

## COUNCIL

Wednesday 21 July 2021

### Present:-

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor Councillor Trish Oliver (Chair)

Councillors Allcock, Atkinson, Bialyk, Branston, Denning, Foale, Ghusain, Harvey, Mrs Henson, Holland, Jobson, Leadbetter, Lights, Mitchell, K, Mitchell, M, Moore, D, Moore, J, Morse, Packham, Pearce, Sheldon, Sills, Sparkes, Sparling, Sutton, Vizard, Wardle, Warwick, Williams and Wood

30

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Buswell, Hannaford, Martin, Newby, Pearson, Quance, and Wright.

31

### MINUTES

The minutes of the Ordinary meeting of the Council held on 27 April 2021 and the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 18 May 2021 were moved by the Leader, Councillor Bialyk and seconded by Councillor Morse taken as read, approved and signed as correct.

32

### SIMON HILL

Councillor Harvey, the Portfolio Holder for City Management, passed on his condolences, and those of Council Members, to the family and friends of Simon Hill, the Council's Cleansing and Fleet Manager, who had passed away on the weekend.

33

### KATHY MCVEAGH

The Lord Mayor passed on her condolences, and those of Council Members, to the family and friends of Kathy McVeagh who had worked in the Customer Service Unit and who had passed away recently.

34

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members declared the following interests:-

- Councillor J.Moore - Minute 45 - regarding Minute No. 61 - disclosable pecuniary interest;
- Councillor Morse - Minute 46 - regarding Minute No. 73 - non pecuniary interest; and
- Councillor Vizard - Minute 46 - regarding Minute No. 73 - non pecuniary interest.

35

### OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Lord Mayor confirmed the receipt of a petition with 48 signatures requesting the extension of the Article 4 restrictions on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's) to include the rest of Sylvan Road, Sylvan Avenue and Moorview Close. In

accordance with the City Council's Petition Scheme, this would be referred to the Planning Committee.

The Lord Mayor reported the following:-

- a letter sent to the Bad Homburg Oberbürgermeister to pass on the condolences of the City of Exeter for the loss of life in Germany following the recent extreme floods;
- the receipt of a letter from Lady Studholme, the High Sheriff of Devon, congratulating the Lord Mayor on her appointment; and
- the Lord Mayor's intention to continue to uphold the tradition and maintain the links with HMS Defender, having already been in correspondence with the Commanding Officer.

The Lord Mayor also reported that Exeter had been honoured to receive a visit on 19 July 2021 from the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall, HRH Prince Charles and HRH Camilla, who had attended a service at the Cathedral and officially opened the Exeter Bus Station.

36

### **PETITION - PROTECT GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE IN PINHOE**

The Lord Mayor referred to the Council's Petition Scheme and invited Kate Jago, the petition organiser, to present and speak on the following petition, entitled "Protect Green Infrastructure in Pinhoe which had gained more than 2,000 signatures.

"We the undersigned petition the Council to safeguard Pinhoe's natural landscape and skyline, urgently to protect our historic hedgerows and trees, and to recognise these wildlife habitats are essential to our community wellbeing and quality of life, as intrinsic features of our local distinctiveness and character.

We call for formal protection of Higher Field as open green space vital to our community and the diversity of local wildlife, and for robust protection of its critical landscape position as part of the Pinhoe Ridgeline connecting to northern Exeter's distinctive woodland skyline, visible across the city. We call for protection and funded repair of wildlife habitats across Pinhoe within Exeter City Council's strategic vision for Liveable Exeter and the corporate plan to "tackle congestion and accessibility, promoting active and healthy lifestyles and building great neighbourhoods".

Kate Jago thanked the Council for its time and attention and to the Council officers for their guidance and advice in running the petition. She also thanked all of the individual and collective contributions made and the commitment to local democracy at this time of climate emergency.

She stated that the petition highlighted the extractive models of development which have hollowed out green infrastructure in Pinhoe. The petition sought the Council's cross-party support for a transformative community-led vision for Pinhoe and for the city's northern hills, to protect wellbeing, wildlife and wild spaces not only for Pinhoe but for the whole of Exeter, connecting the vital nature recovery network across the city and beyond.

When the parish of Pinhoe joined Exeter in 1966, it embraced its new role as a city suburb. Rural farming fields gave way to development - slowly at first, but with gathering speed. Pinhoe had played an important part in the Exeter and East Devon Growth Point area: hosting the Met Office and bordering the Science Park as part of

the joint strategy for adjacent development. Substantial housing developments weave through and wrap around the village alongside all the accompanying traffic, business and educational infrastructure.

Exeter City Council's efforts to contextualise development while under sustained pressure from successive Government targets was recognised but those protections had failed and the consequences were cascading towards collapse. More than 1,500 cars an hour pass through the centre of Pinhoe during peak times. The traffic strategy for Pinhoe was already on the brink of collapse and this was a crisis, with changes needing to be made. Meanwhile, historic sunken lanes were breached; footpaths and rights of way removed and degraded; important landmark trees were vulnerable, isolated from the context of their landscape; wildlife corridors were being decimated. It was considered to be death by a thousand cuts.

In neighbouring East Devon, the ambitious Clyst Valley Regional Park has widespread public support, and having successfully achieved a bid for major funding which was woven through their East Devon District Council's strategic objectives. With well-defined networks of greenspaces, environmental sustainability, plus local and national collaboration established as core values, it was a wonderful model. Exeter City Council had challenged Government guidelines where it could and officers had sought to balance the impossible demands not only in Pinhoe, but across the city and residents were heartened by the Council's recent support for Pinhoe Ridge at Higher Field.

Kate Jago stated that the vision was to establish a natural asset network of historic lanes, public greenspaces, footpaths and bridleways to be placed at the core of a new community-led approach to create a resilient, sustainable active travel area in Pinhoe. This community asset strategy could open new avenues of funding and infrastructure investment. The Pinhoe Area Access Strategy could be revisited and revised in this context, identifying pollution hotspots, developing community-led solutions and placing the wellbeing of our community directly within Exeter's corporate strategy to tackle congestion and accessibility, promote active healthy lifestyles and great neighbourhoods. Support from Exeter City Council for this could be foundational.

This petition also marked the beginning of the campaign for the northern hills, an iconic part of the city's skyline, to be protected as the city's Ridgeline Park: A connection to the city's green circle of Valley Parks at Mincinglake and to the Clyst Valley Regional Park at Poltimore is proposed, to create an extensive, ambitious nature recovery network in line with Natural England's national project. It could also extend into Somerset via the Two Counties Way.

Underpinning the sense of place for both Pinhoe and Beacon Heath, this project would protect wildlife and wild spaces not only for these communities but for the whole of Exeter, connecting a walkable nature recovery network across the city and beyond. Building from the petition to create our community-led vision for connection across the city, this was the project of hope, founded on practical potential and demonstrating social and environmental value to all of Exeter.

The Portfolio Holder for City Development thanked Kate Jago for presenting the petition, and referred to the first part of the presentation which essentially covered the City Council's Policy LS1 Landscape Protection. The protection of the hills of Pinhoe was included within the current Local Plan and was a principle for the future Plan now being developed. The aim of the petition was at the centre of Council policies being brought forward through the Local Plan and within the Liveable Exeter Strategy. The Council had always sought to protect the Pinhoe Ridgeline having refused and defended a planning decision in respect of a Pinhoe site at

appeal and at the High Court. The Portfolio Holder encouraged the signatories to engage with the Local Plan as the impact of public consultation was of great value.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- the 2,000 signatories were largely those who had been impacted by the increasing development and the driver behind the petition was the opposition to the recent planning application in respect of Higher Field. They remain greatly concerned about other green areas both in Pinhoe and across the city. The petition should be referred to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee;
- welcome the petition by local people, the second over the past year that highlighted the need to protect Exeter's nature and heritage which were valuable assets;
- involvement with the work of the Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy in the development of the Local Plan would be particularly beneficial as protecting nature would help achieve the Net Zero 2030 target for Exeter. The network aims to protect, restore and create habitats that increase carbon sequestration;
- the value of ridgelines all around Exeter was recognised not just for their views but for enhancing and providing space for nature;
- the petition reflected the Council's declaration of the Climate Emergency in 2019 and the Ecological Emergency declaration on 27 April 2021. The Council should look to protect, create and restore green spaces in the city and ecology and nature should be at the forefront of the new Local Plan to protect areas from development. There should be a call for sites to be protected as well as for development;
- issues in respect of footways, cycleways and greenways fall within the remit of Devon County Council; and
- the Council recognised the value of green space across and around the city in terms of recreation, biodiversity and the health of citizens.

The Lord Mayor thanked Kate Jago for the presentation.

Councillor Wood moved and Councillor Foale seconded that the petition be referred to the Strategic Scrutiny Committee.

**RESOLVED** that the petition be referred to the Strategic Scrutiny Committee.

37

### **PUBLIC QUESTION**

The Lord Mayor reported the receipt of a question from a member of the public.

#### **Question from Cynthia Thompson**

Mrs Thompson was unable to be present and her question was read out by the Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support.

Could the Leader confirm if Exeter City Council's private companies are available for public scrutiny through the City Council procedures, City Council website and City Council published documents?

#### **Response**

The Council Leader responded that he was not in a position to speak for the companies who had their own management boards and he suggested contacting the Managing Directors regarding any queries.

38

**PLANNING COMMITTEE - 29 APRIL 2021**

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 29 April 2021 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Morse, and taken as read.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 29 April 2021 be received.

39

**PLANNING COMMITTEE - 27 MAY 2021**

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 27 May 2021 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Morse, and taken as read.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 27 May 2021 be received.

40

**PLANNING COMMITTEE - 7 JUNE 2021**

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 7 June 2021 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Morse, and taken as read.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 7 June 2021 be received.

41

**PLANNING COMMITTEE - 28 JUNE 2021**

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 28 June 2021 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Morse, and taken as read.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 28 June 2021 be received.

42

**STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 10 JUNE 2021**

The minutes of the Strategic Scrutiny Committee of 10 June 2021 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Sills and taken as read.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Strategic Scrutiny Committee held on 10 June 2021 be received.

43

**CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 1 JULY 2021**

The minutes of the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee of 1 July 2021 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Vizard and taken as read.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee held on 1 July 2021 be received.

44

**EXECUTIVE - 1 JUNE 2021**

The minutes of the Executive of 1 June 2021 were presented by the Leader, Councillor Bialyk, and taken as read.

In respect of **Minute No. 50 (Appointments to Outside Bodies 2021)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Morse seconded the recommendation and following a vote, the recommendation was carried unanimously.

In respect of **Minute No. 51 (Honorary Aldermen)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Morse seconded the recommendation and following a vote, the recommendation was carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Executive held on 1 June 2021 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

45

#### **EXECUTIVE - 6 JULY 2021**

The minutes of the Executive of 6 July 2021 were presented by the Leader, Councillor Bialyk, and taken as read.

In respect of **Minute No. 55 (General Fund Capital Monitoring 2020/21 and Revised Capital Programme for 2021/22 and Future Years)** the Leader moved and Councillor Williams seconded the recommendations and following a vote, the recommendations were carried.

In respect of **Minute No. 56 (Overview of General Fund Revenue Budget 2020/21)**, the Leader, in response to a question from a Member, advised that the sum of £380,000 awarded to the Council and its partners by the Government had been set aside as an earmarked reserve to help achieve key objectives for the city with a focus on physical regeneration projects such as, but not exclusive to, Liveable Exeter.

The Leader moved and Councillor Williams seconded the recommendations and following a vote, the recommendations were carried.

In respect of **Minute No. 57 (2020/21 HRA Budget Monitoring Report – Out-turn)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Williams seconded the recommendations and following a vote, the recommendations were carried.

In respect of **Minute No. 58 (Treasury Management 2020/21)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Williams seconded the recommendation and following a vote, the recommendation was carried.

In respect of **Minute No. 59 (Depot Relocation)** the Leader, in response to questions from Members, stated that the £3.5 million set aside for the relocation of the Belle Isle Depot to Exton Road was an indicative budget and that the Belle Isle site would be available for disposal. He advised that he could not provide a definitive statement on the future of the site but that it was the intention to provide housing for people in Exeter and that the public would be consulted in line with the Consultation Charter.

The Leader moved and Councillor Morse seconded the recommendation and following a vote, the recommendation was carried.

In respect of **Minute No. 60 (Liveable Exeter – Garden Communities and One Public Estate Funding Awards)** and during discussion the following points were made:-

- priority should be given to marketing and one way communication in line with Garden City principles and that early consideration be given as to what stage the community, both existing neighbours and new, would be invited to contribute to formulating plans for the sites;

- welcome the Garden Communities concept which would help protect the green ridgeline around the city and the city's valuable green spaces and that by meeting Exeter's need for more houses it would be important to build up to protect the green spaces; and
- it would be appropriate for consultation to take place in line with the processes set out in the Council's Consultation Charter and there had been previous consultations on major Council schemes which had led to changes to original proposals.

The Leader moved and Councillor Williams seconded the recommendations and following a vote, the recommendations were carried unanimously.

Councillor J. Moore declared a disclosable pecuniary interest and left the meeting during consideration of the following item.

In respect of **Minute No. 61 (Wellbeing Exeter Strategy 2021-2024)** and during discussion the following points were made:-

- welcome the valuable work already undertaken through Wellbeing Exeter, particularly the work of the Community Connectors and Community Builders who enrich the lives of communities and individuals. The project in particular having made Exeter "Covid Ready" prior to the outbreak of the Pandemic;
- the great value the project would bring, particularly to the city's children;
- welcome the proposal to significantly uplift Heavitree Park and look forward to similar investment to other parks and play areas in the city including the Adventure Playground in the St Loyes Ward; and
- concerns regarding the role and reporting arrangements of the Liveable Exeter Place Board in the overall structure.

The Leader referred to the following:-

- funding of £729,000 from Devon County Council, £1.4 million from Sport England and £410,000 from Local Exeter Primary Care Networks towards a total budget of £3.3 million;
- the creation of four Primary Care networks covering 17 GP practices in the city;
- 16 Community Connectors supporting individual residents to improve their wellbeing;
- 13 Community Builders covering every ward in the city; and
- four Community Physical Activity Organisers supporting individuals and communities to be more active in their everyday life.

The Leader thanked the County Council for its contribution to the project which was acknowledged by Councillor Leadbetter as an opposition Leader, who also welcomed the re-organisation and strengthening of the Wellbeing governance structure which brought proper accountability. He also referred to the scheme being a good example of collaboration between various agencies and strategic partners across the city.

The Leader undertook to seek clarification on the issue raised in respect of the Liveable Exeter Place Board in relation to governance arrangements.

The Leader moved and Councillor Williams seconded the recommendations and following a vote, the recommendations were carried unanimously.

In respect of **Minute No. 63 (Improvements to the Re-cycling Collection Service)** and during discussion the following points were made:-

- welcoming the undertaking in 2016, to review kerbside collections, but the delay in implementation had been considerable;
- because of the proposals within the Environment Bill, as well as a Government commitment to support local authorities to carry out their duties proposed under the Bill, the recommendations should not be supported;
- the Bill sought to require all local authorities to arrange for the collection of glass, metal, plastic, paper and cardboard and require waste collection authorities to arrange for the collection of food waste separately at least once a week as well as free minimal collection of garden waste;
- the proposal to implement food waste collection as a pilot in at least one area was insufficient and a clear timetable was required for a roll out across the city as Exeter residents expect an improved re-cycling rate;
- to support the need for a review of the Materials Re-cycling Facility (MRF) and for a strategic long term plan for this facility. Instead of proposing only to explore options, a detailed timetable was required;
- Exeter residents produced more waste than many other areas but only a small proportion was re-cycled;
- welcome measures to improve re-cycling, introduce kerbside collection and to roll out food waste collection but information was required on dates for the rollout and on the steps that might be needed to address any barriers encountered to ensure delivery was on time;
- the MRF was an award winning facility with neighbouring authorities also sending material to be effectively sorted;
- concern that there had been a delay in implementation and that a pilot in one area only, would not provide a true picture across the city because of the differing makeups of streets and communities - student areas, for example, differed significantly to the West Garth Road area; and
- concern that the eventual city wide programme would be uneven with different standards of collections emerging.

The Portfolio Holder for City Management explained that the pilot area in Alphington involved the food collection vehicle following on and mirroring the rounds of the main refuse vehicle on Monday's to Friday's. He further responded to the issues raised as follows:-

- the Council remained committed to providing a dedicated kerbside waste collection and kerbside glass collection service for all residents equitably across the city;
- given the operational and financial difficulties experienced by neighbouring authorities in using the kerbside sort system, it had been prudent to carefully consider the options available in devising a suitable collection methodology. It was vital to ensure that the final scheme would be fit for purpose;
- the Pandemic had been a significant element in the timing of the scheme and the pause had led to a re-evaluation of the service. A change would involve considerable investment in new vehicles including electric and, in this regard, larger authorities had procurement advantages over the City Council; and
- the intention was to ensure that all new vehicles would be as environmentally friendly as possible. They would receive power from the solar farm near to the re-cycling centre in Marsh Barton, reducing diesel costs as well as benefiting from the energy from the waste plant.

The Portfolio Holder commended the workforce for their hard work, commitment and involvement in the assessment process as a result of the Pandemic. He looked



forward to the pilot rollout to be followed by a full rollout across the city with a similar rollout of glass collection once Government plans became clearer.

The Leader also referred to the slow process of the Bill through Parliament and that, once greater clarity was obtained on legal requirements, local authorities would be in a better position to implement schemes.

The Leader moved and Councillor Williams seconded the recommendations and following a vote, the recommendations were carried.

In respect of **Minute No. 64 (Delivery of Net Zero Exeter)**, and during discussion the following points were made:-

- welcome the proposals to help deliver Net Zero Exeter and hope that the budget of £1 million identified would be sufficient and available;
- whether net zero champions were necessary; and
- would the Council publish its carbon budget and set out the trajectory to reach Carbon Zero by 2030?

The Portfolio Holder for Net Zero made the following points:-

- thanked all Councillors for their support;
- in spite of a number of years of austerity, the delivery of Net Zero Exeter remained a key Council policy as Climate Change was a global emergency that could not be ignored;
- support for the solar energy plant at Marsh Barton had been provided by European Union funding;
- HRH Prince Charles, during his recent visit, had been particularly impressed by the Council's Net Zero initiatives;
- Exeter City Futures was an important partner, for example, in helping deliver Co-Cars and Co-Bikes;
- the budget would facilitate the appointment of additional staff and a number of champions had already been identified within the Council and its partners such as the University of Exeter, Exeter College and the RD&E Hospital. All were very enthusiastic in helping to deliver the ambitions and many worked at ground level with day to day experiences of challenges and opportunities;
- the importance of involving the wider community and the general public; and
- the provision of updated information and reports at the appropriate time.

The Leader thanked the Director Finance and the Deputy Chief Finance Officer for identifying necessary funds for Net Zero as part of the Emergency Budget.

The Leaders of the opposition groups welcomed the report.

The Leader moved and Councillor Williams seconded the recommendations and following a vote, the recommendations were carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Executive held on 6 July 2021 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

**The meeting adjourned at 19.21 and re-convened at 19.29.**

The minutes of the Executive of 8 July 2021 were presented by the Leader, Councillor Bialyk, and taken as read.

In respect of **Minute No. 68 (East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge Joint Strategy : Scope, Resourcing Timetable and Governance)** and during discussion the following points were made:-

- the proposal to co-ordinate action across the authorities was sensible;
- the timetable for the consultation should be lengthened as a short period across the summer holidays on key matters was insufficient. A minimum period of eight weeks should be implemented with the timing of the consultation period reviewed;
- welcome the explanation of the carbon footprint implications and the consultations proposed within the joint strategy will contribute to the emerging Devon Carbon Plan; and
- need to clarify which target year the joint strategy is working towards given that each authority have different net zero climate dates.

The Leader advised that the City Council continued to work to its Net Zero target date of 2030 and with its three partners in bringing forward the joint strategy and that the City Council would also seek to learn from any lessons gained from Teignbridge District Council whose target date was 2025.

The Leader moved and Councillor Sutton seconded the recommendation and following a vote, the recommendation was carried.

In respect of **Minute No. 71 (Exeter Civic University Agreement)** and during discussion the following points were made:-

- whilst supporting the strategic objectives, the report was premature as the public consultation survey would not close until 14 August. As the survey would help shape the Agreement, the results of the consultation should be analysed first;
- practical actions should be identified, for example the University should underline its commitment to net zero by preventing students from bringing cars within the next couple of years unless required for mobility or academic reasons; and
- request deferral of the report.

The Leader responded that any amendments to the Agreement were to be delegated to the Chief Executive & Growth Director in consultation with himself and that he would liaise with the Group Leaders on any changes should they wish to discuss them with him. He welcomed and valued the active engagement of the University in the life of the city and looked forward to further improved connectivity. He also referred to the five world leading climate scientists currently working at the University.

The Leader moved and Councillor Sutton seconded the recommendations and following a vote, the recommendations were carried.

In respect of **Minute No. 72 (Consultation Charter)** the Leader moved and Councillor Sutton seconded the recommendation and following a vote, the recommendation was carried.

Councillors Morse and Vizard declared non-pecuniary interests and left the meeting during consideration of the following item.

In respect of **Minute No. 73 (Parliamentary Constituency Boundary Review)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Sutton seconded the following motion to amend the minute to read as follows:-

- (1) the Pinhoe Council ward should be suggested for inclusion in the revised Parliamentary Constituency to the east of the City, instead of Priory Council ward, as contained within the Boundary Commission's initial proposals;
- (2) the name of any new Parliamentary Constituency to the east of the city include a reference to the fact that it included a significant proportion of the city within its boundary, with the suggested name of Exmouth and East Exeter; and
- (3) instructs officers to inform the Boundary Commission for England of its views on the proposals.

The Boundary Commission had recommended in its latest review, that each constituency must have an electorate as at 2 March 2020, that was no smaller than 69,724 and no larger than 77,062. Legislation was intended to put into place by late 2023. The Exeter Constituency had a current electorate of 80,676 and was therefore deemed too large in the latest comparator figures. The current East Devon Constituency had an electorate of 75,387. The Boundary Commission had reviewed the current boundaries of both these parliamentary constituencies and had proposed that the existing arrangement be extended to include all of the Priory, St Loyes and Topsham city wards, thereby ensuring that the new Exeter Parliamentary Constituency electorate falls within the range set by the Boundary Commission, and does not continue the current practice of splitting City Council wards.

The Leader set out the wider historical and geographic background to the Boundary Commission proposal and stated that it would be more appropriate for the existing Pinhoe ward to be included in the new parliamentary constituency instead of the Priory ward. This would ensure that all three of the most easterly City Council wards, which border the East Devon administrative area, would be included in the new constituency, allowing for there to be a contiguous boundary between the two authorities. Furthermore, Pinhoe retained some of its rurality which would sit better with the more rural constituency of Exmouth. The Leader stated that Pinhoe was a vital and integral part of Exeter, the parish having been brought into the city in 1966 and emphasised that it would not be moving Pinhoe into East Devon but that it would remain as part of the city of Exeter.

The Leader stated that Priory and Pinhoe had exactly the same numbers of electorate of 6,399 but Pinhoe, with a boundary with East Devon, had room to expand, was expanding and was likely to continue to do so, whereas Priory was reasonably static and part of urban Exeter. The Priory ward was important historically with no connection or boundary to the East Devon constituency. The Boundary Commission proposal would mean the parliamentary boundary stretching too far into the urban heart of the City and, as a result, the following would be included in the new boundary - the RD&E Hospital, Wyvern Barracks, Exeter and Devon Crematorium, St Loyes Chapel, Wonford House, Wynstream Primary, Countess Wear Village, ISCA Academy and the West of England School for the Partially Sighted. Wonford, within the urban Priory ward, had its own history with housing built for the working class in the 1930's and 1940's and also included the Ludwell Valley Park.

The Leader asked Members to support the proposition of including the Pinhoe ward, and not Priory ward, in the new Parliamentary Constituency.

Councillor Leadbetter, speaking as an opposition leader, supported the proposition and stated that, whilst the whole of the St Loyes and Topsham wards would move into the new constituency, they too were still very much part of Exeter.

Councillor Wood, speaking as a Pinhoe ward Councillor, and as a Pinhoe resident stated that Pinhoe was part of the Exeter City Council area as well as the city of Exeter with its residents feeling a strong allegiance to the city itself and that, as such, he could not support its inclusion in the new constituency.

Councillor Sparling supported the retention of the Priory ward within Exeter, with the Pinhoe ward moved to the new parliamentary constituency which she believed should be known as Exmouth and East Exeter, emphasising that Pinhoe would remain a part of the city. Pinhoe had a separate identity from the city and residents already had links to East Devon such as the village of Broadclyst and would be suitable for a mixed urban and rural constituency. Moreover, the inclusion of Priory would result in the boundary extending too far into Exeter.

Councillor Mrs Henson felt that, given Exeter's history, its name should receive prominence in the name of the new constituency.

Councillor M. Mitchell stated that the Boundary Commission sought to have regard to geographic factors in identifying and naming constituencies and that, even with adding the whole of the Boundary Commission's suggested three wards, Exeter would not possess the majority population. Members noted that representations were sought from other interested parties and the general public and that there was unlikely to be wide support in East Devon for a minority area being the first name of a constituency.

Councillor Mrs Henson moved and Councillor Holland seconded an amendment to the motion that the name of the new parliamentary constituency should read Exeter East and Exmouth. The amendment was put to the vote and LOST.

Councillor Wardle, speaking as a Priory Ward Councillor, stated that the Boundary Commission had largely undertaken the consultation as a paper exercise and had not taken into account the history of the area and the nature of the communities within the Priory ward. Wonford, an integral part of the Priory ward, possessed long standing links with the city of Exeter going as far back as the 10<sup>th</sup> Century and the Domesday Book. Furthermore, Priory residents felt that the ward was an integral part of the city of Exeter and considered linkage to East Devon as absurd.

Councillor Harvey, speaking as a Pinhoe ward Councillor, supported the retention of Pinhoe within the Exeter constituency. Pinhoe, as well as the East Devon boundary area, were experiencing considerable growth which was likely to continue. Ultimately, the statistics of the new constituency would not match the comparator figures of other constituencies across the country and, as a result, a further review would be necessary. He also referred to the confusion much of the electorate were likely to experience as a result of the proposals.

The Leader, in concluding, re-iterated that Pinhoe would remain as part of the city's family of wards and estimated that, if Pinhoe would become part of the new constituency, the electorate split could be approximately 73,000 in Exeter and 75/76,000 in the new constituency.

The Leader moved and Councillor Sutton seconded the substantive motion and it was **RESOLVED** that:-

- (1) the Pinhoe Council ward should be included in the revised Parliamentary Constituency to the east of the City;
- (2) the name of any new parliamentary constituency to the east of the city to include a reference to the fact that a significant proportion of the city lies within its boundary, with the suggested name to be Exmouth and East Exeter; and
- (3) officers be instructed to inform the Boundary Commission for England of its views on the proposals.

In respect of **Minute No. 74 (Food Law and Health and Safety Enforcement Service Plan 2021-2022)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Sutton seconded the recommendations and following a vote, the recommendations were carried unanimously

In respect of **Minute No. 75 (Funeral Service Provision Review 2021)**, a Member referred to future land use and space requirements for whole body burials especially on religious grounds where cremation might not be considered suitable.

The Leader undertook for a response to be provided to Members on this issue.

The Leader moved and Councillor Sutton seconded the recommendation and following a vote, the recommendation was carried unanimously.

In respect of **Minute No. 77 (Members' Training)**, a Member raised issues around on-line training and difficulties that had occurred during the Pandemic and to any implications if sessions could not be attended by Members. The Leader explained the importance of training and that all training sessions were recorded and archived. Any concerns or anxieties could be examined by the Councillor Development Steering Group.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Executive held on 8 July 2021 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

47

#### **CHANGE IN MEMBERSHIPS**

The Leader reported that Councillor Pearson had stepped down as an Executive Member and Portfolio Holder and thanked him for the work he had undertaken in this role. The responsibilities previously covered within his Portfolio Holder would be split between himself and the Deputy Leader.

The Leader also reported the following changes to the Harbour Board:-

Councillors Allcock and Pearce to replace Councillors Sills and Pearson.

48

#### **FIRST HOMES PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT**

The Portfolio Holder for City Development presented the report seeking formal agreement of the content and publication on the Council's website of a First Homes Planning Policy Statement, setting out how the Council's existing planning policies on affordable housing would be interpreted in the light of the First Homes Written Ministerial Statement and Planning Practice Guidance.

It was important that the Council published a First Homes Statement as soon as possible as the Government had introduced the policy in June and it was now in practice. Due to this urgency and the timing of the Government's First Homes announcement, it had not been possible to take this report to Executive before bringing it to Council.

The Portfolio Holder explained that, instead of the shared principle of affordable housing, a First House Policy would be introduced to allow sale with a 30% discount of the market value. This was to be applied in perpetuity. The Council would not bind itself to the policy as it would be reviewed as part of the Local Plan process.

In response to a Member's question, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that the following issues along with all other issues would be addressed as part of the Local Plan Review:-

- the ability to set either a 40% or 50% discount if local evidence demonstrated that need and viability, the evidence to be tested through the Local Housing Needs Assessment being prepared to inform the emerging Local Plan; and
- in respect of concerns regarding house prices and affordability especially for one or two bed flats, the ability to set a lower price cap if a need can be demonstrated.

The Leader moved and Councillor Morse seconded the recommendations and they were carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED** that:-

- (1) the content of the First Homes Planning Policy Statement attached as an appendix to the report, which included a revised version of Exeter Core Strategy Policy CP7 that took account of the Government's Written Ministerial Statement and Planning Policy Guidance on First Homes, for use as a material consideration in determining relevant planning applications be agreed; and
- (2) the First Homes Planning Policy Statement be published on Exeter City Council's website.

49

#### **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER STANDING ORDER NO 8**

In accordance with Standing Order No. 8, the following question was put by Councillor Jobson to the Portfolio Holder for City Management.

**Can the Portfolio Holder confirm that the glass re-cycling vehicle is back and working at full capacity and when residents might expect the backlog to be cleared and all glass re-cycling containers, including those at supermarkets, to be fully operational?**

The Portfolio Holder for City Management responded that the glass collection vehicle is now back on the road, we are up to date with all glass igloo collections from around the city, and the backlog has been cleared. Guidance was awaited from the Government on the operation of the proposed Deposit Return Scheme included within the Environment Bill currently going through Parliament. Only when further information was known could changes be made to the Council's bottle bank policy.

***Councillor Jobson asked a supplementary question as to whether there was a contingency plan going to be put in place to prevent problems recurring?***

The Portfolio Holder responded that there were no plans to change the Council's approach until it was clear what was required under the Deposit Return Scheme.

In accordance with Standing Order No. 8, the following question was put by Councillor D. Moore to the Portfolio Holder for City Development.

**Please can the Portfolio Holder detail the issues for consideration in reviewing Exeter's CIL Charging Schedule?**

The Portfolio Holder responded that the key issues currently being considered were:-

- proposed changes to planning policy via the Planning White Paper and the Planning Bill which identify revisions to the system for securing funding from development;
- the impact of Covid-19 on development viability and therefore the level of charge which can be levied on different types of development; and
- the need for further, coordinated viability work for the CIL review, the Local Plan and the Liveable Exeter programme.

***Councillor D. Moore asked a supplementary question that, given the Council was going to great lengths to de-risk and secure investment for difficult Liveable Exeter sites, whether it should recoup its investment by ensuring developers of Liveable Exeter sites fully contribute to the CIL to the infrastructure necessary for sustainable communities?***

The Portfolio Holder responded that an answer would be provided by the appropriate Portfolio Holder.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 8.30 pm)

Chair