

COUNCIL

Monday 18 October 2021

Present:-

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

Councillors Allcock, Atkinson, Begley, Bialyk, Branston, Buswell, Denning, Foale, Ghusain, Hannaford, Mrs Henson, Jobson, Leadbetter, Lights, Martin, A, Mitchell, K, Mitchell, M, Moore, D, Moore, J, Morse, Packham, Pearce, Pearson, Sheldon, Sills, Sparkes, Sparling, Sutton, Vizard, Wardle, Warwick, Williams, Wood and Wright

Also Present

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PETER EDWARDS - FORMER LEADER OF EXETER CITY COUNCIL

The Lord Mayor reported with deep sadness the death of Peter Edwards, the former Leader of Exeter City Council. She, with Councillor Phil Bialyk, the Council Leader had, on behalf of Exeter City Council, expressed sincere condolences to Peter's family.

A tribute video of Peter Edwards was shown, which highlighted his huge achievements for the city over the years, including his farewell interview on his retirement with Karime Hassan, the Chief Executive & Growth Director.

Members stood and applauded in memory of Peter.

The Leader of the Council, led a series of tributes to Peter's outstanding contribution to the life of the city during his many years of service.

He stated that it had been a huge privilege to have known Peter as a loyal friend, having first met in the early 1970's when both had been employed by the then Devon General and as a colleague, at work and through the Transport Union, as a Labour Party member and as a Councillor. Peter had provided valuable support and encouragement in all these areas.

Peter had cared immensely for his home city and had served the people of Exeter in different capacities throughout his life. He was highly respected and held in high regard across the city, epitomised the previous Saturday at St. James Park in the tribute from Exeter City FC supporters.

The Leader continued by praising Peter's commitment, vision and judgement in leading the Council and referred to his many achievements. Of these, the most recent were the new Exeter Bus Station and the soon to be completed St. Sidwell's Point. Peter had been particularly committed to delivering a Passivhaus Leisure Centre of the highest quality for the enjoyment of future generations which would now be a fitting legacy to the work of a remarkable person.

The Chief Executive & Growth Director, on behalf of Council staff, praised Peter for the outstanding personal qualities he had shown as Council Leader. He had shown vision and courage, particularly during challenging times when difficult decisions had to be made and his many achievements were testimony to his drive and

ambition for the city. The Chief Executive made specific reference to some of these achievements such as the support for the investment in new flood defences to protect the city; the delivery, in his initial role as a Portfolio Holder and then as Leader, of new homes, of which many were affordable; ensuring John Lewis would be opened in Exeter which had been a key driver in maintaining a vibrant High Street; supporting the Exeter Chiefs in securing Sandy Park as one of the UK venues hosting the 2015 Rugby World Cup; helping attract the BBC Radio One Big Weekend event to Powderham Castle; as well as leading the delivery of the new Exeter Bus Station and St Sidwell's Point.

Councillor Leadbetter, as the leader of an opposition group, echoed the sentiments expressed, commending Peter's vision for the city and praising his commitment, dedication and service to Exeter and residents.

Councillor K. Mitchell, as a co-leader of an opposition group, referred to the genuine warmth and personable qualities of Peter, to his sense of humour and the sound advice he often provided, He referred particularly to the support shown to him in respect of LGBT matters which reflected Peter's true caring nature.

The Deputy Leader, Councillor Wright, in reflecting on Peter's legacy, referred to the naming of the Extra Care Unit as Edwards Court as a further, fitting tribute to his work. She also mentioned the encouragement and support he had given her in her early days as a Councillor and his faith in her with Portfolio responsibilities. Peter had been particularly keen to bring forward the development of newer and younger Councillors soon after they joined the Council.

Councillors Morse, Mrs Henson, Sutton, Hannaford, Warwick, Wardle, Sheldon and Sills paid their own tributes to Peter's many qualities, many referring to their personal memories of him.

The Lord Mayor concluded with her own personal memory of the help and support that Peter had provided and noted that Members' thoughts were with Peter's family and friends at this difficult time.

The meeting adjourned at 7.20 pm and re-convened at 7.35 pm.

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APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Harvey, Holland, Newby and Quance.

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MINUTES

The minutes of the Ordinary and Extraordinary meetings of the Council held on 21 July 2021 were moved by the Leader, Councillor Bialyk and seconded by the Deputy Leader, Councillor Wright taken as read, approved and signed as correct.

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COUNCILLOR IAN QUANCE

The Lord Mayor reported that, because of his illness, the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Quance had last attended a meeting on 18 May 2021 - the Annual General Meeting - meaning his six month period for attendance would expire on 18 November 2021. The Lord Mayor therefore asked Members to approve an extension for any further absence by Councillor Quance up to the end of the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

The Leader moved that the Council approve an extension for any further absence up to the end of the 2021/22 Municipal Year. The motion was seconded by Councillor Wardle put to the vote and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED that an extension in respect of any further absence by Councillor Quance to the end of the 2021/22 Municipal Year be approved.

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OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Lord Mayor passed on her condolences, and those of Council Members, to the family and friends of Rick Lawrence who had worked at the RAMM and who had recently passed away.

The Lord Mayor also passed on her condolences, and those of Council Members, to the family and friends of Joe Mann MBE who had tragically died at the controls of a light aircraft last month. He had been Chair of the Devon Disability Collective and an Exeter City Councillor in 1994. He had been dedicated to the work of securing rights in the working place for disabled people which had led to changes that had transformed the law and informed both the Disability Discrimination Act in 1995 and the Equality Act 2000. The Lord Mayor reported that the City Council was working in partnership with Devon County Council to create a living memorial to Joe, aiming for an apprenticeship scheme for disabled people based at the County Council.

The Lord Mayor expressed her condolences, and those of Council Members, to the family of Sir David Amess MP who had been tragically killed in his constituency on 15 October 2021. She was pleased to report that HM the Queen had agreed to approve city status for Southend in honour of Sir David.

The Lord Mayor also reported the following:-

- the shortlisting of the new Exeter Bus Station for a prestigious regional award in the Building of the Year over £5 million category of the Michelmores Law Property Awards;
- the online consultation, following a one day exhibition, on the new Local Plan for Exeter which would run until 15 November 2021;
- her good wishes to all participants in the forthcoming international women's rugby tournament and to England's Red Roses rugby team in their match at Sandy Park against New Zealand's Black Ferns on 31 October 2021;
- her intention to take part in the Co Bikes #COP26 Challenge; and
- the appointment of Deputy Chief Executive, Bindu Arjoon as the new Chair of the Corporation of Exeter College.

The Lord Mayor advised that she had attended the following:-

- Gareth Steenson's Freemanship Ceremony in recognition of his years of service to the Exeter Chiefs, rugby and the city;
- the High Sheriff of Devon's Legal Service held on 12 October 2021, also attended by the Judiciary Service, Judges, Barristers, Council and Emergency Services leaders as well as other dignitaries from across the region;
- the Navratri celebration at the Hindu Temple and the Coldstream Guards Association Annual Lunch, both on 9 October 2021; and
- the Lord Mayor's Coffee morning on 16 October 2021 helping to raise funds for Inclusive Exeter her chosen charity to support project work across the city.

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PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Lord Mayor reported that no public questions had been received.

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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.

57

PLANNING COMMITTEE - 6 SEPTEMBER 2021

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 6 September 2021 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Morse, and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 6 September 2021 be received.

58

LICENSING COMMITTEE - 14 SEPTEMBER 2021

The minutes of the Licensing Committee of 14 September 2021 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Buswell, and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Licensing Committee held on 14 September 2021 be received.

59

STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 23 SEPTEMBER 2021

The minutes of the Strategic Scrutiny Committee of 23 September 2021 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Sills and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Strategic Scrutiny Committee held on 23 September 2021 be received.

60

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - 28 JULY 2021

The minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee of 28 July 2021 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Wardle, and taken as read.

In respect of **Minute No. 55 (Annual Governance Statement 2020/21)**, the Chair moved and Councillor Atkinson seconded the recommendation and following a vote, it was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 28 July 2021 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

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AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - 29 SEPTEMBER 2021

The minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee of 29 September 2021 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Wardle, and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 29 September 2021 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

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STRATA JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 12 JULY 2021

The minutes of the Strata Joint Scrutiny Committee of 12 July 2021 were presented by Councillor Atkinson, and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Strata Joint Scrutiny Committee held on 12 July 2021 be received.

63

HARBOUR BOARD - 27 SEPTEMBER 2021

The minutes of the Harbour Board of 27 September 2021 were presented by Councillor Pearce, and taken as read.

The Leader, in response to a question from a Member, confirmed that he would raise the issue of the impact of sewerage and field water run-off on the water quality of the Exe Estuary and its wildlife as well as wider environmental impacts in line with the Council's Net Zero 2030 goal with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and City Management and the Director with a view to this issue being considered by the Harbour Board.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Harbour Board held on 27 September 2021 be received.

64

EXECUTIVE - 7 SEPTEMBER 2021

The minutes of the Executive of 7 September 2021 were presented by the Leader, Councillor Bialyk, and taken as read.

In respect of **Minute No. 85 (Air Quality Annual Status Report)**, the Leader undertook to ensure that a question from a Member regarding the importance of meeting the World Health Organisation targets for carbon reduction and a request for a full discussion on Air Quality by the relevant Scrutiny Committee to ensure the lives of residents and communities are not adversely affected by polluted air, would be raised with the Net Zero team. A full response would be circulated to all Members.

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

In respect of **Minute No. 88 (Belle Isle Depot)**, the Leader, in response to a query from a Member confirmed that there was no intention to involve any part of Belle Isle Park in the re-development of the Belle Isle Depot.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Executive held on 7 September 2021 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

65

EXECUTIVE - 5 OCTOBER 2021

The minutes of the Executive of 5 October 2021 were presented by the Leader, Councillor Bialyk, and taken as read.

In respect of **Minute No. 93 (Northbrook Park Update)**, the Leader, in response to a question from a Member, agreed that the Council's ambitions for North Brook Park was a continuation of the legacy championed by former Councillor Ivy Johns of protecting the Ludwell Valley and bringing it into the wider Valley Park system across the city. He also remarked that Peter Edwards had been similarly committed to Exeter's Valley Parks in supporting increased acreage for Ludwell Valley Park

and supporting the wider health and environmental benefits of protecting and enhancing the city's Valley Parks and open spaces.

In respect of **Minute No. 94 (Government Consultation on Giving Police and Crime Commissioner Greater Powers of Competence)**, the Deputy Leader, in response to a Member's query, referred to the work of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Police and Crime Panel, of which she was a Member, in combating violence towards, and harassment of, women and girls and the commitment to promoting greater education to help mitigate these issues.

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

In respect of **Minute No. 95 (Overview of General Fund Revenue Budget 2021/22 – Quarter 1)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded the recommendations and following a vote, the recommendations were carried.

In respect of **Minute No. 96 (General Fund Capital Monitoring Statement – Quarter 1)** the Leader, in response to Members' queries, advised that:-

- the issue of anti-social behavior on the Quay had been raised with the Police;
- the potential for replacing the Mallison Bridge would be raised at the December meeting of the Exeter Canal and Quay Trust but that, given the significant pressures on the Council budget, offering Council support to help replace the bridge was not a priority at present; and
- Members would be provided with a breakdown of the additional £50,000 annual budget provision for IT purposes, including the purchase of new iPad's for Councillors.

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

In respect of **Minute No. 97 (HRA Budget Monitoring Report – Quarter 1)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded the recommendations and following a vote, the recommendations were carried unanimously.

In respect of **Minute No. 98 (Review of the Council's Governance Arrangements)**, Councillor Hannaford, as Chair of the Governance Review Board, commended the recommendations. In particular, he supported the proposed amendment to the Petition Scheme so that petitioners would be required to indicate through the tick box facility on the petition form, which of the eligibility criteria of living, working or studying in Exeter, they were relying on when signing the petition. He explained that it was not appropriate for individuals, other than those with clear links to the city, to lobby on issues directly affecting Exeter and its citizens.

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

In respect of **Minute No. 99 (Amendments to the Scheme of Delegation)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded the recommendation and following a vote, the recommendation was carried unanimously.

In respect of **Minute No. 101 (Members' Training)** and **Minute No. 102 (Acquisition of Property to Support Liveable Exeter)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded that both minutes be considered at the end of the

remaining business on the agenda in Part II with the Press and Public Excluded.
The motion was put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Executive held on 5 October 2021 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

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CHAIR OF STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded the appointment of Councillor Denning as Chair of the Strategic Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor D. Moore moved and Councillor K. Mitchell seconded the appointment of Councillor Sparling as Chair of the Strategic Scrutiny Committee.

Both proposals were voted upon, the majority being in favour of Councillor Denning as Chair of the Committee.

RESOLVED that Councillor Denning be appointed Chair of the Strategic Scrutiny Committee.

67

NOTICE OF MOTION BY COUNCILLOR PEARCE UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 6

Councillor Pearce, seconded by Councillor Sheldon, moved a Notice of Motion in the following terms:-

Standing Up for Responsible Tax Conduct

Full Council notes that:

1. The pressure on organisations to pay the right amount of tax in the right place at the right time has never been stronger.
2. Polling from the Institute for Business Ethics finds that “corporate tax avoidance” has, since 2013, been the clear number one concern of the British public when it comes to business conduct.
3. Almost two-thirds (63%) of the public agree that the Government and local councils should consider a company’s ethics and how they pay their tax as well as value for money and quality of service provided, when undertaking procurement.
4. Around 17.5% of public contracts in the UK have been won by companies with links to tax havens.
5. It has been conservatively estimated that losses from multinational profit-shifting (just one form of tax avoidance) could be costing the UK some £7bn per annum in lost corporation tax revenues.
6. The Fair Tax Mark offers a means for business to demonstrate good tax conduct, and has been secured by organisations with a combined annual income of £50bn and more than 6,500 outlets and premises, including many social enterprises and co-operatives.

Full Council believes that:

1. Paying tax is often presented as a burden, but it shouldn’t be.
2. Tax enables us to provide services from education, health and social care, to flood defence, roads, policing and defence. It also helps to counter financial inequalities and rebalance distorted economies.
3. As recipients of significant public funding, local authorities should take the lead in the promotion of exemplary tax conduct; be that by ensuring contractors are

paying their proper share of tax, or by refusing to go along with offshore tax dodging when buying land and property.

4. Where substantive stakes are held in private enterprises, then influence should be wielded to ensure that such businesses are exemplars of tax transparency and tax avoidance is shunned - e.g., no use of marketed schemes requiring disclosure under DOTAS regulations (Disclosure Of Tax Avoidance Schemes) or arrangements that might fall foul of the General Anti-Abuse Rule.
5. More action is needed, however, current law significantly restricts councils' ability to either penalise poor tax conduct or reward good tax conduct, when buying goods or services.
6. UK cities, counties and towns can and should stand up for responsible tax conduct - doing what they can within existing frameworks and pledging to do more given the opportunity, as active supporters of international tax justice.

Full Council resolves to:-

1. Approve the Councils for Fair Tax Declaration.
2. Lead by example and demonstrate good practice in our tax conduct, right across our activities.
3. Ensure contractors implement IR35 robustly and pay a fair share of employment taxes.
4. Not use offshore vehicles for the purchase of land and property, especially where this leads to reduced payments of stamp duty.
5. Undertake due diligence to ensure that not-for-profit structures are not being used inappropriately as an artificial device to reduce the payment of tax and business rates.
6. Demand clarity on the ultimate beneficial ownership of suppliers and their consolidated profit & loss position.
7. Promote Fair Tax Mark certification for any business in which we have a significant stake and where corporation tax is due.
8. Support Fair Tax Week events in the area, and celebrate the tax contribution made by responsible businesses who say what they pay with pride.
9. Support calls for urgent reform of EU and UK law to enable local authorities to better penalise poor tax conduct and reward good tax conduct through their procurement policies.

The Leader supported the motion, particularly the principle of fair tax. The Council was operating in a fully tax compliant manner and should there be any budgetary issues involved in implementation, the matter would be brought to Executive for consideration.

Members made the following comments:-

- in supporting the Motion, the one concern was whether the Council has the resources to undertake the necessary actions, particularly in respect of recommendation 6 in tracing ownership and clarity on the ultimate beneficial ownership of suppliers;
- recognize that the Council already operates within the framework of the Inland Revenue Service IR35 rule;
- welcome cross party support for this initiative;
- note that the issue of fair tax is widely acknowledged both internationally and by many Councils and organisations in the UK; and
- issue of due diligence can be examined through the Audit and Governance Committee.

In presenting his Motion, Councillor Pearce thanked Members for their support and made the following points:-

- paying tax should not be viewed as a burden but of benefit to the wider community and as an anchor to many institutions. It can assist the Council in its wider aspirations such as its Green agenda and its Net Zero 2030 target;
- whilst recognising the resource implications, the Council can lead the way, set standards and be an example to other organisations in the city, particularly with regard to due diligence; and
- a minimum Corporation Tax of 20% is already recognised globally with many businesses signing up.

Councillor Pearce commended the Motion to Council.

Cllr Sheldon, in seconding the Motion, made the following points:-

- reflecting Theodore Roosevelt's quote of "Taxes are what we pay for a civilised society", taxes should be used for the wider benefit of the community and enhance and support public services; and
- it was important to demand clarity on the ultimate beneficial ownership of suppliers.

The Notice of Motion was put to the vote and CARRIED.

68

NOTICE OF MOTION BY COUNCILLOR WRIGHT UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 6

Councillor Wright, seconded by Councillor Ghusain, moved a Notice of Motion in the following terms:-

Universal Credit Uplift Removal

The Council notes that:-

1. More than 5.8 million people nationally claim universal credit and 40% are in work.
2. 8,118 people in Exeter claim Universal credit of which around 43% are in work
3. The Rountree Foundation has warned that the cut of £20 per week will plunge half a million more people into poverty, including 200,000 children.
4. Inflation jumped to 3.2% (Consumer price Index) in August this year -up from 2% in July. This raise in inflation is predicted to continue through the winter months (office for National Statistics)
5. Fuel costs are rising (currently at 12% increase) particularly affecting people on pre-payment meters. (OfGem July 2021). Most providers put pre-payment customers on the highest tariff, creating even more disadvantage for those already on the poverty line.
6. Rents have risen by 5.6% in the last 6 months -at the fastest rate since 2015.

The Council believes that:-

to withhold essential financial help to more than 5.8million Universal Credit claimants will have disastrous negative implications on health and well-being,

education, community well-being and the economy. This situation will then create increased financial burden on the Treasury to mitigate against these implications.

Exeter City Council calls for:-

1. HM Government to conduct an urgent review into the payment levels of Universal Credit in relation to the rise in food costs, fuel costs, rent increases and in the light of the removal of the £87 per month uplift afforded during the first tranche of the Covid-19 pandemic.
2. A raise in payment levels in line with the ongoing inflated costs of food, fuel and rents.

In presenting her Motion, Councillor Wright spoke from personal experience of the difficulties as a single mother in bringing up children with limited resources and stated that current circumstances were no different.

Councillor D. Moore, as a co-leader of an opposition group, referred to the areas in the city with the highest levels of indices of multiple deprivation which, combined with other financial pressures, would inevitably be the hardest hit. She also referred to the inadequate allocation of £5 million to Devon County Council from a Government nationwide Hardship Fund of £500 million.

Councillor Leadbetter, as the leader of an opposition group, stated that he could support recommendation 1 but not recommendation 2 and asked for separate votes to be taken, Councillor Wright, as mover of the Motion, agreed to his request.

Councillor Ghusain, in seconding the Motion, expressed her surprise that the Government had sought to remove the uplift at a time when food, fuel and heating costs were on the rise, thereby impacting on the poorest families and individuals. Noting that 43% of those on Universal Credit in Exeter were in work, she referred to certain companies now only taking employees back after the Pandemic on lower wages. She urged a review by the Government and an increase of Universal Credit in line with inflation.

Members made the following comments:-

- the removal of the uplift is contrary to Government levelling up aspirations;
- statistics on the disparity between rentals and the Universal Credit support were highlighted at the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee on 7 October 2021 forcing many to save on food and fuel costs in order to afford to pay their rents;
- the Exeter Food Bank provided support other than food and many people were forced to work more than one job to survive and suggesting that individuals work an extra couple of hours does not address the problem;
- the House of Commons Work and Pensions Select Committee had highlighted the rise in food poverty and the number of families living below the headline even before the Pandemic, a situation now exacerbated by this Government decision;
- over half of staff in education report providing food and clothing for children;
- the cuts total £87 a month which represents a potential loss of a weekly shop and the Government Hardship Grant is effectively a return to the Poor Laws administration by local parishes and the unsympathetic narrative of the “undeserving poor”; and

- it is merely a subsistence benefit and a civilised society should accept responsibility and support those who, by reason of birth or bad luck, cannot adequately support themselves.

Councillor Wright commended the Motion to Council.

Both parts of the recommendation were put to the vote. Recommendation 1 was CARRIED unanimously and recommendation 2 was CARRIED.

The meeting adjourned at 9.00 pm and re-convened at 9.10 pm.

69

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 Holland to the Portfolio Holder for City Management.

Councillor Holland was unable to be present and his question was read out by the Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support.

Could the Portfolio Holder for City Development outline the procedure followed by Exeter City Council when notifying Devon County Council where permission has been granted for a 'Change of Use' from a domestic dwelling to a House of Multiple Occupancy? Also, how many such notifications have been made to the County Council during the last 15 months?

The Portfolio Holder for City Development responded that the City Council does not currently have a procedure for notifying Devon County Council where permission has been granted for a 'Change of Use' from a domestic dwelling to a House of Multiple Occupancy. There is no obligation to do this, and Devon County Council has not requested the information. All planning decisions are published online and are available for public viewing.

In accordance with Standing Order No. 8, the following question was put by Councillor D. Moore to the Leader

A prospectus for a Development Fund in Exeter was recently published. This showed the structure of an 'asset backed' investment fund, with the City Council, NHS Trust, County Council and University all being the first entrants into this fund, putting in assets as an equity stake. Please can the Portfolio Holder explain which type of Council asset has been used for the modelling that underpins this prospectus?

The Leader advised that a prospectus had not been 'published' for a development fund in Exeter and that an expression of interest which went to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, was available on the Exeter City Futures website. This was part of the bid process to secure funding to develop a business case for an alternative way of funding the delivery programme for Liveable Exeter. The documentation did not imply commitment from any of the parties mentioned including the City Council. As part of the strategic case Exeter City Futures was exploring optimal structures for a Fund to establish its value-in-use to the city - with no specific assets yet earmarked for detailed modelling.

Councillor D. Moore, in asking a supplementary question, enquired if it was the intention to report back on the outcome of the above explorations and what scrutiny of these was likely to occur.

The Leader responded that it was too early in the process to bring forward any detail but that the Executive would be advised at the appropriate time and that the normal scrutiny channels would be available if required.

70 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded the recommendation to move into Part II to exclude the press and public and following a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

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 items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1,2 and 3 of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Act.

71 **EXECUTIVE - 5 OCTOBER 2021**

In respect of **Minute No. 101 (Members' Training)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Foale seconded the recommendation and following a vote, the recommendation was carried unanimously.

In respect of **Minute No. 102 (Acquisition of Property to Support Liveable Exeter)**, Members discussed the implications of the Council's attempt to acquire and make enhancements to a City Centre property in terms of the contribution it would make to a key area of the city, the Council's overall Place Shaping ambitions and property portfolio and the longer term financial commitment.

In considering the practicalities of the investment and potential risks, particular reference was made to:-

- the opportunity would enable the Council to control long term investment in a key area to support the continued regeneration of the City as well as securing public ownership of a prime city asset;
- detailed discussions with HM Treasury, following which an agreement had been made, that the purchase would be suitable for the Liveable Exeter vision; and
- the longer term risk to the Council.

The Leader, in summarising the Council's intention, emphasised the Place Shaping implications, particularly the delivery of homes elsewhere in the city, as part of the Liveable Exeter vision. He referred to other major projects brought forward by the Council and suggested that the Council's vision for this area would similarly contribute to further growth and prosperity to the benefit of the wider city and its residents. He acknowledged the need for due diligence and for available options and progress to be presented to Members for approval.

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

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 9.47 pm)

Chair