

STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday 23 January 2025

Time: 5.30 pm

Venue: Rennes Room, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter

Members are invited to attend the above meeting.

If you have an enquiry regarding any items on this agenda, please contact Liz Smith, Democratic Services Officer (Committees) on 01392 265425.

Entry to the Civic Centre can be gained through the rear entrance, located at the back of the Customer Service Centre, Paris Street.

Membership -

Pole (Chair), Mitchell, M (Deputy Chair), Atkinson, Ellis-Jones, Haigh, Hughes, Jobson, Knott, Moore, Palmer, Rees, Rolstone, Snow and Williams, M

Agenda

1 Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

2 Minutes

(Pages 5 -
10)

To approve and sign the minutes of the Strategic Scrutiny Committee held on 5 December 2024.

3 Declarations of Interest

Councillors are reminded of the need to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests that relate to business on the agenda and which have not already been included in the register of interests, before any discussion takes place on the item. Unless the interest is sensitive, you must also disclose the nature of the interest. In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, you must then leave the room and must not participate in any further discussion of the item. Councillors requiring clarification should seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer prior to the day of the meeting.

4 Local Government Act 1972 - Exclusion of Press and Public

It is considered that the Committee would be unlikely to exclude the press and public during the consideration of the items on this agenda, but if it should wish to do so, then the following resolution should be passed:

"**RESOLVED** that, under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the particular item(s) of business on the grounds that it (they) involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraph(s) of Part 1, of Schedule 12A of the Act."

5 **Questions from Members of the Public Under Standing Order No.19**

Details of questions should be notified to the Democratic Services Manager via the committee.services@exeter.gov.uk email by 10.00am at least three working days prior to the meeting. For this meeting any questions must be submitted by 10.00am on Monday 20 January 2025.

For details about how to speak at Committee, please click the following link - <https://exeter.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/councillors-and-meetings/public-speaking-at-meetings/overview/>

6 **Questions from Members of the Council Under Standing Order No.20**

To receive questions from Members of the Council to the relevant Portfolio Holders for this Scrutiny Committee. The Portfolio Holders reporting to this Scrutiny Committee are:

Councillor Bialyk -	Leader
Councillor Allcock -	Portfolio Holder City Development
Councillor Vizard -	Portfolio Holder Climate and Ecological Change and Communities
Councillor Wood -	Portfolio Holder Leisure Services and Physical Activity
Councillor Wright -	Portfolio Holder, Culture and City Centre Strategy
Councillor Foale -	Portfolio Holder Arts, Culture and Tourism

Advance questions from Members relating to the Portfolio Holders above should be notified to Democratic Services.

7 **Portfolio Holders Report - Deputy Leader & Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services & City Centre** (Pages 11 - 16)

To receive the report of the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and City Centre, Councillor Wright.

8 **Forward Plan of Business and Scrutiny Work Plan** (Pages 17 - 28)

Please see for noting a link to the schedule of future business proposed for the Council which can be viewed on the Council's web site. This on-line document is a source for Members to raise issues at Scrutiny on forthcoming Executive agenda items:-

<https://exeter.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/councillors-and-meetings/forward-plan-of-executive-decisions/>

Also attached is a draft work plan of future scrutiny items. Should Members wish to raise issues in respect of future business please notify Liz Smith in advance of the meeting.

Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Strategic Scrutiny Committee will be held on **Thursday 3 April 2025** at 5.30 pm in the Civic Centre.

Individual reports on this agenda can be produced in large print on request to Democratic Services (Committees) on 01392 265425.

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STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5 December 2024

Present:

Councillor Liz Pole (Chair)

Councillors Mitchell, M, Atkinson, Haigh, Jobson, Knott, Moore, Palmer, Rees, Rolstone, Snow and Williams, M

Apologies:

Councillors Ellis-Jones and Hughes

Also present:

Interim Director – Environment, Waste and Operations, Head of Service - City Centre and Net Zero, Net Zero Project Manager, Head of Legal and Democratic Services & Monitoring Officer and Democratic Services Officer(LS)

In attendance:

45 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2024 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as correct.

46 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made by Members.

47 Questions from Members of the Public Under Standing Order No.19

There were no questions submitted by the public.

48 Questions from Members of the Council Under Standing Order No.20

In accordance with Standing Order No. 20, the following question was submitted by Councillor Banyard in relation to the Portfolio of Councillor Wood who attended the meeting. The question was circulated at the meeting to Members of the Committee. The response of the Portfolio Holder is set out below:

Question: According to the Financial Conduct Authority, “Access to cash and banking services remain vital for many consumers and businesses” Not being able to pay for a swim or a gym session with cash at St Sidwell’s point, and other Exeter Leisure locations, is a barrier to access for at least the 10% of the population who use cash for most or all of their transactions, according to the FCA.

<https://www.fca.org.uk/publications/research/uks-cash-infrastructure-consumer-research>

This barrier disproportionately affects elderly individuals, disabled people, refugees, undocumented migrants, and the homeless, many of whom may lack access to technology or the skills needed to navigate online systems. For these groups, the inability to engage with services that should be universally accessible exacerbates marginalisation and isolation.

The Council hasn't completed an EQIA on the use of cashless payment systems since cash was removed as a payment option during Covid.

When will all customers be able to pay for Exeter Leisure facilities with cash?

Response:

The Leisure service went cashless in 2020 - at the time due to Covid restrictions. The concept proved popular with our customers. Following the pandemic we analysed our data and concluded that the benefits of a cashless service far outweighed our previous model. From a security point of view it is a safer environment for our staff as well as saving on staff costs due to the reduction in administration associated with cash transaction, including third party collection/deposit service.

We prioritise the data of all customers in our building as a H&S duty of care, taking their name and next of kin in case of emergency. This allows us to ensure we have data should an incident occur, which is industry best practice.

Since we introduced a cashless service, we have had a small handful of customer impacted, our team work with these customers and have managed to find solutions. A number of residents do use cash and we are looking at workable solutions and balancing the risk for staff.

Supplementary Question and Response

Councillor Banyard recognised that a small number of people would be affected but questioned why no formal EQIA had been carried out to assess impact of policies on all?

Councillor Wood responded stating that an EQIA relates to when a decision was made and that the leisure service was brought in-house during COVID when there was no choice but to be cashless and that there was no facility for cash at St Sidwell's Point.

Councillor Knott stated that cashless is often preferred in his trade, hospitality as cash is twice as expensive to process. Was there a study of how much it would cost to introduce the facility to accept cash in leisure facilities? Councillor Wood responded that the cost would be greater than to a retail organisation who would handle large amounts of cash but be able to spread that cost wider. There would be a significant cost to introduce cash handling in car parks, leisure and RAMM shop.

Questions to the Portfolio Holder for Leisure Services and Healthy Living, Councillor Wood:

Councillor Moore asked why Live and Move consultations were not on the Charter page. Councillor Wood agreed to answer outside the meeting as he was not aware that this hadn't been placed on the website.

Councillor Palmer stated that there was also a wider cost in tackling health inequality.

Councillor Moore asked the Leader, Councillor Bialyk if following the Executive decision last week to publish the local plan, could he be sure that enough brownfield sites were being built on? Councillor Bialyk responded making the following points:

- commitment remained to 15% brownfield sites;
- the Plan was evidence-based not political;
- there was a need to balance what they would like, what was needed and reality and that the local plan brought these together;
- social and affordable housing was important to this council;

- 35% hadn't been achieved; and
- there was more good in the Plan than may be evident.

49 **City Wide Net Zero programme of work and update on delivery**

The Head of Service - City Centre and Net Zero presented the report making the following points:

- data was for 2022 as there was a two year lag;
- this was the second report, the first having been three years ago covering 2019;
- the Greenhouse Gas Report was kindly funded by the University of Exeter, via the Exeter Civic University Agreement;
- Exeter's greenhouse gas emissions decreased by 45,000t between 2019 and 2022 to an estimated 466,000t which represented a 9% decrease. The majority of the decline reflected the continued decarbonisation of power;
- a lack of progress in the buildings and transport sectors was particularly concerning as these sectors are the major sources of GHG emissions for Exeter, and reductions fell well short of the level of change required;
- reducing emissions and achieving net zero would require a concerted effort from all stakeholders within the city: businesses, residents, VCSE sector as well as the public sector;
- waste was now treated within the city therefore included in emissions but biogenic content and energy generation not considered;
- change in behaviour was required – such as where residents go on holiday, where and how they spend and where businesses bought raw materials;
- the team would work with Building Greater Exeter in how the construction sector was supported and advised on consumption-based data; and
- the next update would be in March 2025.

The Portfolio Holder for Climate, Ecological Change and Communities and the Head of Service - City Centre and Net Zero answered Members' questions making the following points:

- access to active travel for those with a disability could be drawn into the Transport Working Group and reported to DCC;
- cost of living had an impact on behaviour change;
- government grants could be made more visible;
- carbon budget had not yet been discussed;
- milestones and metrics would be available in March;
- there was work to be done in reaching out to residents about schemes such as Warm Homes; and
- the council remain committed to Net Zero 2030.

Following a vote the recommendations set out in the report were **CARRIED**.

50 **Working Towards Net Zero - Exeter City Council's Corporate Carbon Footprint Report and Carbon Reduction Action Plan**

The Net Zero Project Manager presented the report making the following points:

- recommendation 2.2 was needed in order to ensure activity could continue;
- key activities, PSDS 4 was now open with the only viable building being the Riverside Leisure Centre with a bid submitted (heat pump and insulation of central roof – if successful would be submitted to Executive);

- the Green Accord scheme had been launched in April 2023 and a recent sustainable supplier event had been held, with 70 companies and the Chief Executive in attendance and electric bicycles and vehicles on display;
- carbon literacy training had continued with 132 staff and councillors now carbon literate;
- Bronze status had been achieved;
- the Housing retrofit programme continued;
- SWEEG had been commissioned to carry out a fully costed Carbon Descent Report;
- an EV strategy report would go to Executive in the future; and
- Water Lane solar farm produced renewable energy and was a demonstrator project with a large battery funded through the European Development Fund. There had been a visit, of 16 Officers from various public organisations across Devon, Torbay and Plymouth, to the solar farm during the week.

The Net Zero Project Manager and Portfolio Holder for Climate, Ecological Change and Communities answered Members' questions making the following points:

- new UK Climate Score card rankings would be expected in 2025;
- that three costed scenarios for the decarbonisation of RAMM would be provided outside the meeting
- the City Council's Energy Manager was on the group to input into local energy discussions and work with the DNO;
- in regards to PSDS4, the bulk supply point was one of the main issues at the RAMM;
- there were different restrictions across the city but this was a similar picture nationally and the council would learn from other projects;
- there was a need to understand future demand and now have dialogue with National Grid which wasn't previously possible;
- carbon literacy training would now be service specific where possible;
- the Carbon Descent Plan would be put to SMB and committee for debate and discussion;
- it would be hoped that actions would filter into the emerging corporate plan;
- Portfolio Holders were working together and there may be external opportunities such as carbon literacy training; and
- the council was highly ranked with the Climate Score Cards and other councils were looking at what was being done here.

It was noted that on page 36 6.4 there was a minor typographical error and should read Decarbonisation Plan.

Following a vote the recommendations set out in the report were **CARRIED** unanimously.

51 **Air Quality Performance**

The Interim Joint Director for Environment, Waste and Operations presented the report which had previously been heard by the Executive and Council, making the following points:

- there was a statutory duty to measure nitrogen dioxide concentration and report to central government on a set template;
- there were 85 diffusion tubes mainly on arterial routes looking for issues and giving monthly data;

- there were two fixed stations on the national network, at the RAMM and Alphington Street;
- the lead officer vacancy was an issue as an expert of twenty years had been lost;
- the annual status report would be presented to Executive once the appraisal letter from Defra was received; and
- Defra had now advised that waiting for a year to revise the Air Quality Management Area and subsequently the action plan would be preferable to allow there to be data three years out of COVID.

The Portfolio Holder for City Management and Interim Joint Director for Environment, Waste and Operations answered Members' questions making the following points:

- the primary objective was to look at exceedances of which there was one area in East Wonford Hill;
- this was a sealed order of Council but Defra had a say in it;
- air quality knew no boundaries, local, national or international;
- there had been a change for the better in the last ten or eleven years due to improvements in technology;
- every petrol or diesel car replaced by electric had a positive impact however behaviour change out of vehicles would still be needed;
- mapping of placement of diffusion tubes was available in the public domain, on the council website, there were a number near schools and they were placed in areas where dispersal was difficult with buildings close to the roadside, with some in parks to give background levels;
- the team were not resourced to provide education but DCC active travel have done and the team had input, this is funding dependent;
- reasons for the rise in particulate matter in recent years on page 138 were unclear;
- they had already written to the Director of Public Health with regard to the there being no mention of air quality in the Devon and Torbay Transport Plan;
- all 17 actions would be reviewed
- 4.1 of the Action plan on the website showed significant consultation ([Air quality action plan - Exeter City Council](#)) and a similar level of involvement would be intended upon revision;
- there would be different measures as some such as Co-bikes/Co-cars would no longer be relevant; and
- the Chair of HATOC had agreed to add Air Quality to their agenda.

Councillor Moore proposed a recommendation which was subsequently withdrawn following debate and additional information from the Portfolio Holder.

52 **Annual Scrutiny Report**

Councillor Williams presented the report and thanked Councillor Allcock who had been the previous Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Board. The changed timescale of the report was explained.

During discussion Members made the following comments:

- the format was the same as last year; and
- it would be good to see impact and outcomes.

Members of the Scrutiny Programme Board responded making the following points:

- this was an interim report; and

- other authorities had fuller reports but they also had dedicated scrutiny officers.

The Strategic Scrutiny Committee received the report and recommended that the Executive note the Annual Scrutiny Report 2023/24.

53 **Forward Plan of Business and Scrutiny Work Plan**

The Chair explained that no proposals had been received in the shape of proformas or as Standing Order 18 requests. The Carbon Descent item had not been available therefore a Chair's decision had been taken to move it to the January meeting due to the work plan item being deferred in November.

The Chair proposed that the Live and Move programme update and Councillor Wood's Portfolio update on Leisure Services and Healthy Living, be heard in March rather than January to allow changed information to be provided from that which was presented in June, in addition for more information on future plans to be presented. The Chair proposed that Deputy Leader's Portfolio Holder Report be heard in January.

Following a vote the amendments to the work plan were **CARRIED**.

Councillor Mitchell asked and the Monitoring Officer agreed to discuss with Officers outside the meeting the Combined Scrutiny meeting scheduled.

Following a vote the plan as amended was **AGREED**.

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 7.56 pm

Chair

PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S REPORT TO SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

REPORT TO STRATEGIC and CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Date of Meetings

Strategic Scrutiny: Thursday 23rd January 2025

Customer Focus Scrutiny: Thursday 30th January 2025

Report of COUNCILLOR Laura Wright, Lead Cllr for Corporate Services (including Digital Transformation) & City Centre Strategy.

Council Committees: Executive and Council

Board member/Trustee (council appointments): InExeter, Exeter Canal and Quay Trust

Member of: Devon and Cornwall Police & Crime Commissioner's Panel

Member of: Vision Zero South West Board

Member of: Exeter Community Safety Partnership including working groups; ASB and Gender Safety

Devon & Cornwall Police Cllr Advocate

Relevant training and CPD undertaken this year;

LGA Conference, Harrogate, October 2024

Completion of LGC Next Generation Leadership programme

ECC online certified training; County Lines, Domestic Abuse, Equality Diversity and Inclusion, GDPR, Introduction to Safeguarding Thematics, Misogyny and Incel subculture, Risk Assessment, Serious violence and Knife Crime, FGM.

Other relevant training: Level 2 Safeguarding, Prevent

1. Delivering our strategic priorities: as per our published Corporate Plan 2022-26 which is under revision for updating

1. Contributing to the aspirations of the Exeter Vision 2040

2a Prosperous local economy

City Centre Strategy

The development of a new City Centre Strategy is continuing, the first round of consultations with local businesses and key stake-holders and then with ECC and DCC elected Members has concluded.

Once the City Council Corporate Priorities are in the final stages a public consultation will take place using the same framework as the consultation with business and Members.

The strategy will address many areas – including (but not limited to) a prosperous local economy. The strategy will be finalised by ECC after involving input from key stakeholders who will take ownership of aspects of the resulting Action Plan.

InExeter (the Business Improvement District, also referred to as 'the BID') had a successful vote November 2024, with 90% of participating businesses supporting the BID's renewal. Businesses voted overwhelmingly in favour of renewing InExeter for a third five-year term, allowing for continued investment in city centre improvements and initiatives until March 2030. A total of 334 businesses participated in the vote, achieving a 48% turnout. Of those who voted, 90% supported the BID by number, and 96% by rateable value.

The Business community voted in support of the 2025-2030 InExeter Business Plan, which will guide activity going forward: https://inexeter.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/InExeter_Business_Plan_2025-30_D.pdf

Private sector events relevant to the City Centre and local business

1. The purchase of Princesshay by The Fraser Group provides confidence in Exeter, the City Centre and its long term economic success. <https://frasers.group/press/news/frasers-group-acquires-over-1-million-sq-ft-retail-assets> The Fraser Group also have control over the shops in Paris Street and some in Sidwell Street which form part of the City Point regeneration opportunity, identified in the emerging Exeter Plan. There will be further discussions between the Fraser Group now that Crown Estate are no longer involved.
2. The purchase of the Royal Clarence by Nooko, provides additional confidence in the city centre and Exeter <https://nooko.co.uk/news/press-release-nooko-acquires-historic-royal-clarence-in-exeter-for-exciting-residential-and-commercial-development/> . Nooko is also developing Paternoster House and Concorde House, in the city centre, for high quality urban living apartments.
3. Prior to Christmas there were a number of retail openings within the city centre including ProCook and Knoops.

2b. Healthy and active city: *including safety*

Community Safety & Anti-Social behaviour

The Exeter City Centre PSPO is due for renewal June 2025 <https://exeter.gov.uk/clean-safe-city/community-safety/safer-exeter/pspo/> Work has started in consulting with local statutory bodies.

A new **Community Safety Team** has been established, with 4 officers temporarily employed to patrol the city centre, supporting D&C Police in their hotspot policing initiative. The team also cover city parks and green spaces, as well as collecting and addressing stray dogs. The team have recently undertaken community safety accreditation scheme (CSAS) training. This gives them a range of powers usually only available to police, such as the authority to issue fixed penalty notices for certain offences. The main purpose of the scheme is to contribute to community safety, to combat crime and disorder, public nuisance and other forms of antisocial behaviour in co-operation with the police.

The areas covered by the hotspot policing include; Sidwell Street, High Street, Cathedral Yard, Queen Street, South Street and Mary Arches Street.

Outputs & outcomes for the month of November 2024

- Community Safety Team patrols delivered: 30
- Police intelligence submitted: 4
- Premise visits: 355
- Individuals engaged: 735
- ASB incidents attended: 24

CCTV and Control Room

There have been many notable successes in the increase in safety and in aiding the police in bringing perpetrators of crime to justice. The Control Room team have recently been awarded a commendation from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall, for their work. Just one example of many, is detailed here [News Article - Devon & Cornwall Police \(devon-cornwall.police.uk\)](https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/news/news-article-devon-cornwall-police)

Community Safety Partnership

ECC is the convenor of this statutory partnership, and with the support of partners we will continue to tackle priorities related to community safety and ASB.

The work of the partnership so far has been to bring key stakeholders together to share information, create specific focus groups to bring forward objectives, and to facilitate bids for relevant Home Office Funding for community safety. Through this, we have been able to attain funding for the new CCTV cameras and infrastructure and associated projects such as the 'Need help?' signage around the city centre.

2c. Housing and building great neighbourhoods and communities - N/A

2d. **Net zero carbon city – N/A**

2e. **Thriving culture and heritage – N/A**

3. Leading a well-run council

Internal Audit

- SWAP have begun rolling out AuditBoard, the Audit Management system used to track actions and progress in addressing internal control weaknesses;
- the Audit Plan is on track for completion;
- the s151 Officer and Head of Service – Finance meet monthly with SWAP to discuss progress and highlight any issues; and
- a new process for monitoring action plans and progress has been introduced at a Senior Management level.

HR

- A successful recruitment process completed in November 2024 resulting in the appointment of Strategic Director and Head of Service roles.
- A further campaign commenced for Head of HR and other Head of Service roles, all planned to be completed by end of January 2025.
- A detailed review of HR processes has been requested by Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee, which will be forthcoming within 6 months, following the appointment of the new Head of Service and allowing time for the implementation of the HR Improvement Plan (of October '24).
- A comprehensive review and updating of policies has begun, prioritising the core policies and procedures. This has included the launch of the new Drug and Alcohol Policy and roll out of training and testing equipment.
- EDI Improvement Plan in place following recommendation from mini peer review with senior management task and finish group overseeing delivery. Briefing note on mini peer review recommendations and action plan provided to all members.
- Development of Sexual Harassment Training in line with Equality Act 2010, roll out planned January 2025.
- Employee focused campaign to update emergency contact details, and EDI information via iTrent, strong level return rate across all areas.
- iTrent data cleanse - across Council in line with new operating model and hierarchy structure: work agreed within Strata 25/26 Business Plan for replacement/upgrade of ITrent in 25/26
- Occupational Health Audit commenced December 2024
- Payroll Audit to commence February 2025
- Development of Leadership Competency Framework - to support identification and priorities in relation to Leadership Development: external partner to be secured by February 2025 to support the CEX in the Senior Management Leadership Development

Legal Services: *No updates at present*

Democratic Services

- A firm timeline for the Constitution review will be forthcoming, with an expectation for completion by July this year.
- Administrative improvements to the accessibility of the current Constitution are being made removing duplication, updating named officers to provide job title only, and to include digital links to each section and other relevant documents.
- Work on amendments to the Constitution content will take place initially with the Director and Head of Service and Portfolio Holder, and then be brought to a sounding-board/working group before coming to the relevant committees and then Council for adoption.
- Other non-constitutional improvements to the service – a list of ideas and suggestions that have been made by Members to myself, has been compiled and has been brought forward to the Director for Corporate services for consideration with the Head of Service and Monitoring Officer for inclusion in the constitution review (where applicable). Some examples are;

- I. Aligning the timings of Audit & Governance and Scrutiny Committee agenda content with Executive Committee meetings to improve the process of recommendations reaching Executive to aid decision making.
- II. Monitoring the number of agenda items for Committee meetings (particularly Planning) to avoid evening meetings lasting for more than 3 hours. When decisions are time sensitive, an extra meeting may be called.
- III. To provide refreshments for evening meetings.
- IV. To cap speeches to an agreed timing (as is done in many other councils) with exceptions being at the discretion of the Chair.

AV committee room project - Following feedback from members and staff in the Democratic Services and SMB teams, the new Head of Service, Digital and Data commissioned Focused Vision to carry out an audit of the equipment in the Bad Homburg and Rennes committee rooms. Changes will be made to the AV equipment, with the installation of new speakers, amp, hearing loop, and a camera to record meetings. This will be installed between the 5 and 18 March 2025. The Democratic Services Team have relocated any meetings due to take place in these rooms between those dates. These improvements will improve the experience for Members and those attending committee meetings in Civic Centre.

Digital Transformation

Digital Customer Strategy implementation: A detailed report on progress towards the goals set out in the Digital Customer Strategy approved in November 2023 is being prepared for February/March committee cycle. This will set out progress to date both within the council and through the digital enabling work of Strata. This will also set out the priorities that are being focused on for delivery in 25/26 and 26/27 which will form the basis of the workplan for One Exeter. This will be led by the Head of Service Digital and Data and the Corporate Digital and Data team.

Data Strategy: The draft Data Strategy will also be coming for formal approval in the Feb/March committee cycle. This is a crucial enabling strategy that sets our principles for effective use and management of data. These principles will underpin how we implement new data architecture through critical projects such as SharePoint.

Cllr Training and IT:

- The Councillor Development Steering group will meet on 13 February 2025. Attendance statistics for councillor development sessions will be provided at that meeting.
- To date, a total of 33 training and briefing sessions have been held since May 2024.
- We continue to enforce the mandatory training requirements as set out under Article 8 of the Constitution.
- Cllr training and briefing sessions have been broad and comprehensive this year. Although sometimes there seem to be a lot of briefings, feedback is that members are appreciating training and briefing sessions.

Equality and Diversity

- EDI and Safeguarding Policy Office has been transferred to sit within the HR department.
- A new policy/guidance on corporate parenting for Members will be undertaken soon, following some cross-party member talks I have held (notably with Cllr Palmer).
- EDI Improvement Plan in place following recommendation from mini peer review with senior management task and finish group overseeing delivery.
- Briefing note on mini peer review recommendations and action plan provided to all members.

Corporate Health & Safety:

- Bespoke, onsite accredited Health and Safety at Work training for OMB is being undertaken in January 2025
- Strategic Director for People and Communities and Operations have jointly commissioned an expert external review of H&S at work strategy, policy and delivery resourcing to aid further organisational change linked to implementation of the Senior Leadership restructure.

2. Update or commentary on any major ongoing programmes of work

covered in the sections above

3. Issues that may impact services delivery/financial performance/future budget requirements

Devolution and LGR

CCTV

A tender is being worked on to develop a maintenance contract for the CCTV network, as the current warranty ceases in 2025.

A new commercial income generating contract has been signed, for the Control Room to monitor an external CCTV network. Additional contracts are in negotiation.

Homecall is starting to show an increase in customer numbers following a two-year slow decline. This is a result of a marketing campaign to create better awareness of the service.

The new **Community Safety Team** are funded until 31 March 2025 by the City Council, InExeter and D&C Police. Funding has been confirmed by InExeter from April onwards, we are awaiting funding confirmation from D&C Police. Having this team in place has impacted on the car park service, as some of the officers have moved over from car parking.

4. Potential changes to services/provisions being considered

1. Digital transformation – *as per the Digital Transformation report*
2. Staffing levels review in the CCTV Control Room: to ensure sufficient provision 24/7 to respond to calls, city centre incidents, monitoring the CCTV network and fulfilling external commercial contracts. This 'pinch point' was expected to come when the tension between accepting new external CCTV monitoring contracts and staff workload reached a point of investing in new posts.
3. As part of senior management review, support for the Exeter CSP is moving from the Head of Service Environment and Waste to the Head of Service for City Centre & Net Zero, with oversight from the Strategic Director, Place

5. Other matters the Portfolio Holder wishes to raise with the Scrutiny Committee

1. **ECQT** - Governance review. Following an independent report and recommendations to the Trust, a full trust meeting was scheduled to discuss. Due to the publication of the Government White paper on Devolution, this has been postponed for the near future.
2. **Devon & Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner Panel**
There has been an uplift in funding for the UK Police forces, and Devon & Cornwall will benefit from additional Home Office funding (6.9% increase), including funding to off-set the rise in National Insurance contributions.
The rise in council tax base across Devon & Cornwall as a result of the new 2nd homes council tax legislation will bring an increase of approximately 4.64% for the council tax base across Devon & Cornwall (Exeter at 2.07%).

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WORK PLAN FOR SCRUTINY ITEMS 2024/25*Working Draft for January 2025*

Strategic Scrutiny Committee	Item	Strategic Director	Portfolio Holder	Origin of Business	Status
23 January 2025	Portfolio Holder's Report (Cllrs Wright)		Deputy Leader & Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services (Cllr Wright)		
23 January 2025	Net Zero Carbon Descent Report	Strategic Director for Place (IC)	Portfolio Holder Climate, Ecological Change and Communities (Cllr Vizard)		To be rescheduled - Following presentation to Executive in March, the report and study will be presented to Strategic Scrutiny Committee.
13 March 2025	Portfolio Holder's Report (Cllr Wood & Foale)		Portfolio Holder Leisure Services & Healthy Living (Cllr Wood) and Portfolio Holder Arts, Culture & Tourism (Cllr Foale)		
13 March 2025	Live and Move Programme Update	Strategic Director for Community Services (tbc)	Portfolio Holder Leisure Services & Healthy Living (Cllr Wood)	Report from Strategic Scrutiny Committee 16 March 2023 half yearly	
13 March 2025	Working Towards Net Zero - Exeter City Council's Corporate Carbon Footprint Report and Carbon Reduction Action Plan Progress Report	Strategic Director for Community Services (tbc), Service Lead Net Zero & Business (VH)	Portfolio Holder Climate & Ecological Crisis (Cllr Vizard)	Report from Strategic Scrutiny Committee 29 September 2022 half yearly report	

Strategic Scrutiny Committee	Item	Strategic Director	Portfolio Holder	Origin of Business	Status
13 March 2025	Progress Report Shared Prosperity Fund - Update	Strategic Director for Community Services (tbc) Service Lead Net Zero & Business (VH)	Portfolio Holder Climate & Ecological Crisis (Cllr Vizard)	Report from Strategic Scrutiny Committee 29 September 2022 half yearly report	
5 June 2025	Portfolio Holder's Report (Cllr tbc)				
5 June 2025	Presentation on the Role of Scrutiny	Strategic Director Corporate Resources (DH)		Timetabled report	
5 June 2025	Live and Move Programme Update	Strategic Director for Community Services (tbc)	Portfolio Holder Leisure Services & Healthy Living (Cllr Wood)	Report from Strategic Scrutiny Committee 16 March 2023 half yearly	
23 January 2025	Net Zero Carbon Descent Report	Strategic Director for Place (IC)	Portfolio Holder Climate, Ecological Change and Communities (Cllr Vizard)		To be rescheduled - Following presentation to Executive in March, the report and study will be presented to Strategic Scrutiny Committee.

Combined Strategic Scrutiny and Customer Focus					
5 February 2025	Budget Setting Process	Strategic Director Corporate Resources	Leader		

		(DH)			
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Proformas received/ items for consideration	Item	Strategic Director	Portfolio Holder	Origin of Business	Status
16 December 2024	Markets	Strategic Director Corporate Resources (DH)	Leader	Proforma – Cllr Wetenhall	Sent to SMB for inclusion on agenda at next available meeting and comments.
16 December 2024	UK Shared Prosperity Fund	Strategic Director for Place (IC)		Officer request – Victoria Hatfield	On agenda for next SPB

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Proforma Guidance Notes

These guidance notes also include the proforma to be used to submit your proposed items for review by Scrutiny.

A check list will be used to assist the Scrutiny Programme Board to ensure a consistent approach is taken in determining whether or not to proceed with a suggested proposal or item of business, review of suggested topic or area of work. Their deliberations will also include taking account of the current and future work priorities and the Board will also liaise with the Strategic Management Board.

Important considerations

When Members are considering whether to put forward a proposal for review, it is important that they are aware of the following:

- a) The existing, agreed work priorities for Scrutiny. Members must take into account the capacity of Members and Officers to support the proposed work needed to do the review well;
- b) The Scrutiny Programme Board will wish to consider and prioritise those proposals which have the best chance of securing real improvement or local benefit or can make a positive change in line with the Council's agreed objectives and priorities.
- c) The Member who proposes the item, will be invited to take part in the Task and Finish Group/Spotlight Review to consider the matter.
- d) If it is decided not to proceed with the proposer's idea for review, full reasons will be given.

If a Member(s) wishes to put forward a request to Scrutiny to consider a specific topic or area of work, they must complete the following proforma.

Once completed, it should be emailed to the Democratic Services Manager. Once the views of the Strategic Management Board have been sought, the request will be presented, together with any other supporting information provided, to the Scrutiny Programme Board for consideration and the proposer(s) will be advised of the outcome.

SCRUTINY

Consideration of an Item at Scrutiny Committee

Please complete this form to provide information about your proposal for consideration by the Scrutiny Programme Board or request for a review to be undertaken on a topic or issue of concern. You may attach any other supporting information you feel might help the Board in considering your proposal. The Strategic Management Board will be advised of any proposal, to help advise on the timetable and any resource implications.

Please complete the following form which will be presented to the Scrutiny Programme Board (SPB)

Issue to be Considered	<i>Markets as a strategic issue for the city</i>
Proposer (s)	<i>Lynn Wetenhall</i>
Scrutiny Committee (to be determined by the SPB)	<i>Strategic Scrutiny</i>
Lead Portfolio Holder	<i>Ruth Williams, City Management</i>
Identification of Lead Officer	<i>Ian Collinson</i>

<p>Areas for consideration:</p>
<p>1. <i>What is the specific topic area you want considered/reviewed?</i></p> <p>To consider the City Council's position on how markets can contribute towards the Council's tourism, economic development and wellbeing goals and how the Council might develop a strategic approach to supporting and enabling markets in the city.</p>
<p>2. <i>What are the main issues you feel need to be addressed?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What has been learnt from the experience of different markets in the city over the past few years ? ● What can the City Council do to better support and promote markets and what benefits could flow from this?

- Is the vision of a modern, multi-use space city centre market, something that the City Council should consider as a strategic goal?
- Review how to achieve a more joined-up approach to markets across the Council and other market organisers, to improve the public offer, and also better linking of producers /would be stall holders, those hosting markets, existing businesses to each other.

3. Please identify which of the Council's key priorities your topic relates to? (If any)

If the assumption is made - and it is a fair assumption based on extensive research¹ that markets promote social cohesion, sense of place, provide outlets for small producers of all kinds and cater for vulnerable and disadvantaged people - then anything which ends in Exeter having more, flourishing, sustainable markets, will support the following Council priorities:

- **Exeter Vision 2040** a: a 'Healthy and Inclusive' place, 'Liveable and Connected', a Leading Sustainable City & Culture
- **Corporate Plan 22-26:**
 - a prosperous local economy.
 - addressing the reduced footfall in the city centre
 - attracting start-ups and entrepreneurs
 - Net Zero carbon city
 - Thriving culture and heritage : night time economy and 'shoulder time' in city centre; promoting local businesses with genuine cultural roots, via markets

4. What outcome, including time frame, are you aiming to achieve with this consideration/review?

Timeframe : In time to fit with a final City Centre Strategy if possible.

Outcomes. Exeter City Council has a better understanding of the role of markets and market promoters (including the Council) and how the Council might better support markets.

Exeter City Council has a better understanding of whether the ambition of a modern market place in the city centre is a desirable policy goal.

Exeter City Council has a better understanding of the benefits that might accrue from a more strategic and active approach to markets.

Gather in core stakeholders views and data that would help shape policy ideas. For example, dialogue with other market organisers (InExeter, Princeshay and Cathedral, Brillsville) to understand their needs and opportunities for market development and co-operation.

¹ https://www.sustainweb.org/blogs/jun20_markets_covid_recovery/.

<https://www.powertochange.org.uk/evidence-and-ideas/news-and-events/inclusive-local-economies-through-traditional-retail-markets/>

5. Do you consider this review urgent and if so why?

This is an ideal time to undertake a review of the Council's policy and strategy on markets because:

- the City Centre Strategy will highlight possible sites and provide complementary information. The workshop on the strategy held for Councillors in November this year, showed considerable interest and support around the issue of markets.
- the availability of the City Point site, where there is strong interest in the idea of the market already, makes this a timely exploration
- there is a growing interest in markets locally and nationally, including smaller, producer-led ones such as Brillsville or the Fore St Flea.
- the climate emergency means that building a resilient local economy is a priority

6. Financial considerations

For the Council to come to an informed view on whether markets could be an enhanced and visibly supported element in the city's make up, it needs more information as a first step. This review would potentially pave the way to a strategy and more substantial project exploring whether a new approach is needed, what that might comprise and likely costs. Equally if the review points to markets not being worthy of more support, the Council has a clear position to take when asked about the issue.

7. Expert witnesses to invite

- Entrepreneurs who manage existing markets in Exeter
- InExeter
- Cathedral
- Princesshay
- Sample of food producers, craft and art producers
- Relevant NGOs eg Food Exeter

8. Which format of Scrutiny are you proposing?

C – A task a finish group

A - Officers written report to be submitted to the Committee.

B- A Spotlight Review - where a group of members hold a meeting and gather evidence and make a submission to a Scrutiny Committee .

C - A Task and Finish Group - where a group of members hold a series of meetings gathering evidence and make a submission to a Scrutiny Committee.

Date of Request

15th December
2024

Please note that the Programme Board will consider the following matters (if relevant) when determining the request. *Please tick any that are appropriate.-*

Potential Criteria for Selecting Topic (NB This is not an exhaustive list)	Please tick
The issue has potential impact on one or more sections of the local population	✓
The issue is strategic and/or significant	✓
Scrutiny of this matter will add value to the Council's and/or its partners' overall performance	✓
The review will lead to effective outcomes	✓
This will improve service outputs	
The issue is of concern to partners and stakeholders	✓
The issue is a key issue for the public (as identified through contact with constituents or meetings of local organisations)	✓
This will be of benefit to the community	✓
Poor performing service (evidenced from performance indicators)	
Service/issue ranked as important by the Council's community (via market surveys/annual residents' survey/consultation with tenants, local business community)	
High level of user/general public dissatisfaction with service (via market surveys/complaints)	
Public interest issue (e.g. covered by local media)	✓
High level of budgetary commitment to the service or policy area	
Pattern of budgetary overspends	
Council key priority area	
Central Government priority area	
Issue poses significant or potential risk to the Council (can be financial, reputational or other risk)	✓
Issue raised by external auditor	
Issue raised by Council or one of its Committees	
Issue arises from new legislation or Government guidance	

Key reports or new evidence (provided by external organisations on key issue)	
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FOR SCRUTINY PROGRAMME BOARD USE ONLY

The following will be used if the Proposal/Topic is rejected	Please tick
The timing of this review is inappropriate	
The review will duplicate other work within the Council or elsewhere	
The issue is already under examination by Council	
The issue is already under examination by an Officer Group and changes are imminent	
Issue being examined as part of a service review	
New legislation/guidance expected within a year	
There is an alternative, more effective, route the Member can take to address the issue	
The issue is outside the scope of the Scrutiny Committee	
The issue would not bring about any sustainable and on-going revenue savings	
The issue does not meet any of the Council's corporate priorities	

Comments from SMB	Well run and commercially viable markets can make a valuable contribution to the City Council corporate priorities on the local economy, a healthy and active city, net zero and culture. The City Council holds a Markets Charter for Exeter, and successfully operates the Matford Centre, and is responsible for the weekly Farmers Market at the top of Fore Steet, which is also very popular, but constrained for space to grow. As part of Visit Exeter, officers are working with In Exeter and other partners to explore opportunities for new or expanded markets. However, the City Council does not have sufficient resources and capacity to develop a strategic approach, and there is no budget to support delivery. One option could be to attract a commercial market provider. This could be considered as part of the emerging City Centre Strategy.
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Overall recommendation of Scrutiny Programme Board Please tick relevant box)	Review Supported	Review not supported
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Confirm approval of review by Committee	Yes/No (<i>Delete as appropriate</i>) Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee or Strategic Scrutiny Committee
Date	

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