26

LIST OF DECISIONS MADE AND WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS

The report of the Assistant Director City Development was submitted.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

27

APPEALS REPORT

The schedule of appeal decisions and appeals lodged was submitted.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

28

SITE INSPECTION PARTY

RESOLVED that the next Site Inspection Party will be held on Tuesday 14 April 2015 at 9.30 a.m. The Councillors attending will be Edwards, Lyons and Mottram.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 7.05 pm)

Chair

LICENSING COMMITTEE - SPECIAL

16 March 2015

Present:

Councillor Catherine Dawson (Chair)

Councillors Laws, Brimble, Choules, Clark, Crew, George, Fullam, Henson, Holland, Pearson and Tippins

Apologies:

Councillors Newby and Shiel

Also present:

Corporate Manager - Legal, Assistant Director Environment, Environmental Health Manager, Principal Licensing Officer and Democratic Services Officer (Committees) (HB)

5 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made by Members.

6 Policy of Restriction and Quality Control Standards for Hackney Carriages

The Assistant Director Environment presented the report on the findings of the consultation conducted in respect of the Council's policy of restriction in respect of hackney carriages.

At the Licensing Committee on 22 July 2014, the Committee had considered the options of retaining the policy of restriction and commissioning a survey into unmet demand or entering into consultation with the public, trade and other stakeholders to consider whether to remove the policy of taxi restriction in a managed way, and enhance the quality controls for taxis to improve standards further and prevent any potential negative impact from de-restriction. The Committee resolved the latter option.

Following the above decision, the Council commissioned Marketing Means to undertake research as part of its Taxi Licensing Consultation at the end of 2014. The work of Marketing Means included:-

- a telephone survey of a random sample of 500 members of the general public in Exeter;
- three focus groups in Exeter with invited groups of Hackney carriage drivers, private hire drivers, and older people/representatives of groups for people with disabilities;
- an online survey accessible to all; and
- in addition, representations had been invited and received from individuals and organisations.

The online survey closely followed the questions in the telephone survey although, in the former, there was additional visual material for the question on a city-wide livery.

The phone survey gathered the views from a random selection of people that was matched to the demographic profile of Exeter's population.

Full copies of the representations and responses were made available to the Licensing Committee and published.

The results from the consultation exercise were set out in the report and key points summarised. The Assistant Director Environment stated that the responses from the consultation did not highlight any issues that would significantly strike against ending the policy of restriction, especially if introduced at the same time as the imposition of higher quality standards. The results indicated that higher quality standards were broadly supported.

The Assistant Director Environment stated that the results indicated that there was a demand for Hackney Carriages that was not being met and that the policy of restriction had negative consequences that were not in the public interest. He suggested that there may be weaknesses in the way past surveys had been carried out, which could call into question whether the "demand" surveys could be robustly relied on.

In addition, the Assistant Director Environment stated that the following options had also been considered and discounted:-

- adopting a policy of managed growth in taxi numbers, incrementally increasing numbers year by year, but requiring an affirming survey to be commissioned. It was the view of the Assistant Director Environment that this would not by itself, achieve an increase in quality of the taxi fleet. It would also be open to legal challenge from those who were outside of the batch allowed through each year. Consequently, this was not considered a preferred option.
- maintaining the policy of restriction and coupling it with enhanced quality standards. The Assistant Director Environment's view was that this would not overcome the negative issues surrounding the policy of restriction such as the legal challenges to the policy, the failure demand associated with the policy, the barring of prospective applicants who genuinely wish to operate a taxi, the gender imbalance amongst proprietors, and, most importantly, whether the policy of restriction actually served the public interest.

The Assistant Director Environment advised that he considered that the pragmatic way forward was not to end the policy in isolation, but to implement at the same time as de-restriction, a policy of enhanced quality controls, that significantly raised the threshold for entry to new applicants, in order to avoid any potential negative impacts associated with weakly regulated and unmanaged growth in taxi fleet numbers that have occurred elsewhere. Over time, these enhancements would also act to improve the overall quality of the Hackney taxi fleet further.

In the event that the Committee resolved to end the restriction policy, the Assistant Director Environment recommended that the enhanced quality controls should apply to any applicant for a new Hackney Carriage licence with effect from 17 June 2015. In order to harmonise the standards over time it was recommended that new and higher quality standards should be gradually applied to the existing Hackney Carriage fleet over a 5 year period commencing from 17 June 2015 in a phased way.

It was the Assistant Director Environment's view that better quality controls may act to visibly enhance the quality of the taxi fleet, e.g. by introducing requirements for a distinctive colour scheme and livery, wheelchair accessibility, low emission vehicles, and in-cab CCTV. However, these could also act as a proxy restriction and, in so doing, they would act as a fairer, more pragmatic, beneficial and sustainable alternative to a policy of a numerical restriction.

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor, Councillor Prowse, attended the meeting and spoke on this matter having given notice under Standing Order 44.

He stated that legislation covering the operation of hackney carriages had not changed since the Town Police Clauses Act 1847. Since that time, successive Parliaments had not identified the need to change this legislation. He referred to a report to this Committee on 9 September 2008 when de-restriction had not been supported and to surveys he had carried out personally at that time and in recent days. He visited the John Lewis rank on 3 and 20 February. On both occasions the rank had been full and he randomly approached one of the drivers who told him that he had been waiting on the rank for 90 minutes. On the second occasion he visited the same rank and randomly approached another driver who, coincidentally, was the same driver he had spoken to on 3 February and, on that occasion, the driver indicated that he had been waiting for one hour.

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor, Councillor Prowse stated that he had recently visited Plymouth and he had spoken to the drivers there and they told that there were too many taxis chasing too few fares.

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor, Councillor Prowse also referred to an interim report of the Law Commission which stated that there was no reason why Local Authorities should not be allowed to continue to restrict the number of hackney carriages. He maintained that there was no evidence of unmet demand and asked the Committee to support the second recommendation which was to maintain the policy of restriction.

The Assistant Director Environment responded that the final report of the Law Commission proposed that Local Authorities should be able to determine whether or not to restrict because their unique knowledge of their respective areas put them in the best position to assess what was in the public interest. He further stated that the Councillor's survey had been somewhat anecdotal and that comparison with Plymouth had no relation to the situation in Exeter.

In response to a petition about the high floor height of wheel-chair accessible Hackney vehicles, he advised that he noted that the petition stated a preference for a saloon car from some people with a mobility issue; however, the proposed higher standards did not rule out saloon vehicles, (that is ULEVs which were predominantly saloons). In addition, the wider taxi fleet contained many saloon vehicles, if people preferred these.

The Assistant Director Environment advised that the higher standard recommended required the Euro standard 6 emission vehicles with side access from the pavements (which was deemed better than rear-access vehicles that needed access from the road). These were not yet available from the manufactures although should be available in Autumn 2015. Until that time, it would be necessary to accept Euro 5 standard, side wheelchair-accessible vehicles, providing all other criteria were met. There was currently one Private Hire Euro 5 vehicle with side access.

The Corporate Manager Legal advised the Committee that a Local Authority was obliged to grant an application for a hackney carriage licence unless it was satisfied that no significant unmet demand existed.

A Member recorded his support for the findings of the Law Commission and to the ability of a local authority to determine whether or not to restrict. With regard to unmet demand, he felt that the continuing requests for plates suggested that these applicants were not deterred by the reported wait times of up to and over one hour in the ranks. He stated that he assumed the majority of drivers were self employed but that those without plates were reliant on securing employment from those with and that there was therefore little job security for many drivers. He suggested that a significant proportion of what was earned by these drivers went to meet the rental of the plates. The number of appeals in recent years was an indication that applicants were willing to go to some length to secure a hackney carriage licence which indicated to him that there was sufficient business demand for hackney carriage licences.

He supported the higher standards that were proposed in the report as part of a decision to de-restrict referring to the benefits of CCTV cameras and a higher percentage of wheelchair accessible vehicles. He did accept that it would be appropriate in respect of existing taxis for the requirement for higher standards to be brought in over a period of five years. He did not accept the arguments that de-restriction could lead to longer delays for a taxi and acknowledged that it would be sensible to manage the situation to avoid flooding the market.

Another Member referred to a general level of satisfaction expressed through the survey with the public recording a "4" or "5" level of satisfaction and not a great deal of evidence that the public waited a very long time at ranks. He also felt that a wait of over 10 minutes could be expected on a busy evening/early morning. However, he recognised the support for higher standards and a distinctive colour scheme for city taxis.

A further Member, whilst recognising the rights of all to earn a living, emphasised that the interests of the public were paramount. A number of taxi drivers had sold plates on for significant sums and that it had been apparent from the consultation responses that when personnel were seen observing the ranks the trade mobilised in response to a survey to give a false picture of there being no unmet demand by filling the ranks.

The Assistant Director Environment and the Principal Licensing Officer responded as follows to Members' queries:-

- the higher standards required alongside de-restriction would limit the numbers of existing Private Hire vehicles that could transfer. At present, of the 292 Private Hire fleet, only two met the higher standards in respect of emissions, one of which had a short window of opportunity to apply to transfer as it was a Euro standard 5 emission vehicle which would be ruled out when Euro standard 6 vehicles became obtainable from the Autumn onwards. Moreover, a further nine wheelchair accessible vehicles were required to bring the fleet up to the required 50% standard of such vehicles, in order to allow admission of any ULEV. Thereafter, an additional wheelchair side-accessible vehicle would be required before another ULEV could be added;
- as the policy only permitted the grant of one plate per applicant, any new applicant could only be granted one licence, whether a company or individual. Existing licence holders would therefore be prohibited from applying for additional licences;

- the consultation exercise suggested that some private hire firms were turning away work due to lack of capacity and had been approaching Hackney Carriage drivers to work on the Circuit;
- the option of annual incremental growth would still require evidential justification pointing to an absence of significant unmet demand. This would necessarily require reliance on a survey into the presence (or otherwise) of demand. Any such survey would become less reliable with the passage of time;
- in terms of justifying a policy of restriction, the burden of proof rested with the Local Authority;
- the licensing authority cannot currently prohibit the sale on of licensed vehicles. Of the previous six plates issued in recent years, five had been sold on;
- given the five year period recommended to Members requiring existing Hackney Carriage licence vehicles to upgrade to the enhanced standards, it is anticipated that the existing vehicles may still command a residual premium as they provide an alternative to funding a new vehicle to meet the higher standards;
- if de-restriction did lead to a flood of taxis then restriction can be re-instated, but this is not anticipated because of the higher standards proposed that may also act as a proxy restriction. The cost of meeting the higher standards will not be insignificant and therefore a flood of the market is unlikely;
- applicants must show they are capable of being licensed when they apply for a plate and this will include evidence of finance arrangements being in place;
- it was the case that some ranks become under-utilised such as the Quay and Lower Argyll Street, however the County Council will shortly provide further ranks in the immediate vicinity of busy night-clubs;
- the percentage of the public who had to wait over 5 and over 10 minutes for a hackney carriage, (22% and 25% respectively), was not small in percentage terms. Removing the restrictions (and introducing higher standards) could only positively impact on that position;
- it was apparent that the applicants genuinely wished to provide a good service with investment in high quality vehicles but were currently being prevented by the policy of restriction;
- despite the Council's existing policy of limiting the numbers of licenses issued, a number of additional licenses were granted as exceptions to the current policy or as a result of a successful legal challenge;
- it was important to note that any demand survey might not justify continuing with a policy of restriction. It had been necessary, after the last survey in 2010, to undertake a top up survey a year later; and
- it was likely that existing licence holders had a vested interest in the retention of the status quo because of the plate value should they wish to sell on, and the rental income obtainable from use by other drivers.

RESOLVED that the Council ends its current policy of restricting the number of hackney carriage vehicles with effect from 17 June 2015, and couple this with the introduction of an enhanced set of quality controls as set out in Appendices A-F of the circulated report in order to prevent any negative impact (if any) which may arise as a result of any potential growth in the number of Hackney carriage licences, and to improve standards of the Hackney taxi fleet further.

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 7.10 pm

Chair

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SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY

3 March 2015

Present

Councillor Norman Shiel (Chair)

Councillors Branston, Brimble, Bull, Clark, Foggin, George, Holland, Mitchell, Morris and Robson

Apologies:

Councillors Newby and Raybould

Also present:

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Senior Housing Development Officer, Technical Accounting Manager, Principal Accountant Service (PM), Housing Performance And Project Manager, Environmental Health Technician (AB) and Democratic Services Officer (Committees) (HB)

In attendance:

Councillor Owen

Portfolio Holder Environment, Health and Wellbeing

Traffic Congestion in Exeter

Trevor Preist : Transition Exeter Transport Group

Chris Lorimer : Exeter sustainable Business Network

Keith Lewis : Exeter Civic Society

Lynn Wetenhall : Cwest

Exeter College

John Laramy : Vibe Principal

Rob Bosworth : Assistant Principal of Exeter College

13 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2015 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as correct.

14 **Declaration of Interests**

No declarations of interest were declared.

PRESENTATIONS TO COMMITTEE

15 **Traffic Congestion in Exeter**

The Chair introduced the topic of this scrutiny investigation which had been arranged because of concerns raised not just by this Committee but by other groups in the City about traffic congestion in Exeter and what strategies are in place, or should be in

place, to ensure that the City's transport systems can cope with the significant development that is taking place.

The format was one of question and answers with Jamie Hulland, Devon County Council Transportation, Planning and Road Safety Manager and Mike Walker, Managing Director of Stagecoach forming a Panel with support from the City Council's Principal Project Manager.

The following organisations, who had expressed concerns were invited to provide a brief presentation on their principal issues, the first having submitted a paper which had been included in the agenda together with a follow up paper circulated separately to Members:-

Transition Exeter Transport Group - Trevor Preist
Exeter Sustainable Business Network - Chris Lorimer
Exeter Civic Society - Keith Lewis
Cwest - Lynn Wetenhall

The question and answer session took place, focusing on travel modes other than rail. It was recognised that rail had a significant part to play in Exeter's transport strategy; however, the Devon Metro project was progressing well, so the purpose was to explore what more could be done to promote other travel modes.

The report of the Principal Project Manager on the debate is attached to these minutes and will be circulated to the participating groups. It was proposed that a further report be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee in June

The Chair thanked the Panel and interested parties for attending and their contributions.

16 **Exeter College**

The Chair welcomed John Laramy, Vice Principal and Rob Bosworth, Assistant Principal of Exeter College. The following were highlighted:-

- the Sixth Form for Exeter and the Heart of Devon;
- a major provider of Apprenticeships, Higher Education, Adult and ESOL provision with NEET engagement work in Exeter and Exmouth;
- specialist academies - Michael Caines, Flybe, Reach, Enterprise, Journalism, Music, Sport;
- 24% cut for 2015/16 for adult provision and 22% lower funding for post 16;
- a further 17.5% cut for students who turn 18 at the start of the academic year;
- apprenticeships status quo, the 1,371 apprentices earning £14,000,000;
- students spending some £70,000 a week in and around Exeter;
- over £40 million spent on property developments over the last 12 years and plans for more; and
- challenging times ahead with curriculum changes and reduced Government funding.

They thanked the City Council for its significant support over recent years as part of a partnership approach and to innovative projects many of which had received national recognition such as the Exwick Sports Hub. The College was well placed to thrive as it was located in a forward thinking and growing City with outstanding strategic partnerships, built on trust and mutual gain. The "Exeter Factor" was key.

The following responses were given to Members' queries:-

- all College Higher Education courses were complimentary to the University's and did not offer competing or similar courses and were vocationally relevant e.g. aircraft engineering. A recent 10 week programme for Brazilian students was an example of outreach to international students which the College was keen to develop, subject to financial constraints;
- the College took its responsibilities to the local community seriously seeking to develop positive relationships with meetings held recently and new students, especially those from outside Exeter, expected to respect the local community;
- the requirement for youngsters to remain in education until 18 had now been introduced but there was no penalty for non attendance. It was apparent that some students, for whom further education would not have been a choice in the past, were experiencing difficulties in coping which the College was seeking to address through counselling etc. Transitional Co-ordinators visited the five Exeter Secondary Schools to prepare for transfer to further education;
- the three main courses were A Levels, apprenticeships and full time vocational learning. Keen to increase the latter's profile, the College looked to link all courses to industry and for a clear "line of sight" to exist so that all students experienced practical experiences in the work environment;
- all two/three year apprenticeships involved employment and, although a job was not guaranteed at the end of the course, the majority secured employment; and
- all students were encouraged to take up part time jobs to improve employability, time management etc. and an in house transitional team assisted with placements, compiling job opportunities etc.

Members and the Chair thanked Messrs Laramy and Bosworth for their interesting and impressive presentation.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

17 Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring to December 2014

The Technical Accounting Manager advised Members of any major differences by management unit to the revised budget. The total budget variances indicated that there would be a net surplus of £1,255,026 in 2014-15, representing an increase of £2,629,576 compared to the revised budgeted deficit of £1,374,550 for 2014-15; the main deviations from budget being set in the report.

The forecast HRA Working Balance as at 31 March 2015 was £4,218,245 and the current HRA Capital Programme showed a total forecast spend of £9,772,349 compared to the £12,723,080 approved programme, a decrease of £2,950,731.

Scrutiny Committee - Community noted the report.

18 Community Budget Monitoring to December 2014

The Principal Accountant advised Members of any major differences by management unit to the outturn forecast for the first nine months of the financial year up to 31 December 2014. The current forecast suggested that net expenditure would increase from the approved budget by a total of £189,240 after transfers from reserves and revenue contributions to capital. This represented a variation of 1.94% from the approved budget and included a supplementary budgets of £10,130.

The current Community Capital Programme showed a total spend of £896,360 in 2014/15 with £546,830 of the programme potentially deferred to 2015/16.

Scrutiny Committee - Community noted the report.

ITEMS FOR EXECUTIVE

19 Support for Residents in Older Persons' Accommodation

The Service Lead Performance, Strategy and Resources presented the report explaining the continuation of the current arrangements for supporting residents in the Council's older persons' accommodation following withdrawal of Devon County Council's 'Supporting People' funding after 31 March 2015. The Council would continue to fund these services from the Housing Revenue Account for a period of 12 months.

He responded as follows to Members' queries:-

- discussions were on going with the voluntary sector regarding potential support. The Estuary League of Friends was particularly active in Topsham and Age UK were being consulted on possible areas where they could support; and
- the potential for consulting with the City's Housing Associations, who presently accounted for 7% of the City's housing, to adopt a common position on this issue would be explored.

A Member remarked that this initiative was one example of the Council responding positively to the Government's re-wiring of public services drive.

Scrutiny Committee - Community noted the report and requested Executive to approve:-

- (1) the continuation of funding for the warden service (one Senior Warden and four Wardens) plus the Home Call alarm service to residents in the Council's older persons' accommodation from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for a period of up to 12 months in the first instance from 1 April 2015. The estimated cost of making up the shortfall following the withdrawal of DCC funding would be £182,000 (£131,000 for the wardens plus £51,000 for Home Call);
- (2) additional funding of up to £40,000 from the HRA to be used to fund community development/engagement worker(s) to build capacity among residents of older persons' accommodation and develop partnerships with the voluntary and community sector to reduce dependency on state provision; and
- (3) the investigation of different models of service delivery and funding arrangements to meet customer demand in the future.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

20 Adoption of the Low Emissions Strategy

The Environmental Health Technician presented the report advising Members about the development of a Low Emissions Strategy for Exeter, and requesting adoption of the strategy.

The Low Emissions Strategy had been developed to achieve further reductions in emissions of local and global air pollutants from traffic in the city, within the context of sustainable development of the city, by a range of proposed measures, as set out in the document. The Council had taken the lead in developing the Low Emissions Strategy but was just one partner involved in reducing emission of local air pollutants and their health impacts. The Strategy emphasised that, with vision and commitment, a step change in emissions in the city could be achieved, with benefits to the local population and economy.

Responding to questions from Members submitted prior to the meeting, she confirmed that:-

- any Devon County Council planning application for the Alphington Road Park and Ride and bus corridor would include an air quality assessment which she would review; and
- the emission rates shown for the City's road network and illustrated in the maps within the report did not relate specifically to peak hours but showed the average grammes per km per second emitted over a 12 month period.

Scrutiny Committee - Community supported the report and requested Executive to recommend that Council adopt the Low Emissions Strategy for Exeter for the period 2015-18.

21 **Empty Homes Strategy 2014 Review**

The Senior Housing Development Officer presented the report detailing progress with the Empty Homes Strategy approved in February 2014. It provided a clear strategic approach to returning empty homes back into use and outlined the key housing issues faced by Exeter and the tools at the City Council's disposal to deal with long-term empty properties. The current housing market pressures made it vital for the Council to maximise use of existing housing stock, in particular empty homes.

It outlined what had been achieved for empty homes in Exeter and provided an update on five objectives set out in the strategy to ensure that all priorities and commitments made by the Council towards empty homes were being met.

She encouraged Members to notify officers of empty homes encountered through their ward work.

Scrutiny Committee - Community noted the progress in taking forward the Empty Homes Strategy.

22 **Re-cycling Plan Annual Review**

The Cleansing and Fleet Manager presented the report updating Members on progress with the Re-cycling Plan since its approval in 2011 and seeking ongoing support for re-cycling initiatives.

With regard to the discussions on the potential for a shared waste management service with the County Council, Teignbridge and East Devon Districts, the latter had advised that it wished to retain independence but possible collaboration with the former was still being examined.

Excellent collaborative working continued with the University and its Community Liaison Officer in the development of more tailored information for students about refuse and recycling collection. The Green Team initiative would cease beyond July with schools seeking to focus increasingly on the national curriculum. The County Council however were funding a Resources Futures school visits, which were featured in the schools' curriculum. Seven Exeter schools had been provided with equipment enabling them to compost their own organic waste on-site, and one school now took part in food waste collections through the City Council.

Adding a separate food waste collection would increase Exeter's re-cycling rate. However, there was also a need to engage with residents on how to reduce unnecessary food waste. Home composting of unavoidable food waste, such as fruit and vegetable peelings, was a practical option for many residents and should be encouraged.

There had been a reduction in paper collection reflecting a national plateau but there was increased emphasis on collecting textiles and glass.

Scrutiny Committee - Community noted the Council's progress in implementing the Re-cycling Plan 2011-16 and supported the ongoing actions planned for 2015 as set out in the report.

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 8.48 pm

Chair

TRANSPORT STRATEGY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

EXETER CITY COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY COMMUNITY COMMITTEE, 3RD MARCH 2015

These questions focus on travel modes other than rail. It is recognised that rail has a significant part to play in Exeter's transport strategy; however, the Devon Metro project is progressing well, so the purpose of this session is to explore what more can be done to promote other travel modes.

Respondents:-

JH = Jamie Hulland, Transportation, Planning and Road Safety Manager, Devon County Council;

MW = Mike Watson, Managing Director of Stagecoach South West;

RH = Ross Hussey, Principal Project Manager (Infrastructure Management & Delivery), Exeter City Council.

Question	Answer
Park & ride	
Could park and ride be promoted more, to reduce parking and congestion in residential areas, and does the existing P&R network have sufficient capacity for this?	MW: Carries 2m passengers pa, including contra-peak journeys to employment sites. Yes, could be promoted more; looking at possible relaunch.
Could rail park and ride be promoted?	JH: Yes, Cranbrook stn will have large car park to serve those living away from the station, including neighbouring villages. Plans for enhanced parking at Pinhoe. Scope at stations along the Tarka line to Barnstaple, e.g. Copplestone.
Could vacant sites around the city be used for park and change, or additional parking for local centres?	JH: P&C suitable for edge of city where P&R not viable, such as Crediton and Tiverton corridors. Also looking at A3052. Need car parks with capacity during weekdays.
Could park and ride be extended later into the evenings, and to additional sites on Sundays?	MW: Extended Christmas services not intensively used, nor is comprehensive evening service on city buses. Scope to use other services which pass P&R sites, but DCC lock at 7pm.

	JH: Could explore.
How would a park and ride at Alphington fit with the overall strategy?	JH: Strategy is current (LTP runs between 2011 and 2026), having been developed to relate directly to growth plans for city (linked to the Core Strategy). P&R is one of a number of measures which include Devon Metro and cycling. It needs a range of solutions. JH noted that 22% travel to work on foot. Considerable synergy with aims of groups represented here – i.e. more people getting into the city by other modes.
How would it attract people out of cars, when the bus would be caught in the same congestion on Alphington Road?	JH: Alphington Road needs regular service; and P&R needs direct route, although stops could be included without adding undue delay. Looking at bus priority corridors. Some priority options; Grace Road link has changed movements. The journey time of bus vs car should be offset against comparative benefits of cheaper cost of parking all day and distance to walk to destination at end of journey (i.e. walking from car park will add to overall journey time).
Could it use Tan Lane?	JH: Tan Lane restricted to single deckers so depends on type of vehicle.
What about unauthorised parking in P&R sites?	JH: Difficult to enforce – may need to be more flexible in the future to allow people to park and cycle – still avoids cars driving into the city but recognise problem of walking to neighbouring businesses. RH: Charging for parking liable to VAT; more cost effective to charge for bus.
How can we tackle parking by RD&E staff? Parking causes problems in residential areas. P&R not suitable for 8-8 shifts.	See below for subsequent answer by JH.

Bus	
Could and should Water Lane Link be constructed, as a bus-only link?	JH: Would require £10m bridge and divert buses away from passenger destinations in Marsh Barton – unlikely to represent good value for money.
Bus lanes generally - could they be made more effective (wider, more continuous), and if not, are they worthwhile?	MW: Worth having. Increasing congestion requires us to add two vehicles each year, costing £200k. Would like lanes to be wider and operate consistently from 7am-7pm. JH: We're looking at Heavitree generally. Complicated, because road serves lots of functions. See below for subsequent detail provided by JH on enforcement of yellow boxes and bus lanes.
Can there be a strategic review of residents' parking across the city?	See below for subsequent answer by JH.
Are there any other measures available to improve bus timekeeping, and are there plans to introduce any of them?	MW: Just turned on vehicle location system across Devon which will enhance service control. Can feed in to real time system; working with DCC on this. JH: DCC in Punctuality Improvement Partnership with Stagecoach.
Which elements of the Exeter Bus Growth Strategy are still to be implemented?	JH: The strategy was produced because we needed a plan to cater for new developments, and provide evidence base for section 106 contributions. £5m has been secured towards extending existing services, particularly to serve growth on the east of Exeter.
Could the Strategy be updated? Should it be more ambitious?	JH: Could be updated to take into account technological opportunities.
How are the proposed cuts to supported bus services to be reconciled with the Strategy?	JH: Long lead time to enable responses to be considered. See subsequent details supplied below.

<p>Could bus fares be reduced, as they deter and even prevent people from travelling?</p>	<p>MW: Yes and no. Have reduced day ticket from £4.10 to £3.60, and extended Exeter and Exeter Plus zones giving up to a 35% reduction. Can't do it across the board, as costs increase 3-4%pa due to congestion, wage demands. Fuel costs are hedged so haven't benefited from reduction.</p>
<p>What are the current figures for the daily passenger journeys on each of the Exeter City Buses, Exeter P&R and the Country Services arriving in Exeter?</p>	<p>MW: 16m pa for Exeter, comprising 4.5m on rural services, 9.5m on city services and 2m on P&R. Roughly 48k journeys per day, and 290k per week.</p>
<p>How would these numbers be expected to grow by 2030 and how might such growth be achieved?</p>	<p>MW: Numbers have doubled in Devon in ten years. In some cases can double capacity by changing the vehicle; eg Cranbrook can grow to double decker every 10 mins. Highest loads on some services aren't at peak times.</p>
<p>The figure for Exeter City Buses in 2009/10 of 20,200 implies that the number of passenger journeys per bus per day was about 400. At what corresponding value would it be considered that the vehicle was working at its full capacity?</p>	<p>MW: Maximum is 80 for double deck, 60 or 50 for single deck. Aim below those in interests of comfort.</p>
<p>Public transport generally</p>	
<p>Trevor Preist calculates 15,000 extra people will need to get to work using car or public transport by 2030.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is DCCs target for the fraction of these who will use public transport? • What elements of the current infrastructure plan will yield enhancement in the public capacity to support this? • If these enhancements take place, how many extra users of public transport are they estimated to generate? 	<p>JH: Not clear whether these figures are all assumed in the peak, or where these trips are going. The County tends to look at trends. We're predicting limited growth in demand to the city centre with significant jobs growth on the eastern edge. Need to look at past trends; rail up 100%, bus 50%. Traffic reduced but a 1% reduction in speeds – it is a far more complicated calculation as new interventions (e.g. a new rail halt) will affect how new residents will travel but may encourage mode shift amongst existing people travelling in Exeter. This may explain why traffic volumes have continued</p>

	<p>to reduce on all corridors over the past 10 years despite significant growth in housing.</p> <p>Also, households with internet has increased by double in the last 10 years and the number of trips made for a range of purposes (commuting, leisure, business) are reducing substantially, which needs factoring in to future projections – increased home working for instance.</p> <p>Need to build on past success and do more of the same. Numerous big LTP schemes coming to fruition – Cranbrook & Newcourt stations, Bridge Road widening, Tithebarn Lane link, £5m of bus services, further extension of cycle routes and only 4 years into LTP.</p> <p>Also people time shift to avoid congestion. Contributions made by working at home, less shopping.</p>
Other modes	
What more could be done to improve facilities for cyclists and pedestrians, to encourage travel by these modes?	JH: DCC is developing a cycling and multi use trail strategy and planning to market some of the good scheme work (Exe Estuary) using funds from last year of LSTF.
Are there plans for any more major cycle corridors?	JH: Developing two new high quality primary routes from Monkerton & Newcourt to city centre. May need bold decisions eg closure of minor roads to motor traffic in order to achieve priority for cyclists.
Is there guaranteed funding for the cycle network?	JH: Budget down from £8.9m in 2008/9 to £3.6m. More reliance on growth fund; can't guarantee funding as down to the LEP and Community Infrastructure Levy. MPs want us to continue investing in cycling; we're urging them to put pressure on the LEP.

<p>Are there any plans to ease congestion at Countess Wear roundabout, in addition to Bridge Road widening (which won't address all the problems), especially in view of the large number of new dwellings along Topsham Road?</p>	<p>JH: Scheme will remove bottleneck on Bridge Road, which currently results in blocking back through the roundabout, causing queuing on all approaches. Modelling shows high value for money. Will review roundabout afterwards.</p>
<p>General</p>	
<p>How do you see non-car modes being promoted, following the end of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund and responsibility for major scheme funding passing to the LEP?</p>	<p>JH: Following Zsolt Schuller's voluntary departure, Sustainable Travel now part of single Transportation Planning team. Still have dedicated staff and a plan for future investment.</p>
<p>What efforts have been made to devise an overarching transport strategy that is supported by partners including businesses and other stakeholders, and which can underpin funding discussions?</p>	<p>JH: The LTP is the overarching strategy that had buy in from a range of businesses and stakeholders. Within the financial context, we have needed to prioritise our critical schemes that are going to the LEP/LTB for funding. In the past couple of years, the county council has been delivering approximately £50m of infrastructure to support growth, directly linked to our Local Transport Plan. Unprecedented growth is a success story; congestion as a result so we need to keep planning, and being proactive to get the remaining schemes developed and shovel-ready for future delivery.</p>
<p>What efforts have been made to consider technological solutions, eg in relation to parking?</p>	<p>MW: Lots more we can do. Moving towards rechargeable smart card; also credit cards and mobile ticketing. Hoping to get some buses with wifi for Exeter this year.</p> <p>JH: Can transform bus travel using improvements to info systems, e.g. smartcard technology will allow people to see exactly where their bus is and can use their time more efficiently to create a more demand responsive system. Being able to do things on public transport (check emails/read) is far more productive than sitting in traffic – selling these benefits</p>

	is an important part of making travel by bus more attractive.
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Subsequent answers and more detailed information provided by JH.

Clarification on the residents' parking review, and whether it could be expanded to include parking restrictions around the RD&E hospital

A parking working group of County Councillors has been set up recently with the approval of the Exeter Highways and Traffic Orders Committee. The main remit of this group is to explore the possible expansion of residents' parking permit schemes to areas in the city that do not currently have a scheme and suffer from parking availability issues from non-residential parking. This review includes areas that may not have a current parking availability issue but could suffer in the future or could be affected by displacement parking from any new parking schemes.

The group has had its second meeting and has set the extents and areas of the main focus of the study, which include the areas around the RD&E. It has also had a preliminary review of the parking survey that has recently been undertaken to establish current parking patterns.

The next step is to begin a consultation with a small catchment area of the overall areas being considered, in order to get some early views and feedback to help inform the consultation to the much larger area under consideration. This is with a view to begin delivering County Council approved schemes within the coming financial year.

With reference to the specific query regarding parking around the RD&E for staff, with any proposals for parking schemes we need to consider the effects it would have on displaced vehicle users. With local members' input and with help from the rest of the County Councillors on the working groups, it is hoped that we will be able to strike the right balance between parking availability for residents and utilising available space for workers.

Views on enforcement cameras and which body is responsible for yellow box and bus lane enforcement – particular issues around parking in bus lanes and cars blocking yellow boxes at First and Last junction and Exe Bridges

The use of enforcement cameras is currently being considered as part of Parliament's proposed Deregulation Bill that is at its latter stages of approval. Once this bill is passed the County Council will be able to take a more informed view as to what options it has available to enforce regulatory markings such as box junctions and bus lanes. Until this time it is still within the remit of the police to enforce markings of this nature.

The surfacing of the bus lane between Waitrose and Barrack Road keeps failing; what is being done about it?

The County Council spent £70k last summer doing deep recon patches between Waitrose and Barrack Road, so this issue should now be resolved. There is an action for the Neighbourhood Team officer to monitor the issues.

Consultation on proposed bus service reductions

The proposals to reduce DCC-funded bus services is currently being consulted upon within a public consultation process that ends on 20th April 2015. The context of the proposed reduction in the public transport budget is the Government's Spending Review, which is reducing council funding year on year. With a shrinking budget, some very difficult decisions on priorities are having to be made across county council services.

We are therefore consulting on a set of proposals that aims to minimise the impact – accepting that it is inevitable that the impact of a cut of this magnitude will be significant to many people. This is based on analysis of cost per passenger for different services. Given the high cost per passenger of many current council-funded bus services, with less funding available it is considered appropriate to consider whether there should be an upper limit to the amount spent per passenger journey.

As this is currently out to consultation, it is recommended that any comments / thoughts / feedback on the proposals are articulated through the consultation process (<https://new.devon.gov.uk/publictransportbudget>).

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ECONOMY

5 March 2015

Present:

Councillor Henson (Chair)

Councillors Brock, Brimble, Bull, Holland, Lyons, Robson, Wardle and Williams

Apologies:

Councillors Branston, Crew and Foggin

Also present:

Assistant Director Economy, Service Manager, Business & Commercial Operations, Museums Manager, Events, Facilities and Markets Manager, Principal Accountant Service (PM) and Democratic Services Officer (Committees) (SLS)

In attendance:

Councillor Rachel Sutton - Portfolio Holder City Development

18 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2015 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as correct.

19 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Williams declared an 'other interest' as the Matford Centre is the place of business of an immediate member of her partner's family, and withdrew from the meeting whilst Minute 29 was discussed.

20 **Waterways Review - Towards a Waterways Strategy**

The Service Manager, Business & Commercial Operations presented the report which considered the creation of a strategic framework for the development of Exeter's river and canal and associated assets. The report recommended the formation of a Partnership to develop and deliver a Strategy for the future of the waterways and that the Canal and River Trust be engaged in the discussions on the future strategic direction. The Council had agreed last year to undertake a review of the options in respect of the future operation and management of the Exe Estuary, Quay, Basin and Canal. It was anticipated that the Strategy would be developed, together with the stakeholders, who in partnership with the Council, would enable its delivery.

Responding to questions from a Member submitted prior to the meeting, the Service Manager, Business & Commercial Operations confirmed that:-

- the City Council had been exploring alternative joint funding and management opportunities to ensure the future of the river and canal. However, the Canal and River Trust were most likely to offer the most viable option for collective funding opportunities. Contact had been made with the owners of local waterways such as the Grand Western Canal, with a view to holding further discussions with them and others over the coming months to help form the basis of the review.

- the Canal and River Trust had also recently been successful in securing funding from the Heritage Lottery Funding, and although this did not include Exeter, the Trust had indicated it would be willing to work with the City Council, to best suit individual needs.

A Member also referred to the scope of the consultation. The Service Manager, Business & Commercial Operations welcomed any contribution to the consultation process. He added that the results would also help inform the strategic partnership.

Scrutiny Committee - Economy noted the proposed scope and timetable for the Waterways Review report and recommended Executive approve:-

- (1) establishing a partnership of key stakeholders for Exeter's river and canal to develop and deliver a Waterways Strategy for Exeter; and
- (2) the exploration with the Canal and River Trust of the engagement in the development of Exeter's waterways and its future delivery.

21 **Management of Capital Spending on the Waterways**

The Service Manager, Business & Commercial Operations presented the report and sought Member's approval for the reassignment of approved capital budgets, relating to repairs on the canal and waterways in order to respond to urgent maintenance and repair priorities. The dynamics of the waterways and its susceptibility to weather and seasonal influences could result in the need for a rapid civil engineering response, particularly in relation to the canal. Recent inspections had identified an estimated £55,000 of urgent, but currently unbudgeted works where collective large scale shoring and re-engineering works were required.

Scrutiny Committee – Economy noted the report and requested Executive approval:-

- (1) that any funds remaining from the capital allocation of £150,000 for the repair to the Turf Lock gates be reassigned to other necessary and urgent repairs on the canal and waterway; and
- (2) that the Assistant Director Public Realm in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Culture and the Assistant Director Finance, be given delegated authority to reassign any residue from future capital funding for the waterways in order to effect immediate and or significant repairs elsewhere in the canal or quays. Local Councillors would be advised and variations would be reported in the regular Capital Budget update reports made to Scrutiny Committee.

22 **Proposal to Establish a Museum Shop at RAMM**

The Museums Manager presented the report, which outlined a proposal to set up a shop at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and through its operation, generate additional income to increase the sustainability of the Museum. Independently commissioned visitor research suggested that half of the RAMM's visitors would be quite or very likely to purchase from a specialist RAMM shop, supporting the view that this visitor 'secondary spend' could be an important source of income for a Museum. It would also be following a successful operating model used by the local authority regional museums service in Leeds, as they run a number of very profitable shops and have created a unique brand of merchandise that is only sold from the Museum. A Member welcomed this proposal, and hoped that the RAMM would follow such an example and include items that were pertinent to Exeter. The

Museums Manager confirmed that they would seek to include a range of items unique to the RAMM.

Scrutiny Committee - Economy recommended approval of the following to Executive and Council:-

- (1) to set up a shop within the Royal Albert Memorial Museum;
- (2) the five year forecast Profit & Loss figures and the payback period for the investment requested; and
- (3) a supplementary request for an additional sum of £68,000 to the Capital Programme to enable the fit out and set up of the new shop.

23 **Budget Monitoring Report to 31 December 2014 (3rd Quarter)**

The Principal Accountant advised Members of any major differences by management unit to the outturn forecast of the Economy Services revenue and capital budgets for the first nine months of the financial year up to 31 December 2014. The current forecast suggested that net expenditure would increase from the approved budget by a total of £127,540 after transfers from reserves and revenue contributions to capital. This represented a variation of 77.14% from the approved budget and included supplementary budgets of £299,560. Potential areas of budgetary risk were also highlighted in this report.

The Principal Accountant highlighted the areas which significant variances were anticipated including the expected shortfall of rental income from South Street, and parking income, which was expected to be 2% lower than the annual budget of £5.5 million. He also responded to a Member's question relating to the reduced income from South Street and whether there was a specific or more general downturn in parking revenue, confirming that he could supply the figures for the individual car parks. The Member said that as a member of the Car Parking Review Group, such information would be useful to inform any future discussion to identify any underlying reasons. The current Community Capital Programme showed a total spend of £3,974,611 in 2014/15 with a further £686,270 of the programme potentially deferred to 2015/16.

Responding to a question from a Member submitted prior to the meeting, the Principal Accountant confirmed that a sum of £740 being spent in Well Oak Park, was in respect of a sum of money that had been due as a retention payment. The work had been completed and this was the final payment.

Scrutiny Committee – Economy noted the report.

24 **RAMM's Market Research and Data Capture Programme Update**

The Museums Manager presented the report which informed Members of the visitor research and data capture programme and also to note the forthcoming plans. This research had helped to provide a better understanding of who used the Museums Service (and consequently who did not); views of the visitor experience and their preferences, information that helped the RAMM team monitor satisfaction rates; identifying trends; shaping forward planning, informing RAMM's audience development activities and income generation initiatives. Such research also provided the user context for RAMM and its services and was therefore important background data for Members' information. The key findings were set out in the report and included a satisfaction rate of 98%, with a good pattern of repeat visits.

A Member congratulated the staff on the visitor numbers, but enquired if the figures had changed since the Museum's reopening. The Museums Manager stated that staff had worked hard to maintain the visitor numbers and had expected a dip after the initial period, but she was pleased to report that there were still 295,000 visitors a year. She also responded to a Member's enquiry about the nature of the advertising, stating that the RAMM had a well developed web site. A growing trend had been noted in which visitors first researched their proposed trip to RAMM on-line, as the website provided more convenient, accurate and up to date information. So far, this had not replaced visitors' expectations for a printed brochure of events, but this was expected to gradually change in coming years.

Members noted the report.

25 **Major Partner Museums Funding Update**

The Museums Manager provided a verbal report and referred to the Arts Council England funding currently received by RAMM 2012 – 2015, as part of the Major Partner Museum Programme (MPM). The funding was awarded to a core group of sixteen larger regional museums. A re-submission had recently been made by RAMM to the Arts Council's Major Partner Museum Grants Programme for 2015/18. This was an open application process and she was pleased to inform Members that after an 'in principle' decision last year and further work to produce the mandatory documents required by ACE, the funder had announced the names of the institutions that would be part of the MPM programme 2015-18. RAMM had successfully been included as part of this group, and had received its formal offer of funding.

Members noted the update and congratulated the Museums Manager and her staff.

26 **European Grand Prix Rugby 7's Series Tournament Update - Sandy Park, Exeter, July 2015**

The Assistant Director Economy advised that the third leg of the Rugby Europe's 2015, Grand Prix 7's series would take place at Sandy Park on the 11 and 12 July. The first and second leg games were being held in Lyons and Moscow. This event was another opportunity to showcase Sandy Park, and Exeter to a wider audience. It was hoped that this will be the first of three years of programming for the city and will provide a great opportunity to raise the profile of the city, creating some repeat business for all. The event was currently advertised on the Exeter Chief's web site, with the opportunity to buy day or weekend tickets. The Assistant Director Economy responded to a Member's comment on participation from schools, stating that community events were being held in Duckes Meadow, where 20 schools had been invited to take part in a number of sporting activities on Saturday.

A Member referred to the positive rewards for the excellent delivery of the Rugby World Cup programme, such as the Rugby 7's as part of the run up to the next Olympic Games and whether this would be a prelude to something bigger. The Assistant Director Economy replied that this event may be seen as a reward and the City Council, the RFU and Sandy Park have been working on achieving a legacy from the city's involvement in these tournaments. It was noted that this event could provide an opportunity for the England team to gain Olympic qualification for Rio 2016.

In response to a Member's question, the Assistant Director Economy stated that the emphasis for dressing the city would still be for the Rugby World Cup 2015 event, but the Rugby 7's would be well advertised in and around Sandy Park. This event would also help kick-start the celebrations for the Rugby World Cup 2015. Adverts in

brochures had been taken out at forthcoming matches at Twickenham, as well as being advertised widely on local radio in other areas.

Members noted the update and congratulated those officers for bringing the Rugby 7's event together.

27 Parkwood Leisure Working Group

The minutes of the Parkwood Leisure Working Group meeting held on 10 February 2015 were received.

28 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 for the consideration of the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I, Schedule 12A of the Act.

29 The Matford Centre - Performance Review

Councillor Williams declared an 'other interest' as the Matford Centre is the place of business of an immediate member of her partner's family, and withdrew from the meeting whilst Minute 29 was discussed.

The Events, Facilities and Markets Manager presented the report and updated Members on the performance of the Matford Centre, which incorporates the Exeter Livestock Centre, a vehicle and plant auctioneers, business units, an events concourse, cafe, meeting rooms and extensive outside areas. The report contained details of the financial performance for the last five financial years. He responded to a comment on the future possibility of installing solar panels on the roof.

A Member congratulated staff on the improved financial results for the facility.

Scrutiny Committee – Economy noted the report.

30 The Corn Exchange - Performance Review

The Events, Facilities and Markets Manager presented the report and updated Members on the performance of the Corn Exchange over the last year, the directly managed facility, which hosts a programme of arts and entertainment events, as well as a number of business and community events. The report included detail on the events and their financial performance over the last ten years, together with an event analysis of the arts and entertainments programme for 2014.

A Member referred to the proposed change in the box office system and if the facility could be shared with venues. The Events, Facilities and Markets Manager advised that due to data protection issues, they would be unable to share the new system with others.

Scrutiny Committee – Economy noted the report.

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.25 pm

Chair

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SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - RESOURCES

18 March 2015

Present:

Councillor Baldwin (Chair)

Councillors Mottram, Bialyk, Bull, George, Lyons, Morris, Robson, Sheldon and Winterbottom

Apologies:

Councillors Brock, Spackman and Tippins

Also present:

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Deputy Chief Executive, Assistant Director Finance, Corporate Energy Manager, Scrutiny Programme Officer and Democratic Services Officer (Committees) (SLS)

In attendance:

Councillor Peter Edwards - Leader
Councillor Ollie Pearson - Portfolio Holder Enabling Services

15 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2015 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as correct.

16 **Declarations of Interest**

Members made no declarations of discloseable pecuniary interest.

17 **An Energy Neutral Council - A Renewables and Energy Efficiency Programme Update**

The Corporate Energy Manager presented an update on the Renewables and Energy Efficiency Programme work that had been undertaken during the first year of the programme and since the previous report to Scrutiny Committee - Resources on 17 September 2014. The report also included the financial benefits and savings of the projects completed in this financial year, as well as the projected savings. A copy of the 'Indicative Delivered Electricity' rate breakdown for 2015/16 was circulated which illustrated the various charges and levies applied.

The Corporate Energy Manager provided a further update on the report, advising that following the installation of new LED lights in three of the city's car parks, feedback had indicated that the lights at the Harlequins Centre car park had made a significant improvement to the parking environment. Initial work on the Car Park Canopy Solar PV Scheme at Mary Arches and John Lewis car parks was also progressing well. This pioneering scheme was a first for a local authority nationally. A further update would be made at the next meeting. She also referred to the LED lights replacement programme at the Civic Centre, which was nearly complete. Apart from the significant level of savings made, staff were already appreciating the benefits in their working environment.

Responding to a number of advance questions, the Corporate Energy Manager advised that:-

- it was important to identify where the biggest savings could be made, and the installation of LED light bulbs in car parks was part of a major project to reduce energy costs for the City Council. Public realm could look at some of their areas, but Devon County Council were responsible for street lighting.
- the cost of the boiler replacement at the Civic Centre will be £150,000, and design work, procurement and specialist engineering advice had been carried out by the in-house staff from North Somerset Council, who had recently carried out a similar project.
- a power purchase agreement such as suggested for Quay Climbing would provide a legal agreement to provide the means to sell renewable energy to the leaseholder.
- the actual cost of charging a car at the EV Charge points, ranged from 60p to 82p, depending on the type of vehicle. The investment in the EV Project had been minimal as the cost of the installation of the charge points was paid for by a government grant, and the infrastructure provides the future opportunity to pay for the facility.

The Chair welcomed the greater use of solar power technology and the savings achieved so far. She recognised that some of the older properties would present more of a challenge, but acknowledged the efforts made to include this technology in new build. She asked whether there were plans to put solar panels on the new leisure complex. The Deputy Chief Executive advised that they were not in a position to confirm the final design, but they were working with the project's Design Team and would consider sustainability and energy efficiency factors as well as being linked to the District Heating Scheme to provide a cost efficient way of providing energy to the Leisure Centre.

Scrutiny Committee - Resources noted the following: -

- (1) progress made to date, and in year one the delivery of the Renewables and Energy Efficiency Programme and in year two the feasibility work in progress; and
- (2) a further presentation be made to Scrutiny Committee - Resources.

18 **Overview of Revenue Budget 2014/15**

The Assistant Director Finance presented a report which advised Members of the overall projected financial position of the General Fund Revenue Budget and Housing Revenue Account for the 2014/15 financial year after nine months. Members were advised of the main variances within the Scrutiny Committee's budgets, which showed a projected underspend of £299,810 against a revised Service Committee budget of £12,472,740. The Housing Revenue Account working balance is £7,218,245, with an underspend in total of £2,629,576. There had been a delay in fulfilling the capital programme and a reduction in the short term maintenance budget as work was deferred or no longer required. There were no supplementary budget requests this quarter.

Responding to a question from a Member submitted prior to the meeting, the Assistant Director Finance stated that :-

- an overspend in General Fund Housing related to the provision of temporary accommodation , and the underspend of £11,041 in respect of repairs maintenance related to our own council housing;
- the overspend within the Democratic representation budget was in relation to a proposed new Members' Allowance which was not taken forward.

He responded as follows to Members' queries:-

- the overspend was due to a delay in the implementation of the new licensing scheme for certain types of Houses in Multiple Occupation.
- a pool of regular agency staff was used to provide sickness and holiday cover for the domestic refuse collection rounds, and there was a growing trend for a higher sickness rate coupled with the need to staff an increased length of the rounds. The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that this matter was already under review to resolve the situation. It was also agreed that a colleague from Waste Services would be invited to the next meeting to outline some of the pertinent issues relating to staffing.
- car park charges had remained static, but there had been a slight decrease in car park revenue and this was being monitored. Every effort was being made to address the downturn in Estates revenue from the retail units on South Street.
- an underspend of £69,000 related to net interest paid which occurred when spending was not possible or required. The Member suggested that some speculation to accumulate should be made, but it was acknowledged that there had to be a balance.
- new working arrangements with the Department of Work and Pensions had caused an increase in housing benefit overpayment, which had resulted in an increase in outstanding sundry debt. There continued to be a number of challenges in the workflow across the recovery of debt, and officers were working hard to address this.
- expenditure in relation to consultancy fees was less than anticipated in relation to the redevelopment of the Bus Station site.

Scrutiny Committee - Resources supported the report and recommended approval by Council (where applicable) of the:-

- (1) General Fund forecast financial position for the 2014/15 financial year;
- (2) HRA forecast financial position for the 2014/15 financial year;
- (3) the additional supplementary budgets as listed in Appendix C;
- (4) outstanding Sundry Debt position as at December 2014; and
- (5) creditors' payments performance; and
- (6) the Council Tax and Business Rates collection performance.

19 **Capital Monitoring Statement to December 2014**

The Assistant Director Finance presented the report to update Members on the current position in respect of the Council's revised annual capital programme and to advise Members of the anticipated level of deferred expenditure into future years. The revised capital programme for the current financial year was £23.168 million. During the first nine months of the year, the Council spent £11.098 million on the programme, which equated to 47.90% of the revised programme. He referred to two capital schemes which have been completed since the last quarter, including

£3 million paid to the Environment Agency, as part of an overall £30 million flood defence scheme, and also a more energy efficient condensing boiler was installed at Wonford Community Centre.

Responding to a question from a Member submitted prior to the meeting, the Assistant Director Finance clarified that an additional capital request for £32,800 had been made to develop a tree management system which would enable the exact location of fallen or damaged trees in the city to be accurately recorded. This was using technology as part of a project developed by the UK space agency. Bartec Auto ID would be funding the project and the only expense to the City Council was for a minimal amount of travel and subsistence. He also responded to a suggestion that an underspend in respect of smoke detector replacements could still have been used for more vulnerable occupants in council accommodation, confirming that the underspend would be passed back, but he would pass on members concerns to colleagues in Housing.

Scrutiny Committee – Resources noted the current position in respect of the annual Capital Programme and recommended approval by Council.

20 **Budget Monitoring (3rd Quarter)**

The Assistant Director Finance presented the budget monitoring report, which advised Members of the material differences by management unit to the revised revenue budget. There was a significant underspend of £381,090 after transfers from reserves and revenue contributions to capital. This represented a variation of 6.55% from the revised budget, and included supplementary budgets of £184,120. The main deviations from the budget were set out in the report.

He responded to a Member's enquiry regarding a £14,000 overspend in respect of the civil ceremonies budget and advised that it was the inclusion of lost income for a commercial letting adjacent to the historic Guildhall under the civic ceremonials budget. He would discuss the inclusion of the cost centre detail in the Commercial Property budget, with the Corporate Manager Property.

Scrutiny Committee – Resources noted the report.

21 **Social Media Task and Finish Group - Initial report**

Councillor Bull, Chair of the Social Media Task and Finish Group, presented a report which outlined the conclusion of the Task and Finish Group's investigations into the Council's current use of and presence through social media, and the individual experience as well as providing an update to the Scrutiny Committee - Resources together with recommendations for approval.

The Group had been tasked with exploring whether the Council's current use of social media continued to enhance effective engagement with the local community, individuals and external organisations and to investigate whether any improvements were desirable or necessary. Members acknowledged the ever increasing importance of social media and its effective use which afforded the Council a heightened profile and which could also enhance the speed at which the Council could respond to enquiries and deliver services.

Councillor Bull advised that the Group would look to develop any opportunity to maximise any benefit for both Members and the public. Members discussed the need for some caution when using social media. A Member welcomed the opportunity for social media training.

Scrutiny Committee - Resources welcomed the opportunity to consider and comment upon the ideas submitted by the Social Media Task and Finish Group and noted the following activity including:-

- (1) to hold social media training which should be incorporated into the Councillors' induction training programme;
- (2) acknowledgement that the finding that the Council's current use of and presence through social media is of a high standard and as such, no further improvements were considered necessary at this point in time;
- (3) this Task and Finish Group should meet once more in 9 months' time to review the position to see if it remains the same or whether there were any suggested improvements; and
- (4) this Task and Finish Group report back to the Scrutiny Committee - Resources in October 2015, with a full update on the position together with any further recommendations.

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.30 pm

Chair

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AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Wednesday 11 March 2015

Present:-

Councillor Sheldon (Chair)
Councillors Baldwin, Brock, Lyons, Morris, Raybould and Williams

Apologies:-

Councillors Henson and Laws

Also Present

Assistant Director Finance, Assistant Director Customer Access, Service Improvement Lead (Benefits), Audit Manager (HK) and Democratic Services Officer (Committees) (SLS)

David Bray - Senior Manager Assurance, Grant Thornton
Geraldine Daly - Engagement Lead, Grant Thornton
Victoria Redler - Executive, Grant Thornton

1

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2014 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as correct.

2

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of discloseable pecuniary interest.

3

HOUSING BENEFITS ACCOUNTS 2013/14 QUALIFICATION UPDATE

The Assistant Director Customer Access and Service Improvement Lead (Benefits) attended the meeting to address an issue relating to housing benefit payments raised at the previous meeting. Housing Benefit is administered by the City Council on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the level of work had increased significantly. In addition, the teams (including Housing Benefit, Council Tax and Rents and Housing Advice) were undergoing a restructure as part of the Systems Thinking Review, which had an ongoing impact which was being addressed.

The Service Improvement Lead referred to Grant Thornton's role as external auditor and to an increased level of sampling of housing benefits cases. It was important to ensure that the correct payments were made in respect of housing benefits, to ensure the correct subsidy was reclaimed from the DWP. The subsidy claim was subject to an external audit by Grant Thornton before payment was agreed, and whilst there was no loss to the City Council, the 2013 /14 subsidy report highlighted a number of official errors, which required further investigation. He provided an explanation and also the action taken to address this. There was far greater checking requirement for 2014/15 and work was already underway checking high risk cases for the next audit, taking staff away from their day to day work.

Additional training had been provided for staff, with a number of workshops held, as well as one to one sessions with the Assessment Team. The importance of accurate inputting had been reinforced, resulting in a number of internal processes being changed. In the longer term, there had also been changes to the support

structure for the Assessment Team with new software solutions, and ensuring there was adequate quality assurance and support in place for decision making. They would also ensure that any intelligence from other officers is matched to identify problems before they arise.

In response to a Member's enquiry about sharing data with the key agencies, the Service Improvement Lead stated that this was being done in an effort to work better together. The City Council could already access databases of other departments such as the DWP and HRMC. A Member stated that she fully appreciated the continued impact on the team, but enquired about the history of the errors. The Service Improvement Lead stated that although the caseload did not differ, what had changed was the support structure in place and the focus on the decision making process.

The Assistant Director Customer Access also responded to a Member's comment on training, stating that they were constantly monitoring the error rate, despite there being an issue on volume versus quality of issuing payments. It had been unacceptable to have a back log, but she was confident that the additional training would have an impact.

Members thanked Bindu Arjoon and Chris Buckman for attending.

4

REVIEW OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE RISK REGISTER

The report of the Corporate Manager Policy, Communications and Community Engagement was submitted, which advised the Committee of the changes made to the Corporate Risk Register. The Council's Corporate Risk Register ensures that the Council's business was conducted in accordance with the law and appropriate standards, and that public money was safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The Assistant Director Finance presented the report and referred to a number of changes to the Register. One risk had been updated and four new risks had been identified and added to the Risk Register. He responded to a Member's enquiry about the recommendation for additional training in relation to the Council's Risk Management Policy, and confirmed that the Policy Officer, responsible for risk management work was in the process of arranging the training, which was likely to be in the form of e-learning and would be rolled out throughout the Council later in the year.

The Audit and Governance Committee reviewed and noted the updated Corporate Risk Register for the City Council.

5

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE UPDATE

David Bray, Senior Manager Assurance from the Council's external auditors, Grant Thornton circulated a paper which provided Members with details of the progress made to deliver their responsibilities as the City Council's auditors. He referred to the audit fee for 2013/14 set by the Audit Commission and confirmed that for 2014/15, the audit fee was £77,183 and the indicative Certification Fee had been set at £10,890.

Geraldine Daly, Engagement Lead, Grant Thornton provided a view of the summary of findings in respect of the 2014/15 certification work, and the reasons behind the need for additional testing in relation to the City Council's Housing Benefit subsidy

claim. She responded to a Member's question on where Exeter was positioned with regards to errors made in respect of housing benefits in relation to other authorities, and commented that the structure of change and reduction in resources were having an impact. Grant Thornton had issued more qualifying letters than in the past and Exeter was placed centrally in the ranking of Devon's local authorities.

David Bray advised that the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) deadline for the publication of the final accounts for 2017/18 would be brought forward to 31 July 2018. Although this was some time in the future, achieving an earlier close date of accounts would be a significant challenge, which needed to be addressed now. A Member asked about the rationale behind this earlier deadline. Geraldine Daly reiterated that the reasoning behind the earlier audit timeframe was to gather the accounts to allow sufficient time for the whole of government accounts to be compiled before Parliament recessed for the summer break. The Assistant Director Finance also responded to a Member's comment about the challenges to meet the new timetable, and advised that discussions were already being held to implement this change.

The Audit and Governance Committee noted the report.

6

CERTIFICATION REPORT 2013/14

David Bray, representing Grant Thornton presented details of the certification work for 2013/14. The certification fee reflected the amount of work require by the auditor to certify the claims and returns in that year. He referred to the fees detailed in Appendix C for certification. However, given the level of additional work undertaken in respect of additional testing of the housing benefits subsidy claim, the fee was likely to include an additional fee of £9,000. The Audit Commission would determine the final fee.

The Audit and Governance Committee noted the report.

7

EXETER CITY COUNCIL FRAUD DETECTION/COMPLIANCE LETTER (ISA 240 LETTER)

Geraldine Daly, representing Grant Thornton, presented the Exeter City Council Fraud Detection/Compliance Letter (ISA 240 letter). There was a need to establish an understanding of the management processes in place to detect fraud and to ensure compliance with law and regulation. Grant Thornton were also required to make inquiries of both management and those charged with governance as to their knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud.

A copy of the letter and set of questions to be sent to the Assistant Director Finance and also the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee were attached for information. The Assistant Director Finance and Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee were charged with responding to Grant Thornton and their responses would be reported to the July meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee.

RESOLVED that the Audit and Governance Committee noted the report.

8

INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER (BI-ANNUAL REPORT)

The report of the Audit Managers was submitted, setting out the requirement for the Internal Audit Charter, the purpose of which was to define the scope and role of Internal Audit and explain its purpose, authority and responsibility. The Audit Manager (HK) reminded Members that Internal Audit now worked to the Public

Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS), which required a review of the Charter every two year or following a change to the service. The Charter was last approved by this Committee in June 2013, but an update was required in view of the reduction in Internal Audit resources with effect from 1 April 2015.

RESOLVED the Audit and Governance Committee approved the Internal Audit Charter.

9

ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2015/16

The report of the Audit Managers was submitted, seeking the Committee's approval of the 2015/16 Internal Audit Plan, which was linked to the Council's Corporate Risk Register. The main areas of risk highlighted included a reduced level of internal audit to 470 audit days. An 'Enterprise Risk Management Approach' had also been undertaken to check there were adequate internal controls and a clear separation of duties. A copy of the Internal Audit Plan, attached as an appendix to the report, had also been linked to the Corporate Risk Register.

A Member referred to the reduction in audit days. The Audit Manager advised that Internal Audit they had spoken to the Assistant Directors and Corporate Managers about their strategic priorities and responsibilities concentrating on those high risk areas as part of the Risk Register management.

RESOLVED that the Audit and Governance Committee note the reduction in the audit resource and therefore the reduction in the Audit days available for 2015/16 and approve the 2015/16 Internal Audit Plan.

10

INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Audit Manager (HK) submitted a progress report on the internal audit work carried out during the period 1 October to 31 December 2014. A summary of the progress made against the annual Audit Plan, together with the detail of those that had been completed were included in appendices to the report. A copy of the full report was available to Members on request.

A member of Internal Audit staff had taken voluntary redundancy resulting in a loss of 26 audit days for the final quarter, and the service would therefore not meet the 2014/15 audit plan. One of the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit standard is to conduct a self assessment of compliance with the standard, which must then be followed by an independent validation of the findings of that self assessment. The external assessment was conducted in October 2014 and there were two areas of concern highlighted on access to internal audit electronic files and also audit staff knowledge of contracts. The report also referred to a review of the effectiveness of this Committee, the outcome of the review being attached as Appendix C to the report.

There were no instances to report where recommendations were not accepted by management during this quarter. However, the Assistant Director Finance provided an update in relation to an Internal Audit recommendation not implemented in relation to the management of external funding income. It was important to ensure that the receipts of external grant funds were monitored adequately. In future, all external grant information finance would be reported to the Strategic Management Team on a monthly basis as well as meetings of the Scrutiny Committee - Resources as part of the regular budget monitoring report.

RESOLVED that the Audit and Governance Committee note the following:-

- (1) Internal Audit Progress Report for the third quarter of the year 2014/15;
- (2) those audit report's recommendations not implemented by management, as detailed in paragraph 8.2 of the report, but which was deemed an acceptable risk to the Council; and
- (3) approve the proposed revised Audit Plan for 2014/15 and Members note that the Audit Service would not meet the Audit Plan 2014/15 due to the approval of the voluntary redundancy of the part time auditor post with effect from 31 January 2015.

11

CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE 2015/16

The Assistant Director Finance presented the report which set out the proposed updated Code of Corporate Governance. The City Council was required to prepare and publish an Annual Governance Statement by Regulation 4 of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011. This included a report on the Council's performance against the Code of Corporate Governance, and was required to be updated annually, to ensure that the Annual Governance Statement was accurate and meaningful. The updated Code was attached as an appendix to the report.

The Audit and Governance Committee supported the report and requested Council approval of the updated Code of Corporate Governance for 2015/16.

12

REVIEW OF UPDATE OF THE COUNTER FRAUD STRATEGY (PREVIOUSLY ANTI FRAUD, ANTI BRIBERY AND ANTI CORRUPTION)

The report of the Audit Manager sought approval for the revision to the Council's Counter Fraud Strategy (formerly Anti-Fraud, Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption Policy), which was attached to the report as an appendix.

Following a self-assessment of the Council's counter fraud capability, the Council's Counter Fraud Strategy had been updated to bring it up to date and in-line with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) code of practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption. Members recalled that fraud awareness training had recently been made and enquired if this opportunity had been made available to staff. The Audit Manager advised that staff were made aware of this on a regular basis, as well as through the 'What You Should Do If You Suspect Fraud, Theft or Corruption' leaflet aimed at staff, councillors and members of the public. The Policy will be reviewed by Internal Audit, with other relevant persons, at least biannually, with any significant changes being reported to the Audit and Governance Committee for consideration and approval.

RESOLVED that the Audit and Governance Committee approve the revised Counter Fraud Strategy, a copy of which was circulated with the report as an appendix.

13

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 exclude from the meeting for the consideration of the following item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3, of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

REVIEW OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE RISK REGISTER (APPENDIX A)

The report of the Corporate Manager Policy, Communications and Community Engagement was presented which advised the Committee of the changes introduced to the Council's Risk Management policy.

The Audit and Governance Committee noted the updated Corporate Risk Register contained in Appendix A.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.45 pm)

Chair

STRATA - JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Tuesday 3 February 2015

Present:-

Councillors Christophers, Divani and Edwards

Non-Voting Members - N Bulbeck K Hassan and M Williams

Also Present

The Chief Operating Officer, Director (DH), Director (SD) and Democratic Services Manager (Committees)

1 **CHAIR**

Councillor Edwards was elected Chair.

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

3 **PROGRESS REPORT ON STRATA SERVICE SOLUTIONS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

The Chief Operating Officer report was submitted to inform Members of the progress of Strata and a review of the technology decision making process.

The Chief Operating Officer gave a presentation to update on the following:-

- implementation status of Strata as at February 2015
- what is being done to reduce costs and risks, and increase capacity and capability for change
- progress of the resilient data centres in Exeter and the Single Service Desk
- utilisation of a greater pool of skilled staff
- increasing capacity by the simplification of software
- increasing capability by using common approach and design for all three websites; common HR and payroll software; transformation and channel shift initiatives
- business case would also be created to explore changing from blackberries to smartphones.

The Director (DH) advised that in respect of any capital or revenue expenditure not contained within the approved budget and business plans, the Strata Board had delegated authority to vire expenditure up to £100,000, where it could be funded within existing resources. Any virements over that amount would be brought to the Joint Executive Committee for approval. Any expenditure which required additional funding would need to be approved by all three Councils.

The Chief Operating Officer advised one of the dependencies to achieving the Strata business case was Councils agreeing to use common technology and common business applications. At the time of Strata going live, Exeter approved a channel shift business case which included the procurement of new technology for

a “customer portal” and a “dial-by-voice” system. This technology does not currently exist amongst the three Councils. Whilst Strata did not want to hold up Exeter’s business case it had a duty to ensure that any new technology was suitable for use across all three Councils. Whatever technology platforms emerged would be considered as the common technology platform for all the Councils.

Members discussed the procurement of new technology for a ‘customer portal’ that would be required to support the channel shift business case that Exeter City Council had approved. Whilst recognising Exeter’s need to move forward with this new technology, there were some questions raised with regards to the technology Strata purchased or developed to support Exeter’s channel shift case and that this could pre-determine the systems that the other Councils would need to implement at a future date.

It was agreed that a presentation of the technology elements of Exeter’s business case be made to the Joint Scrutiny Committee on 12 March 2015.

RESOLVED that the progress of implementation of Strata be noted.

4

STRATA ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN FOR 2015/16

The report of the Chief Operating Officer was submitted to update Members on the Annual Business Plan for 2015/16 for Strata Business Solutions Ltd.

Members were advised of the anticipated business cases to be developed for the IT systems within the next 12 months and of the Revenue and Capital budgets for 2015/16. The provisional budget payments had been agreed by the three Councils and these would be confirmed or amended subject to annual Council budget approval during February 2015.

RESOLVED that the Annual Business Plan for 2015/16 be approved.

5

APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATE DIRECTORS TO THE STRATA BOARD

The report of the Solicitor to Teignbridge District Council was submitted to advise the Joint Executive Committee of the need for the shareholding councils to appoint alternate directors to the Strata Board. The Chief Executives of each of the Councils were requested to appoint an alternate director in line with the proposals as set out in the report.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) the request that the Chief Executives of each of the Councils appoint an alternate director as follows, be approved:
 - East Devon District Council – Karen Jenkins, Strategic Lead - Organisational Development and Transformation
 - Exeter City Council – Mark Parkinson, Deputy Chief Executive
 - Teignbridge District Council – Duncan Moors, Solicitor to the Council.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.40 pm)

Chair

STRATA JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday 12 March 2015

Present:-

Councillors Baldwin, Bialyk, Sheldon, Dewhurst, Haines, Prowse and Gammell

Also Present

Strata Chief Operating Officer, Strata Business Systems Manager, Strata Document Processing Manager, Assistant Director Finance and Democratic Services Officer (Committees) (HB)

1 **APOLOGIES**

These were received from Councillors Dent and Wood.

2 **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

It was noted that, in accordance with Standing Orders, the Chair could not be an Exeter City Councillor, as a City Councillor chaired the Strata Executive Committee. The position of Chair was on a rotational basis with the Chair appointed for 12 months.

Councillor Prowse of Teignbridge District Council was elected Chair.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

4 **STRATA - AN ORIENTATION**

The Chief Operating Officer set out the background to the creation of Strata Service Solutions Ltd., established by the three Councils in order to achieve reductions in costs and risks and to meet growing IT challenges and the increasingly complex needs of local authorities. He explained the governance arrangements and it was noted that estimated savings over a ten year period would be in the region of £8.3 million. The company had "gone live" on 1 November 2014.

Strata Joint Scrutiny Committee noted the report.

5 **STRATA IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS**

The Chief Operating Officer provided an update on the progress with the implementation plan. The main elements of the plan were on schedule with the following having slipped slightly:-

- construction of data centre facility at the Civic Centre with a Disaster Recovery facility at Oakwood House, Marsh Barton three weeks behind schedule;
- design of the Active Directory (network) and email design nearing completion;
- Strata time and attendance system incomplete; and
- Councils yet to be asked to begin process of file and email clean up.

The creation of a common service desk across the sites had produced early benefit with instances of mutual support being provided across sites.

Redundancy costs were expected to be higher than anticipated but the extra costs would be met by the Technology Challenge Award grant. Some suppliers had agreed to hold contract costs with others reducing costs.

He responded as follows to Members' queries:-

- the original assessment of anticipated redundancy costs had been based on Human Resources formula but many of the volunteers were from long serving staff. The £135,000 cost would be a one-off;
- the Transformation Challenge Award (TCA) of £970,000, which would cover the redundancy costs, had been awarded in October;
- to assist with migration to the new technology staff would be encouraged to reduce their email and file storage by wherever possible;
- staff morale was very high and opportunities to transfer to one of the two other Councils, for example to reduce travel to work time, would be sympathetically examined but subject to the interest of the business; and
- briefing for new Councillors after the May elections on the raison d'être and operation of Strata would be incorporated into the induction programmes of the three councils.

Strata Joint Scrutiny Committee noted the progress of the implementation plan.

6

STRATA ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN

The Chief Operating Officer updated Members on the Annual Business Plan for 2015/16 for Strata Business Solutions Ltd. The complete Strata business case and implementation plan had been signed off in July 2014 with Strata going live in November 2014 and, consequently, the 2015/16 annual business plan was a close match to the original plan with few exceptions and was presented as a summary only.

Members were advised that accounts would be provided for the first four months of operation up to 31 March 2015 and for 2015/16. Elements of the TCA Award would be carried over into 2015/16.

The Strata Joint Scrutiny Committee noted the Annual Business Plan for 2015/16 as agreed by the Strata Joint Executive Committee.

7

NEW TECHNOLOGY - WHAT IS A CUSTOMER PORTAL

David Sercombe, Business Solutions Manager, spoke to a presentation explaining the operation of a Council Citizen's Portal using that of Oxford City Council as an example.

The portal would sit alongside the Council's web site providing one place for interaction and a history of contacts. It would be used for applying, reporting, paying, responding to consultations etc. with public access possible at the following three levels:-

- basic level for consultation, reporting issues such as graffiti, for which personal information would not be required;
- further detail such as name/email address for location based information such as bin emptying days or local planning permissions; and

- highest level requiring proof of birth, account number e.g. for Council tax, Housing Benefits etc.

Responding to a Member, he advised that each Council's data would be secure and that it would not be possible to access data held by one of the two other Councils following contact by the public.

Strata Joint Scrutiny Committee thanked the Manager Business Systems.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.25 pm)

Chair

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EXECUTIVE

Tuesday 17 March 2015

Present:

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

Also present:

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Deputy Chief Executive, Assistant Director Housing, Assistant Director Economy, Assistant Director Environment, Assistant Director Public Realm, Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support, Museums Manager and Democratic Services Manager (Committees)

27

MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 27 January and 10 February 2015 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as correct.

28

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest were made.

29

MINUTES OF THE MAJOR GRANTS AND NEW HOMES BONUS MINUTES - 26 FEBRUARY 2015

The minutes of the meeting of the Major Grants and New Homes Bonus Panel held on 26 February 2015 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Major Grants and New Homes Bonus Panel held on 26 February 2015 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

30

RUGBY WORLD CUP 2015 UPDATE

The Assistant Director Economy updated Members on the current position with regards to the Rugby World Cup. Members were advised of the marketing being undertaken, the use of the Fanzone on non match days and the 'Festival of Rugby' branding.

In response to a Member's question, the Assistant Director Economy clarified that the 'Festival of Rugby' would be promoted throughout the city and it was hoped that the Arts Organisations would take advantage of the stage in Northernhay Gardens to put on events when there were no rugby games.

RESOLVED that the position be noted.

SUPPORT FOR RESIDENTS IN OLDER PERSONS' ACCOMMODATION

The report of the Assistant Director Housing was submitted explaining the continuation of the current arrangements for supporting residents in the Council's older persons' accommodation following withdrawal of Devon County Council's 'Supporting People' funding after 31 March 2015. The Council would continue to fund these services from the Housing Revenue Account for a period of 12 months during which further investigation of different models of service delivery and funding arrangements to meet customer demand in the future would be undertaken.

Members discussed demand for the service, the ability and willingness of the elderly and vulnerable to pay for the warden service and alarm systems and the need to undertake a review to fully establish the specific needs of the elderly and vulnerable to ensure that any service was targeted at those that most need it.

The Portfolio Holder for Customer Access stated that the Council had 522 dwellings for older people on 22 different sites in the city and many of the Council's tenants were not financially well placed to be able to pay for this service. The proposal would enable the Council to review the support required for the older and vulnerable tenants including developing partnerships with the voluntary and community sector.

Scrutiny Committee – Community considered the report at its meeting on 3 March 2015 and its comments were reported.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the continuation of funding for the warden service (one Senior Warden and four Wardens) plus the Home Call alarm service to residents in the Council's older persons' accommodation from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for a period of up to 12 months in the first instance from 1 April 2015, be approved. The estimated cost of making up the shortfall following the withdrawal of Devon County Council funding would be £182,000 (£131,000 for the wardens plus £51,000 for Home Call);
- (2) additional funding of up to £40,000 from the HRA to fund community development/engagement worker(s) to build capacity among residents of older persons' accommodation and develop partnerships with the voluntary and community sector to reduce dependency on state provision be approved; and
- (3) the different models of service delivery and funding arrangements to meet customer demand in the future be further investigated.

WATERWAYS REVIEW - TOWARDS A WATERWAYS STRATEGY

The report of the Assistant Director Public Realm was submitted updating Members on the proposals for a strategic framework for the development of Exeter's river and canal and associated assets in order to guide the future operation and management of the asset and support economic growth. The report recommended the formation of a Partnership to develop and deliver a Strategy for the future of the waterways and that the Canal and River Trust be engaged in the discussions on the future strategic direction. The Council had agreed last year to undertake a review of the options in respect of the future operation and management of the Exe Estuary, Quay, Basin and Canal. It was anticipated that the Strategy would be developed, together with the stakeholders, who in partnership with the Council, would enable its delivery.

In response to Member's questions, the Assistant Director Public Realm clarified that local engagement would be key to taking the Partnership forward and it was intended that this would be open to all canal and river users. The Partnership was not intending to replicate the work of the Exe Estuary Management Partnership but to learn from them and work with them on taking the Strategy forward. The national Canal and Rivers Trust would be making a presentation to the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee – Economy and it was hoped that the Council would be able to learn from their expertise when conducting the review.

Members supported the proposals to establish a Partnership of key stakeholders in Exeter's river and canal to develop and deliver a Waterways Strategy.

Scrutiny Committee – Economy considered the report at its meeting on 5 March 2015 and its comments were reported.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the proposed scope and timetable for the Waterways review be noted;
- (2) a partnership of key stakeholders in Exeter's river and canal be established to develop and deliver a Waterways Strategy for Exeter; and
- (3) the potential for the Canal and River Trust to be engaged in the development of Exeter's waterways and their future delivery be explored.

33

MANAGEMENT OF CAPITAL SPENDING ON THE WATERWAYS

The report of the Assistant Director Public Realm was submitted seeking authorisation for the re-assignment of approved capital budgets relating to repairs on the canal and waterways in order to respond to urgent maintenance and repair priorities.

The Assistant Director Public Realm advised that the dynamics of the waterways and its susceptibility to weather and seasonal influences could result in the need for a rapid civil engineering response, particularly in relation to the canal. Recent inspections had identified an estimated £55,000 of urgent, but currently unbudgeted works where collective large scale shoring and re-engineering works were required.

Members supported the way forward to ensure the structural enhancement of the canal.

Scrutiny Committee – Economy considered the report at its meeting on 5 March 2015 and its comments were reported.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the re-assignment of any funds remaining from the capital allocation of £150,000 for the repair to the Turf Lock gates to other necessary and urgent repairs on the canal and waterway be approved; and

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

- (2) delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director Public Realm in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Culture and the Assistant Director Finance to reassign any residue from any future capital

funding for the waterway in order to effect immediate and or significant repairs elsewhere in the canal or quays. Local Councillors will be advised and variations will be reported in the Capital Budget update reports.

34

PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A MUSEUM SHOP AT RAMM

The report of the Museums Manager & Culture Lead was submitted detailing a proposal to set up a shop at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and, through its operation, generate income which would help support service delivery in the likely scenario of a reducing core budget.

The Museums Manager & Culture Lead advised that independently commissioned visitor research suggested that half of the RAMM's visitors would be quite or very likely to purchase from a specialist RAMM shop, supporting the view that this visitor 'secondary spend' could be an important source of income for a Museum. It would also be following a successful operating model used by another local authority that ran a number of very profitable shops and had created a unique brand of merchandise that was only sold from the Museum. The profit and loss forecast showed that return on investment was predicted to be achieved by month 21 of operation.

Scrutiny Committee – Economy considered the report at its meeting on 5 March 2015 and its comments were reported.

RECOMMENDED to Council the addition of £68,000 to the Capital Programme to enable the fit out and set up of the new shop at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum.

35

LICENSING ACT 2003 STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

The report of the Assistant Director Environment was submitted seeking approval of the Council's revised Statement of Licensing Policy. Exeter City Council's current Statement of Licensing policy was written in 2010 and came into effect in January 2011. There is a legal requirement to review such policy statements every five years. The current policy must be reviewed by 2016. Following input from Members of Licensing Committee, consultation on a draft policy commenced in September 2014 and concluded on the 12 December 2014.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Wellbeing stated that a number of working groups comprising of officers and Licensing Committee Members had met with the relevant stakeholders to ensure that their views had been taken into consideration when reviewing the policy. He supported the Council's revised Statement of Licensing Policy.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the revised Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Licensing Policy be adopted.

36

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF EXETER

The report of the Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support as submitted detailing the Council's proposed submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE), on new ward boundaries for the City.

Councillor Henson, having given notice under Standing Order no.44 spoke on this item. He raised concerns regarding the change of boundary in the northern area of Thornpark Rise and if this would have an impact on the Parliamentary Boundaries.

The Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support clarified that this submission was for the ward boundaries within the city only and did not involve the Parliamentary boundaries which would be the subject of a separate review at some point in the future. The proposals were to reduce the number of wards from 18 to 13 and sought to balance the number of electorate within the wards. The Council's official submission was required to be submitted to the LGBCE by 30 March 2015.

The Leader stated that any proposed changes to the ward names could be put forward when the submission was considered by Council at its meeting on 25 March.

Whilst the majority of Members supported the proposals, two Members reserved the right to submit alternative proposals.

Members commended all officers involved in putting this submission together.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the proposed ward boundaries, as indicated on the map and narrative attached to the report presented to the Executive, form the Council's official submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, in response to its current consultation on the electoral review of Exeter.

(In accordance with Standing Order 43, Councillors Fullam and Leadbetter requested their abstention from voting be recorded)

37

LORD MAYORALTY

Councillor Foggin was nominated as Lord Mayor Elect and Councillor Robson as Deputy Lord Mayor Elect for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

RECOMMENDED to Council that Councillor Foggin be nominated as Lord Mayor Elect and Councillor Robson as Deputy Lord Mayor Elect for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

38

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 paragraph 5 of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Act.

39

SEWER NETWORK

The report of the Assistant Director Public Realm was submitted regarding the Sewer Network within the City and the proposals to look to resolve matters.

Members discussed the possible financial implications to the Council and unanimously supported the way forward as recommended.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) up to £10,000 over and above that already spent (this amount would be taken from overall the Public Realm budgets) be approved;
- (2) the Council take the necessary action to resolve matters: and
- (3) in the event the matter is not resolved, Executive authority will be sought to issue court proceedings and to approve additional funding.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.43 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 25 March and 21 April 2015.

Agenda Annex

SEATING IN THE GUILDHALL

		Deputy Lord Mayor Councillor Newby (C)	Chief Executive & Growth Director	Lord Mayor Councillor Prowse (C)	Corporate Manager Democratic/Civic Support	Corporate Manager Legal	
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Democratic Services Manager (Committees)				Deputy Chief Executive	Assistant Director Finance	
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Councillors	Councillors	Councillors		Councillors	Councillors
George (L)	Robson (L)	Edwards (L)		Leadbetter (C)	Fullam (LD)
Crew (L)	Sheldon (L)	Sutton (L)		Baldwin (C)	Mrs Brock (LD)
Williams (L)	Spackman (L)	Hannaforde (L)		Henson (C)	Mitchell (LD)
Laws (L)	Raybould (L)	Pearson (L)	TABLE	Shiel (C)	Donovan (C)
Dawson (L)	Lyons (L)	Owen (L)		Winterbottom (C)	Holland (C)
Clark (L)	Foggin (L)	Denham (L)			Mottram (C)
Bowkett (L)					

Cllr Tippins (L)	Cllr Morris (L)	Cllr Branston (L)	Cllr Brimble (L)	Cllr Bull (L)	Cllr Wardle (L)	Cllr Bialyk (L)	Cllr Choules (L)
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L: Labour : 27
 C: Conservative : 10
 LD: Liberal Democrat : 3

Portfolio Holders

Edwards: Leader
 Sutton : Deputy Leader and City Development
 Denham: Economy and Culture
 Hannaforde : Housing and Customer Access
 Owen: Environment, Health and Wellbeing
 Pearson: Enabling Services

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