



## Exeter City Council

A meeting of **EXETER CITY COUNCIL** will be held on **TUESDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2022** on the rising of the Extraordinary Meeting of Council which commences at 6.00 pm at **THE LECTURE THEATRE, INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, EXETER COLLEGE MAIN SITE CAMPUS, HELE ROAD, EXETER** at which you are hereby summoned to attend.

This meeting is open to the public and those addressing the Council under the public speaking provisions in agenda item 3, but because of current social distancing restrictions brought about by the Corona Virus outbreak, any members of the public wishing to attend the meeting should contact the Democratic Services Team [committee.services@exeter.gov.uk](mailto:committee.services@exeter.gov.uk) in advance, as there is limited capacity for public attendance. Priority will be given to those addressing the Council under the public speaking provisions.

In line with the advice from Steve Brown, Director of Public Health, all attendees are kindly requested to take a Lateral Flow Test prior to the meeting.

Further details for the meeting at Exeter College, including COVID compliant protocols, will follow closer to the meeting.

The recording of the meeting will be uploaded onto YouTube as soon as possible.

If you have an enquiry regarding any items on this agenda, please contact John Street, Corporate Manager Democratic & Civic Support on 01392 265106.

The following business is proposed to be transacted:-

	Pages
1 Minutes	
To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2021.	3 - 14
2 Official Communications	
3 Public Questions	Pages
Details of questions should be notified to the Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support at least three working days prior to the meeting - by 10am on Thursday 17 February 2022. Further information and a copy of the procedure are available from Democratic Services (Committees) (Tel: 01392 265115) with details about speaking at Council to be found here: <a href="#">Public Speaking at Meetings</a> .	

To receive minutes of the following Committees and to determine thereon:-

4 Licensing Committee - 1 February 2022	15 - 16
5 Combined Strategic Scrutiny and Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee - 10 February 2022	17 - 22

6	Strata Joint Executive Committee - 19 January 2022	23 - 26
7	Executive - 11 January 2022	27 - 34
8	Executive - 8 February 2022	35 - 44
9	Change in Membership - Harbour Board Notice of Motion	

Pages

10 Notice of Motion by Councillor Wardle under Standing Order No. 6.

This Council is concerned to learn from Stagecoach about the reductions to bus services in Exeter from 24 January 2022 and also from South Western Railway (First Group) to broadly half the number of trains and make a change of trains at Salisbury necessary for passengers to and from London Waterloo from 17 January 2022, noting that these reductions are apparently due to staff shortages related to Covid.

However, this Council also notes the imminent lifting of restrictions by HM Government and the encouragement to employees to return to their workplaces rather than working from home. These developments, along with the continuing expansion in the area, are very likely to encourage car usage to at least pre-Covid levels and, in consequence, a rise in congestion and emissions running counter to Council policies on carbon reduction.

This Council considers that radical solutions are needed to public transport in Exeter in addition to the reversal of the above named cuts. It calls for a wide ranging examination by the Exeter City Council Transport Working Group of the possibilities, for example, of Council run bus services (as existed in Exeter 1904-1970), bus and train performance contracts, electric buses, a city wide tram system, emission charging for road vehicles and workplace parking levies to fund transport improvements.

11 Questions from Members of the Council under Standing Order No. 8.

Date: Monday 14 February 2022

Karime Hassan  
Chief Executive & Growth Director

## COUNCIL

### HELD AT COUNTY HALL

Tuesday 14 December 2021

#### Present:-

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

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

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#### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Atkinson, Buswell, Martin, Pearson, Quance, Vizard, Warwick and Williams.

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#### MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 18 October 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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#### OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Lord Mayor passed on her condolences, and those of Council Members, to the family and friends of Alderman Joan Richardson, a former Mayor, Councillor and Alderman of this city who had recently passed away.

The Lord Mayor also passed on her condolences, and those of Council Members, to the family, friends and colleagues of Peter Jones who had died unexpectedly. Peter, with his colleague Penny, ran a marketing company called Smith & Jones, working across Exeter with the Council's key partners, residents and staff as one of the co-founders of Exeter Live Better - positioning the city as The Brilliant Alternative. Peter wanted to put people's wellbeing and quality of life at the heart of everything and recognised the outstanding qualities the city had to offer. He would often say that 'Exeter hides its light under a bushel - and then hides the bushel'.

The Lord Mayor received a petition from the residents of Albert Street which would be responded to in accordance with the petition scheme.

The Lord Mayor also reported the following:-

- the return home of HMS Defender, the City's Affiliated Ship, which had been at sea for more than seven months. The Lord Mayor had recently spoken to Commander Vince Owen, the Commanding Officer via a zoom call;
- the appointment of the Right Reverend Robert Atwell to the House of Lords who would now sit on the benches of the Lords Spiritual, amongst 26 other Bishops who sit in Parliament's Upper House, leading the House in prayer each morning, playing an active role in the life and work of the House. With that honour, he had become the Right Reverend Prelate the Lord Bishop of Exeter;

- the attendance of the past Lord Mayor, Councillor Peter Holland, at the annual flag raising ceremony in honour of the Polish Squadron 307 who had played a part in defending the city during World War II; and
- the wreath laying by the Leader on behalf of the city at St. James' Park.

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

- the wreath laying ceremony at the Remembrance Service at the War memorial in Northernhay Gardens on 14 November 2021;
- the Weavers, Fullers and Shearmen's annual dinner at Tuckers Hall on 19 November 2021;
- the biennial Achievement Awards of the Rifles at London's Guildhall on 24 November 2021;
- the Freedomship of the City ceremony at the Guildhall in honour of Richard Jacobs on 30 November 2021;
- the ceremony welcoming former Councillor Olwen Foggin as an Honorary Alderman on 3 December 2021;
- Exeter's Hanukkah celebrations in Bedford Square on 5 December 2021;
- the city's Mosque on 10 December 2021;
- the Winter Graduation ceremony at the University Great Hall on 10 December 2021; and
- a number of concerts and fairs as well as the Lord Mayor's Christmas Charity morning at which £400 had been raised towards funds for Inclusive Exeter, her chosen charity to support project work across the city.

The Lord Mayor thanked Councillors for taking lateral flow tests prior to the meeting.

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#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Morse declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Minute 76 below regarding Minute No. 57 of those minutes.

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#### **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

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

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#### **PLANNING COMMITTEE - 11 OCTOBER 2021**

As the Chair of the Committee had declared an interest in one of the items on the agenda, and in the absence of the Deputy Chair of the Committee from the meeting, the minutes of the Planning Committee of 11 October 2021 were presented by Councillor Sutton, a Member of the Committee, and taken as read.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 11 October 2021 be received.

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#### **PLANNING COMMITTEE - 15 NOVEMBER 2021**

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 15 November 2021 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Morse, and taken as read.

In respect of **Minute No. 64 (Planning Application No. 21/1104/FUL – The Harlequin Centre, Paul Street, Exeter)**, the Chair, in response to a query from a Member referring to the absence of national guidance on the definition of co-living

and suggesting that the Planning Member Working Group could be asked to develop a suitable policy on this issue for the city, advised that it was not the role of the Planning Member Working Group to formulate policy. This issue however was under consideration as part of bringing forward the new Local Plan.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 15 November 2021 be received.

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#### **LICENSING COMMITTEE - 26 OCTOBER 2021**

The minutes of the Licensing Committee of 26 October 2021 were presented by the Deputy Chair, Councillor Branston, and taken as read.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Licensing Committee held on 26 October 2021 be received.

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#### **STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 18 NOVEMBER 2021**

The minutes of the Strategic Scrutiny Committee of 18 November 2021 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Denning and taken as read.

In respect of **Minute No. 28 (Questions from Members of the Council Under Standing Order 20)**, the Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Environment, in response to a query from a Member, confirmed that he would liaise with the Portfolio Holder for City Management with a view to convening the first meeting of the Transport Working Group in the New Year.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Strategic Scrutiny Committee held on 18 November 2021 be received.

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#### **CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 7 OCTOBER 2021**

In the absence of the Chair of the Committee, the minutes of the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee of 7 October 2021 were presented by the Deputy Chair, Councillor M. Mitchell and taken as read.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee held on 7 October 2021 be received.

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#### **CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 2 DECEMBER 2021**

In the absence of the Chair of the Committee, the minutes of the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee of 2 December 2021 were presented by the Deputy Chair, Councillor M. Mitchell and taken as read.

In respect of **Minute No. 31 (Car Parks and Environmental Considerations)**, the Portfolio Holder for City Management, in response to a query from a Member, confirmed that a report on work place parking levies would be submitted to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

Also in response to a query from a Member, the Portfolio Holder for City Management, referred to the useful and informed discussion at the Committee on the future of the Council's car park service. The ideas discussed would be considered further, including the importance of setting the right charging structure to combat traffic congestion in the city. He also stated that the City Council would work

with the County Council in respect of appropriate pricing regimes for on-street parking.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee held on 2 December 2021 be received.

83      **COMBINED STRATEGIC SCRUTINY AND CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEES - 20 OCTOBER 2021**

In the absence of the Chair of the meeting of the combined scrutiny committees, the minutes of the Combined Strategic Scrutiny Committee and Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee of 20 October 2021 were presented by Councillor Denning, the Chair of the Strategic Scrutiny Committee and a Member of the Joint Committee, and taken as read.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Combined Strategic Scrutiny and Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee held on 20 October 2021 be received.

84      **AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - 10 NOVEMBER 2021**

The minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee of 10 November 2021 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Wardle, and taken as read.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 10 November 2021 be received.

85      **AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - 1 DECEMBER 2021**

As the Chair of the Committee had not attended the meeting, and in the absence of the Deputy Chair, the minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee of 1 December 2021 were presented by Councillor Hannaford, a Member of the Committee, and taken as read.

In respect of **Minute No. 74 (Decision to Opt into the National External Audit Tender)**, Councillor Hannaford moved and Councillor M. Mitchell seconded the recommendation and following a vote, it was carried unanimously.

In respect of **Minute No. 75 (Extension of the Appointment of the Council's Two Independent Persons)**, Councillor Hannaford moved and Councillor M. Mitchell seconded the recommendation and following a vote, it was carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 1 December 2021 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

86      **EXETER STRATEGIC BOARD - 11 NOVEMBER 2021**

The minutes of the Exeter Strategic Board of 11 November 2021 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Bialyk, and taken as read.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Exeter Strategic Board held on 11 November 2021 be received.

**EXECUTIVE - 2 NOVEMBER 2021**

The minutes of the Executive of 2 November 2021 were presented by the Leader, Councillor Bialyk, and taken as read.

In respect of **Minute No. 106 (Requests for Information)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded the recommendation and following a vote, the recommendation was carried unanimously.

In respect of **Minute No. 108 (Draft Statement of Gambling Policy 2021-2023)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded the recommendation and following a vote, the recommendation was carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Executive held on 2 November 2021 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

**EXECUTIVE - 30 NOVEMBER 2021**

The minutes of the Executive of 30 November 2021 were presented by the Leader, Councillor Bialyk, and taken as read.

In respect of **Minute No. 115 (Members' Allowances 2022/23)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded the recommendations and following a vote, the recommendations were carried unanimously.

In respect of the following Minute, the Chief Executive & Growth Director declared an interest and left the meeting during the consideration of this matter.

In respect of **Minute No. 116 (Changes to the role of the Chief Executive & Growth Director and the Strategic Management Board)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded the recommendations.

Councillor Leadbetter, as leader of an opposition group, moved and Councillor Jobson seconded the following amendments:-

"That Executive recommends and Council approves that:-

- (i) to ensure transparency and accountability Exeter City Council take over the work of Exeter City Futures CIC (ECF) with respect to the Net Zero Exeter 2030 Plan and that strategic partners are invited to support and work with the Chief Executive Officer and Exeter City Council on the delivery of that Plan;
- (ii) recommendation (1) and (2) are therefore deleted;
- (iii) recommendation (3) is amended to read "That the arrangements are reviewed by regular reporting to Scrutiny which shall include an update on each of the 12 key targets";
- (iv) recommendation (4) be deferred until the first review of the arrangements;
- (v) recommendation (5) is deleted;
- (vi) a new recommendation (5) is added to read "The Net Zero 2030 Plan be added to the corporate risk register"; and
- (vii) recommendation (6) to stand.

Councillor Leadbetter, in presenting the amendments, stated that, whilst all stakeholders were signed up to the goal of achieving Net Zero Exeter 2030, this could be better achieved within the City Council by its senior officers rather than by a stand-alone body as this would enable proper scrutiny by Members. He asked for an explanation why it was considered that Net Zero could not be achieved in-house but should be put out to a third party organisation.

Councillor Jobson, in seconding the motion, stated that there was a greater likelihood of the Net Zero Exeter 2030 goal being achieved by ensuring that it remained in-house rather than being led by Exeter City Futures CIC (ECF). She was particularly concerned that ECF was not operating in a sufficiently transparent manner, citing as evidence the lack of clarity in respect of the use of various Government grants and the latest set of ECF minutes being 24 November 2020, which only recorded decisions taken and not the background information. Further, the accounts for the year ending 31 December 2019 were not filed with Companies House until December 2020. She also asked why Devon County Council was not currently represented on the ECF Board.

Councillor Jobson also stated that it was vital for the City Council to be democratically accountable to the citizens of Exeter in combating Climate Change and delivering Net Zero and this could best be achieved through the Council's internal mechanisms including the Audit and Governance and Scrutiny Committees, the Executive and Full Council, rather than a separate company. The City Council, through its democratic processes, was better placed than ECF to share with residents its practices and projects as well as those of the other major stakeholders in the city already working with the Council, to ensure that as many in the city as possible were fully on board with the challenge.

Councillor Leadbetter commended the amendments to Council.

Councillor Bialyk, as Leader, stated that his group would not be supporting the amendments.

### **The amendments were put to the vote and LOST.**

Councillor M. Mitchell moved and Councillor Sparling seconded the following amendment:-

“That recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 5 be referred to the Strategic Scrutiny Committee to consider the implications of the recommendations and to report to the Executive prior to the next Council meeting”

In presenting his amendment, Councillor M. Mitchell stated that, whilst delivering the Net Zero agenda was recognised by all as a key priority for the Council, the proposed changes to the Council's working arrangements through the secondment of senior officers should be subjected to scrutiny and reported to Council. He suggested that the proposals being put forward should also be considered in the context of Government proposals for changing the planning system, potential reform of the two tier Local Government system as well as the continuing reduction in financial support from Central Government to Local Government. He also asked that each of the recommendations within the report be voted on separately.

Councillor Sparling, in seconding the amendment, referred to the long term impact on generations to come of Council decisions relating to Climate Change and that it would be appropriate therefore, in this context, to devote some extra time to

scrutinise the implications of the proposals, in order to agree on the most effective way forward.

Councillor M. Mitchell, in commending the amendment to Council, stated that an unspecific review did not provide the foresight needed to make a major change in working practices and that the implications of the policy needed to be identified and explored. An immediate scrutiny of the proposal was preferable to seeking a review of the arrangements in twelve months.

Councillor Bialyk, as Leader, stated that his group would not be supporting the amendment.

### **The amendment was put to the vote and LOST.**

The Leader, in presenting the motion, stated that the essence of the proposal was to respond as expeditiously and collaboratively as possible to the emergency presented by Climate Change. Working with key institutions across the city such as the University of Exeter, Stagecoach, Great Western Railways, Devon County Council and the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital was far more effective than an appointment of a single dedicated officer within the City Council. A time commitment by the Chief Executive & Growth Director and the Director of Transformation to work with their counterparts in these institutions would be a key driver to the success of Net Zero Exeter 2030 and both were of the highest calibre for these roles having built up an extensive network throughout the city's organisations to support this shared agenda. This commitment would demonstrate the Council's focus on delivering the Net Zero programme with experienced leadership working with a coalition of partners.

The Council, through its Emergency Budget in response to the Covid Pandemic, had allocated significant funding to the Net Zero Exeter 2030 programme, and its financial commitment to Net Zero was more than many authorities who had not made similar financial allocations. He emphasised that the Council was equally committed to maintaining the existing level of its services. There would be regular reports back to Members on the progress of ECF initiatives and a report on the City Development Fund would be presented to the Executive in the New Year. The Leader stated that no decisions affecting the City Council would be made without first reporting to the Council and he offered an invitation for opposition Members to meet with the Chief Executive & Growth Director for a briefing in their respective groups on the detail of the proposal as well as in relation to the Development Fund.

Councillor D. Moore, as a co-leader of an opposition group referring to the seven points she had raised at Executive, welcomed the proposal to establish a carbon budget for the city, as did the rest of the Progressive Group and asked for confirmation that, once the carbon budget was created, the data would be provided on the amount of carbon reduction achieved and for a focus on the most urgent needs as set out in the base line required to achieve Net Zero. She re-iterated the concerns expressed by Councillor Jobson in the financial and governance arrangements of ECF and felt that there was a lack of transparency and scrutiny given to the proposal. She also stated that it was unfortunate that issues around the City Development Fund were only emerging at this point, even though they had been in the public domain for a while. She stated that it was unclear if the secondments would focus on investment or the Liveable Exeter Board.

Referring to the Development Fund, the 10 priority actions in the Net Zero Action Plan 2030 set out in the Executive report and the seven points of specific concern she had raised at that meeting she felt that, rather than rushing ahead, the earlier amendment calling for scrutiny was appropriate. Working with other institutions was

the correct way forward to combine resources to achieve Net Zero but, as with other authorities, it should be the Council itself that uses its status to undertake the leadership role to ensure transparency and inclusive action on the Climate Emergency through the creation, for example, of a working group to ensure rigour and transparency. She remained concerned with the proposal to transfer management arrangements as she felt that the secondments would not be a practical arrangement and that outsourcing the Council's leadership, responsibilities and power to a private company was inappropriate.

Councillor Leadbetter, as the leader of an opposition group, stated that, whilst his group continued to support the work of the Chief Executive & Growth Director on Net Zero Exeter 2030, their stance was that this work should be done in-house. The group supported progressing the work as quickly as possible but that an element of scrutiny should be incorporated initially. He thanked the Leader for the reassurances he had given and stated that the city was well placed to progress with the Net Zero Action Plan. He accepted the offer to meet with the Chief Executive & Growth Director for a briefing.

Councillor K. Mitchell, as a co-leader of an opposition group, referred to a motion presented to Council in February 2019 seeking a Climate Emergency declaration, the wording of which had not been supported on the grounds of requiring more detail. He also confirmed that his group would also accept the offer of a briefing from the Chief Executive & Growth Director.

During the discussion, the following points were made:-

- the proposed structure for ECF will provide the necessary technical data required as part of achieving Net Zero 2030 as the City Council had limited capacity in this regard;
- the City Council's solar array and battery storage facility at Marsh Barton would ultimately power electric refuse vehicles, three of which had been ordered, the first in the south west;
- the Net Zero goal was embedded in the Corporate Plan as a key strategic priority and was also included on the Council's website. The senior staff secondments would provide strong leadership to scrutinize and mediate the city wide programme;
- the Council was committed to its own house building programme through Exeter City Living which, together with building to Passivhaus standards and the retrofit programme of private housing, would meet the requirements of the low carbon agenda and contribute to the Net Zero Exeter 2030 goal; and
- progress would be reported back to the Council through Scrutiny Committees, Executive and Council.

The Leader, in summarising, stated that the 10 key priority actions identified in the Net Zero Exeter Plan 2030 could only be achieved through a collaborative approach. The secondment of the Chief Executive & Growth Director and the Director of Transformation to ECF would help ensure the effective delivery of the Net Zero Exeter 2030 goals as both had strong connections with the private and public sector, community groups and voluntary organisations. He referred to the potential for further collaboration at a regional level, through the retrofit programme being brought forward by Live West in conjunction with other local authorities. He would ensure that the progress of Net Zero Exeter 2030 was fully reported to Members and that the concerns some had raised would be addressed.

He commended the recommendations to Council.

The Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded the recommendations and following separate votes on each, all recommendations were CARRIED, recommendation 4 being CARRIED unanimously.

**The meeting adjourned at 7.47 pm and re-convened at 8.00 pm.**

In respect of **Minute No. 117 (The Exeter Article 4 Direction : Houses in Multiple Occupancy – Response to a recent petition)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded the recommendations and following a vote, the recommendations were carried unanimously.

In respect of **Minute No. 118 (Overview of General Fund Revenue Budget 2021/22 – Quarter 2)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded the recommendations and following a vote, the recommendations were carried.

In respect of **Minute No.119 (2021/22 General Fund Capital Monitoring Statement – Quarter 2)** the Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded the recommendations and following a vote, the recommendations were carried.

In respect of **Minute No. 120 (2021/22 HRA Budget Monitoring Report – Quarter 2)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded the recommendations and following a vote, the recommendations were carried unanimously.

In respect of **Minute No. 121 (Treasury Management 2021/22 Half Year Update)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded the recommendation and following a vote, the recommendation was carried unanimously.

In respect of **Minute No. 122 (Update to Procurement and Contract Procedures)**, the Leader moved and Councillor Wright seconded the recommendations and following a vote, the recommendations were carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Executive held on 30 November 2021 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

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

Councillor K. Mitchell, seconded by Councillor J Moore, moved a Notice of Motion in the following terms (he set out an amendment to the Motion in bold, in view of the extension by the Government of the consultation period, which had been announced after he had submitted the original Motion):-

“Exeter City Council opposes the harm caused to our LGBT+ community in the past through the denial of rights and equal treatment and further recognises that discrimination does still occur today.

This Council recognises and opposes the ongoing harm the practice of so-called conversion therapy brings to LGBT+ people.

This Council calls on the Government to follow through on the promises made, not just in this year's Queen's Speech, but for the past three years, to outlaw the practise of so-called conversion therapy.

**This Council notes the ongoing Government consultation on this matter and calls on the Government to introduce an effective ban on conversion therapy within England, supported by a programme of work to help tackle these practices in all their forms.**

Furthermore this Council will highlight and promote the continued support, counselling and advocacy our local groups provide to members of the LGBT+ Community.

This Council recognises the excellent work done by local people and organisations to support the LGBT+ community here in Exeter, and extends its thanks and support to them.”

In presenting his Motion, Councillor K. Mitchell, as a co-leader of an opposition group, hoped that the Motion would have cross party support. He highlighted that he had been fortunate to have had strong support from his family in respect of his sexuality, but he was aware that many were not so fortunate. He referred to a national LGBT+ survey, where one in 20 respondents had been pressurised into undertaking conversion therapy. This figure was higher in the 18 to 24 year old age group, and in respect of the Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic (BAME) community and disabled individuals. One in five Trans people had also been pressurised. He stated that being a member of the LGBT+ community was not an illness and did not need a cure and that this harmful practice should cease. Exeter was a tolerant city, which welcomed diversity and embraced individuality.

Councillor Hannaford, in supporting the Motion, welcomed the opportunity to lobby for this much needed change. He stated that many LGBT+ people felt lonely, isolated and pressurised to change and that supporting the Motion would show solidarity. He chaired Devon County Council's Children's Scrutiny Committee and it had become evident that during lockdown many LGBT+ people had felt isolated, particularly if they did not have a supportive family. He referred to the historical mistreatment of this group which was akin to torture and had included practices of electric shock treatment and poisoning. Most people's gender identify was in place very early on in their lives, and a binary choice was not the only way that people could live their lives. It was important to foster and develop a culture and society that supports and respects diversity and to allow people to come to terms with their sexual identity.

Councillor Hannaford also referenced the additional biased discrimination of gay men and the BAME community and the legacy of the British Empire across the world, where there had previously been more tolerant systems in regard to different sexual identities. Equal age of consent had only been recognised in more recent times as had the recognition of the LGBT+ status within the Armed Forces. Despite the Council having Mayors and Lord Mayors for centuries, it was only a few years ago that he had become the Council's first openly LGBT+ Lord Mayor in the city's history. He was also pleased to note that there was a far more tolerant attitude to this issue amongst young people.

Councillor Ghusain, as Portfolio Holder for Communities and Culture, in supporting the Motion, referred to the Government's proposal to introduce legislation to act on the practice of conversion therapy. She referred to the extension of the Government's consultation to 4 February 2022, after which a draft bill would be prepared and also to the "Safe to Be Me: A Global Equality Conference", which would take place in June 2022, to coincide with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first official London Pride marches.

Councillor Morse, in supporting the Motion, referred to her conversations with her own teenage children and their friends, and would be disappointed to think that they would have to be persuaded or made to change in any way.

Councillor D. Moore, as a co-leader of an opposition group, thanked Councillor K. Mitchell for the Motion and for Councillor Ghusain for raising the issues around consultation. She hoped that this Motion could form part of a formal submission to the consultation and for the Government's reply to be included on the Council's web site.

Councillor Leadbetter, as the leader of an opposition group, stated that his group would be supporting the Motion.

Councillor J. Moore, in seconding the Motion, thanked Councillor K. Mitchell for bringing forward the Motion and for his and Councillor Hannaford's explanation about how damaging conversion abuse can be.

Councillor K. Mitchell, in summarising, thanked Members for their comments and support. He added that, whilst Councillor Hannaford had been the first openly gay Lord Mayor in the city, he said that he had been the first openly gay Deputy Lord Mayor, and also to have his husband as his consort. He commended the Motion to Council.

The Notice of Motion was put to the vote and CARRIED unanimously, the views of this Council would be submitted in response to the consultation.

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

The Lord Mayor reported that no questions had been received from Members.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 8.28 pm)

Chair

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## LICENSING COMMITTEE

1 February 2022

### Present:

Councillor Chris Buswell (Chair)

Councillors Begley, Foale, Holland, Mitchell, K, Moore, J, Newby, Vizard, Warwick, Wood and Wright

### Apologies:

Councillors Branston and Quance

### Also present:

Service Lead - Environmental Health & Community Safety, Principal Licensing Officer, Legal Advisor and Democratic Services Officer (SLS)

## 1 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2021 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as correct.

## 2 **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made by Members.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976**

## 3 **Licensing Fees and Charges for 2022/23**

The Licensing Committee received the annual report for the proposed licensing fees and charges for 2022/23. The Licensing Committee had a statutory responsibility to set fees for the year which related to the cost of performing the various Licensing functions. Members were referred to appendices attached to the report, which listed all the fees levied by the Licensing Authority. The Principal Licensing Officer explained that these were set in accordance with guidance from the Local Government Association and could be set at a level to recover the cost of delivering the individual licensing function to which they related. Appendix A summarised the Council's powers to set its fees in respect of licensing applications, and any limitations on those powers, and Appendix B listed all the fees levied by the Licensing Authority as of last year and the proposed fees for 2022/23.

The Service Lead- Environmental Health & Community Safety advised that should any representations be raised regarding the fees and charges, this would be reported back to the Licensing Committee. He also responded to a Member's question in relation to affordability of taxi fares for disabled passengers and explained that the fee quoted in the report related to the licence to operate. Taxi fares were set by the Council, and he suggested a review of tariffs may be forthcoming to a future meeting of the Licensing Committee.

**RESOLVED** that the proposed Fees and Charges for the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 be approved, as set out in Appendix B of the report.

## 4 **Establishment of Licensing Committee Working Groups**

The Licensing Committee received the report, which referred to informal discussions that the Licensing Committee had previously considered to establish working groups to address key aspects of the Licensing Committee's work and agree their terms of reference. The proposed working groups would be Member led to review two distinct

policy areas relating to City Street Trading and Taxi and Private Hire Standards and would seek input from relevant stakeholders as part of the work to develop the policies, with any recommendations presented to the Licensing Committee and Council depending on the nature of the changes proposed.

The Service Lead – Environmental Health and Community Safety provided some background. He referred to the previous review of street trading, and the ever changing culture of the city offered a chance to rework the street trading policy to encourage a more vibrant, diverse and greener approach. The City Street Trading working group would also seek input from a variety of different stakeholders and audiences to ensure that street trading offered a more positive aspect of the city and its economy. The formation of a Taxi and Private Hire Standard's working group would also be following up on a Government response on the statutory standards for taxis and private hire. There would be the opportunity to consider a number of areas in more depth including standard areas such as discipline, and also if it was pertinent to consider whether other changes might be needed in the light of more recent developments in technology and innovation.

It is projected that these deliberations could take up to 18 months, and in that time, Members may consider that different policy changes could be implemented in the intervening period. The Service Lead noted a Member's suggestion that in view of the projected timescale and to ensure continuity, it would be appropriate for the chairs of the working groups not to be a Member standing in the Local Government Elections in May.

The following Members put themselves forward to serve on the following working groups:-

- City Street Trading -: Cllrs Foale, Newby, Vizard and Wright
- Taxi and Private Hire Standards: Cllrs Buswell, Holland, Newby and Wood

**RESOLVED** that:-

- (1) a Licensing Committee Working Group be established to look at Street Trading in the city to consider any changes be recommended to the Street Trading Policy, as set out in Appendix A of the report presented at the meeting;
- (2) a Licensing Committee Working Group be established to look at Taxi and Private Hire standards to consider any changes be recommended to the Street Trading Policy, as set out in Appendix B of the report presented at the meeting;
- (3) appointments to the Working Groups be at the discretion of the Chair of the Licensing Committee;
- (4) Officer appointments to the Working Groups be set by the Service Lead – Environmental Health and Community Safety; and
- (5) any proposed changes to Council policies and procedures and any necessary consultations be reported back to the Licensing Committee for consideration.

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 5.50 pm

Chair

## COMBINED STRATEGIC SCRUTINY AND CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

10 February 2022

### Present:

Councillors Allcock, Begley, Denning, Jobson, Martin, A, Mitchell, K, Mitchell, M, Moore, J, Pearce, Sparkes, Sparling, Vizard, Wardle and Warwick

### Apologies:

Councillors Branston, Buswell, Hannaford, Newby, Quance and Sheldon

### Also present:

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Director Finance, Democratic Services Officer (HB) and Democratic Services Officer (SLS)

### In attendance:

Councillor Bialyk	Leader
Councillor Ghusain	Portfolio Holder Communities and Culture
Councillor Morse	Portfolio Holder City Development
Councillor Sutton	Portfolio Holder Net Zero Exeter 2030

### 1 **Appointment of Chair**

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Denning be appointed Chair of the meeting.

### 2 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Combined Strategic Scrutiny and Customer Focus Scrutiny Committees held on 20 October 2021 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as correct.

### 3 **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of discloseable pecuniary interest by Members were made.

### 4 **General Fund/HRA Estimates and Capital Programme 2022/23**

The Director Finance presented the report under the following twelve headings, with his responses to Members' queries set out in italics.

#### Local Government Finance Settlement 20022/23

- the final Local Government Settlement had been laid before Parliament on 7 February 2022, being a single roll-over settlement as it was the intention to re-set the Business Rate Retention scheme The City Council had received a Lower Tier Services Grant of £185,000 and a one-off service grant of £289,000. A Section 31 grant of £83,000 had also been received as the compensation for freezing the Business Rates multiplier had changed from CPI to RPI.

## Business Rates and Council Tax

- the Referendum Principles for the Council Tax set by the Government would allow the Council to increase the tax by £5 or up to 2%, whichever was the higher. A Council Tax increase of £5 represented 3.03%, which would produce an extra £163,733.
- *should the Council set a lower rate, this would set a lower base line for future years which would limit the level of future increases the Council might wish to introduce; and*
- *it was anticipated that the Business Rate re-set would impact differently on all local authorities and that, whilst the City Council might benefit as a result of population growth and visitor numbers, deprivation figures nationally would benefit other Councils. Upper tier authorities were likely to benefit the most from the reset. Any reduction impacting on the Council as a result of formula changes was likely to be tapered with possible assistance through transitional relief.*

## Key assumptions

- an overall allowance of £623,960 had been set aside for inflation with particular reference to increases in utilities and oil;
- neither the 2021/22 nor 2022/23 pay awards were known at present; and
- it was anticipated that interest rates would continue to rise.
- *although there was no formal help from Central Government, the difficulty in recruiting for certain areas of the public sector, especially social care, was recognised;*
- *the majority of borrowing was from the Public Works Loan Board, across varying periods and was fixed, protecting the Council from additional interest payments; and*
- *Council commitment to green measures such as solar panels and purchase of electric vehicles and the conversion to gas boilers was helping combat inflationary increases.*

## Equality Impact Assessment

- the Council was required to consider the impact on equalities on all new and reviewed Council strategies to identify potential negative consequences and this aspect was embedded in the One Exeter report to be presented to Council which set out a three year transformational programme, key elements of which were digitalisation and staff welfare.

## New Homes Bonus

- the 2022/23 allocation was for one year only being £1.362 million compared with £1.941 for 2021/22. A new proposal to replace New Homes Bonus was expected to be announced imminently.
- *when the New Homes Bonus had been first introduced, £150,000 had been set aside for community projects and ward grants. Contributions to community organisations was now met via the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), although, as the amount received varied, care was taken to ensure prudent stewardship of the budget and to ensure contractual obligations were met;*

- *car parking income had returned towards 90% of the pre Pandemic level and a budgetary allowance had been made to cover the reduced income over a one to two year period; and*
- *the cost of borrowing for capital expenditure was shown separately to that of service level costs. The Council had approved a funding based upon a condition survey of car parks, although alternative options including disposal were to be assessed.*

#### Medium Term Financial Plan

- significant reductions in the Medium Term Financial Plan were required for 2023/24 and 2024/25, the reductions required now totalling £6.350 million.
- *the target reduction for 2022/23 was £2.4 million, although the push back of the Business Rate re-set had provided some leeway and the savings sought for the next two years were estimated at £3.5 million and £2.5 million respectively;*
- *the One Exeter project was based on the expectation of achieving savings of £1.3 million in 2022/23 as part of a modernisation programme and discretionary services review; and*
- *Council Tax collection was a statutory responsibility of District Councils, the cost embedded within the settlement and there was no expectation of the precepting authorities contributing.*

#### Balances and Reserves

- the latest estimated position of the General Fund Balance was that it would be £4.158 million as at 31 March 2023, equivalent to 24.1% of Exeter's net revenue budget. The revised medium-term financial plan indicated that the General Fund Balance would increase slightly to £4.337 million by the end of 2025/26;
- the Council's proposed revenue budget for 2022/23 included a net transfer from earmarked reserves of £234,290 with £181,000 allocated for Net Zero Exeter initiatives; and
- as the Council faced uncertainty in the medium term over funding, including the vagaries resulting from the Pandemic, it was prudent to hold higher reserve levels to offset sudden losses of income or unexpected expenditure.

#### Revenue Estimates 2022/23

- Service Committee Expenditure for 2022/23 is £15,454,950 which was £591,310 lower than the current year. The total General Fund Expenditure budget requirement for 2022/23 was planned to be £15,925,100, an increase of £757,250 compared to 2021/22.

#### Council Tax Budget Requirement

- net expenditure to be financed from Council tax was £6,415,560, an increase of £163,740 compared to 2021/22. The alternative option of a 1.99% increase would reduce the amount by £65,000.
- *the increases from the precepting authorities were unknown at present and the final figures would not be available until a day or so before Extraordinary Council. It was anticipated that the County Council level would be broadly similar to the previous year although a £10 increase could be anticipated in respect of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall.*

### Housing Revenue Account

- the HRA was a self-contained fund which from 2012 was expected to be self-financing. There was a budget deficit of £1.154 million which would be met from the working balance; and
- the account was well within medium term financial plan requirements and a higher contingency was maintained as housing repair costs in estates, for example, could be high.

### Capital Programme Resources

- the 2022/23 programme totalled £46.469 million which was largely as previously agreed with an additional figure for IT equipment and software; and
- the HRA medium term financial plan provided for a capital programme of £21.829 million with £14.3 million allocated for stock improvements and £7.5 million for new build.

### Statutory Powers

In accordance with a range of statutory responsibilities the Council had set a minimum level for the General Fund Balance to remain above £3 million, with £4 million set as the minimum figure for the HRA.

- *no detail was available to date in respect of the Government intention to provide relief towards utility bill increases. It was expected to be set outside the Council Tax regime but with cash payments to be made to households within bands A to D. Relief for those within Bands E to H would be discretionary and would be for those who could show financial need;*
- *the Council Tax team work load would increase significantly. The Government would be making a contribution to the Council of £39,000 towards the administration of this relief, which would include any changes to software. Whilst it was expected that this would be paid by the Government to the Council before year end, the expectation was that relief should be released after 1 April 2022; and*
- *the scheme would be publicised through the Council's usual channels.*

Combined Strategic Scrutiny and Customer Focus Scrutiny Committees noted the report.

## 5 **Capital Strategy 2022-23**

The Director Finance stated that the report explained the details of the long-term policy objectives and resulting capital strategy requirements, governance procedures and risks for the capital programme.

Combined Strategic Scrutiny and Customer Focus Scrutiny Committees noted the report.

## 6 **The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (Incorporating the Annual Statement of Minimum Revenue Provision)**

The Director Finance explained the proposed 2022/23 prudential indicators for capital finance for adoption by the Council and to set the annual statement of Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). The three key indicators for Council to consider were the

capital financing requirement, the operational boundary and the authorised limit. It was noted that debt was repaid on an annuity basis.

The Director Finance responded to Members' queries:-

- *it was correct to state that within the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy 2022/23, the £254 million was the total borrowing of the General Fund and HRA together and that this was the amount the Council would have borrowed. It showed the Council's underlying need to borrow based on the proposed capital programme;*
- *with regard to the planned cuts to the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the General Fund increase to £2.4 million by 2024/25, it was considered that it was prudent and affordable to sustain this level of borrowing as much of the borrowing supported income generation. The three commercial properties, had been purchased using borrowing provide in excess of £2.5 million income; and*
- *the Commercial Property Budget included an allowance for voids but it was not the intention to increase this element as, whilst there had been some properties with rental based on turnover inevitably suffering during the Pandemic, overall returns continued to be sustainable. In respect of Princesshay, the Council held the freehold but any rental downturn affected the lessee. This budget, like all Council budgets, was regularly monitored through quarterly reports and any issues would be brought to the attention of Council.*

Combined Strategic Scrutiny and Customer Focus Scrutiny Committees noted the report.

## 7 Treasury Management Strategy Report 2022/23

The Director Finance presented the report seeking the adoption of the Treasury Management Strategy Report and the incorporated Annual Investment Strategy 2022/23, as required under section 15(1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2003. The report set out the detail of all current investments as at 31 December 2021 with limits set on the value of investments that could be held by any one institution such as banks, building societies or other Local Authorities. The report also detailed borrowings through the Government's Public Works Loan Board, all being long term with no short term borrowings. Risk was also spread by investing through Money Market Funds.

The Director Finance responded to Members' queries:-

- *although there had been concerns regarding the financial position of some local authorities with whom the Council placed deposits, ultimately there was very little risk associated with local authority investments. Even the Icelandic Banking crises, as an example, had been resolved without Government intervention with monies subsequently returned to this Council with interest; and*
- *the Council had regard to the green credentials of bodies it invested with and used the Standard Chartered and Barclays Sustainable or Green deposit accounts.*

A Member referred to the use the Council made of the Link Group as external treasury management advisors and whether the Group, through its advice to the Council, currently provided assessments on the Council investments, banks and money market funds on their climate wrecking or climate positive investments. The Member moved that Link Group be requested to include consideration of the climate

impacts of investments and banking activity within their advice provided to Council. This was seconded, voted upon and carried.

The Director Finance undertook to report to Council on whether Link Group included consideration of the climate impacts of investments and banking activity in their advice provided to Council.

**RESOLVED** that:-

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) the Director Finance update the Council on the assessment provided on climate emergency issues and whether Link Group included consideration of the climate impacts of investments and banking activity in their advice provided to Council.

The Chair thanked the Director Finance for his presentation.

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 7.00 pm

Chair

**STRATA - JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE****WEDNESDAY, 19 JANUARY 2022**Present:

Councillors Arnott, Dewhirst and Bialyk (Chair)

Officers in Attendance:

Phil Shears, Managing Director - Teignbridge District Council  
Sarah Selway, Democratic Services Team Leader & Deputy Monitoring Officer  
Bindu Arjoon Deputy Chief Executive - Exeter City Council  
Robin Barlow, Head of Security & Compliance  
Peter Johns, Head of IT Solutions Delivery  
Martin Millmow, Head of Document Centres  
Christopher Morgan, Trainee Democratic Services Officer  
Laurence Whitlock, Strata IT Director  
Naomi Harnett, Principal Projects Manager – East Devon District Council

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Councillor Phil Bialyk of Exeter City Council was elected Chair for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

**2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2021 were approved as a correct record and would be signed by the Chair.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Dewhirst declared an interest as a member at Devon County Council.

**4. STRATA PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Strata IT Director presented the report on activity identifying key activities, successes and areas for improvement.

In response to members it was confirmed that the report would be sent to Strata Joint Scrutiny Members with any comments to be directed to Strata IT Director.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**5. FINANCIAL UPDATE REPORT**

The Strata IT Director presented the report which updated Members on the financial position of Strata at the end of November 2021.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**6. CHANGE TO TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Chair presented the request from Exeter City Council that the Strata Joint Executive Committee terms of reference be amended to enable the authorities' Chief Executives to nominate a substitute.

**RECOMMENDED** to East Devon District Council, Exeter City Council and Teignbridge District Council that Strata's Joint Executive Committee terms of reference be amended to allow for the officer representation to be the Chief Executive or their nominee of the three constituent authorities (rather than the Chief Executive).

**7. 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 following item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**8. STRATA BUSINESS PLAN**

The Strata IT Director presented the report to explain the Strata Business Plan 2022 and beyond.

**RECOMMENDED** that the following be approved by East Devon District Council, Exeter City Council and Teignbridge District Council Full Councils:-

- (1) The interim Strata Business Plan noting that a new version of the Strata Business Plan would be completed and brought back for approval once the three authorities had undertaken their Digital and IT Strategy work and Agilisys had completed their review of Strata;
- (2) The provision of the PowerBI Premium of £70,000, this to be apportioned to the three authorities as per the percentages in the Strata Contract;

- (3) The total Strata Services Solutions Ltd budget of £7,371,549 as portioned below:-  
East Devon District Council - £2,866,318  
Exeter City Council – £2,444,655  
Teignbridge District Council - £2,060,576; and
- (4) Capital requirements budget for the next 12 months of:  
Public Switched Telephone Network Replacement - Exeter City Council - £40,000  
Exeter City Council Civic Centre HFX Door Access Replacement - £100,000  
System upgrade costs – 2012 server replacement - £100,000 apportioned as below:-
- Exeter City Council - £35,936
  - East Devon District Council - £36,692
  - Teignbridge District Council - £27,372
- Geographic Information Systems Cloud Migration £10,000 apportioned as below
- Exeter City Council - £3,594
  - East Devon District Council - £3,669
  - Teignbridge District Council - £2,737

The meeting started at 4.05 pm and finished at 4.50 pm.

Chair

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## EXECUTIVE

Tuesday 11 January 2022

Present:

Councillor Bialyk (Chair)

Councillors Wright, Foale, Ghusain, Harvey, Morse, Sutton, Williams and Wood

Apologies:

Councillors Mitchell, K (as an opposition group Leader)

Also present:

Councillor D. Moore (as an opposition group Leader)

In attendance:

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Deputy Chief Executive, Director Finance, Assistant Director of Housing (LB), Asset Management Lead and Democratic Services Team Leader

1

### CHRIS GALE

The Chair passed on his condolences and respects to Chris Gale, who was a former Councillor for both Exeter City Council and Devon County Council, who had recently passed away. The Chair highlighted that he had been an active Councillor, representing the Heavitree ward and had been a good friend.

2

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE & GROWTH DIRECTOR

The Chair congratulated Karime Hassan, the Chief Executive & Growth Director who had been made a Member of the Order of the British Empire for services to government, in the in the Queen's New Year Honours. The Chair highlighted that it was a well-deserved honour and achievement for his work and vision for the city.

3

### MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2021, were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

4

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made.

5

### QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 19

No questions from members of the public were received.

6

### STRATEGIC CASE FOR THE EXETER DEVELOPMENT FUND

The Executive received the report on the strategic case for the Exeter Development Fund, which had been included as an appendix to the report presented at the meeting. The report set out the funding concept, which would combine public and private sector finances to transform the built environment. Work was ongoing to develop the business case, which would be presented to Members for their approval.

The Chief Executive & Growth Director highlighted the pivotal role of this work in developing the vision as set out in the Liveable Exeter Programme and discussed the complexity of the strategic case.

Members had set out a clear ambition in regards to the delivery of Net Zero and supporting active travel to help solve mobility and congestion issues. Members noted the current planning system alone could not deliver the required infrastructure or achieve net zero goals. Planning on its own could not deliver the quality of neighbourhoods and community infrastructure required, leaving local authorities to invest on infrastructure.

The new model was based on public sector investment and with equity investment from the Government to create a finance model at the commencement of the project to deliver the infrastructure to control how housing development was undertaken. Any increase in value would ensure that all financial returns would be repaid to the public sector.

Members noted that there were issues to address, but if successful it would be a major change for the public sector. The concept objectives stated that it would be publicly owned, impact driven for place making, professionally run with locally retained profits. The Strategic Business Case would also be presented to the Strategic Scrutiny Committee, who may decide to establish a Task & Finish Group to understand the detail and would include relevant professionals and partners to explain the detail behind the Business Case.

Councillor D. Moore, as an opposition leader, spoke on the item, and thanked the Chief Executive & Growth Director for the report. She referred to the Exeter Development Fund in the report appendix and agreed that finance was needed to invest in the transformation of the economy and built environment to achieve the net zero target. She enquired on the following strategic issues which would be beneficial for when the report would be presented to the Strategic Scrutiny Committee:-

- at the Council meeting in July 2021, in response to a question on which Council assets had been used to model the funding, it was stated that it wasn't known at that time. What were the principles underpinning the business model and was it intended that the assets put into the fund by the council in exchange for equity council owned assets or ones that might be developed as a result of the fund, such as build to rent property?
- although the focus on the achievement of Liveable Exeter was welcomed, there was more to be done across Exeter such as retrofitting the current housing stock. It was explained at the Audit and Governance Committee that the Council would not be proceeding with a retrofit company. Could the Leader confirm that this City Development fund was intended for investment in measures to reduce carbon emissions across the rest of the city as an equal priority?
- would the partner organisations also be presenting to their governing bodies?
- Exeter Global City Futures was not highlighted, could their role in Exeter City Futures and this project be clarified?

The Leader, in responding, stated that these questions would need to be presented at the Strategic Scrutiny Committee, however in reference to the question regarding

the retrofitting, he confirmed that the Audit and Governance Committee did not make policy, and was the role of Council.

The Chief Executive & Growth Director in responding stated:-

- those involved with the modelling work would be invited to the Strategic Scrutiny Committee;
- the principle of the business case was asset based and there would be a choice on whether to put assets into a fund to raise equity or receive a Capital Receipt for the assets;
- the Council had made good progress with its plans for the retrofit of Council owned homes and would be looking at how retrofitting would be done for non-Council owned property and exploring options on how this might be achieved;
- other institutions would have the opportunity to report the business base to their respective Councils based on their own terms of reference; and
- Global City Futures were consultants to Exeter City Futures and were doing a lot of the work on the business case.

During the discussion the following points were made:-

- Pinhoe Ward was an example of an area that has been subject to significant growth in housing but has lacked community infrastructure demonstrating the inadequacies of the system. A change on how development was undertaken was needed. If the business plan can be made to work, the Council would have more control over developments to the way residents expected and to help meet the Net Zero 2030 Plan; and
- Exeter City Living had been setup to disrupt the market and was relatively small-scale. To reach the 2030 Net Zero target, more needed to be done and the report was a good step forward to achieving this, particularly with the proposed Scrutiny process.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council note the progress on the Exeter Development Fund Strategic Case and, recognising the complexity of the matter, agree to:

- (1) additional, dedicated briefings for Members on the strategic case and, when published, on the full business case; and
- (2) a report be presented to the Strategic Scrutiny Committee on the full business case including, if considered appropriate, the formation of a Task and Finish Group to review this in detail.

7

### **2022/23 BUDGET STRATEGY AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN**

The Executive received the report on the strategic overview of the budgetary position for the 2022/23 financial year and beyond, which included the likely level of available resources, the known demand for resources and the proposals to ensure that a balanced budget could be achieved. Members noted that the Council was required to set a balanced budget and Council Tax prior to the start of the financial year.

Particular reference was made to:-

- The fact that, although a three year settlement in the comprehensive spending review had been provided for local authorities, for the Government had provided a one year roll over settlement only;

- due to the further delay to the fair funding review and resetting of the business rates, the Councils' settlement from the previous year had been improved;
- lower tier services grants had been granted again for a one year period along with a new Services Grant, which totalled £470,000 extra funding, and - offset the increase to the national insurance contributions under the new Health and Social Care Levy, which equated to an extra £156,000;
- the Council had an extra one year new homes bonus settlement of £1.362 million. The business rates had not changed and the figures for the business rates return were still pending;
- the Council Tax referendum threshold had been set at less than 2% or up to a maximum of £5. Exeter's budget strategy set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan assumed an increase of £5 which would be a decision for Members at Full Council;
- the proposed Capital Programme had not been finalised and there maybe changes made before February 2022, however the majority had already been approved.

The Director Finance in responding to a question stated:-

- inflation would be significantly higher and with added costs of £625,000 for next year on the assumption that the national pay award would be 1.5% and that the pay award for this financial year had not been agreed;
- the Inflation would be similar to the impact on households, notably utility and fuel costs; and
- the £5 increase on Band D properties would take Council Tax to £165 a year to Exeter City Council, a 3% increase in Council Tax.

The Chair commented on the staff pay award and provided assurances that the Council would honour all pay negotiations and implement those increases.

Members thanked the Director Finance for the detailed briefing on the Budget Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan, which had been provided to all Members.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council note the contents of the report and approve the proposals to establish a balanced revenue budget and capital programme.

8

### **COUNCIL TAXBASE AND NNDR 1 2022/23**

The Executive received the report which set out the 2022/23 Council Tax base in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012. The report further sought approval to delegate the Council's estimate of Business Rate Income (NNDR1) for the next financial year to the Director Finance.

Particular reference was made to the legal requirement to formally notify the preceptors that the Council Tax Base would be set at 37,666 Band D equivalent properties which was an increase of 289. The business rates were not currently ready and delegated authority was sought to notify the preceptors.

**RESOLVED** that:-

- (1) in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Exeter City Council as its tax base for the year 2022/23 shall be 37,666; and
- (2) the responsibility to approve the Council's NNDR1 return by 31 January 2022 be delegated to the Director Finance (Section 151 Officer).

9

### **HOUSING RENTS AND SERVICE CHARGES 2022-23**

The Executive received the report which set out the proposed changes to Council dwelling rents, garage rents and service charges with effect from 1 April 2022.

Particular reference was made to-

- there would be a 4.1% increase in rent which would be significant, compared to the previous year which had been 1.5% This increase would offset the loss of income caused by the lower than expected increase last year;
- Council tenants have benefited from five years of a 1% reduction in housing rent; and
- the weekly increase would be £3.18 for a two bedroom flat with rent levels of £80 per week which was the lowest rent in the city for a property of this type.

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Council Housing Development and Services welcomed the report and highlighted that discussions on rent increases had been held with the Housing team.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council approve:-

- (1) the increase of Council dwelling rent by 4.1% from 1 April 2022;
- (2) the increase of garage rent by 4.1% from 1 April 2022; and
- (3) the increase of service charges by 4.1% from 1 April 2022, with the exception of charges specified in paragraph 11.3 of the report.

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### **LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2022-23**

The Executive received the annual report which sought agreement on the Local Council Tax Support scheme for working age residents for 2022/23, which Members were required to approve each year.

Members were informed that prior to the Covid Pandemic, officers were intending to propose changes to the local scheme. However, due to the current circumstances and the impact of the Pandemic, there was concern that potentially vulnerable households might be affected by any proposed changes and officers wanted to take more time to model this in detail. In addition, due to staff resources being dedicated to administering the government's support to businesses and households affected by the pandemic and allowing the necessary IT to be developed by the supplier, it was recommended to maintain the scheme in its current form.

The Portfolio Holder for Supporting People expressed her thanks to the team who had supported residents and businesses through the Pandemic and acknowledged the volume of work that has been undertaken.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council approve the continuation of the current Local Council Tax Scheme into 2022-23 without substantive changes.

11 **HOUSING OMBUDSMAN COMPLAINT HANDLING CODE: SELF-ASSESSMENT**

The Executive received the report for the 2020 Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code, which set out the good practice to enable landlords to respond to complaints effectively and fairly and to undertake regular self-assessments to benchmark themselves against the Code's requirements and identify areas for improvement. Members noted that the Council's Housing and Development Advisory Board, having reviewed the self-assessment on 16th November 2021, had not identified any issues or request any amendments to be made. The report had been presented to Members to ensure transparency.

**RESOLVED** that the Executive note the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code report.

12 **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 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.

13 **OPTIONS REPORT FOR RENNES HOUSE**

The Executive received the options report for Rennes House, which outlined the significant challenges that had emerged since the decision to refurbish the building had been taken in 2018 in particular the escalated costs of implementing the previous decision as well as the requirements of the imminent Building Safety Bill. Members were requested to reconsider the decision taken in 2018 and to consider the option to demolish and re-provide homes. It was highlighted that the option of demolishing and re-providing would support a more comprehensive re-development in the local area with the consented Vaughan Road development and the fairly recently developed Chester Long Court.

Particular reference was made to the residents at Rennes House, who had been notified that a direction was being sought on the proposals. Officers would continue to engage with residents following the Members' decision and a full financial viability assessment would be undertaken including a discussion with Homes England on the opportunity for grant funding and which would be reported back to Members.

In response to a question raised by a Member, the Asset Management Lead explained that, of the 61 properties available in Rennes House, 11 were being kept empty awaiting Members' decision and officers were confident that a plan would be developed to accommodate the occupants of the remaining 50 properties.

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Council Housing Development and Services welcomed the detailed report and considered it was a good opportunity to develop housing in the area. Residents in the area were a community, and re-housing must work to ensure that care was given to keeping the community together.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council:-

- (1) note the issues that have arisen in implementing the previously agreed decision to refurbish Rennes House including the significant increase in cost to undertaking such work;

- (2) note the compliance and Health & Safety obligations that the Council would be required to undertake following implementation of the Building Safety Bill, which would be significant and challenging and potentially unachievable with the building in its current condition or if only refurbished in line with the previous decision by Members;
- (3) reconsider the way forward and, in particular, to consider whether Demolish and Re-provide is more feasible to ensure a greater benefit to both residents and the community and as the most cost effective option when considered over the lifetime of the building; and
- (4) agree to receive a report, setting out the financial viability appraisal and confirmation of funding arrangements, including the potential of external (Homes England) grant funding and the revision of the capital investment programme to accommodate the preferred option, which would include some re-prioritisation or delays to other capital work streams.

14

### **EDWARDS COURT OPTIONS REPORT**

The Executive received the report which sought agreement for the next steps for housing management and care provision for the Edwards Court Extra Care Scheme. An additional budget was sought to provide the initial expenditure to make the scheme ready for occupation.

Members noted that Edwards Court had 53 units, developed to Passivhaus standard by the Council for the extra care scheme. It would provide residents with their own private living space, with shared communal areas. The original intention was the commissioned care provider would also provide housing management of the Scheme. Market changes since the original scoping work however, meant that the procurement process indicated that there was no interest from providers to undertake both functions.

Officers had assessed that the most efficient and practical way forward was for the Council, by way of the Council Housing and Development Service, to provide the housing management as well as the maintenance of the building. The cost would be covered by the rents and service charges, which were in-line with other extra care schemes and eligible for Housing Benefit. The procurement of a provider for the care element was about to commence.

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Council Housing Development and Services welcomed the report and expressed her thanks to the officers who had been working with Devon County Council.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council:-

- (1) agree to continue using Edwards Court as an extra care facility with Exeter City Council maintaining the building and housing staff providing the non-care elements of the service and noting that Devon County Council will be responsible for securing care provision via a commissioned service;
- (2) approve a budget of £350,000 to be set aside to enable the scheme to be ready to receive its first tenants and commence operation;
- (3) agree that a contribution of £20,000 per annum, subject to an annual uplift be used as a contribution towards the care provider's scheme manager;

- (4) agree that an Extra Care Property Services Manager be recruited by Exeter City Council to manage all non-care elements of the scheme at a cost of £35,000 salary; and
- (5) agree the budget set out for the Medium Term Financial Plan as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

15

### **MEMBERS' TRAINING**

The Executive received the report which provided a quarterly update on the Members' training programme and included Members' attendance for the training sessions from 22 September 2021 to present and their feedback on the sessions attended.

The Councillor Development Steering Group had been undertaking a review of the Members' Induction Programme ahead of the May 2022 elections. Particular reference was made to:-

- contacting the newly elected councillors, to get their detailed feedback on the induction programme;
- requesting officers who conduct training to attend the next meeting of the Councillor Development Steering Group, to hear Members' views to help improve the development programme;
- the implementation of star ranking system to highlight the importance of sessions being held;
- the implementation of a manual update for Members attendance for those who have viewed the training recording, but were unable to attend the live session; and
- continue to maximise the Zoom functions for delivering training, which showed attendance was still higher than when sessions had been held in a physical capacity.

In response to a question from a Member, the Corporate Manager Democratic & Civic Support confirmed that training sessions for the Council's Harbour Board would be included as part of the training provided to Members.

**RESOLVED** that the Executive note the Members' Training report.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.37 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 22 February 2022.**

## EXECUTIVE

Tuesday 8 February 2022

Present:

Councillor Bialyk (Chair)

Councillors Wright, Ghusain, Harvey, Morse, Sutton, Williams and Wood

Apologies:

Councillors Foale

Also present:

Councillor D. Moore (as an opposition group Leader)

Also present:

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Deputy Chief Executive, Director Finance, Service Lead Legal Services, Service Lead - HR Services, Service Lead - Environmental Health & Community Safety, Active & Healthy People Programme Lead, Service Lead for City Development, Democratic Services Team Leader and Democratic Services Officer (HB)

16

### MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2022, were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

17

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made.

18

### QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 19

No questions from members of the public were received.

19

### ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE PROGRAMME: ONE EXETER

The Executive received the report which set out how the Council would deliver its organisational change programme, One Exeter, to deliver a fit for purpose organisation which met the savings identified in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

The Programme had been developed to ensure value for money services would be delivered to meet the objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan 2018-21 and to meet the requirements of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which had identified a need to deliver a combination of budget reduction and income generation to address a £7.65 million budget shortfall by the end of March 2025.

The report detailed proposed changes for 2022/23 in discretionary services taking into account corporate priorities and overall impacts on service delivery and non-discretionary areas. Further development of digitalisation and increased commercial activity would also be significant elements in the change programme.

Particular reference was made to the consultation with staff and union on the proposed work programme and the development of a Communication Plan to ensure all staff and stakeholders, including Members, were kept informed on the progress of the work programme.

The commitment from staff was recognised as being vital and there would be continued engagement with staff focus groups, liaison with the Trade Union and a Staff Sounding Board would be established to gain further input. Members noted that the Programme would be delivered via the Operational Management Board, supported by the One Exeter Programme Steering Group (PSG)

During discussion the following points were made:-

- the changes were necessary in response to the level of Central Government reductions to Local Government necessitating creative solutions, and the work involved was a large undertaking. The scope of the work identified and the intention to engage Council staff and their response was inspiring;
- the Council had introduced flexible working prior to the Covid Pandemic which had put it in a good position to bring forward changes in response to the budget shortfall and to drive more efficient ways of working; and
- staff well-being was a priority in the change programme.

The Leader thanked the Deputy Chief Executive and the PSG for their work on the One Exeter programme.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council:-

- (1) approve the organisational change programme to deliver a fit for purpose organisation and meet the requirements of the MTFP;
- (2) note that the overall savings targets for each work stream are indicative and where targets are not met, that these will have to be met by compensatory savings in other areas to ensure that the council continues to deliver a balanced budget;
- (3) agree to receive further reports requesting funding at the appropriate time, having noted the budget requirements for delivering the change programme;
- (4) approve the following recommendations from the Discretionary Services Review:-
  - (a) a recurring reduction of £171,180 in back office spend for operational budget cut proposals;
  - (b) the transfer of £95,370 from the Neighbourhood CIL to resource the Communities element of the Active and Healthy People service, subject to compliance with the provisions of the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2011;
  - (c) the business case proposal to remodel the Customer Service Centre, and the permanent deletion of two security and assistance officer posts and one customer service officer post, generating a proposed saving of £86,945, noting that two of the posts are currently vacant; and
  - (d) the business case to reduce the opening hours of the underground passages to reduce the operational cost, generating a proposed saving of £45,000.
- (5) note that in relation to recommendation 4, that employees will be consulted on the impact of any changes to their roles and jobs and where the outcome results in any potential redundancies, the consultation will be genuine and meaningful and consultation will be entered into:

- with a real willingness to listen;
  - an honest preparedness to adjust proposals where considered appropriate;
  - where there is a sufficient level of detail provided; and
  - where there is adequate time made available.
- (6) authorise the relevant Director to consider and agree any alternatives that are reasonable, implementable and deliver the same financial savings required by the business case as part of the consultation process.

20

**GENERAL FUND / HRA ESTIMATES AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23**

The Executive received the report on the proposed General Fund revenue estimates for 2022/23 and recommending the Band D level of Council Tax for 2022/23. The report also included the proposed Capital Programme for 2022/23 and future years, and the proposals in respect of the Housing Revenue Account.

Particular reference was made to the following:-

- the final Local Government Settlement of £54 billion nationally had been laid before Parliament on 7 February 2022, with Exeter City Council receiving an increase in the Business Rate multiplier compensation amounting to £83,000 when compared to the Provisional Settlement. The Council had also received a new service grant of £285,000 together with a further £4,000 as well as a further lower tier grant of £185,000;
- the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2022-23 had been agreed for one year, following the delay in Business Rates Retention Scheme;
- the Referendum Principles for the Council Tax set by the Government would allow the Council to increase the tax by £5 or by up to 2%, whichever was the higher, and a £5 increase was being proposed which would provide an extra £163,733;
- the HRA Medium Term Financial Plan would show a substantial lower contribution to the Capital Programme as the majority of the work would be funded from other reserves;
- the General Fund Capital Programme was largely as previously agreed with an additional figure for IT equipment; and
- final figures would be reported to the Extraordinary Council on 22 February 2022 when the Devon County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall and the Devon and Somerset Fire Authority precepts would be known.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council:-

- (1) approve the overall spending proposals in respect of both its revenue and capital budgets;
- (2) approve the Council Tax for each Band be recommended to the Council as set out in section 8.19.3 of the report, subject to Devon County Council, the Office of the Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner Devon and Cornwall and the Devon and Somerset Fire Authority confirming their Band D levels respectively; and
- (3) approve the revised council tax levels submitted to Council on 22 February 2022, when the actual Council Tax amounts for Devon County Council, Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner and the Devon and Somerset Fire Authority are set.

21

**CAPITAL STRATEGY 2022-23**

The Executive received the report which sought approval of the Capital Strategy 2022-23. The report provided Members with details of the long-term policy objectives and resulting capital strategy requirements, governance procedures and risks for the capital programme. Members noted that there were no significant changes from the previous year.

Councillor D. Moore, as an opposition leader, spoke on the item, referring to the Council's commitment to the development of and consultation of a community asset transfer policy, which had not been referred to in the report. She enquired in particular to the stewardship of assets section for the transfer of assets for less than market value for providing social or environmental benefits and whether there was still a commitment to the development of a community asset transfer policy?

A response would be provided outside the meeting.

Members welcomed the report which highlighted the Council's commitment to delivering the key priorities for Net Zero and active and healthy lifestyles.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council approve the Capital Strategy as set out in Appendix 1 of the report presented at the meeting.

22 **THE PRUDENTIAL CODE FOR CAPITAL FINANCE IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES  
(INCORPORATING THE ANNUAL STATEMENT OF MINIMUM REVENUE  
PROVISION)**

The Executive received the report on the proposed 2022/23 prudential indicators for capital finance for adoption by the Council and to set the annual statement of Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), which would be incorporated within the Budget Book for approval at the full Council meeting as per the statutory requirement.

Particular reference was made to the range of indicators to manage the Capital Programme and borrowing, which the Council must adhere to:-

- the Capital Financing requirement demonstrated the amount which the Council had an underlying need to borrow, regardless of whether that amount has actually been borrowed;
- a consultation had been held on the minimum revenue provision, which had proposed a number of changes including to capital loans, but there were no proposed change to the minimum revenue provision strategy at this stage;
- the Operational Boundary set the maximum amount of borrowing that the Council intended to undertake for capital purposes over the period covered by the indicators; and
- the authorised limit was the maximum level, which the Section 151 officer was allowed to borrow to cover the Operational Boundary and day to day cash flow needs. The Council was not allowed to exceed this amount of borrowing without first authorising an increase to the limit.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council adopt:-

- (1) the Prudential Indicators set out in Appendix A-C of the report presented to the meeting; and
- (2) the Annual Statement of Minimum Revenue Provision for the Council.

23 **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY REPORT 2022/23**

The Executive received the report seeking the adoption of the Treasury Management Strategy Report and the incorporated Annual Investment Strategy 2022/23, as required under section 15(1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2003.

Particular reference was made to there being no significant changes since the previous year. There were limits set to the value of investments that could be held by any one institution such as banks, building societies or other Local Authorities and that money could also be invested with the Government. It was noted that there would be a future borrowing requirement in respect of the Exeter City Living development at the Clifton Hill site, which has already been approved by Council.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council adopt the new Treasury Management Strategy and delegations contained therein.

24

### **WONFORD HEALTH AND WELLBEING CENTRE FEASIBILITY PROPOSAL**

The Executive received the report, which sought funding and approval to progress to the next Workstage of the Wonford Health and Wellbeing Hub redevelopment programme, including further detailed feasibility towards full planning consent for the development of the existing Wonford Community and Sports Centre facilities.

Particular reference was made to Wonford being a future nominated site for regeneration and development within the wider transformational Liveable Exeter housing plan and that health and wellbeing was at the centre of Wonford, through a community led vision and investment to redevelop a health and wellbeing hub.

An in depth local community engagement process had been undertaken with investment from Sport England as part of the 'Live and Move' Local Delivery Pilot programme, and the Council was now seeking to progress the programme to a formal in depth feasibility and to submit a planning application. Engagement with the local community over a two year period had shown that some 70% of the ward had not used the centre. The public consultation had also highlighted the following:-

- the development of a hub would bring the community together and improve the health and wellbeing of local residents;
- the facility would be opened outwards to the whole community, to replace the current intimidating building outlook and would be connected to the Wonford Playing Fields, the Ludwell Valley Park and the wider city Green Circle cycle and walking route;
- there would be improvements to the sustainable transport options to the site; and
- the development towards a local hub for leisure and wellbeing activities would be led by the local community.

Councillor D. Moore, as an opposition leader, spoke on the item, welcoming the project and the community engagement undertaken and enquired on community involvement and governance arrangements for this new facility. She further enquired on whether the Portfolio Holder would be considering the carbon impact for the demolition and construction?

A response would be provided outside the meeting.

During discussion the following points were made:-

- the initiative would encourage people to become healthier and more active, particularly by making the centre more welcoming and accessible to the local community, acting as a destination point for residents;
- consultation work had been undertaken on several levels with an emphasis on providing residents with a voice on the design of the new facility around their community needs. The engagement had resulted in many useful suggestions such as a café, climbing wall and a shared space; and
- the new hub would result in greater ownership by the local community and help improve health and well-being in area which had suffered from deprivation and inequality.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council approve:-

- (1) the provision of £750,000 funding to progress to the next Workstage of the Wonford Health & Wellbeing Hub; and
- (2) the invitation of local residents' involvement in the co-design of the proposed redevelopment.

25

### **EXETER LOCAL PLAN: ISSUES CONSULTATION SUMMARY REPORT**

The Executive received the report which summarised the Local Plan 'Issues' consultation and the responses received, which was included as an Appendix to the report. As the Local Planning Authority for Exeter, the City Council had a statutory duty to prepare planning policy for the city and an initial, 'Issues' public consultation had been held between September and November 2021. The consultation enabled the public, stakeholders and the wider community with an early opportunity to influence the scope of the new Local Plan for Exeter.

Particular reference as made to:-

- of the 215 responses received from the consultation, the majority had been submitted online, with 161 from individuals and 54 from organisations; and
- the responses would help inform the next stage of developing the Local Plan for consultation in Autumn of 2022.

During discussion the following points were made:-

- public feedback had reflected many of the Council priorities including addressing the climate emergency, health and wellbeing, delivering much needed homes for the city and economy and jobs;
- significant reference had been made to developing brown field sites and protecting green spaces, which were important goals for the Council;
- a wide range of engagement mechanisms had been used, including a public consultation at the Exeter Central Library.

**RESOLVED** that the content of the 'New Local Plan Issues Consultation Summary Report' (Appendix A) be noted as a document which will be used to inform the preparation of the emerging new Local Plan.

26

### **ANNUAL PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022/23**

The Executive received the report on the Council's Annual Pay Policy Statement 2022/23 which required approval by Full Council each financial year in line with legislation.

It was highlighted that the pay differential between the highest and lowest paid was 6.28 and that the Council, having adopted the Real Living Wage in January 2014, would see a Living Wage of £9.90 per hour from 1 April 2022. It was predicted that the minimum wage may increase to £10.70 per hour by 2024/25. It was also noted that negotiations were continuing on the pay award and that any necessary changes would be made to the budget in line with the nationally agreed award.

The Leader confirmed the Council's commitment to honour any national agreement to the annual pay award.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council:-

- (1) adopt the Policy, Report and Appendices and publish in accordance with legislation; and
- (2) grant delegated authority to the Director Corporate Services to make necessary amendments to the pay policy statement following any changes in legislation or subsequent increases in pay.

27

### **GENDER PAY GAP REPORT**

The Executive received the report on the Gender Pay Gap which was a statutory requirement of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, for the local authorities employing 250 or more employees.

Particular reference was made to the average pay for females across the Council was higher than that of males contrary to the national trend and that there were three times more males in the lower quartile of earnings than females.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council:-

- (1) note the Findings and Observations as follows:
  - the average rate of pay for females is higher than males across the Council;
  - the difference has increased slightly since last year from 4.59% to 5.00%; and
  - there are over 3 times more males in the lower quartile of earnings than females
- (2) approves the publication of the Gender Pay Gap Report and its findings on the Exeter City Council website and on the centrally held database on gov.uk.

28

### **REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CONTAMINATED LAND STRATEGY**

The Executive received the report which sought the adoption of a revised Contaminated Land Strategy for the period 2022 to 2027. Following a consultation, there had been no comments or recommendations were received from the public or any of the statutory consultees during the consultation period.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council adopt the revised Contaminated Land Strategy.

29

### **PROPOSED VARIATION OF THE PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER**

The Executive received the report on the variation of Prohibition E of the Public Spaces Protection Order 2017 ("PSPO") which was due to expire on the 20 June 2022 and to seal a new order for the maximum of three years.

A consultation had run between October 2021 and December 2021, with the representations received being in favour of the variation to the PSPO to increase the time for dispersal to up to 24 hours for either a direction to leave made to an individual and or a dispersal order for two or more persons.

Members welcomed the report, which was considered to be a sensible approach with a strong agreement to amend Prohibition E. Members expressed their thanks to the Community Policing Team and staff for the work that had been undertaken.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council approve:-

- (1) the variation of Prohibition E of the current order following a public consultation so that any individual whether or not in a group who is causing harassment, alarm and distress may be required to leave the area of the PSPO for a maximum of 24 hours as stated in Appendix A of the report;
- (2) no change to the remaining prohibitions of the Public Spaces Protection Order and the existing boundaries as shown in Appendix B of the report;
- (3) the extension of the PSPO for a further three years, commencing on 20 June 2022; and
- (4) the continuation of the current policy of funding received by the Council from fixed penalty notices issued for a breach of any PSPO to be ring-fenced for initiatives to address anti-social behaviour and that the funding continue to be administered through the Exeter Community Safety Partnership.

30

**AUTHORISATION OF LEGAL SERVICES OFFICERS TO ATTEND THE  
MAGISTRATES' AND COUNTY COURTS AND CHANGES TO THE SCHEME OF  
DELEGATION FOR LEGAL SERVICES.**

The Executive received the report which sought the authorisation for legal officers to represent the Council before the County Court and Magistrates' and the County Court. The report further sought Council approval to amend the Constitution to state that future decisions concerning authorisation of legal officers to appear before the courts, to be delegated to the Service Lead Legal Services.

**RESOLVED** that in accordance with Section's 222 and 223 of the Local Government Act 1972 and Section 60 of the County Courts Act 1984, the following officer be authorised to represent Exeter City Council at the County and Magistrates' Courts:-

- Danny Damarell – Housing and Litigation Team Lead

**RECOMMENDED** that Council approve the amendment to the Council's Scheme of Delegation to give delegated authority to the Service Lead, Legal Services, to authorise legal officers to represent Exeter City Council in the Magistrates' and County Court in accordance with sections 222 and 223 of the Local Government Act 1972 and section 60 of the County Courts Act 1984.

31

**EXETER CITY LIVING BUSINESS PLAN 2022-23**

**RESOLVED** that the item be deferred.

32

**A BUSINESS CASE FOR THE CREATION OF A RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY  
COMPANY**

**RESOLVED** that the item be deferred.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.25 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 22 February 2022.**

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