

## **CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date: Thursday 3 July 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 Customer Service Centre, Paris Street.

### *Membership -*

Rees (Chair), Cookson (Deputy Chair), Begley, Darling, Fullam, Holland, Hussain, Moore, Parkhouse, Payne, Pole, Read, Snow and Wardle

## **Agenda**

### **1 Apologies**

To receive apologies for absence.

### **2 Minutes**

(Pages 5 -  
10)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2025.

### **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 any 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(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraph(s) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.”

## **5 Questions from the Public under Standing Order No. 19**

Details of questions should be notified to Democratic Services via [committee.services@exeter.gov.uk](mailto:committee.services@exeter.gov.uk) email by 10am at least three working days prior to the meeting. For this meeting any questions must be submitted by 10am on Monday 30 June 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 are:

Councillor Bialyk – Leader of the Council  
Councillor Asvachin – Housing, Homelessness Prevention & Customer Services  
Councillor Vizard – Climate, Ecological Change and Communities  
Councillor Williams – Place and City Management  
Councillor Wright – Corporate Services and City Centre

Advance questions from Members relating to the Portfolio Holders should be notified to Democratic Services via [committee.services@exeter.gov.uk](mailto:committee.services@exeter.gov.uk)

## **7 Petition: Eton Walk Refuse bin (reinstatement)**

(Pages 11  
- 30)

To hear evidence from the petition organiser and receive the report of the Strategic Director for Operations.

## **8 Anti-Social Behaviour in the City Centre**

## **9 Quarter 4 Budget Scrutiny**

(Pages 31  
- 94)

To receive the report of the Strategic Director for Corporate Resources.

## **10 Medium Term Financial Plan**

(Verbal  
Report)

To receive the report of the Strategic Director for Corporate Resources.

## **11 Box-shifting Update**

(Pages 95  
- 98)

To receive the report of the Strategic Director for Corporate Resources.

**12 Scrutiny Annual Report**

(Pages 99  
- 114)

To receive the report of the Scrutiny Programme Board.

**13 Scrutiny Work Plan and Proposals Received**

(Pages  
115 - 118)

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:

[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 Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee will be held on **Thursday 25 September 2025** at 5.30pm 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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## CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

27 March 2025

### Present:

Councillor Josie Parkhouse (Chair)

Councillors Rees, Begley, Darling, Harding, Holland, Miller-Boam, Moore, Patrick, Pole and Wardle

### Apologies:

Councillors Fullam, Hussain and Read

### Also present:

Senior Housing Needs Team Lead, Head of Service - Housing, Head of Service - Customers and Communities, Strategic Director for People and Communities, Strategic Director of Operations, Head of Legal and Democratic Services & Monitoring Officer, Head of Service - City Centre and Net Zero, Legal Advisor and Democratic Services Officer (LS)

### In attendance as Portfolio Holders:

Councillors Asvachin, Bialyk, Vizard, Williams, R.

#### **53 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee held on 30 January 2025 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

#### **54 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made by Members.

#### **55 Questions from the Public under Standing Order No. 19**

The Chair reported that there were no questions from the public.

#### **56 Questions from Members of the Council under Standing Order No. 20**

The Chair reported that there were no questions submitted in advance from Members and invited questions to the Portfolio Holders present in accordance with Standing Order No. 20.

Councillor Vizard, Portfolio Holder for Climate, Ecological Change and Communities responded to a question from a Member making the point that he consider how charities who did not receive any money could be supported and asked the Head of Service Customers and Communities to respond. The Head of Service Customers and Communities stated that 'Gatherwell' had a suite of marketing tools which would be used.

Councillor Vizard also responded to a further question from a Member stating that the website would be updated with the additional information provided following the previous meeting of the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee.

#### **57 Scrutiny Work Plan**

The Chair proposed that this item be heard next rather than in the order it appeared in the agenda.

The Chair reminded Members that following discussion at the last meeting the item “Performance and service provided to customers and stakeholders of Stagecoach Southwest in Exeter” had been passed to the Scrutiny Programme Board to determine at which committee it is best heard.

The Chair explained that there were two proformas to be scoped with ASB in city centre being the first and she invited Councillor Mitchell, as proposer to come to the table as he had submitted a request under Standing Order No. 44 to attend and speak on the item.

Councillor Mitchell in presenting the request stated that the item was as outlined on the proforma and that he would suggest that the committee look at causations, how it presents itself in Exeter, was there anything unique to the city and look at possible solutions.

The Chair stated that similar to the previous theme of safety of women at night she would suggest that the whole committee address this topic so as not to exclude anyone.

A Member suggested that it may be useful to invite the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Wright in order to better understand the situation.

The Scrutiny Programme Board could also discuss invitees, and July was considered a good time to schedule this item as this would coincide with almost a year of the community safety team which would be extended and linked to Devon and Cornwall hotspot policing.

The Chair clarified that the issue to be considered on a proforma would look at the city centre, but a wider area could be considered at a later date.

The Strategic Director People and Communities made the following comments in support of scoping the item:

- the Strategic Director for Place would be the relevant officer;
- she cautioned against correlating street attachment and rough sleeping with ASB;
- there was a library of international evidence about cause and effect, reports of which could be made available to help identify what would be expected from partners;
- she could provide information about the organisation who commissions drug and alcohol services.

Councillor Moore suggested that witnesses were ask the following:

- What were the key things they offer which are unique;
- What they thought the Council could do better or stop doing to impact ASB and work better in partnership with them.

The Chair suggested that a small number of key witnesses were asked to give a short, written report and present on ASB in the city centre, it's causes and possible solutions, in the first instance, to include Police, InExeter, the university, drug/alcohol services.

Following a vote the scoping of the item on ASB in the city centre was AGREED unanimously.

The Head of Service – City Centre and Net Zero suggested that the InExeter boundary be used as this was well-defined.

In scoping the item on Key People Activity across the Council the Strategic Director for People and Communities made the following points:

- Last year the Chief Executive had commissioned a review of HR;
- Information had been taken from the review to create an HR Improvement Plan which it would be helpful for scrutiny to look at;
- The timeframe set out was a welcome opportunity to set out what the review had detailed, the actions taken and things which remained outstanding;
- The new Head of Service had been in post for one month so the time frame given would give time for delivery of the Improvement Plan to be pushed forward;
- Use of temporary staff had not been part of the review but could look to share information in relation to whether this had made things easier or produced budget savings.

Following a vote the scoping of the item on Key People Activity Across the Council was AGREED unanimously.

The Chair proposed seconded by Councillor Rees that the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee approve the Work Plan as submitted with Portfolio holder report for July removed and tenants Passivhaus item moved to September. Following a vote, the recommendation was CARRIED unanimously.

## **58 Portfolio Holder Report - Portfolio for City Management (Cllr Ruth Williams)**

The Portfolio Holder for City Management, Councillor Ruth Williams, presented her report which was taken as read.

The Portfolio Holder, Strategic Director for People and Communities, Strategic Director for Operations and Head of Service Operations responded to questions from Members in the following terms:

- the government website issued advice and guidance to packaging producers regarding the new legislation, but the related funding remained unclear;
- investment in the MRF would improve the recycling rate and Exeter was in the top 10% for residual waste and the Council was good at selling some recyclables but this maybe affected by the new legislation;
- reduction in the amount of waste produced remained the aim;
- the tender for work on the Heavitree paddling pools had been unsuccessful as the funds on offer were insufficient for the work required, stage 2 consultation was planned and being designed;
- electric vehicles for food waste did not currently exist and the position was the same for large street cleansing vehicles;
- the cost of an electric waste collection vehicle was £0.5million with an equivalent diesel costing £0.25million but shorter leases would be considered;
- it was hoped that in 2026 electric vehicles could operate for 2.5 days before charging was needed;
- whole fleet electrification would be difficult to manage due to infrastructure and scheduling given the capacity of the charge, how far the vehicles travel and how heavy they are. Growth in stages allowed learning to be had;

- food waste rounds could be adjusted rather than extra vehicles obtained in order to maximise efficiency;
- recruitment was not a single service-area issue and a number of routes in were being considered and expertise could be difficult to source;
- apprenticeships were a key area being considered within the HR Improvement Plan and it was acknowledged that the current website did not always make it easy to make a job application or take into account a wide range of needs;
- video applications were being trialled as well as looking into methods used by other councils;
- a strategy in regard to career pathways would be brought forward;
- consultants would be appointed in the near future and would support procurement with regard to the MRF. The building and infrastructure would go ahead in tandem and an update to Members would be provided in the summer;
- recycling rates were not the most important metric, reducing waste produced was;
- manufacturers using less packaging should help reduce the amount of waste collected and the amount the council recycled;
- the recycling rate could be improved by including garden waste collection which could be misleading;
- education was still needed to help residents to understand as there remained residents who did not recycle, including some students who struggled to understand the system.

## 59 **Update on Street Cleansing**

The Head of Service Operations presented the report on the Update on Street Cleansing and responded to questions from Members in the following terms:

- that a methodology which maintained objectivity was used to select sample roads. This involved a twelve-month rolling programme where wards were selected cyclically with 5% being re-inspections for consistency;
- Grade C issues were addressed between 24 and 48 hours and cleared and those areas would be re-inspected within the next month, on a different day and time. It was possible that these could be one-off issues or not. If there was aggregated or accumulated waste, then additional solutions could be considered;
- volunteer and community litter-picking schemes were part of the solution and measures would be seen as adequate if maintained by volunteers;
- street cleansing was responsible for litter and detritus arising on the kerb however there could be biomatter and metals from vehicles and Devon County Council(DCC) would be responsible for drainage and their programme of works did not correspond with that of the city council;
- street parking was an issue and there was no capacity to suspend parking across the whole city in order to cleanse. However, DCC would permit 24- hour parking suspension if there were particular issues;
- DCC was responsible for weeds, but some may inadvertently be cleared when deep cleaning. Persistent issues would not be addressed by the city council;
- the standard litter form on the council website should be used to report issues;
- all litter bins not in play areas were for mixed use, meaning that dog foul could be put in and the waste to energy plant would process this;
- self-compacting litter bins were being trialled at Bromhams Farm, and these could be useful in rural communities and Valley Parks as they had a larger capacity;
- there was work to be done on education and to get schools involved at an early stage;



- further data collation was required, and the online forms would provide this but current lack of digitisation meant it was more difficult to gather evidence and data;
- enforcement for littering was difficult as those dropping litter must be seen to do so;
- fly-tipping was a waste issue rather than street cleansing and related to large bulky items;
- there was a programme of work with Devon County Council and other districts with regard to waste collection and fly-tipping. Cameras were being considered in problematic areas.

## 60 **Six-monthly update on Homelessness Strategy**

The Portfolio Holder for Housing, Homelessness Prevention and Customer Services, Councillor Asvachin, presented the report which was taken as read.

The Portfolio Holder, Senior Housing Needs Team Lead, Head of Service – Housing and Strategic Director for People and Communities responded to questions from Members in the following terms:

- targets to end rough sleeping were aspirational and it could be more realistic to end rough sleeping as a norm;
- terms of reference for a mid-term policy review, later in the year, were being written;
- the Howell Road pods were operational with two of the four successfully occupied albeit with some repairs required;
- the portfolio holder was working with St Petrock's and the methodology for the count was on the agenda;
- the date of the count was countywide and agreed with partners and reassurance was given over accuracy as the team carried out weekly counts and monthly returns to Government with an average of 13 reported at present;
- officers had carried out extensive work responding to the consultation and working with the LGA on a lobbying piece of work, which had included briefings for local MPs. There was a consistent message across the country;
- the number of people living in campervans were unknown at present but would be obtained;
- the number of people who had approached the Council to make homelessness applications was 2023/24 1053, 2024/25 1079;
- it was difficult to say if attrition rates had an impact;
- trend data would be provided in future;
- the outreach team were commissioned to reach out to those sleeping in vehicles;
- the need for toilets overnight would be noted in the review of services;
- the council worked with Public Health and Devon County Council at a strategic level regarding drug use and were operationally co-located with a range of other services. Identification of those at risk was undertaken on a weekly basis. There was a high number of drug-related deaths, but the majority were housed;
- the outreach team were trained and able to respond to those experiencing overdose;
- the impact of interventions would be brought to the portfolio Holder; and
- individuals may have a range of types of contact with the Council, but outreach was face to face.

## 61 **Results of 2025/26 Budget Consultation**

The Strategic Directors for People and Communities and Place presented the report and responded to questions from Member in the following terms:

- On reflection the market research was carried out by a professional company using representative samples including young people, but the online survey reached an older demographic which was interesting;
- Whichever methodology was used in future the same EDI information requests would be made in order to build a data set around knowledge and insights;
- Specific attempts were made to engage with young people with care experience through Devon County Council users' groups but there had been no interest which would be reflected on, and other methodology would be considered;
- All the information would be on the website;
- This was early in the journey of objectivity about engagement with citizens as this was the second of this type of survey and knowledge and data would be built;
- Professionals were used to advise but there was more still to do;
- It would be up to Members how this was used in policy;
- There would be consultation on the impact of not accepting cash payments and this would focus on those identified who might be most disadvantaged including taking information from research on digital exclusion and feedback would be provided to Members before a final decision was taken.

One Member felt that the summary page could misrepresent the data held within the report. They felt that 3 of the 5 areas there was a clear priority – People feeling safe in the city, cleaning streets and reducing litter and a well-run Council, however, this was not the same for People and Homes. Furthermore, the online group put museums, theatre and art as a second choice, yet this showed lowest in the summary.

Another Member stated that they were assured that officers would bring proposals and that results of this type of surveys would inform ideas and strategies in future.

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 7.35 pm

Chair

## REPORT TO CUSTOMER FOCUS / STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting:

Report of: Cat Chambers

Title: Eton Walk Bininfrastructure Review

### Is this a Key Decision?

Scrutiny is a non decision making committee

### Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Executive

### 1. What is the report about?

The residents of Eton Walk and the adjoining areas raised a petition requesting the urgent review of Litter and dog bins (bininfrastructure) in the area surrounding Sylvan Heights and Eton Walk area.

This ePetition ran from 08/03/2025 to 24/04/2025 and has now finished with 41 signatures.

Residents cited that “The area is well used by families, residents and walker's with dogs on a daily basis. With the 2 bins by the footpaths recently removed without notice to the residents, it has already impacted the green areas resulting in rubbish products and dog mess fouling which is very unsightly and unsanitary”

The report outlines the operational protocols and investigative process undertaking to assess demand for litter bins city wide, and more specifically to identify additional litter/dog foul demand that would require additional bininfrastructure in the area.

### 2. Recommendations:

The current recommendation is that no further action is required, the existing level of bininfrastructure and visitation provides suitable and sufficient resource to manage waste and prevent its aggregation on site.

### 3. Reasons for the recommendation:

- Multiple management inspections were carried out and there was little to no litter identified, indicating a demand for additional provision.
- The standard of cleansing onsite currently classes as an 'A' on average, in comparison national industry street cleaning standards and guidance.
- Current standard of cleansing is maintained with a once weekly street cleaning visit.

As a result of the above existing litter demand does not meet the threshold for additional bininfrastructure in accordance with Operational Protocol at this time (appendix B).

#### 4. What are the resource implications including non-financial resources

There is no resource implications associated with this report or recommendations.

#### 5. What are the legal aspects?

Section 89(1) and (2) of The Environmental Protection Act 2019 places a duty on principle litter authorities to ensure that public open space and highways maintainable at public expense, are kept clean of litter so far as is practicable and in accordance with relevant guidance.

The Litter Act 1982 provides the power for principal litter authorities to provide and maintain litter bins. There is no duty placed on the authority to do so.

#### 6. Report details:

The council recognises that intensity of use is a prioritising factor in the fitment and sustainability of bin infrastructure. Bin fitment, whether medium or low intensity use, is prioritised based on litter hotspot assessments, to ensure the right bin is used in the right location.

##### Hot Spot Demand Assessment

Eton Walk and surrounding areas were inspected on five separate occasions to assess contamination and intensity of use.

Date of Inspection	Time of Inspection	Cleansing standard	Comparative to street sweeping visit
Thursday 27/03/25	09:45	A	Two days post sweeper
Wednesday 02/04/2025	09:43	A	One day post visit
Friday 04/04/25	13:50	A	Three days post visit
Friday 11/04/25	13:48	A	Three days post visit
Monday 16/06/25	08:44	A	Day prior to visit (post weekend)

These visits were carried out by different team members that on different days relative to street cleaning, to ensure a broad evidence base for decision making.

In, all occasions, cleansing standards were not identified below a “A” as per the approved street code of practice for litter. Photos taken on the most recent visit, Monday 16/06/25 can be found in appendix A. Similar photos are available for each visit carried out.

Most notably, the existing bin on site was only three quarters full after a week, having not been visited since the previous Tuesday 09/06/25 as per the existing schedules.

##### Sweepers Statement of Findings

The levels of litter indicated by the Supervisory inspections match the local sweepers on site findings. The local street sweeper visits every Tuesday and confirmed that on a “bad day which isn’t very often” they would spend up to 30 minutes on site, and the bin was only ever three quarters full.



In the case of Eton Walk, both litter levels, and bin use currently appear stable and maintained by existing provision and schedules. Litter is therefore unlikely to substantially occur routinely and will be an ad hoc issue.

Although Binrastructure can subject to unpredictable demand from time to time, where binrastructure becomes full before scheduled visitation the public can report it on the council website [Report littering - Exeter City Council](#). Teams will subsequently be dispatched to empty it as soon as possible or within two working days.

### **Relocation**

To ensure that the council retains the right asset in the right space, relocation of existing bins may be considered where they could provide better opportunities to reduce litter levels. Given the low litter levels throughout the area, it is not considered in this case that moving the bin would be cost-effective.

### **Ongoing Monitoring**

Binfastructure is audited twice a year and is assessed for continued efficacy and condition as part of each audit. In addition, residents can request new provision whereby the believe that cleansing standards have changed.

## **7. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?**

It ensures that the cleaning services operate an efficient and well management services:

- Maintaining A balanced budget
- Ensuring Good operational governance
- Offering Value-for-money services
- Delivering Well-managed assets

## **8. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?**

That litter starts to accumulate, to mitigate this the council will follow existing operational protocols to ensure the provision of the correct cleaning regime.

## **9. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)**

11.1 Under the Act's Public Sector Equalities Duty, decision makers are required to consider the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

11.2 In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

11.3 In making decisions the authority must take into account the potential impact of that decision in relation to age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), sex and gender, gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women and new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage and civil partnership status in coming to a decision.

11.4 No potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act because the report is for noting only

## **10. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:**

12.1 Important to complete this section in light of the Council declaring a Climate Emergency. Consider whether the recommendations you are making in the report will help, hinder or have no direct impact on delivering our carbon reduction target (carbon neutral by 2030).

12.2 Operational protocols are designed to ensure cost-efficacy in cleaning programmes. In doing so, schedules are optimised to reduce unnecessary travel so far as practicable.

Protocols

## **11. Are there any other options?**

There are currently no other options identified for implementation.

Director Adrian Pengelly

Report Author: Cat Chambers

## **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)**

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

Contact for enquires:  
Democratic Services (Committees)  
Room 4.36  
01392 265275





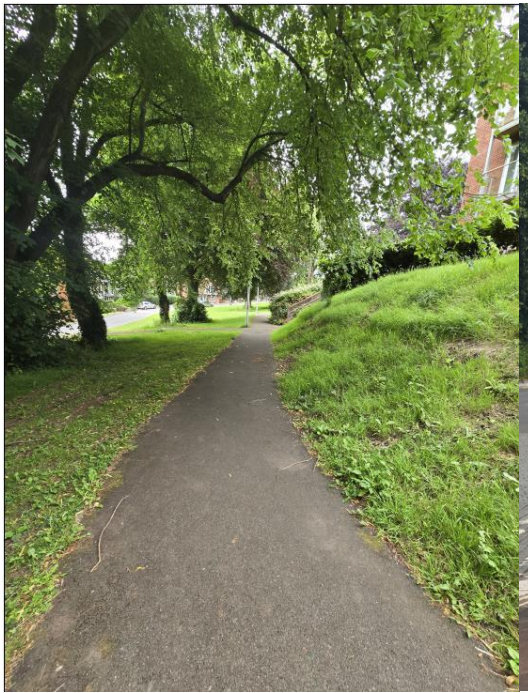
















# **Litter/ Dog Bin (Binrastructure) Protocol**

**Version 0.1 Exeter City Council Litter Bin Protocol**

**April 2024**

## Document Control Sheet

Document Title	Exeter City Council Litterbin Protocol
Version	Version 0.1
Author	C. Chambers
Date	April 2024
Further copies from	Environment and City Management



## Introduction

The City Council's Corporate vision lays out the goals to ensure Exeter remains a national leader in quality living. Exeter is a flourishing and beautiful city with a growing diverse resident base. There is a shared vision of prioritising safe well-built and inclusive neighbourhoods that encourage and promote health, wellbeing and sustainability. It has never been more critical to ensure that the City Councils combined litter strategies rise to the challenges presented by being a leader in quality living and sustainability, balancing those challenges presented by increasing quantities of disposable goods with providing well run value for money sustainable services.

We recognise here the role that Litter bin infrastructure (Binrastructure) plays in the development of clean safe neighbourhoods, and the part that litter bins play in supporting the City Councils Clean Streets Strategy in continuing to maintain high quality living space and enabling the responsible disposal of items consumed on the go. When it comes to the role of the litter bin there is no question that bins, either inadequately emptied or poorly presented, have an impact on community value, aesthetics and quality of living, often encouraging further antisocial behaviours, littering, fly tipping, graffiti amongst others. The City Council spends over £1.5 million a year on keeping the city looking good, and the delivery of binrastructure is an integral part of the City's ability to meet its responsibilities under section 89 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

We want to deliver a clean well maintained and improved binrastructure service. One that recognises each community's unique attributes, supports our city's sustainable future and provides a value for money service. Working with partners, local communities and individuals to ensure we have the right provision, in the right place.

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## 1. Principles

- 1.1. That litter/ dog bins, collectively referred to here as binrastructure, will continue to be used as one of the methods to manage and control litter contamination city wide, where they are appropriate to retain standards in accordance with section 89 of The Environmental Protection Act 1990 and associated codes of practice.
- 1.2. The service will not allow binrastructure to become the cause of cumulative litter contamination and will take such action as deemed necessary, and in accordance with adopted practice, to manage litter generated as a result of binrastructure.
- 1.3. That it will balance the number and type of bins fitted with the cost of maintaining them, in accordance with the principles outlined in the Litter Strategy for England 2017.
- 1.4. That when determining fitment applications each application will be considered on its own merit, and the process adopted for determination will be applied uniformly in all cases.
- 1.5. That binrastructure will be managed using the three primary asset management principles. These three principles are:
  - **Planning and design**, supporting the right bin, at the right cost, in the right location, with suitable emptying schedules.
  - **Operation**: demand assessment, condition monitoring, condition-based maintenance,
  - **Decommissioning**, at the end of the bin's lifecycle, or at the end of its period of usefulness.

## 2. Policy Objectives

- 2.1 To provide guidance to staff, stakeholders, and customers about the role of binrastructure and the benefits or constraints that accompanies it.
- 2.2 To provide guidance to staff, stakeholders, and customers on the operational procedures that govern the fitment of new binrastructure.
- 2.3 To outline how the authority assesses levels of litter contamination and utilises the subsequent impact assessment data to retain cost-effective bin stocks.
- 2.4 To recognise that binrastructure is for use in the control of waste generated on the go. They are not for domestic household waste disposal, commercial event waste, commercial business waste, or for any other waste that is reasonably expected to be disposed of through other regulated waste streams.
- 2.5 To recognise that litter bins are not a fixed asset and that they will be moved or removed if alternative street cleansing methods can provide a better or more cost-effective service.
- 2.6 to proactively manage and retain data in relation to litter bins, to ensure transparency in practice and decision making.

### **3. Legal Requirement**

- 2.1 Section 89(1) and (2) of The Environmental Protection Act 2019 places a duty on principle litter authorities to ensure that public open space and highways maintainable at public expense, are kept clean of litter so far as is practicable and in accordance with relevant guidance.
- 2.2 The Litter Act 1982 provides the power for principal litter authorities to provide and maintain litter bins. There is no duty placed on the authority to do so.
- 2.3 Once installed, the principal litter authority has a duty under The Litter Act 1982 to ensure litter bins are emptied regularly and maintained.
- 2.4 The duty extends to ensuring that litter bins should be emptied frequently enough to ensure that their contents do not become a nuisance or give cause for reasonable complaint.

### **4. Operational Delivery Procedures – Planning and Design:**

Supporting the right bin, at the right cost, in the right location, with suitable emptying schedules.

#### **4.1 Establishing emptying schedules.**

- Emptying schedules are established based on real-time use.
- The common frequency in which a bin fills to capacity is the frequency that is assigned for its collection.
- Where the council identifies changes in how frequently a bin requires emptying as standard, officers will proactively investigate schedules and will adjust the frequency where appropriate.
- Schedules cannot account for ad hoc or unpredictable demand that causes bininfrastructure to fill prior to standard collection. Ad hoc demand will be treated as a 'one-off' and no long-term remedial actions will be considered by officers; however, the bin will be emptied within two working days, once reported.
- Where collection frequencies are reviewed council officers will consider the ongoing cost-efficacy of the bin, and the ability of it to successfully resolve contamination in context of its current placement. Where the cost-efficacy of a bin changes, officers may move or remove the bin as necessary.

#### **4.2 Delivery and fitment of new litter bins (siting requirements)**

- The council recognises that intensity of use is a prioritising factor in the fitment and sustainability of bininfrastructure. As such city centre(s), tourist locations, formal parks and play areas remain high priority locations for bininfrastructure. Bin fitment in all other areas, whether medium or low intensity use, will be prioritised based on litter hotspot assessments, to ensure the right bin is used in the right location.

- Where littering remains common place in locations with existing bininfrastructure, the council will utilise nudge methods to increase uptake. This may include footprints on the floor leading to the bin or changing the colour of the bin if needed. Where nudge methods have been utilised by other authority areas there has been a substantial decrease in litter levels recorded.
- The council recognises that street cleansing demands across the city can change and as such there will be the need for new litter bins in new locations. When this occurs, officers are committed to installing new bins as soon as resource and procurement allow.
- Where customers request new bin provision, we will investigate the request by carrying out a litter impact (hotspot) assessment. Where investigations suggest a litter hotspot and a requirement for bininfrastructure over other street cleansing methods, officers will install a new bin.
- The council does not operate separate litter/ dog waste bins as standard and carries out ostensibly mixed waste collection. However, it recognises that in some locations a specified bin type is the most appropriate for the contamination present. As a result, we may fit an appropriate type and capacity bin to meet a specific need where necessary.
- New bininfrastructure will only be fitted where contamination levels meet the operational threshold for a new bin.

#### **4.3 Litter impact (hotspot) demand assessments**

- The council is committed to monitoring cleansing standards across the city in accordance with the DEFRA Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse 2019 (COP). It applies the grading principles outlined in COP to litter impact (hotspot) assessment, as a determining factor for the placement or removal of bininfrastructure.
- Contamination standards outlined in the COP are:
  - Grade A – No litter or refuse
  - Grade B – Predominantly free of litter apart from some scattered items.
  - Grade C – Widespread distribution of litter with minor accumulations
  - Grade D– Heavy contamination with significant accumulations.
- Where requests for new bininfrastructure are received, if street cleansing standards remain on average a Grade B or above, then additional bininfrastructure will not be considered for fitment.
- Where requests for new bininfrastructure are received, and where there is evidence to indicate that street cleansing standards in the location fall routinely below a Grade B and constitute a litter hotspot, then providing new bininfrastructure can support in reducing street cleansing resource and improving the litter grading for the location, it will be fitted.
- Where reviews of existing stock are carried out, bininfrastructure will only be retained if it continues to reduce resource demand and, or, it is still required to ensure that cleansing standards do not drop to include an increasing accumulation of litter.

#### **4.4 Operational delivery constraints.**

- The fly-tipping of domestic and commercial waste within binfrastructure (including disposal of cat litter, and domestically stored dog fouling) limits the availability of the bin for genuine use, creates unpredictable emptying requirements, and increases the resource and cost to successfully manage that bin. The service is committed to investigating cases of fly-tipping and it will take firm but proportionate action. This may include removing the bin after a period of notice, where offences persist, and investigations have failed to provide an alternative solution.
- Binfrastructure is subject to unpredictable demand from time to time. The council takes all reasonable steps to ensure that litter bins are emptied at appropriate intervals, however where binfrastructure becomes full before scheduled visitation the public can report it on the council website. Teams will be dispatched to empty it as soon as possible or within two working days.
- Binfrastructure schedules city wide operate Monday – Friday (predominantly). Where binfrastructure becomes full on a Saturday and Sunday, customers can report it on the council website, and they will be emptied within two working days.
- Where litter bins become full, customers are required to carry their waste to the next bin, or to take their waste home with them. This will prevent the bin from overflowing and causing a nuisance to others. Where individuals continue to use binfrastructure beyond capacity, resulting in waste dropping to the floor, this is a littering offence according to section 87(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 2019.

### **5. Condition and Asset Management Operations:**

Asset levels, condition monitoring, and condition-based maintenance.

#### **5.1 Data Management:**

- The council retains a data base record of bin type and location for every item of binfrastructure within the city.
- As and where binfrastructure is installed or decommissioned, these records are routinely updated.
- Complete binfrastructure audits are held two time per year, to reconfirm the number, location, scheduled frequency, and type of bin in situ, and to prevent data decline.

#### **5.2 Condition assessment and replacement:**

- Two-time annual audits are used to assess the condition of binfrastructure. Bin condition is rated based on their current visual state of maintenance.
- Binfrastructure is rated as follows:
  - Grade A – New or near new and in excellent condition
  - Grade B – Good condition, some minor signs of rust and paint peel.
  - Grade C – Poor and aging, extensive rust and/ or paint peel, but not dangerous.
  - Grade D – dangerous, or no longer structurally sound.

- Where a bin records a Grade C on audit, a demand assessment will be carried out. Where demand remains unchanged, the bin will be identified for replacement as soon as practicable. Where demand has changed, the bin may be decommissioned.
- No bins should naturally decline to a Grade D, as bininfrastructure audits are proactive in preventing it. However, Grade D bins can occur through accident or anti-social behaviour. Where a bin is found to be a Grade D, it will be removed immediately, and reviewed for replacement or decommissioning.

### **5.3 Procurement decisions**

- The council monitors and investigates new and emerging technology, including SMART, Solar, and digital monitoring bininfrastructure designs. Where it is proven to provide a value for money substitute to standard designs, it will be considered as an alternative choice.
- Industry studies indicate that bins in bright colours are more accessible and encourage better use. Alternative bin colours will be considered against City Planning requirements, and the standardised national ROTG colours. Where colours don't conflict with either and offer the opportunity for improved uptake they may be used as alternatives to improve the visibility and use of bininfrastructure.
- The standard capacity of community litter bins in Exeter is 125 litres, limited by manual emptying methods and weight. The council is committed to phasing out any lower capacity litter bins than standard at end of life. In addition, where operationally feasible the use of 250 litre bins will be explored as a suitable alternative for high footfall rural locations.
- Dog bins remain a standard capacity.

### **5.4 Recycling on the go (ROTG)**

- The Council provides existing ROTG and trials different provision in a number of locations within the city.
- We continue to investigate ROTG options, to find technically, environmentally and economically practicable solutions that would support cost-effective ROTG on a wider city scale.

## **Further information**

**Information and web links to organisations that are a useful resource for the development of the bininfrastructure policy.**

- Association for Public Sector Excellence. (2017). Briefing 17 - *Developing a successful 'binfrastructure' – litter bin policy, Strategies and procedures*.  
<https://apse.org.uk/apse/index.cfm/members-area/briefings/2017/17-04-developing-a-successful-binfrastructure-litter-bin-policies-strategies-and-procedures/>
- Association for Public Sector Excellence. (2020). *Briefing 20-83 - 'The Right Bin in the Right Place'*. <https://apse.org.uk/index.cfm/apse/members-area/briefings/2020/20-83-e28098the-right-bin-in-the-right-placee28099-wrap-guidance-to-english-local-authorities-and-business-improvement-districts-bids-on-the-design-number-and-location-of-public-litter-bins-and-other-items-of-street-furniture-d/>
- DEFRA. (2017). *Litter Strategy for England*.  
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a82216340f0b6230269b009/litter-strategy-for-england-2017-v2.pdf>
- DEFRA. (2019). *Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse*.  
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5d8b766ded915d0372f8ac59/pb11577b-cop-litter1.pdf>
- WRAP. (n.d.). *'Binfrastructure' - The right bin in the right place*.  
<https://wrap.org.uk/resources/guide/binfrastructure-right-bin-right-place>.

## REPORT TO COUNCIL

Date of Meeting: 10 June 2025

Report of: Strategic Director of Corporate Resources & s151 Officer

Title: Overview of General Fund Revenue Budget 2024/25 – Quarter 4

### Is this a Key Decision?

No

### Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

### 1. What is the report about?

1.1 To advise Members of the overall financial position of the General Fund Revenue Budgets for the 2024/25 financial year and to seek approval for the General Fund working balance, a number of supplementary budgets and the creation of new earmarked reserves.

### 2. Recommendations:

It is recommended that Council approves

- 1) The net transfer of £1,031,267 from Earmarked Reserves as detailed in paragraph 8.9 and set out in detail in Appendix 3;
- 2) The supplementary budgets of £4,500,520 and budget transfers as detailed in paragraph 8.11 and Appendix 4; and
- 3) The General Fund working balance at 31 March 2025 at £5,305,182.

It is recommended that Council notes

- 1) The Earmarked Reserves at 31 March 2025;
- 2) The Council Tax account and collection rate;
- 3) The outstanding sundry debt, aged debt analysis and debt write-off figures;
- 4) The creditors payments performance; and
- 5) The One Exeter programme update.

### 3. Reasons for the recommendation:

3.1 To formally note the Council's end of year financial position and carry forward any budgets that were not spent but where the funding is still required.

### 4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources?

The impact on the General Fund working balance is set out in section 8.10.

### 5. Section 151 Officer comments:

5.1 Once requests for supplementary budgets are taken into account, the financial position is broadly in line with expectations in the medium-term financial plan. There

were concerted efforts by Officers in a number of teams to reduce the impact of additional costs over the year, which reduced some of the additional expenditure that was projected throughout the year.

## 6. What are the legal aspects?

6.1 Section 28 of the Local Government Act 2003 imposes a statutory duty on the Council to monitor during the financial year its expenditure and income against the budget calculations. If the monitoring establishes that the budgetary situation has deteriorated, the Council must take such action as it considers necessary to deal with the situation. This might include, for example, action to reduce spending in the rest of the year, or to increase income, or to finance the shortfall from reserves.

The Local Government Finance Act 1992 places a legal requirement on Council to approve not only the budget but also any changes to the budget proposed during the year. Council has a legal duty to ensure that the budget is balanced and that any changes to the budget are fully funded.

## 7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

7.1 This report raises no issues for the Monitoring Officer.

## 8. Report details:

### 8.1 Financial Summary

<b>FUND</b>	<b>Planned Transfer To / (From) Working Balance £</b>	<b>Budget Variance (More) / Less £</b>	<b>Outturn Transfer 2024/25 £</b>
General Fund	(2,862,201)	2,284,820	(577,381)

### 8.2 General Fund (Appendix 1 & Appendix 2)

During the year, a restructure of the Senior Leadership of the Council has taken place. The restructure was projected to reduce costs by £388,110, which would be used to strengthen areas of the Council requiring investment to meet members' priorities. In 2024/25, the actual reduction totals £350,946 as there were some interim arrangements in place to cover vacant posts.

Net services expenditure is lower than budget by £5,122,543 against a revised budget of £23,181,890. This includes supplementary budgets of £6,431,110. Variances of more than +/- £30,000 are detailed below:

### 8.3 Chief Executive

<b>Budget Heading</b>	<b>Over / (Underspend)</b>
<b>Active &amp; Healthy People</b>	<b>(£366,435)</b>



**Responsible Officer: Executive Office Manager**

£292,920 of the lower than budgeted costs relates to unspent grant income, which will be transferred into Sport England reserves and requested as supplementary budgets in 2025/26. There is £56,939 of the approved £700,000 budget for the Wonford Health & Wellbeing Hub remaining, which will also be requested as a supplementary budget.

**8.4 Operations**

Budget Heading	Over / (Underspend)
<b>Environmental Health &amp; Licensing</b>	<b>(£266,156)</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Environmental Health &amp; Waste</b> <p>As Vehicle Licensing is self-financing, £35,172 will be transferred out of the Vehicle Licencing earmarked reserve to cover the additional costs. A new earmarked reserve for unspent funds in Contaminated Land Surveys and Environmental health projects is being requested to enable the funds to be requested as a supplementary budget in 2025/26. A further supplementary budget of £53,860 has been requested in the Neighbourhood Team.</p> <p>After the movements proposed above, expenditure is £200,773 lower than budget. This is predominantly due to vacancies within the staffing establishment, which has led to many initiatives being put on hold due to lack of resources.</p>	
<b>Parks &amp; Green Spaces</b>	<b>(£127,481)</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Operations</b> <p>£56,970 has been requested as a supplementary budget in Children’s play areas to enable strategic development work to take place. The balance relates to additional income arising from a 2023/24 invoice for urban grass cutting that wasn’t accrued for at the end of the last financial year.</p>	
<b>Domestic Refuse Collection</b>	<b>(£656,518)</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Environmental Health &amp; Waste</b> <p>A new grant of £190,340 has been received from Government to support the transition to weekly food waste collections – this will be transferred into an earmarked reserve for use in 2025/26.</p> <p>A supplementary budget for £78,530 has been requested in 2025/26 to help provide temporary equipment storage, needed because of the demolition of several buildings.</p> <p>The balance relates to the food waste programme being delayed to ensure adequate resources were in place to deliver an efficient service (e.g. the construction of the food waste bay) therefore less was spent on roles not being filled and vehicles not being leased than was included in the budget. It is anticipated that the service will be in a position to continue to roll out to the remainder of the city in 2025/26. This lower expenditure has more than offset the income the service is unable to claim from DCC’s Share Scheme saving fund, to which we have no eligibility until the scheme achieves 100% coverage.</p>	
<b>Waste Chargeable Services</b>	<b>£178,128</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Environmental Health &amp; Waste</b>	

The Service has failed to deliver its income targets in respect the green waste service.	
<b>Materials Reclamation Facility</b>	<b>£65,171</b>
<p><b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Environmental Health &amp; Waste</b></p> <p>There were a number of significant breakdowns due to the age of the MRF site, which meant that the use of secondary reclamation facilities were required in order to comply with the Council's operating permit issued by the Environment Agency.</p> <p>The expenditure budget has been exceeded by £560,000 which is due to an increase in the use of agency staff to cover vacancies, an increase in fleet costs and the cost of using secondary reclamation facilities.</p> <p>However, there has been an offsetting £497,000 surplus to the income budget for Materials &amp; Goods for resale.</p>	
<b>Engineering Services</b>	<b>(£373,088)</b>
<p><b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Operations</b></p> <p>Active recruitment has continued however, there remains a number of vacancies which have been difficult to fill, resulting in a £154,987 underspend on pay. The budget for demolition costs for a footbridge (£134,180) has not been spent and is no longer required.</p>	
<b>Waterways</b>	<b>(£131,561)</b>
<p><b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Operations</b></p> <p>Despite active recruitment, the waterways engineer post remains vacant at year end resulting in £121,350 not being spent of the budget. Alternative recruitment opportunities and/ or consultancy will be pursued in 2025/26.</p> <p>There remains a need for a contingency fund to be available for any inquiry that might follow the application for the Harbour Revision Order. Therefore an £80,000 budget is being requested as a supplementary budget for 2025/26.</p>	
<b>Corporate Property – Assets</b>	<b>(£218,213)</b>
<p><b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Asset Maintenance</b></p> <p>As Members are aware, the property maintenance budget was increased by £200k to allow for the additional costs of managing the Leisure property portfolio. However, the costs of maintaining Leisure properties has continued to be charge directly to Leisure, so this cost centre was expected to not use £200,000 of its budget.</p> <p>There is £71k unspent owing to vacancies in the establishment budget, a planned restructure is expected to be in place by autumn 2025/26. This has offset additional expenditure on repairs and maintenance of the Council's operational properties owing to their age and condition.</p>	
<b>Corporate Support</b>	<b>£237,438</b>
<p><b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Asset Maintenance</b></p> <p>Increases in postage costs mean that £20k more than anticipated has been spent.</p>	

Civic Centre rental income is £217k lower than budget.

A supplementary budget of £100,000 was added during the year to facilitate the work around the Civic Centre office move but no costs have been incurred during 2024/25. This supplementary budget is being requested again for 2025/26.

## 8.5 Corporate Resources

Budget Heading	Over / (Underspend)
<b>Commercial Assets - Parking Services</b>	<b>£432,124</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Commercial Assets</b> <p>The net income generated by Car Parks is lower than anticipated for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The increase in debit and credit cards and use of the Ringgo App has increased the costs to the Council for using these methods of payment;</li> <li>• Re-zoning some of the Car Parks from Zone 1 to Central has increased their Business Rates bills;</li> <li>• Rental income from Devon County Council renting offices at John Lewis car park has been lost after their Parking team moved out;</li> <li>• The proposed increase in car parking tariffs for 2024/25 were not implemented;</li> <li>• Seasonal parking permit income is lower than expected.</li> </ul> <p>There has however been a reduction in the costs of electricity, which were £182,000 lower than the budget.</p>	
<b>Commercial Assets - Estates</b>	<b>(£1,087,387)</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Commercial Assets</b> <p>Additional backdated rent relating to the turnover from businesses occupying commercial properties has been accounted for, with 2 properties alone contributing £574k additional income.</p> <p>The Guildhall Shopping Centre continues to perform well with strong occupier demand with additional net income of £611k. This will be transferred to the earmarked reserve as it cannot be used for general expenditure. The income from the Centre has, in addition to covering its own direct costs and capital expenditure, funded the debt costs associated with the purchase and all the costs including compensation payments associated with the sale of Mary Arches.</p>	
<b>Commercial Assets - Major Projects</b>	<b>(£42,670)</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Commercial Assets</b> <p>The costs associated with the Bus Station Demolition project were lower than projected. The cost of this project has been funded from the Guildhall Shopping Centre reserve.</p>	
<b>Commercial Assets - Markets</b>	<b>(£47,031)</b>

<b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Commercial Assets</b> Income from commercial contracts at the Matford Centre continue to outperform the budget. Additionally, there has been lower than budgeted expenditure on supplies and services. This has been offset by the income from the solar array being lower than budget as a result of lower prices for selling the electricity generated and maintenance being required for some of the panels. The Council is looking to rectify the maintenance issue in 2025/26 and a supplementary budget has been requested.	
<b>Elections &amp; Electoral Registration</b>	<b>(£224,110)</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Legal and Democratic Services</b> The Council received the funding from Devon County Council early and therefore this funding will be placed in an earmarked reserve and a supplementary budget requested in 2025/26 to match with the costs of running the election. Additionally, as part of the reductions agreed two years ago, the budget was smoothed to reflect the fact that the Council holds elections in three of every four years. Therefore, the balance will be added to an earmarked reserve.	
<b>Democratic Representation</b>	<b>(£39,976)</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Legal and Democratic Services</b> There was lower expenditure than budgeted in respect of Members' special responsibility allowances (£26k) as a result of members sharing roles and no member champions claiming allowances. The balance reflect lower pay costs – due to short periods of vacancy.	
<b>Unapportionable Overheads (Pension costs)</b>	<b>£982,687</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Finance</b> The Council does not budget for pension strain costs, and therefore these were higher than budget (albeit approved as part of the senior management restructure. The majority of these costs were funded from an earmarked reserve.	
<b>Legal Services</b>	<b>(£31,505)</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Legal Services</b> A vacant post plus reductions in working contracts, a change in grades and hours worked have contributed to lower costs in respect of pay. This has been partially offset by lower than anticipated third party income generated and a reduction of S106 fees.	

## 8.6 People and Communities

<b>Budget Heading</b>	<b>Over / (Underspend)</b>
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<b>Housing Needs and Homelessness</b>	<b>(£873,982)</b>
<p><b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service - Housing</b></p> <p>The lower than anticipated net expenditure is caused by two significant amounts of funding which are being transferred to earmarked reserves with supplementary budgets requested in 2025/26. These are £760k for the Homes 4 Ukraine project and £220k Winter Pressures grant due to be spent in 2025/26.</p> <p>As per the explanation in quarter 3, continued demand on homelessness services and correlating expenditure in placing households in Temporary Accommodation continues resulting in a £157,161 being spent over budgeted levels. This was highlighted early in 2024/25 but due to management actions to mitigate these pressures the actual figure is significantly less than the £350k projected. Whilst remodelling of some units of temporary accommodation has taken place to reduce the costs the continued demand on the service has necessitated the ongoing use of contracted hotels which incurs an additional cost for providing security services to ensure the safety of all residents.</p> <p>Work continues at pace to bring in a number of temporary accommodation properties under the long lease model which will reduce the cost of providing temporary accommodation. In addition, we will be undertaking a review of the current operating model of the service to look for any efficiencies and corresponding savings.</p>	
<b>GF Housing – Property</b>	<b>(£67,278)</b>
<p><b>Responsible Officer – Head of Service - Housing</b></p> <p>As reported previously, over the past 12 months we have handed back all of the Private Sector Leased Properties under council management, whilst taking into account any mandatory reimbursement under the terms of the lease. This has now stopped the deficit of rental income against payments to landlords. The EXtralet tenancies have remained stable, meaning that we haven't needed to utilise the handback or voids budgets.</p> <p>However, there is a supplementary budget request for £43k in 2025/26 for remedial works and compensation towards lost revenue in respect of a PSL leased property which was handed back in 2024/25.</p>	
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>(£48,429)</b>
<p><b>Responsible Officer – Head of HR Workforce Planning &amp; OD</b></p> <p>This net income in respect of the Council's Green Travel initiative will be transferred to earmarked reserves at year-end and will be used to facilitate initiatives under the new Sustainable Travel Policy.</p>	
<b>Central Support</b>	<b>£47,482</b>
<p><b>Responsible Officer – Head of Service - Digital &amp; Data</b></p> <p>There are £86,860 of redundancy costs which will be covered by reserves. An unused budget of £18,950 funded by an historic Brexit grant has been transferred into an earmarked reserve and requested as a supplementary budget in 2025/26.</p>	
<b>Human Resources</b>	<b>£46,025</b>

<b>Responsible Officer – Head of HR Workforce Planning &amp; OD</b> Additional costs relate to redundancy payments in respect of the Senior Management restructure. These will be covered by the earmarked reserve. A £45,000 supplementary budget for 2025/26 has been requested for staff training.	
<b>IT Services</b>	<b>(£326,867)</b>
<b>Responsible Officer – Head of Service - Digital &amp; Data</b> Strata has not spent all of its funding in 2024/25 as efficiencies have been made in order to prepare for the transfer of Services to the Cloud. Strata have returned the funds to each Council but have requested they are returned in 2025/26. Therefore, they will be transferred into an earmarked reserve and requested as a supplementary budget for 2025/26. Additionally, lower mobile phone charges of £23,721 and an increase in internal income of £28,300 from support service recharges have contributed to the lower costs.	
<b>Exeter Community Grants Programme</b>	<b>(£217,608)</b>
<b>Responsible Officer – Head of Customer and Communities</b> £151,106 less than budgeted was spent on Wellbeing Exeter and will therefore be transferred into the Wellbeing Exeter earmarked reserve and requested as a supplementary budget in 2025/26. £66.6k is due to CIL-funded initiatives that were budgeted for but have not been started – these funds will remain in the CIL fund for future use.	
<b>Customer Service Centre</b>	<b>£50,122</b>
<b>Responsible Officer – Head of Customer and Communities</b> The continued use of agency staff within the customer contact centre in 2024/25 caused higher than budgeted expenditure. These contracts arose from demand increases, including the introduction of discretionary schemes such as the household support fund. These long-term agency arrangements ceased, as of October 2024.  An additional supplementary budget of £51,800 has been requested for the Operations Team Leader post (Grade H, 1FTE); this post was removed from the establishment in error during the budget setting process and will be added to the 2026/27 MTFP as an additional pressure on the General Fund.	

## 8.7 Place

<b>Budget Heading</b>	<b>Over / (Underspend)</b>
<b>Culture</b>	<b>(£222,092)</b>

<p><b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Culture</b></p> <p>The supplementary budget for the Women's Rugby World Cup was not spent and will be requested in 2025/26.</p> <p>The Corn Exchange has spent £131,660 less than anticipated as a result of lower utilities and other premises costs; and increased income from event sales and refreshments.</p>	
<b>Building Control &amp; Land Charges</b>	<b>£120,840</b>
<p><b>Responsible Officer: Head of City Development</b></p> <p>Building Control and Land Charges collectively under recovered their costs by £120,840, due to continuing market challenges restricting construction activity and low house sales. As these are self-financing the deficits will be offset against their respective earmarked reserves.</p>	
<b>Planning</b>	<b>(£317,409)</b>
<p><b>Responsible Officer: Head of City Development</b></p> <p>The 2024/25 out-turn for City Development reflects a mixed financial position across key service areas. Within Planning, unused grant income of £230,380 is being transferred to earmarked reserves with supplementary budgets requested for 2025/26. £311,163 from the approved Local Plan evidence base budget is also being transferred to an earmarked reserve with a supplementary budget requested for 2025/26. Funding in respect of CIL admin amounts to £118,658 in 2024/25, leaving a shortfall of £53,208 against budget. Planning fee income was lower than budget by some £277k.</p>	
<b>Museum Service</b>	<b>(£320,549)</b>
<p><b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Culture</b></p> <p>At the end of 2024/25, £127,092 of grant monies has been unused so this will be transferred into an earmarked reserve and requested as a supplementary budget for 2025/26. RAMM has continued to show savings against utilities, partly due to the on-going efficiencies review and implementation work of an external consultant. RAMM also over-achieved on income from events, venue hire, school visits and exhibition tickets. In particular, the Dartmoor exhibition, which opened in October and ran for four months, was very successful. This helped to mitigate some of the income lost due to the roof repairs that closed areas of the museum for several months during the year, and loss of café rental income.</p> <p>In February, a trial in-house café was opened, using existing Council resources. A six-month supplementary budget was added to the 2024/25 budget and a further supplementary budget will be requested in 2025/26 to allow this facility to continue. An external consultant is conducting a review of the museum in early 2025/26, including exploring potential business models and income generating capability.</p>	
<b>Leisure &amp; Sport</b>	<b>(£874,025)</b>



<b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Culture</b>  £646,557 of the additional income is in respect of the VAT refund from HMRC; this will be transferred to an earmarked reserve and held in the short term.  Expenditure on salaries was £200,000 lower than expected because of difficulties in recruiting specialised roles such as lifeguards. Income has exceeded budget by £290,000. However, this has been offset by additional premises costs in respect of maintenance.	
<b>St Sidwells Point</b>	<b>(£59,850)</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – Culture</b>  This budget is no longer required.	
<b>Liveable Exeter Garden City</b>	<b>(£351,398)</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Strategic Director for Place</b>  The unused grant income will remain in the earmarked reserve and a supplementary budget requested in 2025/26.	
<b>CCTV &amp; Home Call</b>	<b>£57,873</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – City Centre &amp; Net Zero</b>  The Home Call alarm service had a drop in income compared to budget and higher costs of non-contractual overtime, needed to maintain required staffing levels. This resulted in an adverse budget variance of £97,630. Surplus income from CCTV monitoring contracts has helped mitigate this and the final out-turn is improved compared to the forecast at quarter three.	
<b>Community Safety</b>	<b>(£48,396)</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Head of Service – City Centre &amp; Net Zero</b>  £49,043 will be transferred into reserves and requested as supplementary budgets in 2025/26 (this is for grants received as well as a small amount of fine income imposed for breaches of the city's Public Spaces Protection Order).	

## 8.8 Other Financial Variations



Budget Heading	Over / (Underspend)
<b>Net interest</b>	<b>(£129,116)</b>
<p>Interest payable was £58k higher than budgeted. During the year it was necessary to borrow £10m from PWLB for one year to support working balances so PWLB interest was £26k higher than budgeted. The interest element of finance leases was £32k higher than budgeted, largely due to new leases during the year.</p> <p>Interest rates on temporary investments and money market funds remained high and offset the reduction in cash balances. This resulted in a net £172k additional interest after paying over interest relating to the HRA and other funds held.</p> <p>The CCLA Property Fund yielded £28k higher than budgeted dividends.</p>	

### 8.9 Earmarked Reserves

During 2024/25 there has been an overall net transfer from Earmarked Reserves of £792,507. The details of all Earmarked Reserve movements are shown in Appendix 3.

Movement	2024/25
Opening Balance, as at 01/04/24	<b>£13,569,370</b>
Net transfer	(£1,031,267)
<b>Balance, as at 31/03/25</b>	<b>£12,538,103</b>

### 8.10 General Fund Balance

During 2024/25 there has been an overall deficit of £577,381. The minimum requirement for the General Fund working balance was approved by Council in February 2024 at £3.020 million.

Movement	2024/25
Opening Balance, as at 01/04/24	<b>£5,882,563</b>
Net	(£577,381)
<b>Balance at Year End</b>	<b>£5,305,182</b>

### 8.11 Supplementary Budgets

There is a requirement for some supplementary budgets in 2025/26 as the Council has identified at the end of the year a number of revenue budgets that have not been spent but where a commitment is required in the following financial year.

It is therefore proposed that supplementary budgets totalling £4,500,520 identified in Appendix 4 are approved and added to the 2025/26 budget. The supplementary budgets will be financed from Earmarked Reserves (£3,660,480), and the General Fund working balance (£840,040), or be self-financing.

Appendix 4 also lists proposed budget transfers which have been identified where budgets need to be transferred from one service area to another.

### 8.12 Outstanding Sundry Debt

An aged debt analysis of the Council's sundry debts is shown in the table below:

Age of Debt	March 2024	March 2025
Up to 29 days (current)	£1,411,457	£1,264,074
30 days – 1 Year	£2,738,947	£1,689,790
1 – 2 years	£299,265	£1,005,233
2 – 3 years	£273,541	£224,732
3 – 4 years	£78,227	£202,422
4 – 5 years	£290,834	£58,784
5 + years	£340,009	£580,916
<b>Total</b>	<b>£5,432,280</b>	<b>£5,025,951</b>

### 8.13 Council Tax

As at 1 April 2025, arrears amounted to £9.840m, the movements during 2024/25 were as follows:

	£m	£m
<b>Arrears as at 1 April 2024</b>		<b>8.600</b>
Add:		
2024/25 debits raised net of discounts	£90.413	
Less:		
Payments received	(£90.381)	
Refunds and change in pre-payments	£1.489	
Write-offs	(£0.281)	
<b>Arrears as at 31 March 2025</b>		<b>9.840</b>

Against the arrears of £9.840m, a bad and doubtful debt provision of £4.580m has been provided, calculated in accordance with the appropriate accounting guidelines.

The 'in-year' council tax collection rate for 2024/25 was 96.09% compared with 96.20% in 2023/24.

### 8.14 Debt Write-Offs

The following amounts have been written off during 2024/25:

	2023/24 Total	2024/25
• Council Tax	£236,172	£280,588
• Business Rates	£38,096	£5,829
• Sundry Debt	£2,238	£0
• Housing Rents	£93,187	£51,381
• Non-HRA Rents	£63,376	£33,087
• HB Overpayments	£191,856	£76,146

#### 8.15 Creditor Payments Performance

Creditors' payments continue to be monitored in spite of the withdrawal of statutory performance indicator BVPI8. The percentage paid within 30 days was 95.24% for 2024/25 compared with 95.60% for 2023/24.

### 9. One Exeter Update

9.1 As Members will be aware, One Exeter is the Council's transformation programme and is a critical priority for the council.

Appendix 5 sets out how the Council performed against the 2024/25 approved cost reductions. At the end of the financial year, of the overall £1.402 million proposed savings £1.108 million were achieved.

A detailed report is included at Appendix 6.

### 10. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

10.1 This is a statement of the 2024/25 financial position.

### 11. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

11.1 The risks relate to overspending the Council budget and are mitigated by regular reporting to the Strategic Management Board and Members. Members have a legal responsibility to take action where balances are projected to reach an unsustainable level, and the Strategic Management Board are working to address the current projected shortfall in reserves.

### 12. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

12.1 Under the Act's Public Sector Equalities Duty, decision makers are required to consider the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

12.2 In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority

from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

12.3 In making decisions the authority must take into account the potential impact of that decision in relation to age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), sex and gender, gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women and new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage and civil partnership status in coming to a decision.

12.4 In recommending this proposal no potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act because there are no significant equality and diversity impacts associated with this decision.

### **13. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:**

13.1 There are no direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from the recommendations.

### **14. Are there any other options?**

14.1 Not applicable.

### **Strategic Director of Corporate Resources & s151 Officer, Dave Hodgson**

Authors: Michelle White, Nicola Morley, Bridget Kendrick, Claire Hodgson and Suzanne Edwards

### **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)**

Background papers used in compiling this report:  
None

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2024/25 GENERAL FUND BUDGET MONITORING - SUMMARY

APPENDIX 1

OUTTURN

	Original Budget £	Supplementary Budgets & Transfers £	Revised Budget £	Year End Outturn £	Variance to Budget £
Chief Executive	827,800	1,357,400	2,185,200	1,794,713	(390,487)
Operations	11,934,600	735,710	12,670,310	11,394,157	(1,276,153)
Corporate Resources	(6,063,790)	936,010	(5,127,780)	(5,175,651)	(47,871)
People and Communities	6,719,430	1,912,050	8,631,480	7,237,277	(1,394,203)
Place	8,472,940	1,534,660	10,007,600	7,993,748	(2,013,852)
less Notional capital charges	(5,140,200)	(44,720)	(5,184,920)	(5,184,898)	22
<b>Service Committee Net Expenditure</b>	<b>16,750,780</b>	<b>6,431,110</b>	<b>23,181,890</b>	<b>18,059,347</b>	<b>(5,122,543)</b>
Net Interest	1,406,000		1,406,000	1,276,884	(129,116)
Revenue Contribution to Capital	0		0	114,619	114,619
Minimum Revenue Provision	1,831,020		1,831,020	2,505,261	674,241
Voluntary Revenue Provision	0		0	(700,000)	(700,000)
<b>General Fund Expenditure</b>	<b>19,987,800</b>	<b>6,431,110</b>	<b>26,418,910</b>	<b>21,256,111</b>	<b>(5,162,799)</b>
Transfer To/(From) Working Balance	(1,313,430)	(1,548,771)	(2,862,201)	(577,381)	2,284,820
Transfer To/(From) Earmarked Reserves	337,000	(4,755,979)	(4,418,979)	(1,031,267)	3,387,712
<b>General Fund Net Expenditure</b>	<b>19,011,370</b>	<b>126,360</b>	<b>19,137,730</b>	<b>19,647,463</b>	<b>509,733</b>
Formula Grant	(6,291,000)		(6,291,000)	(6,291,000)	0
CIL Income	(781,000)	(126,360)	(907,360)	(773,881)	133,479
Business Rates Growth / Pooling Gain	(4,283,880)		(4,283,880)	(4,927,102)	(643,222)
New Homes Bonus	(485,920)		(485,920)	(485,919)	1
Council Tax	(7,169,570)		(7,169,570)	(7,169,560)	10
	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Working Balance March 2024 £ 5,882,563

5,305,182 March 2025

**2024/25 GENERAL FUND BUDGET MONITORING - DETAIL**  
**QUARTER 4**

ACTUAL TO DATE		HIDE THIS COLUMN BEFORE SUBMITTING	YEAR END OUTTURN				
ACTUAL TO DATE	VARIANCE TO DATE		APPROVED BUDGET	OUTTURN	VARIANCE	QTR 3 FORECAST VARIANCE	
£	£		£	£	£	£	
18,167,073	(721,648)		TOTAL GENERAL FUND NET EXPENDITURE	28,366,810	23,244,245	(5,122,565)	(497,830)
Chief Executive							
928,027	(3,151)	83C7	ACTIVE & HEALTHY PEOPLE	1,338,760	972,325	(366,435)	0
766,122	96,562	86B7	STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT	846,440	822,388	(24,052)	40,910
1,694,149	93,411		NET EXPENDITURE	2,185,200	1,794,713	(390,487)	40,910
Operations							
351,875	(250,641)	81A1	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & LICENSING	870,630	604,474	(266,156)	(287,000)
1,391,984	(115,200)	81A6	PARKS & GREEN SPACES	2,001,810	1,874,329	(127,481)	(29,810)
65,947	(254)	81B2	BEREAVEMENT SERVICES	118,370	108,301	(10,069)	5,530
7,812	2,872	81C3	AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT	4,940	(96)	(5,036)	0
0	0	81C5	SUNDRY LANDS MAINTENANCE	112,300	112,300	0	0
89,794	(2,841)	81C9	CORPORATE HEALTH & SAFETY	105,740	102,918	(2,822)	(3,800)
1,881,839	(305,308)	81D2	DOMESTIC REFUSE COLLECTION	3,629,990	2,973,472	(656,518)	(412,460)
1,301,859	10,968	81D4	STREET CLEANING	1,691,910	1,720,074	28,164	(7,930)
137,719	(8,968)	81D5	PUBLIC CONVENIENCES	226,130	212,158	(13,972)	(17,130)
(539,039)	(111,309)	81D6	WASTE CHARGEABLE SERVICES	(430,390)	(252,262)	178,128	(1,910)
299,646	(909)	81D7	WASTE STRATEGY & FACILITIES	355,540	375,400	19,860	7,300
604,455	95,906	81D8	MATERIALS RECLAMATION FACILITY	689,090	754,261	65,171	124,740
239,321	(364,500)	83B4	ENGINEERING SERVICES	837,140	464,052	(373,088)	(210,230)
343,972	(112,523)	83C1	WATERWAYS	676,480	544,919	(131,561)	(134,100)
898,993	(235,651)	83C5	CORPORATE PROPERTY - ASSETS	1,091,690	873,477	(218,213)	(269,380)
602,450	234,204	86B5	CORPORATE SUPPORT	688,940	926,378	237,438	100,000
7,678,628	(1,164,155)		NET EXPENDITURE	12,670,310	11,394,157	(1,276,153)	(1,136,180)
Corporate Resources							
(3,896,320)	508,366	83A1	CORPORATE ASSETS - ESTATES	(5,228,130)	(6,315,517)	(1,087,387)	6,410
(4,443,530)	414,374	83A3	PARKING SERVICES	(6,295,540)	(5,863,416)	432,124	492,180
820,832	125,995	83B8	MAJOR PROJECTS	926,450	883,780	(42,670)	(57,160)
(390,891)	118,587	83B9	MARKETS	(511,220)	(558,251)	(47,031)	(52,460)
2,053,664	153,080	86A1	REVENUES & BENEFITS	2,184,240	2,189,668	5,428	235,220
264,501	(26,987)	86A2	ELECTIONS & ELECTORAL REG	390,180	166,070	(224,110)	46,210
249,045	17,245	86A3	CORPORATE	227,400	252,489	25,089	35,190
478,839	(24,765)	86A5	DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION	662,150	622,174	(39,976)	(39,760)
1,865,891	798,964	86A7	UNAPPORTIONABLE OVERHEADS	1,278,500	2,261,187	982,687	883,200
585,029	(61,846)	86B1	FINANCIAL SERVICES	682,570	667,274	(15,296)	0
116,545	7,076	86B2	INTERNAL AUDIT	117,780	125,628	7,848	7,550
473,816	(27,729)	86B4	LEGAL SERVICES	306,950	275,445	(31,505)	(23,850)
137,522	(33,777)	86B8	PROCUREMENT	130,890	117,817	(13,073)	(11,110)
(1,685,057)	1,968,583		NET EXPENDITURE	(5,127,780)	(5,175,651)	(47,871)	1,521,620
People and Communities							
1,362,462	53,387	81C2	HOUSING NEEDS & HOMELESSNESS	2,637,200	1,763,218	(873,982)	350,000
114,229	(61,267)	81E1	GF HOUSING - PROPERTY	199,800	132,522	(67,278)	(53,000)
0	0	83A2	TRANSPORTATION	0	(48,429)	(48,429)	(60,000)
321,972	43,346	86A6	CENTRAL SUPPORT	370,680	418,162	47,482	66,280
677,434	(21,010)	86B3	HUMAN RESOURCES	799,900	845,925	46,025	14,240
2,183,130	(36,813)	86B6	IT SERVICES	2,443,940	2,117,073	(326,867)	(14,440)
510,609	(179,761)	86B9	EXETER COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAMME	937,200	719,592	(217,608)	(180,980)
792,573	57,473	86C3	CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE	922,770	972,892	50,122	79,150
155,533	(26,732)	86C4	ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE PROGRAMME	243,020	261,511	18,491	0
21,919	(7,036)	86C6	PRIVATE HOUSING	76,970	54,810	(22,160)	9,470
6,139,861	(178,413)		NET EXPENDITURE	8,631,480	7,237,277	(1,394,203)	210,720
Place							
339,047	(71,445)	83A4	NET ZERO AND BUSINESS	957,600	939,883	(17,717)	14,970
(136,802)	(524,133)	83A5	CULTURE	503,160	281,068	(222,092)	(127,680)
41,127	41,070	83A6	TOURISM	0	29,919	29,919	29,880
78,021	94,987	83A9	BUILDING CONTROL & LAND CHARGES	65,520	186,360	120,840	90,000
862,249	(13,514)	83B5	PLANNING	1,195,310	877,901	(317,409)	94,200
1,283,856	(356,682)	83C2	MUSEUM SERVICE	2,656,510	2,335,961	(320,549)	(201,710)
817,315	(359,550)	83C3	LEISURE & SPORT	2,811,810	1,937,785	(874,025)	(958,980)
0	(44,888)	83C8	ST SIDWELLS POINT	59,850	0	(59,850)	(59,850)
54,327	(13,874)	83C9	VISITOR FACILITIES	86,000	64,498	(21,502)	(4,960)
207,217	(8,180)	86A4	CIVIC CEREMONIALS	356,370	350,728	(5,642)	(4,320)
224,455	(20,260)	86A8	COMMUNICATIONS	226,330	242,427	16,097	(20)
321,250	(186,770)	86C2	LIVEABLE EXETER GARDEN CITY	677,360	325,962	(351,398)	(100,000)
246,430	24,915	86C5	CCTV & HOMECALL	406,780	464,653	57,873	91,860
1,001	(2,749)	86C7	COMMUNITY SAFETY	5,000	(43,396)	(48,396)	1,710
4,339,493	(1,441,073)		NET EXPENDITURE	10,007,600	7,993,748	(2,013,852)	(1,134,900)

## Earmarked Reserves

Account	Account description	Opening Balance £	Transfers In £	Transfers Out £	Closing Balance £
09413	CONSERVATION	(2,339)			(2,339)
09416	VEHICLE LICENSING	(35,172)		35,172	0
09417	S 57 GRANTS	(19,613)			(19,613)
09419	SURE START	(20,000)			(20,000)
09420	BUILDING CONTROL	18,821		91,549	110,370
09427	MALLINSON	(64,671)		29,038	(35,633)
09428	OLD MILL	(5,499)			(5,499)
09434	SHIP	(7,438)			(7,438)
09437	HOUSING ASSESSMENT	(1,245)			(1,245)
09444	Climate Change	(6,709)			(6,709)
09448	DEVON HOME CHOICE	(48,567)	(69,991)		(118,558)
09451	TRANSFORMATION	(1,347,556)		1,301,920	(45,636)
09455	Habitat Assessment	(30,533)	(108,368)		(138,901)
09456	Green Travel	(236,075)	(48,429)		(284,504)
09457	AFU Archiving	(4,352)			(4,352)
09458	Countryside Grants	(14,500)			(14,500)
09460	Redundancy reserve	(628,001)		628,001	0
09463	EBAC	(92,100)		29,923	(62,177)
09464	Museum of the Year	(31,682)			(31,682)
09467	Natura 2000	(202,074)			(202,074)
09473	NHB - Local Community Infra	(73,577)		73,577	0
09475	NHB - Active Exeter	(59,849)			(59,849)
09480	NNDR Deficit	(1,660,213)	(561,240)		(2,221,453)
09487	PINHOE COMMUNITY HUB	(53,756)			(53,756)
09491	IFRS 9	(102,783)		102,783	0
09494	LAND CHARGES	(318,977)		21,387	(297,590)
09495	BUSINESS RATE PILOT	(97,457)		74,201	(23,256)
09496	PLANNING INCOME	(151,688)			(151,688)
09501	RAMM INFRASTRUCTURE RESERVE	(256,585)			(256,585)
09503	GOVERNANCE REVIEW	(55,000)	(102,783)	0	(157,783)
<b>Covid - Acting as principal:</b>					
09504	WELL-BEING SUPPORT FUND	(37,127)		14,000	(23,127)
09505	CEV RESPONSE	(51,030)		51,030	0
09521	Contain Outbreak Management Fund	(9,319)			(9,319)
09522	Protect & Vaccinate	(16,282)		16,282	0
09510	Garden Communities - Grant 2	(289,683)		134,522	(155,161)
09511	Development Corporation Comp	(387,684)		246,440	(141,243)
09514	ECL - Corporate Property Support	(200,000)		0	(200,000)
09515	Net Zero Exeter	(629,666)		220,750	(408,916)
09519	Future events	(99,800)		70	(99,730)
09523	Strata	(74,000)	(245,443)	74,000	(245,443)
09524	Wellbeing Exeter	(90,050)	(151,106)	90,050	(151,106)
09525	Revs & Bens New Burdens	(89,700)		89,700	0
09526	Household Support Fund Admin Grant	(132,970)	(213,025)	75,724	(270,270)
09527	RSAP Revenue Grant	(85,169)		9,914	(75,255)
09528	Homelessness New Burdens	(258,904)		258,904	0
09530	Surplus Guildhall income	(2,175,256)	(724,067)		(2,899,324)
09531	CPO Funding	(800,000)		800,000	0
09532	AIM Reserve	(600,000)		0	(600,000)
09533	Sport England - Core	(138,598)		34,893	(103,705)
09534	Sport England - Pathfinder	(998,068)		806,915	(191,153)
09535	Homes 4 Ukraine Scheme	(796,877)		36,135	(760,742)
NEW	Afghan Household Fund	0	(15,058)		(15,058)
NEW	Winter Pressures	0	(220,413)		(220,413)
NEW	Operations - ECQT Dredging	0	(12,000)		(12,000)
NEW	Operations - Contaminated Land Survey	0	(11,883)		(11,883)
NEW	Operations - Environmental Health Projects	0	(34,813)		(34,813)
NEW	Operations - Food waste collection grant	0	(190,340)		(190,340)
NEW	Digital & Data - Historic Brexit Grant	0	(18,950)		(18,950)
NEW	Community Safety Partnership Fines	0	(300)		(300)
NEW	Community Safety	0	(48,740)		(48,740)
NEW	Planning Digitalisation	0	(50,000)		(50,000)
NEW	Planning Skills & Development	0	(72,000)		(72,000)
NEW	Local Plan Evidence	0	(311,163)		(311,163)
NEW	Liveable Exeter - Atlas funding	0	(55,000)		(55,000)
NEW	Museum Projects	0	(123,180)		(123,180)
NEW	Museum NPO	0	(3,910)		(3,910)
NEW	Custom House surplus	0	(7,740)		(7,740)
NEW	Arts & Events	0	(9,320)		(9,320)
NEW	Leisure VAT refund	0	(646,557)		(646,557)
NEW	Council Elections - grants in advance	0	(259,794)		(259,794)
		<b>(13,569,370)</b>	<b>(4,315,613)</b>	<b>5,346,880</b>	<b>(12,538,103)</b>

Transfer To/(From) Earmarked Reserves

(1,031,267)

## PROPOSED SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGETS &amp; BUDGET TRANSFERS FOR 2025/26

**Supplementary Budgets**

Description	£	Funded by:
<b>Chief Executive</b>		
Local Government Reorganisation	88,000	GF Balances
Exeter Net Zero projects	31,330	Earmarked Reserve
Wonford Health & Wellbeing Hub	56,940	GF Balances
Sport England - Core	103,710	Earmarked Reserve
Sport England - Pathfinder	191,150	Earmarked Reserve
Organisational Change Programme	30,900	Earmarked Reserve
<b>Operations</b>		
Children's Play Area - 24/25 underspend. Needed for strategic development	56,970	GF Balances
Engineering Watercourse work	5,000	GF Balances
Waterways Dredging work - budget smoothed, but work occurs biennially	50,000	GF Balances
ECQT Dredging grant	12,000	Earmarked Reserve
Gap Analysis	1,900	Earmarked Reserve
HRO one-off funding legal fees & disbursements - rollover of unspent balance	11,540	GF Balances
HRO one-off other expenses - contingency (Independent Enquiry)	80,000	GF Balances
Waterways - Waterways Engineer 3 yr FTC	121,350	GF Balances
Contaminated Land Survey	11,880	Earmarked Reserve
Environmental Health Projects	34,810	Earmarked Reserve
Neighbourhood Team - 24/25 supplementary roll forward	53,860	GF Balances
Emergency Planning	9,320	Earmarked Reserve
Weekly Food Waste Collections transitional resource	190,340	Earmarked Reserve
Kerbside recycling - storage (24/25 supplementary budget roll-forward)	78,530	GF Balances
Commercialisation - Advanced ISO Accreditation (RedQuadrant report)	12,840	Earmarked Reserve
<b>Corporate Resources</b>		
Civic Centre re-location	100,000	Earmarked Reserve
Well Being Support Fund	23,130	Earmarked Reserve
Bus Station Wider Options Consultant Fee for Market report	23,250	Earmarked Reserve
CIPFA - asset management plan consultancy	25,000	Earmarked Reserve
Civic Centre relocation and car park cashless advice consultancy	25,000	Earmarked Reserve
Elections - County Council & PCC Elections grants in advance	259,790	Earmarked Reserve
Household Support Fund - Staff Costs	80,500	Earmarked Reserve
Procurement - Legal advice	13,000	GF balances
<b>People &amp; Communities</b>		
Remedial works required to PSL property	43,000	GF balances
Strata	245,440	Earmarked Reserve
Winter Pressures	220,410	Earmarked Reserve
Afghan Household Fund	15,800	Earmarked Reserve
Homes for Ukraine	760,740	Earmarked Reserve
Devon Home Choice new system	4,000	Earmarked Reserve
Domestic Abuse New Burdens Funding - Expenditure	36,218	Self-financing
Domestic Abuse New Burdens Funding - Income	(36,218)	Self-financing
Asylum Dispersal - Expenditure	16,800	Self-financing
Asylum Dispersal - Income	(16,800)	Self-financing
Wellbeing Exeter	151,110	Earmarked Reserve
Operations Team Leader (Grade H, 1FTE)	51,850	GF Balances
Historic Brexit Grant	18,950	Earmarked Reserve
New Burdens Transparency Grant	8,103	Self-financing
New Burdens Transparency Grant	(8,103)	Self-financing
Staff training	45,000	GF Balances
<b>Place</b>		
Community Safety Projects	33,990	Earmarked Reserve
Community Safety Partnerships	14,750	Earmarked Reserve
Antisocial Behaviour Initiative	165,520	Self-financing
Antisocial Behaviour Initiative	(165,520)	Self-financing
Planning Skills	29,000	Earmarked Reserve
Planning Skills Delivery Fund	43,000	Earmarked Reserve
Local Plan Evidence	311,160	Earmarked Reserve
Planning Digitalisation	50,000	Earmarked Reserve
Liveable Garden City	155,160	Earmarked Reserve
Atlas	55,000	Earmarked Reserve
Exeter Development Fund	141,240	Earmarked Reserve
RAMM Café - cost	23,230	Self-financing
RAMM Café - income	(23,230)	Self-financing
Custom House - 24/25 surplus	7,740	Earmarked Reserve
Museum Projects	123,180	Earmarked Reserve
Museum NPO	3,910	Earmarked Reserve
Arts & events	9,320	Earmarked Reserve
Women's Rugby World Cup - payment to rugby union	99,730	Earmarked Reserve
Women's Rugby World Cup - event marketing	75,000	GF Balances
Additional NPO Support (Northcott Theatre)	10,000	GF Balances
	<b>4,500,520</b>	

**Funded from:**

Earmarked Reserves	3,660,480
GF Balances	840,040
	<b>4,500,520</b>

**Budget Transfers**

South West Council Subscription - transfer from Member Services	9,380
South West Council Subscription - transfer to HR	(9,380)
New Budget for Corporate Consultation & Engagement	120,000
Funded By:	
Mobile Phones	(27,980)
Procurement	(1,490)
Democratic Rep	(1,000)
HR	(5,000)
RAMM	(12,000)
Corn Exchange	(20,000)
Advertising & Marketing	(10,000)
Underground Passages	(5,000)
Leisure	(37,530)



## Monitoring Budget Reductions - 2024/25 Outturn

## Appendix 5

Service	Description/Proposal	2024/25 Budget Reduction/ (increase)	Outturn	Variance (shortfall)	Comment
Public and Green Spaces	Allotment fee increase	£20,450	£19,793	(£657)	Full increase in fees phased over 2 years rather than 1; uplift in fees started from 29th September rather than 1st. Full recovery expected to be achieved in 2025/26.
Public and Green Spaces	Street cleansing agile service delivery; saving profiled 50% in 2023/24 and 50% 2024/25	£101,850	£22,450	(£79,400)	£30k saving in C059 12059 NOT achieved; YE actual is £49,400 overspend
Procurement	Shared service with Teignbridge, South Hams and West Devon District Councils	£27,000	£4,000	(£23,000)	Only recharge in 24/25 was to TDC for maternity cover until the end of Sept 24. No other external work was carried out.
Markets and Halls and Visitor Facilities	Additional income at Matford Centre	£8,500	£8,500	£0	Income budget has been achieved so saving has been met.
Revenue & Benefits	Move HRA Rent Collection back to Housing Tenancy Services. Reduce team to level required for HRA/or in-line with recharge level; delete 1 x Income Collection Team Leader 5 x Senior Collection Officers, 1 x Support (effectively removing officer costs met from the GF)	£172,920	£172,920	£0	Saving achieved
Revenue & Benefits	EDDC Hosted Council Tax Administration. Delete vacant Local taxation Lead and 3 hours from Post 5089	£55,680	£55,680	£0	Post deleted, saving achieved
Corporate Property	Estates functional review; remove Assistant Estates Surveyor post	£20,230	£20,230	£0	Post removed therefore saving achieved
Housing Needs and Homelessness	Reduction of spot purchase B&B accommodation; relating to unrecoverable HB in Welfare and Benefits	£80,170	£0	(£80,170)	Saving not achieved as continued use of B&B necessary due to delays in long lease arrangements .
<b>SUB TOTAL SERVICE REVIEW REDUCTIONS</b>		<b>£486,800</b>	<b>£303,573</b>	<b>(£183,227)</b>	
Marketing	Additional income	£25,000	£25,000	£0	Income budget achieved so saving achieved
Leisure	VAT ruling Leisure is non-business for VAT	£600,000	£646,560	£46,560	Both claims have been submitted; 1st claim has been received, awaiting decision on second. Full amount accrued at year-end
Corporate	Reduction in Pension Added Years budget in line with reduced spending	£60,000	£60,000	£0	No overspend so saving achieved
RAMM	Restructure per Council approval	£73,000	£73,000	£0	Restructure implemented so saving achieved
Planning	Additional income resulting from Central Government fee increase	£157,000	£0	(£157,000)	Fee increases have not led to the expected increase in income therefore saving not achieved
<b>OTHER PROPOSALS</b>		<b>£915,000</b>	<b>£804,560</b>	<b>(£110,440)</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£1,401,800</b>	<b>£1,108,133</b>	<b>(£293,667)</b>	

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### 1. One Exeter Update

One Exeter was the council's organisational change programme and it has helped to deliver the council's strategic priority of leading a Well-Run Council.

The programme was structured around five work streams as set out below.

- Our People
- Our Technology
- Our Customers
- Our Services
- Our Governance

To reflect the strategic importance of the work, the programme was sponsored by the Chief Executive and owned by the SMB.

#### The future of the work programme:

Over the last year, and as part of the Senior Leadership Review, the programme of work has now been embedded within Directorates and the Executive Office. Continuous improvement and transformation are now part of the council's business as usual. There is no longer a requirement to have a standalone programme of work and it is proposed that the One Exeter Programme is now mainstreamed across the council.

Going forward, progress against this work will be reported through the regular meetings that are held with Portfolio Holders and through the committee reporting process where appropriate.

#### Year end update:

The **'One Council, One Team'** strapline of the One Exeter programme is embedded across the council and the organisational culture is shifting away from silo working to one of collaboration and joined up working. A summary of the progress that has been made over the last year is set out below.

### Delivery of the Digital Customer Strategy

During 2024/25 the council continued to deliver the adopted Digital Customer Strategy and work with Strata our IT service solutions company on the enabler projects it identified in their Business Plan. As part of the Senior Leadership Restructure, a Digital and Data team was created, and a new Head of Service was recruited to manage this service and lead digital and data transformation projects. The team works closely with other services and members of the Extended Leadership Team (ELT).

The following work has been undertaken over the last year to deliver the ambitions of the Digital Customer Strategy:

- **My Account Introduction:** Launched in late-January 2025, the "My Account" platform, will provide a single digital front door for customers to contact the council and track their requests.
- **City Development Transformation Project:** Initiated a pilot project to explore digital solution improvements and centralised contact opportunities within the City Development service.
- **End User Computing:** Tested a new computing model which will enable users to work natively on their window laptop and remove the reliance of virtual desktops to work.

- **Rapid Impact Team:** A team was created to look at the Parks and Open Spaces and Waste Management services to determine the potential to reduce the current cost base through service improvement and digitalisation.
- **Resident's survey:** The council conducted a resident's survey and consulted on the budget plans for 2025/26. A new corporate Engagement Manager has been recruited to bring a corporate standard for consultations and how the council seeks feedback.
- **SharePoint:** A pilot in the council's digital team was conducted to store files in a standard that can be rolled out to the wider council. A lesson learnt exercise will be carried out before a full roll out takes place.
- **Telephony Migration:** Preparation was made to migrate users from Skype for Business to Teams, ensuring continuity ahead of Skype's end-of-life in October 2025.

### Peer Review of Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

In June 2024, the Chief Executive invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to undertake a review of the council's work on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and invited recommendations on how to make improvements.

Specifically, the review focused on:

- Does the organisation understand its duties under the Equality Act?
- What is the understanding and support from elected members?
- How does this understanding translate through service delivery?
- What does it feel like to apply for a job with and then work for the council for people from minoritised groups?
- What are we doing and what could we do in future to strengthen our links into communities?
- What do we need to do to address the gaps in our response to the Equality Act?
- What resources do we need to take this forward both in terms of designated EDI role and across the wider organisation within services?

The review took place over three days with four peer assessors from the Local Government Association. This "mini" Peer Review team made the following general observations.

The review identified that there was clear commitment to EDI from the Chief Executive and political leadership and that there were pockets of good practice that could be replicated across the organisation. The review recommended that further work was undertaken to embed EDI across the council, communicate positive EDI initiatives and increased collaboration with community groups to inform service delivery.

An EDI Taskforce has been created under the Lead Strategic Director for People and Communities and a detailed action plan has been developed.

### Improved Corporate Governance Arrangements

The council's external auditors recommended that the council should review the alternative delivery models with which it is involved and assess if continuing with these arrangements if appropriate provides best value for money. In response to this recommendation, [a report](#) was brought to Executive in January 2025 and considered by full Council in February 2025. The report provides information concerning those entities connected to the council and the role of the council within those organisations. The report also recommended that the Chief Executive has delegated authority to appoint Directors, Client Leads and Shareholder representatives and that

a report is presented to Council every six months to update councillors on the performance of each company.

The council has also improved its arrangements for tracking and monitoring progress with Internal Audit reports and recommendations. Going forward, all Internal Audit reports with limited assurance will be reported to SMB and tracked via the new Audit Tracker tool. This will ensure that key audit recommendations are implemented and reported against.

In addition, corporate/cross-cutting Internal Audit reports such as the Corporate Governance Audit will be reported to Audit and Governance Committee to provide assurance to councillors that strategic audit recommendations are being actioned.

### **Completion of Senior Leadership Restructure**

The new Senior Leadership Structure has been approved by Council and implemented. The new structure is designed to break down silos and ensure that the council can deliver on its priorities, implement its ambitious transformation programme, provide an excellent customer experience and lead a well-run Council.

The reason for the restructure was to create a more cohesive group of senior leadership, acting as a joint team to enable the delivery of the council's priorities through better balanced portfolios, a co-ordinated and corporate approach and an ability to drive transformation together.

### **Accommodation Review**

The Council has been considering options for a number of years to free up the Civic Centre site and move to new premises. The site could provide much needed new homes and has been identified as part of the Eastgate Liveable Exeter strategic development opportunity, providing a new vibrant mixed-use quarter in the City Centre.

Work is continuing to identify a site for relocation.

### **Development of a new Corporate Plan**

SMB have been working with members of the Executive to develop a new Corporate Plan for the council. The new Corporate Plan will demonstrate how the council will deliver its vision for a happy, healthy and fully engaged city in the future.

To deliver the key priorities, services will focus on setting targets and measuring performance. The Extended Leadership Team (ELT) have been working together to compile a series of meaningful measures that will help assess progress against the priorities.

The plan will adopt a straightforward and strategic approach with a greater emphasis on the outcomes councillors want to achieve for the city.

The outcomes will be delivered through four strategic priorities:

- Local economy
- Sustainable environment
- People
- Homes

These priorities can only be delivered by having a Well-Run Council.

### **Communication and Collaboration**

Over the last year, there has been a focus on improving communication and collaboration across the council. The Chief Executive continues to publish a fortnightly message in the staff newsletter to keep everyone informed about the strategic work that has been taking place as well as personal highlights such as meeting and learning more about the front-line teams.

A series of All Staff Events took place in February 2025 to introduce the new ELT, hear about the council's focus and priorities over the year ahead, learn more about the plans to become a unitary council and to network and ask questions.

The ELT has continued to meet to discuss a number of strategic issues including the financial position, the Corporate Plan, the Strategic Performance Management Framework and the requirement for staff to return to the office base for 40% of their working week.

The Chief Executive now meets with new starters on a quarterly basis to welcome them to the council, talk about the priorities and focus of the council and how the council supports and develops its staff. Meetings are also held with staff to celebrate their long service awards with Strategic Directors and Heads of Service presenting the awards.

The Staff Sounding Board has also continued during 2024 and has offered invaluable feedback to the One Exeter programme. This included helping to inform the work that is currently underway to improve the current working arrangements in the Civic Centre.

## **REPORT TO COUNCIL**

Date of Meeting: 10 June 2025

Report of: Strategic Director of Corporate Resources & s151 Officer

Title: 2024/25 General Fund Capital Monitoring 2024/25 and Revised Capital Programme for 2025/26 and Future Years

### **Is this a Key Decision?**

No.

### **Is this an Executive or Council Function?**

Council.

## **1. What is the report about?**

1.1 To advise members of the overall financial performance of the Council for the 2024/25 financial year in respect of the annual capital programme.

To seek approval of the 2025/26 revised capital programme, including commitments carried forward from 2024/25.

## **2. Recommendations:**

2.1 It is recommended that Council approve:

- (1) The overall financial position for the 2024/25 annual capital programme.
- (2) The amendments and further funding requests to the Council's annual capital programme for 2025/26 and future years.

## **3. Reasons for the recommendation:**

3.1. Local authorities are required to estimate the total of capital expenditure that it plans to incur during the financial year when it sets the prudential indicators for capital expenditure. This shows that its asset management and capital investment strategies are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

Capital expenditure is a significant source of risk and uncertainty since cost variations, delays and changing specifications are often features of large and complex capital projects.

In order to manage the risks associated with capital programming the annual capital programme is updated every three months to reflect any cost variations, slippage or acceleration of projects.

## **4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources**

4.1 The financial resources required are set out in the body of this report.

## 5. Section 151 Officer comments:

5.1 The capital programme is showing further progress, and this is expected to improve once the full structure is completed within the General Fund Assets team. Work will continue with budget managers to better profile schemes over a number of years to reflect the likely timing of delivery.

## 6. What are the legal aspects?

6.1 Monitoring of capital expenditure is required in order to comply with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2003.

The requirements imposed on the Council by the Act are set out in section 3 of the report.

## 7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

7.1 The Monitoring Officer has no additional comments.

## 8. Report details:

### 8.1. REVISIONS TO THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The 2024/25 Capital Programme, including commitments brought forward from 2023/24, was last reported to Council on 25 February 2025. Since that meeting the following changes have been made that have increased the programme:

Description	£	Approval/Funding
<b>Revised Capital Programme, as reported to Council 25 February 2025</b>	<b>32,726,380</b>	
Topsham Museum	182,000	Approved by Council 25 February 2025
<b>Revised Capital Programme</b>	<b>32,908,380</b>	

### 8.2. PERFORMANCE

Capital expenditure in the year amounted to £8.434 million. There are some schemes where the timing of the spend is uncertain, these schemes have a budget of £7.588 million, of the remaining £25.320 million budget the spend during the year was £8.416 million, which equates to 33.24% of the revised programme. It is proposed to carry forward a total of £20.428 million budget into future years, as indicated in Appendix 1.

### 8.3. CAPITAL FINANCING

The 2024/25 capital expenditure was financed as follows:

	£
Capital Grants & Contributions	2,304,364



Capital Receipts	571,564
Community Infrastructure Levy	206,767
Revenue Contributions	114,619
Borrowing	5,236,278
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,433,592</b>

#### 8.4. AVAILABLE CAPITAL RESOURCES

The available capital resources for the General Fund for 2024/25 are £3.197 million. Total General Fund capital expenditure is £8.434 million of which £5.236 million will be funded from borrowing.

Appendix 3 sets out the forecast use of the resources available for the General Fund and the likely amounts of borrowing that will be necessary to fund the capital programme over the next three years.

The value of actual capital receipts received in the year in respect of the General Fund are:

	<b>General Fund £</b>
<b>Balance as at 1 April 2024</b>	<b>851</b>
New Receipts	570,713
Use of Capital Receipts	(571,564)
<b>Balance as at 31 March 2025</b>	<b>0</b>

#### 8.5. EXPENDITURE VARIANCES

The main (greater than +/- £30k) variances and issues concerning expenditure are as follows:

Scheme	Variance £
Farm Hill Retaining Walls (23 no.)	(£39,329)
Countess Wear Retaining Wall Rebuild	£39,329
<b>Officer Responsible: Head of Service – Operations</b>  The Farm Hill scheme will underspend this year to compensate for an overspend on the Countess Wear Retaining Wall project.	
<b>Riverside &amp; RAMM Decarbonisation Projects</b>	<b>(£4,860,850)</b>
<b>Officer Responsible: Head of Service – City Centre and Net Zero</b>  As per the report that was presented to Executive on 1 October on the Public Decarbonisation Scheme 3b Project which sets out the reasons for this scheme not going ahead. The budget was to be grant funded, so this is not a saving of ECC funds.	
Scheme	Variance £
Leisure Complex Build project	£96,027
Leisure Complex – Fit Out	(£96,027)
<b>Officer Responsible: Head of Service – Asset Management</b>  The Leisure complex scheme is in its final stages and the variance against the build project can be compensated by the underspend in the fit out budget.	
Scheme	Variance £
Fleet Lease	£666,580
<b>Officer Responsible: Head of Service – Waste, Recycling and Fleet Manager</b>  Some of the leased items acquired in the first year of the contract have come to the end of their original agreements so have had to be replaced during the year, and the new lease agreements are significantly more expensive than the original costs. There have been fewer additions over the last year or two due to affordability so there has been an element of catch up during 2024/25 to replace fleet which was past its useful life.	
Scheme	Variance £
Right of Use - Rent for Waterways	98,000

A new lease accounting standard, IFRS 16, came in from 1 April 2024. Under the new standard it requires most leases to be accounted for as acquisitions, so that the authority recognises the rights acquired to use an asset. The overspend in respect of Waterways relates to the lease of the Port Constructor, which was previously budgeted as a service cost. In overall terms, there is no overall financial impact to the Council.

#### 8.6. SCHEMES TO BE DEFERRED TO 2025/26 AND BEYOND

Schemes which have been identified as being wholly or partly deferred to 2025/26 and beyond are:

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Budget to be Deferred. £</b>
<b>Waste Infrastructure</b>	<b>376,343</b>
<b>Improved Recycling Containers</b>	<b>11,672</b>
<b>Depot Enhancement Works</b>	<b>6,141,564</b>
<b>Food Waste Collections</b>	<b>857,140</b>
<p><b>Officer Responsible: Head of Service – Environment &amp; Waste</b></p> <p>The waste depot improvement works including the MRF has been re-profiled in-line with estimated project spend.</p> <p>Interim works have been completed to allow for further food waste collection now to be conducted during the 2025/26 financial year.</p> <p>The reprofiling to both Waste Infrastructure and Recycling containers are also linked to the depot development work, as spending is linked to the works.</p>	
<b>Parks Infrastructure</b>	<b>155,715</b>
<b>Cemeteries &amp; Churchyards Infrastructure Improvements</b>	<b>35,973</b>
<b>Pinhoe Playing Field Upgrades</b>	<b>38,897</b>
<b>Cricklepit Bridge</b>	<b>38,220</b>
<b>Trews Weir refurb</b>	<b>37,584</b>
<b>District Street Lighting</b>	<b>150,000</b>
<b>Bromhams Farm Playing Fields</b>	<b>48,618</b>
<b>Northbrook Wild Arboretum</b>	<b>221,563</b>
<b>Heavitree Paddling Pools</b>	<b>526,680</b>
<b>Play Areas</b>	<b>73,456</b>

**Officer Responsible: Parks & Green Spaces Parks**

Parks and Green Spaces Infrastructure, Cemeteries and Churchyard infrastructure, are allocations for schemes where timings of spend against the scheme are dependent on either deterioration of existing assets or the availability of suppliers to provide facilities required with works expected to slow down until the new year.

£126k of play areas improvements have been carried in the 2024/25 financial year. Spending and project progress has had to be paused temporarily, and funding deferred to 2025/26, to allow for contract procurement.

Pinhoe Playing fields were subject to substantive surface and drainage works. The deferment of current capital is a result of the remaining works being seasonal. Additional remedial maintenance programmes are expected to be carried out May – August 2025 and April – August 2026.

Phase one of the works at Cricklepit Bridge have been completed, and final works will be completed in the new financial year.

Delays in delivery for the Trews Wier refurbishment have been caused by complexity of project and need for input and approval of proposals and designs from external partners.

Delivery of works for the District Street Lighting project remain in Devon County Council's control. Minimal works were completed in 2024/25, meaning there remains more work to do in the next financial year.

Works progressing as expected for the Bromhams Farm Playing Fields project with the deferral reflecting the longer contract duration agreed at tender stage to cover ongoing establishment maintenance.

The Northbrook Wild Arboretum scheme deferral reflects a timing delay in respect of commencement of the scheme.

As previously reported the Heavitree Paddling Pools plans were unsuccessful at tender. As a result, the works did not progress in 2024/25. The project will progress pending an additional consultation.

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Budget to be Deferred £</b>
<b>Bowling Green Marshes Coastal Defence Scheme</b>	<b>68,389</b>
<b>Farm Hill Retaining Walls (23 no.)</b>	<b>128,497</b>
<b>Mallison Bridge</b>	<b>35,632</b>
<b>Bonhay Rd/Andlaw House Footpath</b>	<b>144,635</b>
<b>St James' Weir &amp; Ducks Marsh Meadow banks</b>	<b>75,000</b>
<b>Landfill Gas Extraction Systems</b>	<b>95,999</b>
<b>Mincinglake Valley Park Reed Beds &amp; Pipe Inlet</b>	<b>36,280</b>
<b>Exeter Canal Bank Repairs</b>	<b>43,304</b>

<b>ECC Bridge Repair Programme</b>	<b>230,461</b>
<b>Oxford Road Car Park Retaining Wall</b>	<b>200,000</b>
<b>Canal Basin Bridge Refurbishment</b>	<b>50,000</b>
<p><b>Officer Responsible: Engineering &amp; Assets Manager</b></p> <p>Following an unsuccessful procurement exercise for the Bowling Green Marshes Coastal Defence Scheme an alternative approach has been selected that will increase the programme time into the next financial year.</p> <p>The scope of the Farm Hill retaining walls project has significantly reduced since the budget was requested, we are currently awaiting tender process.</p> <p>The Mallison Bridge Project is being led by Devon County Council. The Council's financial contribution has not yet been requested by Devon, due to delays in approving the funding agreement with all funding partners.</p> <p>The Bonhay Road footpath project has been delayed due to uncertainty over land ownership / responsibilities. Investigations are ongoing.</p> <p>The St James' Wier and Ducks Marsh budget is precautionary, there is no current need to spend but the asset is being monitored.</p> <p>The landfill gas extraction system works are postponed due to need for wintertime monitoring of boreholes before the works scope can be finalised.</p> <p>There have been Delays to the Mincinglake Valley Park works which were caused by the complexity of surveying the culverts which are up to 10 metres below ground. Remote methods have been unsuccessful, and these are not suitable for person-entry. A new approach has now been selected, and works will continue in 2025/26. Resourcing issues have reduced capacity to deliver the bridge programme at the anticipated rate, fewer works planned in this financial year.</p> <p>Exeter Canal bank repairs have been deferred as an engineer has not been appointed in the previous financial year.</p> <p>Resourcing issues have reduced capacity to deliver the bridge programme at the anticipated rate, fewer works planned in this financial year.</p> <p>The budgets for both Oxford Road wall and the Canal Basin Bridge refurbishment are precautionary with no current need to spend at present, but the asset is being monitored.</p>	
<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Budget to be Deferred £</b>
<b>Guildhall Shopping Centre Enhancements</b>	<b>4,982,350</b>
<b>St Nicholas Priory Roof</b>	<b>88,120</b>

**Officer Responsible: Interim Head of Service – Commercial Assets**

Discussions with tenants for the development of the Guildhall Shopping Centre are continuing with spend expected in 2025/26.

In regard to St Nicholas Priory, Historic England have asked that the funding bid needs to be resubmitted for a patch and repair as opposed to a complete replacement. A new bid will be submitted by the end of June 2026.

<b>Cathedral Green Display Cases</b>	<b>35,000</b>
<b>Green Space Depot Site</b>	<b>2,500,000</b>

**Officer Responsible: Head of Service – Asset Management**

The restructure and recruitment of the Assets team has not yet taken place, so it is that there has been no spend on the above programmes. The restructure is likely to be progressed into 2025/26.

<b>Leighton Terrace &amp; King William Street MSCP</b>	<b>(311,897)</b>
<b>Backlog Maintenance</b>	<b>(97,183)</b>
<b>City Wall</b>	<b>76,454</b>
<b>BLRF – Clifton Hill</b>	<b>(23,070)</b>
<b>Commercial Property Ancillary Accommodation</b>	<b>(57,821)</b>
<b>Riverside Sports Hall Roof</b>	<b>60,870</b>
<b>Topsham Museum</b>	<b>221,074</b>
<b>Leisure Property enhancements</b>	<b>1,027,011</b>
<b>Leisure Equipment Replacement Programme</b>	<b>338,094</b>
<b>RAMM Roof Repair &amp; Insulation</b>	<b>72,527</b>
<b>Corn Exchange Lift</b>	<b>50,000</b>
<b>Bus Station Construction</b>	<b>100,369</b>



**Officer Responsible: Head of Service – Asset Management**

As reported at quarter three, the budgets for backlog maintenance, Clifton Hill and Commercial Property Ancillary Accommodation were reprofiled into 2025/26. Costs incurred since quarter two includes major concrete repairs at Leighton Terrace car park and the replacement of water mains at Clifton Hill.

Delays to the City Wall have arisen due to the need to negotiate with the landowner who's land we need to access to undertake the works. These works have now commenced & budget will be spent in 2025/26.

The inability to appoint project managers has resulted in delays to the Leisure Property enhancements project work. Restructure is underway to address this, and budget will be spent in 2025/26.

The Topsham Museum project was delayed due to the scope of works changing and waiting for listed building consent to be brought to the full planning committee for a decision.

Inability to appoint project managers has resulted in delays to the leisure property enhancement project. Restructure is underway to address this & budget will be spent in 2025/26.

The leisure equipment replacement programme was under-utilised this financial year, however the full budget will be required in 2025/26 to replace equipment on a rolling basis.

The inability to appoint project managers has resulted in delays to the RAMM Roof Repair & Insulation project work due to staffing pressures. Restructure is underway to address this & budget will be spent in 2025/26. The Riverside Sports Hall Roof project will be consolidated within this budget.

The inability to appoint project managers has resulted in delays in the Corn Exchange Lift project work due to staffing pressures. Restructure is underway to address this & budget will be spent in 2025/26.

The Bus Station scheme budget deferment is due to planned works to revert the traffic flows in Princesshay were awaiting formal Devon County Council Traffic Regulation Order approval. This approval is now in place and the works will be progressed during 2025/26.

<b>Customer Contact Platform</b>	<b>155,539</b>
<b>Idox System for Planning</b>	<b>52,783</b>
<b>Financial Management</b>	<b>144,135</b>
<b>EUC model equipment (replacement laptops)</b>	<b>97,362</b>
<b>ECC Civic Centre HFX Door Access Replacement</b>	<b>35,098</b>
<b>Microsoft Power Apps</b>	<b>30,001</b>

**Officer Responsible: Head of Service, Digital and Data**

Each of the projects listed are identified in the Strata Business Plan and will each be delivering digital transformation in the council.

The reason for the rollover is due to capacity issues each project is still required but its delivery is now scheduled for during 2025/26.

Customer Contact Platform – procurement of the new customer contact system has begun; implementation will now be during quarter 1 and quarter 2 of 2025/26.

Idox System for Planning – implementation will now take place during 2025/26.

Financial Management – whilst procurement of the system has been completed, the project has suffered significant delays as a result of problems in getting a working test system. The future of the project is currently under consideration based on whether the problems encountered can be resolved.

EUC model equipment (replacement laptops) – invoicing for the new laptops due to the way Strata rebill the council will come in during quarter 1 of 2025/26.

ECC Civic Centre HFX Door Access Replacement - invoicing for the new door access system due to the way Strata rebill the council will come in during quarter 1 of 2025/26.

Microsoft Power Apps – due to capacity issues, this project will be looked at during quarter 3 and quarter 4 of 2025/26.

**Disabled Facilities Grant**

**270,789**

**Officer Responsible: Head of Service – Customer Relations Housing**

Most of this relate to grants that have been started but require architects designs to be drawn up, planning approval or further occupational therapist input.

## **8.7 FURTHER FUNDING REQUESTS**

### **Matford Centre (£58,000)**

Additional funding is requested for maintenance and access works for the roof mounted solar array at the Matford Centre. As the PV panels are not functioning properly without this maintenance there will be a projected loss in income of £50,000 a year.

### **Strata Business Plan – Various IT Projects (£452,760)**

The Strata business plan for 2025/26 was approved in February 2025. The purpose of this request is to formally add the approved schemes to the capital programme.

### **Financial Management System (£46,000)**

The implementation date for this project has been revised and additional resources are required to fund this change and the extension of dedicated in house officer resources.

## **Decarbonisation – Riverside Leisure Centre (£4,395,286)**

In March 2025 Exeter City Council secured PSDS Phase 4 funding for a much-needed decarbonisation project at the Riverside Leisure Centre. The grant, split over 3 years, has a total project value of £4,395,286.00, with a contribution of £841,286.00 from the City Council Roof replacement Budget. The project is split into three years, Year 1 - 2025/26 £350,000.00 for additional detailed surveys, project design and procurement, Year 2 - 2026/27 £1,750,000.00 and Year 3 - 2027/28 £1,454,000.00 for roof, heating and cooling replacement works. This will be added to the council's own contribution of £900k which has already been approved.

## **Disabled Facilities Grant (£146,200)**

Additional funding has been received to support the expenditure against this activity.

### **8.8 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2025/26 (Appendix 2)**

The revised Capital Programme for 2025/26, after taking into account the carried forward requirements from 2024/25 now totals £45,228,932.

## **9. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?**

9.1 The Capital Programme contributes to all of the key purposes, as set out in the Corporate Plan.

## **10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?**

10.1 Areas of budgetary risk are highlighted to committee as part of the quarterly budget monitoring updates.

## **11. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)**

11.1 Under the Act's Public Sector Equalities Duty, decision makers are required to consider the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

11.2 In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

11.3 In making decisions the authority must take into account the potential impact of that decision in relation to age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), sex and gender, gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women and new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage and civil partnership status in coming to a decision.

11.4 In recommending this proposal no potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act because the impact of each scheme is considered prior to approval. Any significant deviation from this will be noted within the body of this report.

## **12. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:**

12.1 We are working towards the Council's commitment to carbon neutral by 2030. The impact of each scheme is considered prior to approval.

## **13. Are there any other options?**

13.1 There are no other options.

**Strategic Director of Corporate Resources & s151 Officer, Dave Hodgson**

Author: Nicola Morley and Paul Looby

## **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)**

Background papers used in compiling this report:

None

Contact for enquires:  
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Service	Scheme	Total 2024/25	2024/25 Spend	2024/25 Budget to	2024/25 Programme
		Capital Programme		be Carried Forward	Variances
				to 2025/26 and	(Under)/Over
		£	£	£	£
Operations					
Environment & Waste	Waste Infrastructure	411,750	35,407	376,343	0
	Improved recycling containers	123,470	111,798	11,672	0
	Depot Improvement Works	6,170,870	29,307	6,141,564	0
	Food Waste Collections	857,140	0	857,140	0
	Noise Monitoring Equipment	28,760	24,466	4,294	0
	DEFRA Air Quality Grant	13,000	13,000	0	0
Operations Service	Capitalised Staff Costs	150,000	0	150,000	0
	Bowling Green Marshes Coastal Defence Scheme	100,000	31,611	68,389	0
	Parks Infrastructure	182,580	26,865	155,715	0
	Cemeteries & Churchyards Infrastructure Improvements	50,000	14,027	35,973	0
	Bank Repairs & Stabilisation to Watercourses	20,000	770	19,230	0
	Pinhoe Playing Field Upgrades	42,050	3,153	38,897	0
	Parks Anti-Intrusion Measures	12,560	2,411	10,150	0
	Cricklepit Bridge	100,000	61,780	38,220	0
	Trews Weir refurb	130,000	92,416	37,584	0
	District Street Lighting	150,000	0	150,000	0
	Exeter Quay Cellars cliff face	282,810	253,405	29,405	0
	Ash Die Back Tree Replacement	100,000	90,388	9,612	0
	Fleet Lease costs	910,290	1,576,870	0	666,580
	Right of Use - Rent for Waterways	129,010	227,530	0	98,520
	Bromhams Farm Playing Fields	313,840	265,222	48,618	0
	Longbrook Street wall behind 30-38	5,000	0	5,000	0
	Northbrook Wild Arboretum	272,480	50,917	221,563	0
	Farm Hill Retaining Walls (23 no.)	200,000	32,174	128,497	(39,329)
	Mallison Bridge	64,670	29,038	35,632	0
	Bonhay Rd/Andlaw House Footpath	144,810	175	144,635	0
	St James' Weir & Ducks Marsh Meadow banks	75,000	0	75,000	0
	Heavitree Paddling Pools	526,680	0	526,680	0
	Play Areas	200,000	126,544	73,456	0
	Landfill Gas Extraction Systems	100,000	4,001	95,999	0
	Mincinglake Valley Park Reed Beds & Pipe Inlet	50,000	13,720	36,280	0
	Exeter Canal Bank Repairs	76,890	33,586	43,304	0
	ECC Bridge Repair Programme	350,000	119,539	230,461	0
	Countess Wear Retaining Wall Rebuild	135,120	174,449	0	39,329
	Oxford Road Car Park Retaining Wall	200,000	0	200,000	0
	Canal Basin Bridge Refurbishment	50,000	0	50,000	0
	Harbour Workboat (Port Constructor)	165,000	165,000	0	0

Service	Scheme	Total 2024/25 Capital Programme	2024/25 Spend	2024/25 Budget to be Carried Forward to 2025/26 and Beyond	2024/25 Programme Variances (Under)/Over
		£	£	£	£
Asset Maintenance	Leisure Complex - Build Project	15,750	111,777	0	96,027
	Riverside Leisure Centre	29,000	0	29,000	0
	Fire Risk Assessment Works	0	2,297	(2,297)	0
	Leisure Complex - Fit Out	442,670	0	346,643	(96,027)
	Riverside Sports Hall Roof	60,870	0	60,870	0
	Leighton Terra & KW St MSCP	0	311,897	(311,897)	0
	Civic Centre Phase 3 Roof Rep	263,380	247,676	15,704	0
	City Wall	85,000	8,546	76,454	0
	Backlog Maintenance	0	97,183	(97,183)	0
	BLRF - Exeter Canal Basin	0	1,842	(1,842)	0
	BLRF - Mary Arches Car Park	0	4,037	(4,037)	0
	BLRF - Belle Isle	0	2,071	(2,071)	0
	BLRF - Clifton Hill	0	23,070	(23,070)	0
	Guildhall roof replacement	0	3,653	0	3,653
	Cathedral Green Display Cases	35,000	0	35,000	0
	Topsham Museum	424,680	203,606	221,074	0
	Leisure Property enhancements	1,047,440	20,429	1,027,011	0
	Commercial Property Ancillary Accommodation flat roof recovering	0	57,821	(57,821)	0
	RAMM Roof Repair & Insulation	711,170	638,643	72,527	0
	Corn Exchange Lift	50,000	0	50,000	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>16,058,740</b>	<b>5,344,117</b>	<b>11,483,377</b>	<b>768,753</b>
<b>Corporate Resources</b>					
Commercial Assets	Bus Station Construction	207,710	107,341	100,369	0
	Improved Car Park Security Measures at King William Street & Arena Park	19,670	0	19,670	0
	Wat Tyler House - resolving ongoing water ingress with new rainwater system	0	3,100	(3,100)	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>227,380</b>	<b>110,441</b>	<b>116,939</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>People &amp; Communities</b>					
	Customer Contact Platform	161,030	5,491	155,539	0
	Annual Contribution to Strata	53,910	53,904	0	(6)
	Idox System for Planning	60,680	7,897	52,783	0
	Financial Management	239,040	94,905	144,135	0
	AV Equipment - Hybrid Meeting Rooms	48,800	67,933	0	19,133
	IT Replacement Programme	10,000	34,692	0	24,692
	Contact Centre Telephony	17,970	19,998	0	2,028
	Core telephony	17,970	1,123	16,847	0
	EUC model staff	14,370	5,184	9,186	0
	EUC model equipment (replacement laptops)	242,310	144,948	97,362	0



Service	Scheme	Total 2024/25 Capital Programme	2024/25 Spend	2024/25 Budget to be Carried Forward to 2025/26 and Beyond	2024/25 Programme Variances (Under)/Over
		£	£	£	£
Digital & Data	Booking	17,970	0	17,970	0
	Sharepoint resource	21,560	36,226	0	14,666
	Chatbot	17,970	0	17,970	0
	Print & post review	7,190	0	7,190	0
	PSTN Replacement	40,370	12,600	27,770	0
	ECC Civic Centre HFX Door Access Replacement	85,060	49,962	35,098	0
	System Upgrade Cost 2012 Server replacement	3,480	104	3,376	0
	GIS Cloud Migration	230	0	230	0
	Microsoft Purview	9,000	0	9,000	0
	Microsoft Power Apps	35,930	5,929	30,001	0
	Software Upgrade	28,750	16,419	12,331	0
	Sharegate	5,750	2,347	3,403	0
Housing	Right of Use - GF Housing Rents	160,350	159,095	0	(1,255)
	Disabled Facility Grants	1,580,390	1,309,601	270,789	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2,880,080</b>	<b>2,028,359</b>	<b>910,979</b>	<b>59,257</b>
<b>Place</b>					
City Centre & Net Zero	CCTV improvements	97,110	89,129	7,981	0
	Shared Prosperity Fund	178,550	179,440	0	890
	Riverside & RAMM Decarbonisation Projects	5,170,850	291,146	0	(4,879,704)
Culture & Leisure	Council Signage Improvement	9,850	10,777	0	927
	Right of Use - Haven Road Storage Rent	36,040	38,969	0	2,929
	Leisure Equipment Replacement Programme	661,660	323,566	338,094	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>6,154,060</b>	<b>933,028</b>	<b>346,075</b>	<b>(4,874,957)</b>
<b>SUB TOTAL PLANNED CAPITAL PROGRAMME</b>		<b>25,320,260</b>	<b>8,415,944</b>	<b>12,857,369</b>	<b>(4,046,946)</b>
<b>APPROVED COMMITTED SCHEMES WITH EXTERNAL FACTORS THAT IMPACT ON DELIVERY TIMESCALES</b>					
Asset Maintenance	Green Space Depot Site (Belle Isle)	2,500,000	0	2,500,000	0
Commercial Assets	Guildhall Shopping Centre Enhancements	5,000,000	17,648	4,982,352	0
	St Nicholas Priory Roof	88,120	0	88,120	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7,588,120</b>	<b>17,648</b>	<b>7,570,472</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>GENERAL FUND SERVICES TOTAL</b>		<b>32,908,380</b>	<b>8,433,592</b>	<b>20,427,841</b>	<b>(4,046,946)</b>

## BUDGETS CARRIED FORWARD TO 2025/26 AND BEYOND

Service	Scheme	2025/26 Budget as per Budget Book/Council Approvals	Proposed Budget to be Carried Forward to 2025/26 and Beyond	Proposed Budget Reprofiled to Future Years	Total 2025/26 Capital Programme	2026/27 Budget as per Budget Book/Council Approvals
		£	£	£	£	£
<b>Operations</b>						
Environment & Waste	Waste Infrastructure		376,343		376,343	
	Improved recycling containers		11,672		11,672	
	Depot Improvement Works	1,675,000	6,141,564		7,816,564	
	Food Waste Collections		857,140		857,140	
	Noise Monitoring Equipment		4,294		4,294	
Operations Service	Capitalised Staff Costs	150,000	150,000		300,000	150,000
	Bowling Green Marshes Coastal Defence Scheme	150,000	68,389		218,389	217,870
	Parks Infrastructure	99,390	155,715	(75,000)	180,105	75,000
	Cemeteries & Churchyards Infrastructure Improvements	84,790	35,973		120,763	
	Bank Repairs & Stabilisation to Watercourses		19,230		19,230	
	Pinhoe Playing Field Upgrades		38,897		38,897	
	Parks Anti-Intrusion Measures		10,150		10,150	
	Cricklepit Bridge	53,750	38,220		91,970	
	Trews Weir refurb	300,000	37,584		337,584	3,099,510
	District Street Lighting	796,140	150,000	(200,000)	746,140	200,000
	Piazza Terracina		0		0	158,560
	Exeter Quay Cellars cliff face		29,405		29,405	
	Ash Die Back Tree Replacement	147,910	9,612	(75,000)	82,522	75,000
	Fleet Lease costs	1,251,280	0		1,251,280	2,329,910
	Bromhams Farm Playing Fields		48,618		48,618	
	Longbrook Street wall behind 30-38		5,000		5,000	
	Northbrook Wild Arboretum		221,563		221,563	
	Farm Hill Retaining Walls (23 no.)	646,040	128,497	(265,000)	509,537	265,000
	Mallison Bridge		35,632		35,632	
	Bonhay Rd/Andlaw House Footpath		144,635		144,635	
	St James' Weir & Ducks Marsh Meadow banks		75,000		75,000	
	Heavitree Paddling Pools		526,680	(426,675)	100,005	426,675
	Play Areas	200,000	73,456		273,456	166,900
	Landfill Gas Extraction Systems	159,350	95,999	(80,000)	175,349	80,000
	Mincinglake Valley Park Reed Beds & Pipe Inlet	131,510	36,280	(100,000)	67,790	100,000
	Exeter Canal Bank Repairs		43,304		43,304	

Service	Scheme	2025/26 Budget as per Budget Book/Council Approvals	Proposed Budget to be Carried Forward to 2025/26 and Beyond	Proposed Budget Reprofiled to Future Years	Total 2025/26 Capital Programme	2026/27 Budget as per Budget Book/Council Approvals
		£	£	£	£	£
	ECC Bridge Repair Programme	200,000	230,461		430,461	200,000
	Oxford Road Car Park Retaining Wall		200,000	(200,000)	0	200,000
	Canal Basin Bridge Refurbishment		50,000		50,000	
	Outdoor Leisure Facilities - Newcourt	121,270	0		121,270	
	Riverside Walls at Quay	50,000	0		50,000	
Asset Maintenance	Leisure Complex - Build Project	650,000	0		650,000	
	Civic Centre Air Conditioning Replacement	25,000	0		25,000	
	Riverside Leisure Centre		29,000		29,000	
	Fire Risk Assessment Works	1,626,810	(2,297)		1,624,513	
	Leisure Complex - Fit Out		346,643		346,643	
	Exmouth Buoy Store	212,720	0		212,720	
	Riverside Sports Hall Roof		60,870		60,870	
	Guildhall MSCP	883,400	0		883,400	
	John Lewis MSCP	357,760	0		357,760	
	Princesshay 2 MSCP	424,400	0		424,400	
	Leighton Terra & KW St MSCP	618,000	(311,897)		306,103	
	Civic Centre Phase 3 Roof Rep		15,704		15,704	
	City Wall	477,740	76,454		554,194	
	Backlog Maintenance	530,030	(97,183)		432,847	
	BLRF - Exeter Canal Basin	591,240	(1,842)		589,398	
	BLRF - Mary Arches Car Park	1,289,460	(4,037)		1,285,423	
	BLRF - Belle Isle	663,940	(2,071)		661,869	
	BLRF - Clifton Hill	225,000	(23,070)		201,930	
	BLRF - Lower Wear Road	293,390	0		293,390	
	Cathedral Green Display Cases		35,000		35,000	
	Topsham Museum		221,074		221,074	
	Leisure Property enhancements	1,000,000	1,027,011		2,027,011	
	Commercial Property Ancillary Accommodation flat roof recovering	104,540	(57,821)		46,719	
	RAMM Roof Repair & Insulation		72,527		72,527	
	Corn Exchange Lift		50,000		50,000	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>16,189,860</b>	<b>11,483,377</b>	<b>(1,421,675)</b>	<b>26,251,562</b>	<b>7,744,425</b>
<b>Corporate Resources</b>						
Commercial Assets	Bus Station Construction		100,369		100,369	
	Improved Car Park Security Measures at King William Street & Arena Park		19,670		19,670	
	Wat Tyler House - resolving ongoing water ingress with new rainwa	272,270	(3,100)		269,170	
	Commercial Properties - capital improvements to enable ongoing income (compliance with EPC legislation)	120,000	0		120,000	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>392,270</b>	<b>116,939</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>509,209</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>People &amp; Communities</b>						
	Customer Contact Platform		155,539		155,539	
	Annual Contribution to Strata	53,910	0		53,910	53,910

Service	Scheme	2025/26 Budget as per Budget Book/Council Approvals	Proposed Budget to be Carried Forward to 2025/26 and Beyond	Proposed Budget Reprofiled to Future Years	Total 2025/26 Capital Programme	2026/27 Budget as per Budget Book/Council Approvals
		£	£	£	£	£
Digital & Data	Idox System for Planning		52,783		52,783	
	Financial Management		144,135		144,135	
	Datacentre Relocation	35,940	0		35,940	
	NCSC Zero Trust	53,910	0		53,910	
	IT Replacement Programme	10,000	0		10,000	10,000
	Core telephony		16,847		16,847	
	EUC model staff		9,186		9,186	
	EUC model equipment (replacement laptops)	150,000	97,362		247,362	150,000
	Booking		17,970		17,970	
	Chatbot		17,970		17,970	
	Print & post review		7,190		7,190	
	PSTN Replacement		27,770		27,770	
	ECC Civic Centre HFX Door Access Replacement		35,098		35,098	
	System Upgrade Cost 2012 Server replacement		3,376		3,376	
	GIS Cloud Migration		230		230	
	Microsoft Purview		9,000		9,000	
	Microsoft Power Apps		30,001		30,001	
	Software Upgrade		12,331		12,331	
	Sharegate		3,403		3,403	
Housing	Disabled Facility Grants	800,000	270,789		1,070,789	800,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,103,760</b>	<b>910,979</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,014,739</b>	<b>1,013,910</b>
<b>Place</b>						
City Centre & Net Zero	CCTV improvements		7,981		7,981	
	Riverside & RAMM Decarbonisation Projects	900,150	0		900,150	
Culture & Leisure	Leisure Equipment Replacement Programme	100,000	338,094		438,094	100,000
	Pinhoe Community Hub	1,276,470	0		1,276,470	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2,276,620</b>	<b>346,075</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,622,695</b>	<b>100,000</b>
<b>SUB TOTAL PLANNED CAPITAL PROGRAMME</b>		<b>19,962,510</b>	<b>12,857,369</b>	<b>-1,421,675</b>	<b>31,398,204</b>	<b>8,858,335</b>
<b>APPROVED COMMITTED SCHEMES WITH EXTERNAL FACTORS THAT IMPACT ON DELIVERY TIMESCALES</b>						
Asset Maintenance	Green Space Depot Site (Belle Isle)	375,970	2,500,000		2,875,970	
Commercial Assets	Guildhall Shopping Centre Enhancements	5,884,280	4,982,352		10,866,632	
	St Nicholas Priory Roof		88,120		88,120	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>6,260,250</b>	<b>7,570,472</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13,830,722</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>GENERAL FUND SERVICES TOTAL</b>		<b>26,222,760</b>	<b>20,427,841</b>	<b>(1,421,675)</b>	<b>45,228,926</b>	<b>8,858,335</b>

## GENERAL FUND AVAILABLE RESOURCES

GENERAL FUND	2024-25 £	2025-26 £	2026-27 £	2027-28 £	FUTURE YEARS £	TOTAL £
<b>CAPITAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE</b>						
Capital Receipts Brought Forward	851					851
GF Capital Receipts	570,713	8,460,000	0	0	0	9,030,713
Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay	114,619	174,388	0	0	0	289,007
Disabled Facility Grant	1,309,601	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000	4,509,601
Community Infrastructure Levy	206,767	8,186,647	476,899	0	0	8,870,314
Other - Grants/External Funding/Reserves/S106	994,764	4,868,855	867,380	0	0	6,730,999
<b>Total Resources Available</b>	<b>3,197,315</b>	<b>22,489,890</b>	<b>2,144,279</b>	<b>800,000</b>	<b>800,000</b>	<b>29,431,484</b>
<b>GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME</b>						
Capital Programme	32,908,380	26,222,760	7,436,660	3,330,430	1,263,910	71,162,140
Overspends/(Savings)	(4,046,946)					(4,046,946)
Slippage	(20,427,841)	19,006,166	1,421,675			0
<b>Total General Fund</b>	<b>8,433,592</b>	<b>45,228,926</b>	<b>8,858,335</b>	<b>3,330,430</b>	<b>1,263,910</b>	<b>67,115,194</b>

<b>UNCOMMITTED CAPITAL RESOURCES:</b>						
Capital Receipts Brought Forward	851	0	5,080,537	2,436,717	56,287	851
Resources in Year	3,196,464	22,489,890	2,144,279	800,000	800,000	29,430,633
Less Capital Receipts to carry forward	0	(5,080,537)	(2,436,717)	(56,287)	(56,287)	(56,287)
Less Spend in Year	(8,433,592)	(45,228,926)	(8,858,335)	(3,330,430)	(1,263,910)	(67,115,194)
<b>Borrowing Requirement</b>	<b>5,236,278</b>	<b>27,819,573</b>	<b>4,070,236</b>	<b>150,000</b>	<b>463,910</b>	<b>37,739,997</b>

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## **REPORT TO COUNCIL**

Date of Meeting: 10 June 2025

Report of: Strategic Director Corporate Resources

Title: 2024/25 HRA Budget Monitoring Report – Outturn

### **Is this a Key Decision?**

No

### **Is this an Executive or Council Function?**

Council

## **1. What is the report about?**

1.1 To advise Members of any major differences, by management unit, between the approved budget and the outturn for the financial year up to 31 March 2025 in respect of the Housing Revenue Account and the Council's new build schemes.

An outturn update in respect of the HRA Capital Programme is also incorporated into this report in order to help provide a comprehensive financial update in respect of the Housing Revenue Account.

## **2. Recommendations:**

2.1 It is recommended Council approves:-

- The HRA financial position for 2024/25 financial year.
- The revision of the HRA Capital Programme to reflect the reported variations detailed in Appendix 3.
- A supplementary revenue budget request for £19k in 2025/26 to increase the electrical testing budget in order to meet statutory requirements.
- Supplementary revenue budgets of £122,806 for interest and £183,816 for voluntary repayment of debt, offset by £306,622 in additional annual rental income in respect of the long lease (see capital request below).
- Further funding requests as set out in paragraph 8.14 for the following capital spend.
- £2m grant funding from Devon Combined Authority to support energy conservation works at 127 Council properties.
- £400k funded from s106 affordable housing receipts to purchase an adapted property.
- £400k to acquire a property for a family with specific needs to be funded from capital receipts, and on completion of the transfer the vacated property will be sold.
- £75k required in 2025/26 for the Hamlin Gardens retention payment.
- £2,645,792 for the long leases of a number of properties to sit within the HRA to help alleviate financial pressures on temporary accommodation. This will also require annual revenue budgets for the interest and repayment of debt, which are anticipated to be fully offset by additional rental income



### **3. Reasons for the recommendation:**

3.1 To formally note the HRA's projected financial position and to approve the reported variations to the HRA Capital Programme.

The Housing Revenue Account is a statutory account and local housing authorities have a duty to keep a HRA in accordance with proper accounting practices and to review the account throughout the year. Members are presented with a quarterly financial update in respect of the HRA and this is the final update for 2024/25.

### **4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources**

4.1 The financial resources required to deliver both housing services to Council tenants and to invest in new and existing housing stock during 2024/25 are set out in the body of this report.

The impact on the HRA's available financial resources is set out in Appendix 2.

### **5. Section 151 Officer comments:**

5.1 The overall position has improved as a result of management action on rent recovery. The budgets for repairs and maintenance have been increased in 2025/26 to address the significant overspends seen during this financial year. This of course has an impact on the funding available for the capital programme.

### **6. What are the legal aspects?**

6.1 The statutory requirement for a Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is set out in Part VI of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Section 74 of the Act sets out the duty to keep a Housing Revenue Account as a ring-fenced fund and sets out the structure within which the HRA operates. Part VI of the Act sets out the detailed statutory provisions on the operation of the HRA, including credits to the account (income) and debits to the account (expenditure). Section 76 sets out the duty to prevent a debit balance on the HRA. The authority must implement proposals that will secure that the account for each financial year will not show a debit balance. Members will also note the provisions of Schedule 4 of the Act which sets out the requirements concerning 'The Keeping of the Housing Revenue Account'.

### **7. Monitoring Officer's comments:**

7.1 The Monitoring Officer has no additional comments.

### **8. Report details:**

#### **HRA FINAL ACCOUNTS TO 31 MARCH 2025**

#### **8.1 Background to the HRA**

The HRA records expenditure and income relating to council dwellings and the provision of services to tenants. Housing authorities have a statutory duty to maintain a HRA account, which is primarily a landlord account, in order to account to their tenants for income and expenditure on council housing separately from other functions and services of the Council. This includes tenancy management, repairs and maintenance, council house building and council house retrofits.

## 8.2 Projected transfer from the working balance

	£
<b>Approved Budgeted transfer from the working balance</b>	<b>208,360*</b>
Supplementary budgets – Council approved 16th July 2024	50,000
Virement - Council approved 15th October 2024	23,828
<b>Revised Budgeted transfer from the working balance</b>	<b>282,188</b>

<b>*2024/25 Approved Budget Represented By</b>	<b>£</b>
85A1 MANAGEMENT	2,114,770
85A11 EDWARDS COURT	(131,410)
85A2 TENANCY SERVICES	1,863,110
85A3 SUNDRY LANDS MAINTENANCE	507,430
85A4 REPAIR & MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME	7,062,000
85A5 REVENUE CONTRIB TO CAPITAL	2,500,000
85A6 CAPITAL CHARGES	3,745,650
85A7 HOUSING ASSETS	2,709,130
85A8 RENTS	(21,633,420)
85B2 INTEREST	1,471,100
85B4 MOVEMENT TO/(FROM) WORKING BALANCE	<b>(208,360)</b>

The HRA had working balances of £5,669,065 as of 31st March 2024. This is higher than the £3.525 million contingency resolved to be retained. In 2024/25 there was a revenue contribution of £2.5 million to capital.

## 8.3 Revenue Monitoring

The 2024/25 financial year has ended with an overall net deficit of £763,678, which is £481,490 more than budgeted, but represents an improvement of £836,700 compared to the projected outturn at Quarter 3. The reasons for this and the main deviations from budget for the financial year are set out below. Please also refer to Appendix 1.

<b>Budget Heading</b>	<b>Forecast Variance at Q3 (Under) / Overspend</b>	<b>Actual Budget Variance (Under) / Overspend</b>
<b>Resident Involvement</b>	<b>(380)</b>	<b>(£138,299)</b>

<b>Officer Responsible: Head of Housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The £138k underspend is due to staff savings and reduced spend on supplies and services.</li> </ul>		
<b>Management</b>	<b>£70,210</b>	<b>(£86,915)</b>
<b>Officer Responsible: Head of Housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an underspend of £5k on general HRA overhead costs, a £76k overspend of tenant decant costs has been offset by savings in other areas including internal recharges, publications, training, consultants, and contribution to pension back-funding. The Corporate Recharge is £4k below budget as the statutory officer recharge has reduced since the re-structure. Older Person's Accommodation is £78k underspent as utilities were lower than budgeted and replacement Home Call alarms were sourced at lower cost than anticipated.</li> </ul>		
<b>Edwards Court</b>	<b>£10,000</b>	<b>(£203,655)</b>
<b>Officer Responsible: Head of Housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Edwards Court is underspent due to high occupancy levels, savings on catering staff vacancies, and general savings on premises, supplies and services.</li> </ul>		
<b>Tenancy Services</b>	<b>(£63,440)</b>	<b>(£267,358)</b>
<b>Officer Responsible: Head of Housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are general savings across this area including £14k for Right to Buy admin team which includes additional admin fees; £29k for Lettings &amp; Home Ownership teams due to staff savings and lower tenants removal and legal expenses than budgeted; £162k savings on the Tenancy Services team due to reduced spend on utilities and premises costs, staffing, supplies and services; and £62k on the Income Collection team due to vacancies in the establishment.</li> </ul>		
<b>Rents</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(£766,536)</b>
<b>Officer Responsible: Head of Housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dwelling rents are £754k higher than budgeted due to void levels being lower than anticipated and a concerted effort from management and the team resulting in higher rent recovery rates. Garage rents have increased by £41k, although other rents have decreased as a result of removal of telecoms equipment on Rennes House.</li> </ul>		
<b>Repairs and Maintenance Programme</b>	<b>£1,444,160</b>	<b>£2,287,491</b>
<b>Officer Responsible: Head of Asset Maintenance</b>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General Maintenance £1,088k – the response budget has experienced high demand with the projected overspend being in part due to an increase in stock condition surveys highlighting issues which need to be addressed. There have also been larger numbers of tenants transferring from/to properties which have had major repairs refused previously and this necessitates increased investment and corresponding repairs. Additionally, the service is receiving requests for more expensive works, including roofing and window repairs which whilst extensive, do not qualify as capital investment so the costs for such fall to this budget area. This area includes a £244k overspend on damp and mould works due to intensive pro-active surveying. Problems can recur, and remedial work including plastering is sometimes required.</li> <li>Repairs to void properties £786k – there has been continued pressure on the voids budget throughout the winter, which includes a number of properties with a significant amount of work required before re-letting.</li> <li>Low Maintenance &amp; Painting Flats £584k – whilst on site during the retrofit programme additional essential works were identified resulting in an overspend.</li> <li>These overspends are partly offset by savings in Re-pointing (£89k), Communal Decorations (£18k) and planned Asbestos removal (£74k), with small overspends on electrical testing and service contracts totalling £10k.</li> </ul>		
<b>Sundry Land Maintenance</b>	-	<b>(117,844)</b>
<b>Officer Responsible: Head of Asset Maintenance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There has been an underspend of £73k on estate maintenance with reduced demand for work on shrubs and trees within the HRA estate, and £45k underspend on the garden assistance budget.</li> </ul>		
<b>Capital Charges</b>	<b>(20,968)</b>	<b>(20,968)</b>
<b>Officer Responsible: not applicable (statutory accounting charge)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depreciation is a real cost to the HRA as it represents the amount of money which needs to be set aside in the Major Repairs Reserve to provide for future capital works or to repay debt. A lower depreciation charge results in a revenue saving in the year, but less funding available for future capital spend.</li> </ul>		
<b>Housing Assets</b>	<b>£45,410</b>	<b>£121,996</b>
<b>Officer Responsible: Head of Asset Maintenance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social Housing Delivery has overspent by £27k as a result of expenditure on support to deliver the retrofit programme and new housing delivery. Planned works has overspent by £7k on salary and agency costs. Reactive Repairs has overspent by £223k due to agency staff covering vacancies, these posts are being recruited to on a permanent basis which will address this budget area. Health &amp; Safety Compliance has underspent by £144k due to the re-</li> </ul>		

structure and vacancies. £9k of asset maintenance overhead costs have been charged to this area since the organisational re-structure which previously were coded to general management.		
<b>Interest</b>	<b>(£166,800)</b>	<b>(£326,422)</b>
<b>Officers Responsible: Heads of Service – Housing &amp; Asset Maintenance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The budget included interest costs for an additional £3.9m approved borrowing. To date this has been funded internally, and no further external borrowing has been arranged, resulting in a saving in interest and repayment costs in the year. Interest receivable on balances has been higher than budgeted as rates remained elevated throughout the year.</li> </ul>		
<b>Total budget (underspend)/overspend</b>	<b>£1,318,190</b>	<b>£481,490</b>
<b>2024/25 HRA Deficit / (Surplus)</b>	<b>£1,600,378</b>	<b>£763,678</b>

#### 8.4 Impact on HRA Working Balance

The HRA Working Balance represents amounts set aside to help facilitate service improvements, repay debt or to provide investment in the stock in future financial years.

The forecast balance, as of 31 March 2025, is set out below:

<b>Movement</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
<b>Opening HRA Working Balance, as of 1 April 2024</b>	<b>£5,669,065</b>
Deficit for 2024/25	(£763,678)
Balance resolved to be retained (HRA contingency)	(£3,525,000)
<b>Balance Available, as of 31 March 2025</b>	<b>£1,380,387</b>

The transfer from the working balance for 2024/25 brings the working balance as of 31 March 2025 closer to the HRA balance resolved to be retained of £3.525m.

#### 8.5 Supplementary Budgets

Analysis of the electrical testing budgets has identified a shortfall of £120k over the next four years in order to meet statutory requirements. A supplementary approval is therefore requested for £19k in 2025/26 to provide sufficient budget.

#### 8.6 Major Repairs Reserve

Councils are expected to set aside some of their income each year into the Major Repairs Reserve, in order to ensure appropriate provision is made towards financing future capital works or to repay debt. The balance held in the reserve at the end of the financial year is set out below:

<b>Movement</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
Opening Major Repairs Reserve, as of 1 April 2024	<b>£12,455,749</b>
Revenue monies set aside during 2024/25	£3,724,682
Amount used to finance capital expenditure during 2024/25	(£11,162,363)
<b>Balance as of 31 March 2025</b>	<b>£5,018,068</b>

### 8.7 HRA Available Resources over the Medium Term

The forecast HRA available resources for delivering both housing services and capital investment are set out in Appendix 2 for the period to 2028/29.

The total available resources are made up of several reserve balances; the HRA working balance, the Useable Capital Receipts reserve and the Major Repairs Reserve.

The HRA working balance is the movement on revenue budgets, contributions can be made from this reserve towards financing capital budgets in the form of 'Revenue Contributions to Capital'. The useable capital receipts reserve is made up of both the Right-to-Buy (RTB) receipts reserve and the non-RTB receipts reserve; these reserves are available to finance capital spend; some restrictions apply. The Major Repairs Reserve is increased each year by the HRA depreciation charge to revenue, this reserve is then available to spend on the HRA capital programme.

The total forecast HRA available resources is impacted by variances in both revenue budgets detailed in section 8.3 above, and variances in capital budgets detailed in sections 8.12 & 13 below.

The forecast total available resources over the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) have increased £652k since last reported at 2024/25 Quarter 3 largely due to the overspend in year not being as high as projected throughout the year.

Total available reserves over the MTFP are now expected to be £2,896,577 after deducting the £3.525 million balance resolved to be retained (HRA contingency).

### 8.8 HRA Debt

In October 2018 the Government formally removed the HRA debt cap, which restricted the amount of borrowing stock-holding local authorities could have for the purposes of the HRA. The lifting of the 'debt cap' means that local authorities are now able to borrow for housebuilding in accordance with the Prudential Code.

Executive on 8 October 2019 approved the first Council House Building Programme to deliver 100 new homes into the HRA at a cost of £18 million. On 5 April 2020, the Council took out a loan of £15.36 million from the PWLB to support this programme, with the remaining £2.64 million to be funded by capital receipts.

As of 31 March 2024, the HRA's borrowing stood at £73.242 million. The total of the £15.360 million new loan and the former 'debt cap' level of £57.882 million.

The HRA currently has approval to borrow a further £7.7 million, this has been deferred but will likely be required in the next two years.

### 8.9 HRA Capital Programme

The 2024/25 HRA Capital Programme was last reported to Council on 25th February 2025. Since that meeting the following changes have been made that have increased the 2024/25 programme.

Description	2024/25	Approval / Funding
<b>HRA Capital Programme</b>	<b>£23,566,062</b>	
Q3 programme variances	£212,614	Council 25 <sup>th</sup> February
<b>Revised HRA Capital Programme</b>	<b>£23,778,676</b>	

### 8.10 Performance

HRA Capital expenditure in the year amounted to £22,402,312 which equates to 94% of the revised approved capital programme (as set out above). The nature of capital investment in the financial year comprised:

HRA Capital Expenditure	£
Capital investment in existing stock	15,323,788
Capital investment in the provision of new council homes	7,078,524
<b>Total HRA Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>22,402,312</b>

### 8.11 HRA Capital Financing

The total HRA capital expenditure for 2024/25 will be financed as follows:



<b>HRA Capital Finance</b>	<b>£</b>
Major Repairs Reserve	11,162,363
Revenue Contribution to Capital	2,500,000
Capital Receipts	5,577,859
Commuted sums (S106)	18,778
Borrowing	0
Grants	3,143,312
<b>Total HRA Capital Financing</b>	<b>22,402,312</b>

The impact on the capital resources available to the HRA over the next 4 years is set out in Appendix 2.

#### 8.12 Capital Budget Variances

The details of key (greater than +/- £50k) variances from budget are set out below.

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Overspend / (Underspend)</b>
<b>Balcony walkway improvements</b>	<b>(451,027)</b>
<b>Energy conservation</b>	<b>£658,437</b>
<b>Re-roofing – Flats</b>	<b>(£166,338)</b>
<b>Re-roofing – Houses</b>	<b>£82,805</b>
<b>Porch canopies</b>	<b>(£79,404)</b>
<b>Structural repairs</b>	<b>£170,141</b>
<b>Window replacements</b>	<b>£350,746</b>
<p><b>Officer Responsible: Head of Asset Maintenance / Planned Maintenance Lead</b></p> <p>Balcony walkways, re-roofing flats &amp; porch canopies – Some of this work has been delayed due to the process of leaseholder consultation.</p> <p>Retrofit - not all properties which were deemed eligible for funding were, therefore resulting in additional contributions from ECC as they did not qualify for grant funding</p> <p>Re-roofing Houses, Structural repairs, Window replacements – significantly more work was required than originally scoped due to the age &amp; condition of the respective properties.</p>	

<b>Bathroom replacements</b>	<b>(£64,438)</b>
<b>Plastering</b>	<b>(68,547)</b>
<b>Officer Responsible: Head of Asset Maintenance / Response &amp; Voids Lead</b> Bathrooms & Plastering – the requirements were slightly less requirement in year than originally planned for.	
<b>Fire Risk Assessment Works (total)</b>	<b>(£335,603)</b>
<b>Lift Upgrades</b>	<b>(£88,729)</b>
<b>Officer Responsible: Head of Asset Maintenance</b> Fire Risk Assessment Works – Works commenced later in the year due to the procurement process & the mobilisation of the successful contractor. Lift Upgrades – Additional lift condition information was required to enable to the procurement process to proceed, works will now be scheduled in 25/26 and a carry forward of £50k is included in section 8.13 below.	

### 8.13 Schemes to be deferred to 2025/26 and beyond

Schemes identified as being wholly or partly deferred to 2025/26 and beyond are:

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Budget deferred to / (brought forward from) future years</b>
<b>Council House Building Programme – Vaughan Road Phase A</b>	<b>£969,707</b>
<b>Officer Responsible – Head of Asset Maintenance / Asset Management Lead</b> There has been some slippage in the Vaughan Road project, but the in-year underspend will be required in 2025/26 when Phase A will complete.	
<b>Kitchens</b>	<b>(£480,000)</b>
There was an overspend on kitchens during 2024/25 to address identified hazards, but this has been brought forward from future years' budgets.	
<b>Fire Risk Assessment Works</b>	<b>£300,000</b>
<b>Lift Upgrades</b>	<b>£50,000</b>

<p><b>Officer Responsible – Head of Asset Maintenance</b></p> <p>The Fire Risk Assessment budget has not been fully spent in year; however, an inspection of sprinkler systems has identified that £300k is likely to be needed in 25/26 for sprinkler servicing and remedials.</p> <p>£50k is required to be carried forward for the lift upgrade at Amersham Court which has not been completed in 24/25.</p>	
<b>Local Authority Housing Fund - 3</b>	<b>£580,789</b>
<p><b>Officer Responsible: Head of Housing</b></p> <p>LAHF Round 3 has been used to purchase a further 2 homes during 24/25, with the balance of the approved budget to be spent in 2025/26 in accordance with the terms of the grant.</p>	

#### 8.14 Further funding requests

In February 2025 up to £2m grant funding was made available from the Devon Combined Authority to support energy efficiency works undertaken by the Council not eligible for the SHDF funded project. Claims for expenditure works have now been submitted, approved and paid for the full £2m.

Two properties are required to be purchased to meet the needs of families with specific requirements, and £800k needs to be added to the Social Housing Acquisitions budget in 2025/26. There are sufficient s106 affordable housing funds to cover one property, and the other will need to be met from HRA capital receipts.

The Hamlin Gardens development (Brook House) completed in November 2024, and £75k is required in 2025/26 to pay the retention payment due in November 2025.

The Council is acquiring the long lease on a number of properties to reduce the financial pressures on temporary accommodation. Due to the length of the leases these have to be accounted for within the HRA, this requires a capital budget of £2,645,792 in 2025/26 and revenue budgets in year 1 £122,806 for interest and £183,816 for voluntary repayment of debt, offset by £306,622 in additional annual rental income.

#### 8.15 Historic Council own build Final Accounts to 31 March 2025

The Council's own build properties at Rowan House and Knights Place form part of the overall Housing Revenue Account, but separate income and expenditure budgets are maintained in order to ensure that they are self-financing.

As the 21 units were built using HCA funding in conjunction with borrowing (£998k), they are accounted for separately in order to ensure that they are self-financing. A separate COB working balance and Major Repairs Reserve are maintained until such time as a

sufficient balance has been accumulated to repay the debt attributable to these properties, at which point the units can be accounted for with the wider HRA stock.

#### Key Variances from Budget

The 2024/25 year has ended with an overall net surplus of £16,898, which will be transferred to the COB working balance. This represents a change of £33,028, compared to the budgeted transfer from the working balance of £16,130.

The variance is largely due to lower than budgeted management and repairs costs, and higher interest receivable on balances. Please refer to Appendix 1 for more details.

### **9. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?**

9.1 The Housing Revenue Account contributes to a key purpose, as set out in the Corporate Plan; Building great neighbourhoods.

### **10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?**

10.1 For clarity, these are specific financial risks, alongside the risks captured in the corporate risk register.

It is not permissible for the HRA to go into an overall financial deficit position, it is therefore important to ensure that an adequate level of HRA balances is maintained as a contingency against risks. The HRA resolve to retain a working balance at no less than £4 million to mitigate against financial risks.

Areas of budgetary risk are highlighted to committee as part of the quarterly budget monitoring updates.

### **11. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)**

11.1 Under the Act's Public Sector Equalities Duty, decision makers are required to consider the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

11.2 In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

11.3 In making decisions the authority must take into account the potential impact of that decision in relation to age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), sex and gender, gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women and new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage and civil partnership status in coming to a decision.

11.4 In recommending this proposal no potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act because there are no significant equality and diversity impacts associated with this decision.

## **12. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:**

12.1 We are working towards the Council's commitment to carbon neutral by 2030. The impact of each scheme is considered prior to approval.

## **13. Are there any other options?**

13.1 None.

**Strategic Director Corporate Resources, David Hodgson**

Author: Claire Hodgson, Lead Accountant - Housing

## **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)**

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

Contact for enquiries:  
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# APPENDIX 1

YEAR END FORECAST							
MANAGEMENT UNIT	APPROVED BUDGET	Q3 FORECAST OUTTURN	2024/25 OUTTURN	VARIANCE SINCE QUARTER 3	OVERALL VARIANCE TO BUDGET	VARIANCE TO BUDGET	2023/24 ACTUAL
	£	£	£	£	£	%	£
<b>PEOPLE &amp; COMMUNITIES - HRA HOUSING</b>							
RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT	315,980	315,600	177,681	(137,919)	(138,299)	-44%	175,748
MANAGEMENT	1,798,790	1,869,000	1,711,875	(157,125)	(86,915)	-5%	1,673,019
EDWARDS COURT	(131,410)	(121,410)	(335,065)	(213,655)	(203,655)	155%	(187,740)
TENANCY SERVICES	1,886,938	1,823,498	1,619,580	(203,918)	(267,358)	-14%	1,441,789
RENTS	(21,633,420)	(21,633,420)	(22,399,956)	(766,536)	(766,536)	4%	(21,037,638)
<b>HRA ASSET MAINTENANCE</b>							
- GENERAL MAINTENANCE	2,545,320	3,345,320	3,633,773	288,453	1,088,453	43%	3,069,622
- REPAIRS TO VOID PROPERTIES	1,346,000	1,946,000	2,132,046	186,046	786,046	58%	2,010,534
- SERVICE CONTRACTS	1,278,440	1,378,290	1,285,234	(93,056)	6,794	1%	1,107,003
- OTHER	1,942,240	1,886,550	2,348,438	461,888	406,198	21%	1,703,372
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME	7,112,000	8,556,160	9,399,491	843,331	2,287,491	32%	7,890,531
SUNDRY LAND MAINTENANCE	507,430	507,430	389,586	(117,844)	(117,844)	-23%	501,224
REVENUE CONTRIBUTION TO CAPITAL	2,500,000	2,500,000	2,500,000	0	0	0%	4,000,000
CAPITAL CHARGES	3,745,650	3,724,680	3,724,682	2	(20,968)	-1%	3,745,646
HOUSING ASSETS	2,709,130	2,754,540	2,831,126	76,586	121,996	5%	2,686,495
INTEREST	1,471,100	1,304,300	1,144,678	(159,622)	(326,422)	-22%	684,966
MOVEMENT TO/(FROM) WORKING BALANCE	(282,188)	(1,600,378)	(763,678)	836,700	(481,490)	171%	(1,574,040)
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>
<b>Working Balance 1 April 2024</b>	<b>5,669,065</b>	<b>31 March 2025</b>	<b>4,905,387</b>				

## COUNCIL OWN BUILD SITES

MANAGEMENT UNIT	APPROVED BUDGET	Q3 FORECAST OUTTURN	2024/25 OUTTURN	VARIANCE SINCE QUARTER 3	OVERALL VARIANCE TO BUDGET	VARIANCE TO BUDGET	2023/24 ACTUAL
	£	£	£	£	£	%	£
MANAGEMENT	98,080	97,700	87,855	(9,845)	(10,225)	-10%	82,789
ROWAN HOUSE	(13,200)	(13,200)	(14,898)	(1,698)	(1,698)	13%	(13,834)
KNIGHTS PLACE	(78,700)	(78,700)	(91,956)	(13,256)	(13,256)	17%	(82,705)
INTEREST	(7,510)	(7,510)	(15,028)	(7,518)	(7,518)	100%	(13,532)
CAPITAL CHARGES	17,460	17,130	17,129	(1)	(331)	-2%	17,456
MOVEMENT TO/(FROM) WORKING BALANCE	(16,130)	(15,420)	16,898	32,318	33,028	-205%	9,826
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>
<b>Working Balance 1 April 2024</b>	<b>322,146</b>	<b>31 March 2025</b>	<b>339,044</b>				



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## APPENDIX 2

## HRA AVAILABLE RESOURCES 24/25

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	2024-25 £	2025-26 £	2026-27 £	2027-28 £	2028-29 £	TOTAL £
<b>CAPITAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE</b>						
Usable Receipts Brought Forward						7,745,744
Major Repairs Reserve Brought Forward						12,455,749
Other HRA Sales	564,000	936,000	0	0	0	1,500,000
RTB sales	2,490,015	1,500,000	0	0	0	3,990,015
Surrender back to DLUHC - pending investment in replacement affordable housing						
Major Repairs Reserve	3,724,682	3,724,680	3,724,680	3,724,680	3,724,680	18,623,402
Revenue Contributions to Capital	2,500,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	2,100,000	1,900,000	8,500,000
Grants and external contributions		960,500				960,500
Devon Combined Authority retrofit grant	2,000,000					2,000,000
s106 funding	18,778	697,000				715,778
LAHF grant from MHCLG	310,210	283,790				594,000
Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund	833,102					833,102
Commutated sums	0					0
Borrowing	0	7,748,380				7,748,380
Long leases	0	2,645,792				2,645,792
<b>Total Resources available</b>	<b>12,440,787</b>	<b>19,496,142</b>	<b>4,724,680</b>	<b>5,824,680</b>	<b>5,624,680</b>	<b>68,312,462</b>
<b>CAPITAL PROGRAMME</b>						
HRA Capital Programme	22,402,312	18,222,074	9,973,253	6,966,569	5,525,867	63,090,075
Further Funding Requests		3,445,792				3,445,792
<b>Total Housing Revenue Account</b>	<b>22,402,312</b>	<b>21,667,866</b>	<b>9,973,253</b>	<b>6,966,569</b>	<b>5,525,867</b>	<b>66,535,867</b>
<b>UNCOMMITTED CAPITAL RESOURCES:</b>						
Usable Receipts Brought Forward	7,745,744	5,221,900	538,228	538,228	538,228	7,745,744
Major Repairs Reserve Brought Forward	12,455,749	5,018,069	7,530,017	2,281,444	1,139,555	12,455,749
Resources in Year	12,440,787	19,496,142	4,724,680	5,824,680	5,624,680	48,110,969
Less Estimated Spend	(22,402,312)	(21,667,866)	(9,973,253)	(6,966,569)	(5,525,867)	-66,535,867
<b>Uncommitted Capital Resources</b>	<b>10,239,968</b>	<b>8,068,245</b>	<b>2,819,672</b>	<b>1,677,783</b>	<b>1,776,596</b>	<b>1,776,595</b>
<b>WORKING BALANCE RESOURCES:</b>						
Balance Brought Forward	5,669,065	4,905,387	4,325,317	4,539,818	4,232,338	5,669,065
HRA Balance Transfer - to/(from) Working Balance	(282,188)	(561,070)	269,001	(264,480)	416,144	(422,593)
Under/(over)spend 2024-25	(481,490)					(481,490)
Supplementary budget request for electrical testing		(19,000)	(54,500)	(43,000)	(3,500)	(120,000)
Balance Carried Forward	4,905,387	4,325,317	4,539,818	4,232,338	4,644,982	4,644,982
Balance Resolved to be Retained	(3,525,000)	(3,525,000)	(3,525,000)	(3,525,000)	(3,525,000)	(3,525,000)
<b>Uncommitted HRA Working Balance (after balance resolved to be retained of £4m)</b>	<b>1,380,387</b>	<b>800,317</b>	<b>1,014,818</b>	<b>707,338</b>	<b>1,119,982</b>	<b>1,119,982</b>
<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE CAPITAL RESOURCES (after balance resolved to be retained of £4m)</b>	<b>11,620,355</b>	<b>8,868,562</b>	<b>3,834,490</b>	<b>2,385,121</b>	<b>2,896,578</b>	<b>2,896,577</b>

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**2024-25  
CAPITAL MONITORING - OUTTURN**

	2024-25 Capital Programme	2024-25 Spend	2024-25 Budget to be Carried Forward to Future Years	TO 2025-26	TO 2026-27	TO 2027-28	TO 2028-29	2024-25 Programme Variances Under ( )
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>HRA CAPITAL</b>								
<b>EVERYONE HAS A HOME</b>								
Adaptations	965,164	1,013,060						47,896
Balcony Walkway Improvements	531,250	80,223					-	451,027
Bathroom Replacements (inc. Communal)	750,000	685,563					-	64,438
Boiler Replacement Programme & Central Heating	1,016,723	1,006,271					-	10,452
Common Area Footpath & Wall Improvements	152,445	170,047						17,602
Communal Area Improvements - New Flooring	60,096	65,937						5,841
Communal Door and Screen Replacements	159,570	128,611					-	30,959
Door Replacements (inc. Outbuildings)	457,090	446,094					-	10,996
Communal Door Entry System	112,600	87,600					-	25,000
Electrical Central Heating	14,091	15,245						1,154
Electrical Rewires - Domestic & Communal	1,248,974	1,264,201						15,227
Energy Conservation	2,479,580	3,138,017						658,437
Fire Risk Assessment Works - Compliance	802,706	299,245	(300,000)	300,000				203,461
Fire Risk Assessment Works	333,340	201,199						132,141
Fire Safety Storage Facilities	998	998						-
Kitchen Replacements (inc. Communal)	1,359,762	1,843,352	480,000	(120,000)	(120,000)	(120,000)	(120,000)	3,590
LAINGS Refurbishments	350,000	357,176						7,176
Lift Upgrades	237,400	98,671	(50,000)	50,000				88,729
Reroofing - Flats	846,350	680,012						166,338
Reroofing - Houses (outbuildings, chimney, gutters, downpipes, fascia)	633,057	715,862						82,805
Porch Canopies	103,924	24,520						79,404
Rennes House	100,000	92,502	(7,498)	7,498				0
Soil Vent Pipe Replacement	4,686	4,686						-
Structural Repairs	987,308	1,157,449						170,141
Window Replacements	1,240,050	1,590,796						350,746
Plastering	225,000	156,453						68,547
<b>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT TOTAL</b>	<b>15,172,164</b>	<b>15,323,788</b>	<b>122,502</b>	<b>237,498</b>	<b>(120,000)</b>	<b>(120,000)</b>	<b>(120,000)</b>	<b>29,122</b>
<b>COUNCIL OWN BUILD CAPITAL</b>								
Social Housing Acquisitions - Open Market	350,000	350,000						-
St Loyes Extracare Scheme	19,739	11,107						8,632
Local Authority Housing Fund	909,778	328,989	(580,789)	580,789				0
Council House Building Programme - Bovemoors Lane	32,345	17,740	(14,605)	14,605				-
Council House Building Programme - Hamlin Gardens	1,393,563	1,391,978						1,585
Council House Building Programme - Vaughan Road Phase A	4,430,672	3,460,965	(969,707)	969,707				0
Council House Building Programme - Vaughan Road Phases B and C	1,470,415	1,517,746						47,331
<b>COUNCIL OWN BUILD TOTAL</b>	<b>8,606,512</b>	<b>7,078,524</b>	<b>(1,565,101)</b>	<b>1,565,101</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>37,113</b>
<b>OVERALL HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT TOTAL</b>	<b>23,778,676</b>	<b>22,402,312</b>	<b>(1,442,599)</b>	<b>1,802,599</b>	<b>(120,000)</b>	<b>(120,000)</b>	<b>(120,000)</b>	<b>66,235</b>

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## REPORT TO CUSTOMER FOCUS / STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of meeting: 3 July 2025

Report of: David Hodgson, Strategic Director of Corporate Resources

Title: Business Rates – Empty Property Relief ‘Box Shifting’ – 6 Month Update

### Is this a key decision?

Scrutiny is a non-decision-making committee.

### Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Executive.

#### 1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 To provide members with an update of the impact of the measure introduced by Central Government to tackle the practice of ‘box shifting’ in respect of empty property relief (EPR).

#### 2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 For Members to note the content of the report.

#### 3. Reasons for the recommendation:

- 3.1 On 3 October 2024 Members of Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee requested an update in 6 months’ time on the impact of the change of law that increased the EPR re-set period from 6 weeks to 13 weeks.

#### 4. What are the resource implications including non-financial resources

- 4.1 The level of empty property relief granted following the change in legislation was expected to fall from an average of 65% to 50% in respect of those businesses who use the practice of ‘box shifting’.

#### 5. What are the legal aspects?

- 5.1 The Local Government Finance Act 1988 – Section 45 Unoccupied Hereditaments, Liabilities and Reliefs.
- 5.2 The Non-Domestic Rating (Unoccupied Property) (England) Regulations 2008 – Regulation 5 - A hereditament which has been unoccupied and becomes occupied on any day shall be treated as having been continuously unoccupied for the purposes of regulation 4(a) which, subject to regulation 5, has been unoccupied for a continuous period not exceeding three months and (b) which is a qualifying industrial hereditament that, subject to regulation 5, has been unoccupied for a continuous period not exceeding six months; if it becomes unoccupied again on the expiration of a period of less than six weeks beginning with that day.

- 5.3 The Non-Domestic Rating (Unoccupied Property) (England) Regulations 2024 -. these Regulations amended the period specified in regulation five of The Non-Domestic Rating (Unoccupied Property) (England) Regulations 2008 from 6 weeks to 13 weeks.

## 6. Report details:

### Background

- 6.1 Empty Property Relief (EPR) operates by providing owners of empty non-domestic properties with 100 percent relief for the first three months (or six months for industrial properties) after a property becomes empty. If the property remains empty once the relief period ends, the owner must pay the property's full business rates liability. However, if the premises are re-occupied for a specified period and becomes empty again, another period of Empty Property Relief can be claimed. In some cases, this can become a pattern.
- 6.2 The practice of box shifting – a form of business rates avoidance – is used by some landlords to claim empty rates relief by simply putting boxes in an empty commercial space and declaring it occupied.
- 6.3 From the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2024 an empty property is required to be occupied again for a period of 13 weeks or more, before it becomes eligible for another period of EPR when it falls empty again. Prior to this it had to be occupied for 6 weeks or more, before it became eligible for another period of EPR.

### Update

- 6.4 The Council granted empty property relief of £3.046m and £2.865m for the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25 respectively; a reduction of £181k. Whilst this is not a significant reduction, there are other factors that impacted on the level of EPR such as increased business rates liabilities and reduction in transitional relief.
- 6.5 When we reported the change in legislation to this committee in October 2024, Officers estimated that £150k additional business rates will be payable as a result of the re-occupation period increasing from 6 weeks to 13 weeks, of which the Council will retain around £35k as business rates is shared with government (50%), DCC (9%) and Devon & Somerset Fire (1%). The actual position is therefore close to the initial estimates.
- 6.6 The level of reduction is consistent with the findings of the Local Government Association, who reported in February 2025 that the move to 13 weeks has not helped materially to reduce business rates avoidance.
- 6.7 The number of businesses that display patterns of 'box shifting' has remained steady at circa 60, so the change in the re-set period does not seem to be a deterrent. However, to provide some context to Members, the overall number of businesses granted EPR stood at 603 in 2024/25, so those practicing 'box shifting' represent only 10% of businesses awarded EPR.
- 6.8 As a worked example, the table below shows the maximum amount of EPR granted to the business in respect of the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25, which reflects the move from a 6-week re-set period to a 13-week re-set period:

Financial Year	Gross Rates Payable	Empty Property Relief	% of relief granted	Rates Payable
2023/24	£5,346.25	£3,893.54	73%	£1,377.71



2024/25	£5,346.25	£2,656.78	50%	£2,689.47
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## Consultation

- 6.9 The Government have committed to consult on a General Anti-Avoidance Rule (GAAR) for England shortly. This will provide an opportunity for local authorities to feedback and to seek a further extension to the empty property re-set period, such as to the six months originally consulted on.

## 7. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

- 7.1 Contributes to a well-run council.

## 8. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

- 8.1 Undertaking regular property inspections to identify properties which are now occupied thereby reducing the loss of income to the Council.

## 9. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

- 9.1 No impact.

## 10. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

- 10.1 None.

## 11. Are there any other options?

- 11.1 None.

Director

Report Author:

## Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report: -

None

Contact for enquires:

Democratic Services (Committees)

Room 4.36

01392 265275

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## REPORT TO CUSTOMER FOCUS AND STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 3 July 2025 and 5 June 2025

Report of: The Scrutiny Programme Board

Title: Annual Scrutiny Report 2024-25

### Is this a Key Decision?

Scrutiny is non decision-making.

### Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

### 1. What is the report about?

1.1 To provide an annual update in respect of the Scrutiny work achieved during the municipal year 2024-25.

### 2. Recommendations:

2.1 The Annual Scrutiny Report 2024-25 is noted by the Strategic Scrutiny Committee and the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee; and

2.2 The Executive note and recommend that Council approve the Annual Scrutiny Report 2023-24.

### 3. Reasons for the recommendation:

3.1 The Annual Scrutiny Report provides the Scrutiny Committees with an opportunity to:

- a. monitor the progress of the scrutiny function at Exeter City Council;
- b. comment upon the progress and direction of scrutiny over the past year and into the future;
- c. ensure that the Scrutiny Committees are kept fully up to date as to any Task and Finish Group work and what they have achieved;
- d. illustrate how effective scrutiny can contribute towards an accountable, transparent and democratic process.

### 4. What are the resource implications including non-financial resources

4.1 Resources are limited to capacity within the Democratic Services Team. There is no dedicated Scrutiny Officer.

### 5. What are the legal aspects?

None identified.

### 6. Report details:

6.1 This update provides Members with an overview of the work and achievements of scrutiny during 2024-25 and is set out in detail at Appendix A attached to this report.

6.2 The report brings annual reporting into line with the municipal year.

## **7. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?**

7.1 Good governance contributes to the Council's purpose of "Leading a well-run Council".

## **8. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?**

None identified

## **9. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)**

11.1 Under the Act's Public Sector Equalities Duty, decision makers are required to consider the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

11.2 In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

11.3 In making decisions the authority must take into account the potential impact of that decision in relation to age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), sex and gender, gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women and new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage and civil partnership status in coming to a decision.

11.4 No potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act because the report is for noting only

## **10. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:**

12.1 Important to complete this section in light of the Council declaring a Climate Emergency. Consider whether the recommendations you are making in the report will help, hinder or have no direct impact on delivering our carbon reduction target (carbon neutral by 2030).

12.2 You should think about things like:-

- Travel (and, if travel is unavoidable, whether lower carbon options will be pursued e.g. walking, public transport, electric car);
- Infrastructure (e.g. LED lighting, energy efficient heating/hot water, solar panels, electric car charging points);
- Waste (e.g. recycling, composting, reducing non-recyclable waste); and
- Any other specific carbon reduction initiatives.

12.3 If there are no direct carbon/environmental implications for the decision please state:

No direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from the recommendations.

## **11. Are there any other options?**

None identified.

Director: Strategic Director for Corporate Resources

Report Author: Scrutiny Programme Board

## **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)**

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

Contact for enquires:  
Democratic Services (Committees)  
Room 4.36  
01392 265275

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**SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25**

**EXETER CITY COUNCIL**

**(May 2024 – April 2025)**

## Contents

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Looking Ahead to 2025/26.....	6





## **Foreword from the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Board**

The role of Scrutiny is to provide support, challenge and to maximise the effectiveness of Exeter City Council and its working relationships with its partners across the local and wider communities it serves.

The two Scrutiny Committees have continued to take a proactive approach to matters concerning the Council and its residents, to support the Council in making a positive contribution to work in the city. The Scrutiny Programme Board supported by the Democratic Services Team have overseen much change during this year including new scrutiny committee Chairs, new Democratic Officers, a senior leadership restructure all of which have seen improved efficiency and smooth running of scrutiny.

The Scrutiny Programme Board was set up to meet on a bi-annual basis but have continued to meet quarterly to provide oversight and direction on the work of scrutiny. The meetings are attended by the Chairs and Deputy Chairs with the aim of developing a future programme of work, reviewing any Scrutiny Proposals submitted by Members on our pro-forma and support best practice for both of the scrutiny committees.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Scrutiny Committee Members, and our partners for their continued support in contributing to the scrutiny process as well as officers and the Democratic Services team in facilitating the operation of the Board and the Committees. Grateful thanks also to the external trainer for sharing her expertise which set both committees up with skills to achieve their responsibilities as laid out in our constitution.

I hope you can see a difference in this report as we have aimed to demonstrate the impact of scrutiny over the last year and I look forward to seeing this develop further over the coming year.

**Councillor Matthew Williams,  
Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Board (2024/25)**

**April 2025**

## Introduction

The Annual Scrutiny Report for Exeter City Council provides an overview of the work undertaken by the Strategic Scrutiny Committee and Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee during the 2022/23 year, July 2023 to April 2024.

Scrutiny is a key tool for promoting the best interests and wellbeing of the area and seeks to ensure that local people receive high quality services that meet their needs. The two Scrutiny Committees act as a critical friend to the Executive, hold it to account and provide challenge where deemed necessary. Scrutiny has a vital role in reviewing policy development and advising the Executive of areas for potential improvements. The work of the two Scrutiny Committees supports the Council in the work undertaken to achieve the aims of the Council's corporate objectives.

The aims of the Scrutiny process are to:-

- add value to Council business and decision-making;
- hold the Executive to account;
- to monitor the budget and performance of services;
- assist the Council in the development of policy and review the effectiveness of the implementation of Council policy; and
- to review relevant Government policy development and legislation to assess the impact on the City and make recommendations to Executive.

The two Scrutiny Committees of Strategic Scrutiny and Customer Focus discharge the functions conferred by Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations under section 32 of the Local Government Act 2000.

Continuing to highlight the role of scrutiny:

- A page on the Councillor Hub devoted to scrutiny providing Members with supporting information and guidance to assist them in good scrutiny practice;
- Committee Members who are not Members of the largest political group of the Council are encouraged to submit requests for consideration of scrutiny to the Scrutiny Programme Board using the Scrutiny Proposal Form as it is important that Scrutiny Committees are led by Members and are responsible for setting their own work programme and taking into account the views of all Members;
- Appointing Deputy Chairs of Scrutiny Committees to Chair any Task and Finish Groups or Spotlight Reviews, as and when established;
- A template for Portfolio Holder Reports to update Members on activities within their portfolio; and
- Face to face training with an external provider took place on 16 May 2024.

The Council's Scrutiny Committees continue to have an important role in relation to the development of the Council's budget and policy framework, as well as to make recommendations to the Executive on matters within their terms of reference. Members have access to the [Council's Forward Plan](#) and where there is a need for Scrutiny consideration following an Executive decision to bring the matter to Committee first via the Call-In process.

This report serves as a reminder to Members of their responsibilities and powers re-iterates the importance of Scrutiny being Member-led. The Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Programme Board can be found on Page 257 of the [Constitution](#).

## Scrutiny Programme Board

The Scrutiny Programme Board is formed of the Chairs and Deputy Chairs of the two Scrutiny Committees:



**Chair – Councillor Matthew Williams**

### **Strategic Scrutiny Committee**



**Chair – Councillor Liz Pole**



**Deputy Chair – Councillor Michael Mitchell**

### **Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee**



**Chair – Councillor Josie Parkhouse**



**Deputy Chair – Councillor Catherine Rees**

## **Year in Review: Strategic Scrutiny Committee 2024-2025**

The Strategic Scrutiny Committee has met on six occasions during the municipal year 2024/25.

There were no call-in requests during this period.

## **Year in Review: Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee 2024-2025**

The Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee has met on five occasions during the municipal year 2024/25.

No call-in requests were received during this period.

## **Year in Review: Combined Scrutiny Committee 2024-2025**

The Combined Scrutiny Committee meets to discuss joint issues and also met to discuss the Council budget. The Chair rotates between the Chairs of the respective Scrutiny Committees.

The Combined Scrutiny Committee met twice in the municipal year 2024/25.

## **Looking Ahead to 2025/26**

The Scrutiny Programme Board agrees the format and content of the work programme held Scrutiny Work Schedule, a working document which is reported on at each Board meeting.

A copy of the Scrutiny Work Schedule is attached to each Scrutiny Committee agenda.

The coming year brings the following items already scheduled to be heard before scrutiny committees:

Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee – regular Budget scrutiny, ASB in the city centre and Key People Activity Across the Council and a petition.

Strategic Scrutiny Committee – regular Live & Move programme updates, Markets & Street Trading, Citywide Net Zero alongside Working Towards Net Zero.

The Forward Plan is circulated to Members and is available on the [Council Website](#)



# Scrutiny Annual Report 2024/25

**Exeter City Council**  
**(May 2024 - April 2025)**



# What Scrutiny has meant to us over the last year



# Strategic Scrutiny

Responsibility for:

- Relevant policies in the Exeter Plan
- Corporate Health & Safety
- Response to Central Government's Policy Making
- Climate change and sustainability
- Council wide/strategic matters
- Hear call-ins relevant to the role of the committee

## TOPIC

## IMPACT

### LEISURE SERVICE UPDATE

Family Membership suggestion given to officers

### LIVE AND MOVE UPDATE

Councillors were better informed has helped with bids for additional funding in partnership with community groups

### COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

Recommendation made to the Executive: *that the Executive Committee consider a review of the current Asset Management Policy in relation to commercial property.*

### NET ZERO

Active travel for those with a disability referred to Exeter Transport Working Group for further information and investigation

### SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

Feasibility study outcomes will be subject to further scrutiny

### EXETER PLAN PUBLICATION PROCESS

There was scrutiny consensus that the plan timings would be beneficial to Exeter and its residents

### AIR QUALITY PERFORMANCE

Informed Members of the scope and work being undertaken, partnership working and Government-set timeline for

### PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATES

Suggestion made to Deputy Leader regarding positive publicity of the CCTV scheme as a reflection from interactions with residents. Members able to reassure residents that the city centre is a safe place to be with understanding

# Customer Focus

Responsibility for:

- Corporate Performance Monitoring
- Financial Performance Monitoring
- Annual Budget Setting Process
- Service specific/operational matters
- Hear call-ins relevant to the role of the committee

## TOPIC

### VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS

## IMPACT

Improved Councillor understanding

### RELOCATION OF SERVICES

Councillors agreed with the steps set out

### BOX-SHIFTING

Further report requested by the committee in order to scrutinise

### CITIZENS ADVICE EXETER

Recommendation made to the Executive: *that the Executive Committee revisit options for Citizens Advice Exeter to reduce their premises expenses with Exeter City Council.*

### BUDGET

Scrutiny of the quarterly budget introduced by this committee.

### COMMUNITY LOTTERY

Suggestion made to officers of services as prizes which will be considered to celebrate two years of the lottery

### STREET CLEANSING

Councillors more confident advising residents about littering/fly-tipping and will now encourage to use the online reporting tool

### HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

Embedded scrutiny of this area into regular practice to ensure councillors are aware of current situation



# Case Study

**30 Sept  
2024**

Proposal submitted for scrutiny.

**3 Oct  
2024**

CFSC unanimously voted to add CA Exeter to the Agenda for November meeting and to delegate scoping of the item to SPB.

**16 Oct  
2024**

SPB scoped the item.

**28 Nov  
2024**

Item scrutinised at CFSC.  
Recommendation to Executive created.

**14 Jan  
2025**

Recommendation heard by Executive.

## Outcome

### Minute No. 24 Commercial Property Review

*The Executive considered the recommendations of the Strategic Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 6 June 2024.*

*The Leader advised that officers had been asked to review of the current asset management policy in relation to the commercial property, which would be presented to Executive Committee in due course.*

*The Leader moved the recommendations, which were seconded by Councillor Wright, voted upon, and CARRIED unanimously.*

*RESOLVED that the Executive Committee agreed to a review of the current Asset Management Policy in relation to commercial property.*

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**WORK PLAN FOR CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY ITEMS 2024/25***Working Draft for July 2025*

Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee	Item	Director	Portfolio Holder	Origin of Business	Status
3 July 2025	Quarter 4 "Outturn Report" Budget Scrutiny	Strategic Director for Corporate Resources (DH)	Leader (Cllr Bialyk)	Scrutiny proposal Cllr Parkhouse	
3 July 2025	Eton Walk Refuse bin – Petition	Strategic Director for Operations (AP)	City Management (Cllr R Williams)	Petition	
3 July 2025	Anti-Social Behaviour in the City Centre – its causes and possible solutions	Strategic Director – People and Communities (JY)	Corporate Services & City Centre (Deputy Leader, Cllr Wright)	Scrutiny proposal Cllr Mitchell	
3 July 2025	Box-shifting Update	Strategic Director for Corporate Resources (DH)	Corporate Services & City Centre (Deputy Leader, Cllr Wright)	Agreed 3 October 2024 committee meeting	Head of Service Finance will bring the report.
3 July 2025	Annual Scrutiny Report	Strategic Director for Corporate Resources (DH)	Corporate Services & City Centre (Deputy Leader, Cllr Wright)	Annual Report	
25 September 2025	Portfolio Holder's Report (Cllr TBD)				

25 September 2025	Key People Activity Across the Council	Strategic Director – People and Communities (JY)	Corporate Services & City Centre (Deputy Leader, Cllr Wright)	Scrutiny proposal Cllr Palmer	
25 September 2025	Tenants Energy Review of our Passivhaus Council Homes*	Strategic Director – People and Communities (JY)	Housing, Homelessness Prevention and Support Services (Cllr Asvachin)	Scrutiny proposal Cllr Atkinson	
13 November 2025	Portfolio Holder's Report (Cllr TBD)				
13 November 2025	Six-monthly update on Homelessness Strategy	Strategic Director – People and Communities (JY)	Housing, Homelessness Prevention and Support Services (Cllr Asvachin)	Proposed by Councillor Denning – half yearly report	
13 November 2025	Quarter 2 Budget Scrutiny	Strategic Director for Corporate Resources (DH)	Leader (Cllr Bialyk)	Scrutiny proposal – Cllr Parkhouse	
22 January 2026	Portfolio Holder's Report (Cllr TBD)				
19 March 2026	Portfolio Holder's Report (Cllr TBD)				
19 March 2026	Update on Street Cleansing and Bin Collection – Recycling and Food Waste Collection	Head of Operations (CC)	City Management (Cllr R Williams)	Yearly report	

Updated 31/03/2025

To be timetabled on 27 March 2025 subject to proforma being submitted *[see October 3 minutes]*:

- **Budget proposal from Cllr Moore**

DRAFT

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