

STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday 4 June 2026

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 on 01392 265425.

Entry to the Civic Centre can be gained through the Customer Service Centre, Paris Street.

Membership -

Rappert (Chair), Begley (Deputy Chair), Darling, Haigh, Harding, Miller-Boam, Mitchell, K, Moore, Payne, Wetenhall and Williams, M

Agenda

1 Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

2 Minutes

(Pages 5 -
10)

To approve and sign the minutes of the Strategic Scrutiny Committee held on 2 April 2026.

3 Declarations of Interest

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

4 Local Government Act 1972 - Exclusion of Press and Public

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

"RESOLVED that, under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the

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

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

Details of questions should be notified to the Democratic Services Manager via the committee.services@exeter.gov.uk email by 10am at least three working days prior to the meeting. For this meeting any questions must be submitted by 10am on Monday 1 June 2026.

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

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

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

Councillor Bialyk - Leader
Councillor Patrick - Portfolio Holder City Development
Councillor Pole - Portfolio Holder Climate and Ecological Change and Communities and Customer Services
Councillor Findlay MBE - Portfolio Holder Culture & City Centre

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

7 **Working Towards Net Zero - Exeter City Council's Corporate Carbon Footprint Report and Carbon Reduction Action Plan Progress Report** (Pages 11 - 34)

To receive the report of the Strategic Director for Place.

8 **Scrutiny Annual Report** (Pages 35 - 46)

To receive the report of the Scrutiny Programme Board.

9 **Legislative timetable update regarding Community Land Trusts** (Pages 47 - 50)

To receive the briefing note of the Strategic Director for Corporate Resources.

10 **Forward Plan of Business and Scrutiny Work Plan** (Pages 51 - 54)

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

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

[plan-of-executive-decisions/](#)

Also attached is a draft work plan of future scrutiny items.

Should Members wish to raise issues in respect of future business please notify Liz Smith in advance of the meeting.

Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Strategic Scrutiny Committee will be held on **Thursday 10 September 2026** at 5.30 pm in the Civic Centre.

Individual reports on this agenda can be produced in other formats upon request to Democratic Services on 01392 265425.

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STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2 April 2026

Present:

Councillor Liz Pole (Chair)

Councillors Mitchell, K, Haigh, Harding, Hussain (as substitute), Miller-Boam, Moore, Payne, Rolstone, Wetenhall and Williams, M

Apologies:

Councillor Atkinson (sent substitute)

Also present:

Executive Office Manager, Place Partnership (Sport England) Manager, Head of Service - City Centre and Net Zero and Democratic Services Manager

In attendance as Portfolio Holder:

Councillors Bialyk and Vizard

43 **Minutes of meeting Thursday 12 March 2026 of Strategic Scrutiny Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2026 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as correct subject to the following amendments.

Minute No. 41:

- an application **was being planned for** ~~had been submitted for~~ Nature Towns and Cities accreditation;
- there was a contamination issue with separate on-street **recycling** litter bins but these would be trialled at the Quay;
- Viridor seemed positive at a previous ~~Strategic Waste-Exeter ERF~~ **Community Liaison** Committee meeting.

44 **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made by Members.

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

There were no questions submitted by the public.

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

In accordance with Standing Order No. 20, the following questions were submitted by Councillor Wetenhall in relation to the Portfolio of the Leader who attended the meeting.

Question

“Councillors have been waiting for an update on a review of CIL governance since November 2024 when internal audit identified as an area of weakness. In January this year, you said in an email to me that “*The Task Group is an officer meeting to explore governance models and approaches for CIL/S106. This part of the work is now complete, and the Head of City Development is finalising draft proposals for SMB to consider.* Last week’s Audit and Governance Committee was informed that a further internal audit is now being undertaken next financial year.

Can the Portfolio Holder answer the following questions, to enable Strategic Scrutiny members to have an oversight of what is happening given the long delay and no date being provided as to when Councillors will have further information.

1. When do you expect SMB to consider proposals from the work of the Task Group given that you said the work was complete in January of this year?
2. What changes or improvements are already in place on CIL governance, if any, since the audit report of Nov 24?
3. How and when will Councillors have an opportunity to see any aspect of this ongoing work?"

Response

1. SMB had reviewed the draft proposals for CIL/s106 governance and the Leader would meet with Directors next week.

2. A report to the Executive on 28 April would recommend a new governance framework

3. All the actions recommended by the audit review have been completed and will be reported to the Audit and Governance Committee in due course.

Supplementary Questions and Responses

1. Councillor Wetenhall asked why the Strategic Director had stated that the report would be ready in two weeks if the Leader was meeting with him next week? The Leader responded stating that officers were bringing forward the proposal for him to consider and it would likely be complete by next week but he may ask for amendments to be made.

2. Councillor Wetenhall asked if she could see the work of the task group, which she had asked the Director. The Leader responded that audit had identified a weakness which the Council was looking at. He also informed the committee that officers had been working on this and had met with him once and there had been further work to complete and he had received a draft last week. The Leader added that he would discuss this with the Portfolio Holder and report back to the Executive team but not necessarily a committee.

3. Councillor Wetenhall asked if there had been changes or improvements and the Leader responded that SMB were working on the issues raised, that CIL money was present and when a project arose funding was considered however, proposals for how to handle these in future.

During discussion about procedure the Chair agreed to speak to the Monitoring Officer as Councillor Wetenhall had requested sight of the original report.

In accordance with Standing Order No. 20, the following questions were submitted by Councillor Moore in relation to the Portfolio of the Leader who attended the meeting.

Questions for the Leader from Councillor Moore:

1. Please can you explain what happened to the Bronze plaque on Mallison Bridge and can it be given to the Mallison family?
2. Cllr B: What are you doing to ensure there is increased transparency around assets that may be disposed of that might be of interest to communities?
3. Cllr B: a community asset transfer request was submitted by the community for Bromham's hut on 20 February and there has been no reply. Why is this?

RESPONSE:

1. Officers will look into this and respond outside the meeting.
2. This is currently being reviewed to ensure that any potential opportunities are communicated.
3. The asset has a complex ownership structure which prior to responding on the CAT proposal we were attempting to clarify with the EA – but to no avail so far. The Bromhams CAT proposal is being allocated to an Officer to progress and Estates will contact the community representative as soon as possible. They apologise for not having sent an acknowledgement email in a timely manner.

47 **Performance and Service Provided to Customers and Stakeholders of Stagecoach South West in Exeter**

The Chair welcomed representatives from Exeter & District Bus Users Forum and Stagecoach South West.

The Exeter & District Bus Users Forum outlined key challenges as follows:

- congestion and traffic conditions, including variability between school and non-school days;
- the impact of new developments on service planning;
- issues arising from “super stops”, where multiple stops had been combined without sufficient infrastructure improvements; and
- that these were not necessarily unique to Exeter but faced across the country.

Members questioned representatives on ticketing models, planning for new developments, and the design and effectiveness of super stops. It was highlighted that early provision of bus services into new housing developments was important to embed travel behaviours before car dependency became established.

The Chair reminded the committee and those present that Devon County Council was the responsible authority for transport.

The Committee also heard from a blind bus user who shared lived experience of using the bus network, highlighting:

- difficulties locating shelters, vehicles and doors;
- challenges arising from glass shelters, floating bus stops and combined stops;
- the value of knowledgeable drivers and the assistance card scheme, provided by Devon County Council;
- limitations of app-based systems for users without smartphones; and
- quieter electric buses, where diesel buses were easy to hear.

Members welcomed this insight and discussed potential mitigations such as tactile features, audible signals and greater consistency in design.

The Managing Director of Stagecoach South West presented current performance information making the following points:

- passenger numbers remained stable despite fare increases;
- punctuality was reported at approximately 85%, carrying 250,000 passengers per week;
- the app was 93% accurate and the remaining 7% could be missing vehicle data;
- ticketing equipment and tracking was likely to be replaced during this year;
- there were currently 13 driver vacancies in Exeter which represented 3.2%;
- investment was being made in fleet replacement, including the introduction of electric buses, subject to depot power connections;

- reliability continued to be affected by congestion, roadworks and infrastructure constraints;
- the remainder of the fleet would be electrified in 2027 with £47 million investment of private capital which showed the confidence in Exeter;
- this year drivers would undertake specific training underpinned by the Department of Transport regarding the safety of women and girls at night;
- disability awareness training was extensive;
- there was more use of off-bus ticketing in Europe and in London there was no interaction with bus drivers and multidoor buses were used which risked fare evasion; and
- he was proud of what his team delivered every day and they were part of the communities in which they live and work and he would welcome positive ways forward.

Members' raised issues including route reliability across the city, coordination with rail services, timetable changes, accessibility, pricing, and engagement with local businesses and Devon County Council being the transport authority.

The Managing Director of Stagecoach South West responded to members' questions in the following terms:

- data informed timetable changes and service planning;
- there were operational challenges on cross-city routes and consideration may need to be given to splitting the P route in the next timetable changes if they did not see improvements;
- engagement with Network Rail and GWR was through the enhanced partnership and he would discuss Newcourt with GWR to understand the needs better as he hadn't understood the issue for residents, particularly on rugby match-days;
- there were limits to fare reductions due to funding and revenue requirements;
- there was ongoing work nationally and locally to improve accessibility and the customer experience;
- there had been issues of poor parking and enforcement around the Marsh Barton rail halt as well as the bus stop not having a raised kerb, shelter or realtime information, which Devon County Council had been made aware of;
- the Flexi 5 and 10 had been withdrawn but the same discount was available when buying multiple tickets;
- lots of modelling had been carried out;
- Exeter was the 10th most congested place in the UK which made it challenging to run buses reliably;
- the record for a bus running late was 90 minutes which during September when there were issues on Barrack Road and Topsham Road and it was a university open day;
- it had been enlightening to hear first-hand experience and that he had made note of things to do which he would also feedback through national forums;
- driverless ticketing was not being considered at present as this would need to be funded from revenue; and
- the Stagecoach industry position was that where new routes were to be implemented they would need to be underwritten by the local transport authority and the Devon County Council budget was fully committed but section 106 fund could be utilised.

A member stated that as a business-owner she felt there was room for wider discussion as many of her staff were non-drivers and she placed them where they could access via public transport rather than the best place as a business and if buses serviced other areas at key times data from mobile phones may be very different.

During discussion it was suggested that the Portfolio Holder for Climate, Ecological Change and Communities could be asked to raise issues with the relevant Devon County Council Portfolio Holder, that were potential actions which could be requested of Planning and route suggestions which could be made to Stagecoach.

Following discussion, the Chair proposed, seconded by Councillor Mitchell that the minutes of this item be sent to the Strategic Director for Place and the Portfolio Holder for Climate, Ecological Change and Communities which following a vote was **CARRIED** unanimously.

The Chair thanked the guests and stated that she felt enlightened and more able to understand the bus service across the city.

The committee took a break at 7.23pm and reconvened at 7.29pm

48 **Live and Move Programme Update**

The Place Partnership Manager presented a verbal report (slides attached), making the following points:

- this was a review of the last six to twelve months;
- the Newtown scheme was a flagship active travel infrastructure scheme with construction underway;
- there had been a presentation on the Wonford project given at Extraordinary Council on 24 March and capacity-building was underway with trustees of the community group;
- work on the Green Circle was underway, developing 12 shorter routes for local residents with Wellbeing Exeter and Members' were called upon to promote this;
- work covering Cranbrook was continuing, working towards a Memorandum of Understanding;
- there had been an increase in inactivity in the lowest socio-economic groups; and
- the team were supporting Cornwall and Swindon as part of the project, who had asked to meet with political leaders as well.

The Chair reminded members that the committee would have a more detailed report with the local evaluation partner provided at the September meeting.

The Place Partnership Manager responded to Members' questions in the following terms:

- specialist help would be utilised in co-designing the governance model at Wonford, led by the Live and Move Team and the Head of Service Customers and Communities;
- the aim of the investment in Wonford was to support local residents and work had been done alongside them which demonstrated this commitment. There was a range of national evidence regarding integrating leisure with other services and how this would bring people to the hub who may not visit a leisure centre;
- the September report would include activity in other areas of the city but he was aware of seated exercise being provided with the Shilhay residents Association in the St David's area;
- he would feedback to ECCT the request to connect with ward members;
- work with those with disabilities was carried out in partnership with Activity Alliance and Sport in Mind;

- infrastructure would be provided using Sport England 'Active Design' principles which were inclusive;
- the council did not apply to the GWR Community Fund this year as advised by the Regional Development Manager as they prioritised those who had not applied within twelve months;
- regarding connecting to the Valley Park and the Sustainable Habitat Mitigation Strategy he would liaise with the Chair and Planning colleagues; and
- consultation and engagement had been undertaken with residents in Countess Wear on the opposite side of Bridge Road to King George V Playing Fields but signage was a suggestion which he would take away and ECCT would want to understand the barriers to crossing the road.

Members welcomed the progress made through the programme to date and acknowledged the scale and ambition of the work. It was requested that the report later in the year, include more detailed performance information.

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

Members commented on the work plan making the following points:

- policy issues as a result of the Local Plan examination would be more relevant the process; and
- further information in the item column could be useful.

In scoping the bike parking item, scheduled for the committee meeting in June, it was requested that Planning was considered and that Councillor Wetenhall, as proposer, would liaise with the Head of Service Net Zero and City Centre with regard to the report to be brought.

The Chair agreed to contact the Strategic Director for Place regarding the CIL Governance Report.

The Chair agreed that the Shared Prosperity Fund report would be a report to Councillors' Information Bulletin.

Following a unanimous vote the proposal from Councillor Wetenhall on Community Land Trusts was added to the work plan. Outline scoping of the item resulted in a request to officers for an update on the legislative timetable in June if it was not possible to bring the item at that time and that an officer report on the resource and opportunity implications of the emerging Community Empowerment Bill with regard to community assets, to include Community Land trusts and any work being undertaken on Community Asset Transfer be brought to the committee.

Following a vote the draft Scrutiny Work Plan as amended was **AGREED**.

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 8.52 pm

Chair

REPORT TO CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE / STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 4 June 2026

Report of: Strategic Director Place

Title: Exeter City Council's Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan

1. Summary:

- 1.1 This report presents the City Council's Carbon Reduction Plan (Appendix A), approved by Executive 17 March 2026.
- 1.2 The Carbon Reduction Plan has been developed from the City Council's Costed Organisational Carbon Footprint Projections Report and relevant actions from the previous Carbon Reduction Plan reported to Strategic Scrutiny on 11 September 2025.
- 1.3 The Carbon Reduction Plan includes all Positive Current Trajectory measures (previously known as Business As Usual) and where possible, includes measures from the Mid-Term and Max scenario measures from across the main sectors of the City Council's operation.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 Strategic Scrutiny review the Carbon Reduction Plan (Appendix A).
- 2.2 Members note and support work undertaken to incorporate Positive Current Trajectory (PCT) measures as set out in the Carbon Reduction Plan, into Service Plans, as well as intended outcomes from the Corporate Plan, and integrating the Corporate Performance Dashboard.

3. Issues which scrutiny could consider:

- 3.1 Strategic Scrutiny to review the Carbon Reduction Plan and resources required to deliver the Plan.

4. Report details:

- 4.1 In 2025 a report to Executive Committee presented a summary of the City Council's "Costed Organisational Carbon Footprint Projections" Report. The report, produced by the Centre for Energy and Environment at the University of Exeter, assessed the potential to achieve net zero by reducing emissions across five sectors: council-owned housing, non-domestic buildings, transport, renewable energy and land use change/afforestation.

For enquiries please contact: democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

- 4.2 The Report includes cost estimates, and considers three scenarios:
- **Positive Current Trajectory (PCT):** The level of activity that is already planned for and/or committed to by the City Council. Activity will require additional funding from government, or other external sources.
 - **Mid Case (Mid):** An escalation of activity beyond the PCT scenario i.e., a 'stretch target' which would also require additional government grant funding and operational costs.
 - **Net Zero (Max):** A theoretical maximum level of uptake of measures, which would have considerable impact on cost, skills, supply chain and capacity.
- 4.3 The PCT measures have been incorporated into the Carbon Reduction Plan, combined with measures from the previously Carbon Reduction Plan. Where possible, some measures from the Mid and Max scenario have been included in the Carbon Reduction Plan. Actions labelled as a/b/c, indicates PCT/Mid/Max options from the Costed Organisational Carbon Footprint Projections Report.
- 4.4 Where known, the Carbon Reduction Plan includes estimated costs, metrics for each action, and the relevant Head of Service as lead officer. If projects have not secured funding to date, they represent future ambition.
- 4.5 The Carbon Reduction Plan covers seven sectors: Housing, Non-domestic buildings, Transport & Equipment, Land Use Change, Procurement, F-Gases & Waste and Overall Organisation.
- 4.6 The Carbon Reduction Plan is a live evolving action plan, which will be reviewed every 6 months to update on progress made, as well as any legislative, financial, technical and operational changes. The Carbon Reduction Plan is reported to Strategic Scrutiny every six-monthly basis to ensure progress is tracked and priorities and intended outcomes are reported.
- 4.7 The Net Zero team and relevant representatives from OMB meet twice a year and are responsible for updating the Carbon Reduction Plan, ensuring actions are aligned and are included within Service Plans.
- 4.8 To show progress, each action is reviewed and colour coded based on the following colours: green = near completion, orange = some progress, yellow = slight progress, red = no progress.
- 4.9 A full list of completed and committed projects, to reduce corporate carbon emissions can be found at the end of the Carbon Reduction Plan, showing year completed. Actions recently completed or in progress include:
- Construction of new Council homes to Passivhaus standard.
 - Loft and cavity insulation within City Council social homes.
 - Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Installations on City Council social homes.
 - Riverside Leisure Centre Decarbonisation Project.

For enquiries please contact: democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

- Solar PV installations at Exeter Arena, Wonford Sports Centre and St Sidwell's Point, Senate Court and Guildhall Car Park.
- Council corporate energy contract is from a renewable tariff.
- Migration of Council data from Council based data centres to cloud based.
- Trial of Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel within fleet vehicles.
- Expansion of electric fleet and portable equipment.
- Incentives to increase uptake of public transport for staff and cycle storage for active travel.
- Devon & Torbay Local Electricity Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) project currently underway with several City Council car parks due to have EV charging infrastructure installed.
- 799 trees planted in 2025. An assessment completed in 2023 by Treeconomics, assessing the canopy cover of the whole city of Exeter, found the estimated canopy cover to be 20.2%, higher than the UK national average (17%) for towns and cities.
- Procurement sends a Carbon Data Request form to all suppliers awarded with contracts over £100k providing for better measurement of scope 3 emissions.
- The City Council awarded silver status for Carbon Literacy Training.

4.10 Carbon reduction discussions are integrated into OMB meetings, with a dedicated Carbon Reduction Plan review meeting held with relevant Heads of Service every 6 months.

4.11 Delivery of the Carbon Reduction Plan includes extensive additional benefits, over and above a reduction in of GHG emission reduction, which includes:

- reduced use of fossil fuel lowers pollution levels.
- healthier more comfortable homes and buildings.
- energy efficient, cheaper to run social housing and corporate buildings.
- biodiversity enhancement.
- improved health for our workers and residents.
- reduced operational costs supporting sustainable City Council services.
- improved budget security from a self-supply of renewable energy generation.
- local leadership and dissemination for replication of decarbonisation measures.
- decarbonisation works provide for 'green' jobs and skills training.
- collaboration and innovation benefit the city and region.

5. Resource implications including non-financial resources:

5.1 The original City Council Carbon Reduction Plan has been reviewed and updated to include all PCT measures, as set out in the Costed Organisational Carbon Footprint Projections Report. Funding operational and capital reduction measures is extremely challenging. Estimated capital and operational costs will inform discussions with relevant OMB representatives to support future grant funding bids.

5.2 The Carbon Reduction Plan is being incorporated into service business plans, which will form part of future planning of existing service budgets.

For enquiries please contact: democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

6. Legal aspects:

- 6.1 Section 1 of the Climate Change Act 2008 states that it is the duty of the Secretary of State to ensure that the net UK carbon account for the year 2050 is at least 100% lower than the 1990 baseline. The target was originally 80% and was increased to 100% by the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019.

7. How does the matter contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan:

- 7.1 This report and the work of the Net Zero team links directly to the Corporate Plan 2025-28. Activity to reduce our GHG emissions links to key priorities set out in the Corporate Plan and in collaboration with City Council services, including using specific and measurable metrics to track progress against priorities and intended outcomes.

Local Economy	Work with Building Greater Exeter and Exeter College to support green skills, training and local employment opportunities, as part of new development and retrofit. Collaboration with other Public Sector organisations, such as the University of Exeter, the Met Office and Exeter Science Park to drive forward carbon reduction initiatives.
Sustainable Environment	Net Zero team focuses on reducing City Council GHG emissions. Decarbonisation reduces energy consumption and costs, reducing service delivery costs and supporting sustainable council services.
Homes	The housing retrofit programme delivers warmer homes, reduced energy consumption, reduced carbon emissions, energy bills and improved health outcomes and wellbeing for tenants. Together with Liveable Exeter, working collaboratively with developers in developing sustainable and accessible neighbourhoods and new homes, using sustainable construction methods.
People	Working in partnership with Live & Move in developing sustainable travel options for residents. Supporting and encouraging City Council officers to be more active and sustainable in their travel choices. Supporting leisure services through better energy management and efficiencies to maintain provision of affordable facilities. Tree planting provides for reduced surface water runoff, improved air quality, improved biodiversity and habitat, and cooling to address warmer summers.

8. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

- 8.1 In reviewing the City Council's Carbon Reduction, potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act. An Equality Impact Assessment has been included in the background papers for Member's attention.

For enquiries please contact: democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk

9. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

9.1 The City Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019. The Costed Organisational Carbon Footprint Projections Report provides a roadmap to reduce City Council GHG emissions. For context, GHG emissions arising from the City Council's direct activities (Scope 1), indirect energy emissions (Scope 2) and from other indirect activities (Scope 3) and included within the Carbon Reduction Plan.

9.2 Strategic decisions made either have a positive or negative effect on City Council GHG emissions. Work needs to be undertaken prior to decisions being made to determine the impact on City Council GHG emissions

Director: Strategic Director Place

Author: Net Zero Project Manager

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

Background papers used in compiling this report:

List of Appendices:

Appendix A – Exeter City Council Carbon Reduction Plan

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Exeter City Council Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan

February 2026

Introduction

- Exeter City Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and as part of this commitment it aims to achieve net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for its own corporate activities, across Scopes 1, 2 and 3.
- This updated Carbon Reduction Plan combines the **Carbon Reduction Plan November 2024** with the Positive Current Trajectory (PCJ), Mid and Max scenarios from the **Costed Organisational Carbon Footprint Projections report** produced by the Centre for Energy and the Environment at the University of Exeter.
- The success of the Carbon Reduction Plan will need support politically and financially to ensure every Council service and employee can lead by example and demonstrate the broad and sometimes extreme actions to reduce carbon emissions, whilst delivering a service to the residents and businesses of Exeter.

Document Framework

The seven sectors in the Carbon Reduction Plan are listed below:

1. Housing
 2. Non-domestic Buildings
 3. Transport & Equipment
 4. Land Use Change
 5. Procurement
 6. F-gases and Waste
 7. Overall Organisation
- Where actions are labelled **a/b/c**, this indicates **PCJ/Mid/Max** options from the Costed Organisational Carbon Footprint Projections report, with emissions reduction increasing as the letters progress
 - Estimated **costs** (where known) come from the **Costed Organisational Carbon Footprint Projections** report
 - Where **funding is available**, this has been labelled as 'Yes' or 'Part'. If funding is not available, this has been labelled as 'No' and is a **future ambition**
 - **Metrics** included for each action to indicate how progress will be measured over time
 - Each action identifies a **Head of Service** as lead officer
 - At the end of the Plan is a section that includes all **previously completed projects** along a timeline

Governance and Monitoring

- The Carbon Reduction Plan is a **live evolving** action plan, **reviewed every 6 months** to update on progress made, as well as legislative, financial, technical and operational changes.
- Relevant Heads of Service from the **Operational Management Board (OMB)** have been assigned to each action, and are **responsible for their assigned actions within the Carbon Reduction Plan**, and ensuring this is aligned and included within their **Service Business Plans**.
- Every 6 months, the current status of each action will be reviewed, and the **colour coded progress column** will be updated based on the following colours: green = near completion, orange = some progress, yellow = slight progress, red = no progress

Delivery of the Carbon Reduction Plan will involve:

1. A rolling programme of projects, funded by invest to save opportunities, borrowing, existing budgets, and available grant funding.
2. Quarterly meetings between Net Zero team and OMB, to discuss progression of actions within Carbon Reduction Plan.
2. Six monthly reports to be presented to Strategic Scrutiny Committee, including, if available, the latest annual report of the Council's Carbon Footprint report.

1. Housing

Area of Focus	Action <small>(where labelled a/b/c this indicates options)</small>	Cost estimated	Currently funded? <small>Yes / No / Part</small>	Lead officer	Metric	Current status <small>(green = near completion, orange = some progress, yellow = slight progress, red = no progress)</small>
Construction of new homes to Passivhaus standard	1.1 Build 500 new homes to Passivhaus standard	£2,960,000 uplift from cost of building 500 new homes to non-Passivhaus standard	Part	HoS - Asset maintenance	No. of Passivhaus homes built/year	Around 170 Passivhaus new homes constructed so far. This includes the most recent completion in 2025 of Vaughan Road Phase 1 (35 homes), with Phase 2 (16 apartments) commencing construction in 2026.
	1.2 Install cavity wall insulation in 181 homes a year	£4,840,000	Part	HoS - Asset maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of cavity wall insulation installments/year • SAP score 	At current rate, around 40 wall insulation installations/year.
1.3 Install loft insulation in 181 homes a year	Part		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of loft insulation installments/year • SAP score 		At current rate, around 90 loft insulation installations/year.	
Decarbonising heat	1.4a Replace gas boilers like for like at end of life (~400 replacements per year)	£8,790,000	Yes	HoS - Asset maintenance	No. of gas boilers replaced/year	Current standard approach is for gas boilers to be replaced like for like at end of life. Electrical heating (Quantum) to be investigated in some properties in 26/27 financial year. Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) trial to be investigated in a small number of suitable properties.
	1.4b Install direct electric heating to all gas homes (609 installations per year)	£20,900,000	No		No. of direct electric heating systems installed/year	
	1.4c Install air source heat pumps (ASHPs) to all gas homes (609 installations per year)	£51,300,000	No		No. of ASHPs installed/year	
Increasing appliance efficiency	1.5 Promoting energy efficiency and use of low energy appliances by promotion of and access to good quality guidance	£0	No	HoS - Asset maintenance	Amount of promotion / guidance available to residents on appliance efficiency	Retrofit and Net Zero teams to work together on leaflet for residents promoting energy efficiency and use of low energy appliances.
Solar photovoltaic (PV) installation	1.6 Install solar PV on 70 homes per year	£3,290,000	Part	HoS - Asset maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • kW of solar PV installed/year • No. of homes installed with PV/year 	At current rate, around 40 solar PV installations/year.

2. Non-domestic Buildings

Area of Focus	Action	Cost	Currently funded? Yes / No / Part	Lead officer	Metric	Current status <small>(green = near completion, orange = significant progress, yellow = some progress, red = no progress)</small>
Riverside Leisure Centre	2.1 Install insulation in sections of roof where required		Yes	HoS - Culture and Leisure	Electricity and gas consumption (kWh)	<p>£3.6million PSDS 4 funding awarded in 2025 to implement 3 year project at Riverside Leisure Centre to insulate section of roof that hasn't yet been insulated, replace air handling units, install an air source heat pump system and heat recovery system. Project completion expected in 2028.</p> <p>Cannot currently proceed due to lack of funding.</p>
	2.2 Replace air handling units		Yes			
	2.3 Install air source heat pump		Yes			
	2.4 Install heat recovery system		Yes			
	2.5 Install LED lighting		Part			
	2.6 Install cavity wall insulation where needed		No			
	2.7 Install double glazed curtain walling		No			
	2.8 Install double glazed rooflights		No			
	2.10 Draught-proof external doors		No			
	2.11 Install triple glazed windows		No			
	Wonford Sports Centre		2.12 Install 49kWp solar PV			
2.13 Install cavity wall insulation		No				
2.14 Install roof insulation		No				
2.15 Install air source heat pump		No				
ISCA Centre	2.16 Install 158 kWp solar PV		No	HoS - Culture and Leisure	Electricity and gas consumption (kWh)	<p>Cannot currently proceed due to need for roof replacement. Once this has been completed, solar PV business case would be viable.</p> <p>Cannot currently proceed due to lack of funding.</p>
	2.17 Install air source heat pump		No			
Exeter Arena	2.18 Install 72 kWp solar PV		Yes	HoS - Culture and Leisure	Electricity and gas consumption (kWh)	<p>Investment for the installation of 25 kWp solar PV array on Exeter Arena grandstand roof approved at Council meeting in December 2025</p> <p>Cannot currently proceed due to lack of funding.</p>
	2.19 Install air source heat pump		No			
St Sidwell's Point Leisure Centre	2.20 Install 83 kWp solar PV		Yes	HoS - Culture and Leisure	Electricity and gas consumption (kWh)	Investment for the installation of 83 kWp solar PV array on St Sidwell's Point roof approved at Council meeting in December 2025.
Corn Exchange	2.21 Install double glazing windows		No	HoS - Culture and Leisure	Electricity and gas consumption (kWh)	Cannot currently proceed due to lack of funding.
	2.22 Install cavity wall insulation		No			
	2.23 Install roof insulation		No			
	2.24 Install LED lighting		No			
	2.25 Install 29.5 kWp solar PV		No			
	2.26 Install air source heat pump		No			
Custom House	2.27 Install air source heat pump	£11,460,000	No	HoS - Culture and Leisure	Electricity and gas consumption (kWh)	Cannot currently proceed due to lack of funding.
RAMM	2.28 Install roof insulation where not yet completed		No	HoS - Culture and Leisure	Electricity and gas consumption (kWh)	Cannot currently proceed due to lack of funding.
	2.29 Install 30 kWp solar PV, LEDs, electric heating		No			
	2.30 Install LED lighting		No			
	2.31 Decarbonise heating - electric heating or air source heat pump		No			
Historic Guildhall	2.32 Install air source heat pump	Unknown at present	No	HoS - Culture and Leisure	Electricity and gas consumption (kWh)	Cannot currently proceed due to lack of funding.
Senate Court	2.33 Install 84 kWp solar PV	£284,000	Yes	HoS - Commercial Assets	Electricity consumption (kWh)	<p>Investment for the installation of 84 kWp solar PV array on Senate Court roof approved at Council meeting in February 2026.</p> <p>Investment for the replacement of equipment approved at Council meeting in February 2026.</p>
	2.34 Replacement of mechanical and electrical building management and ventilation equipment	£692,000	Yes			
Guildhall Car Park	2.35 Install 321 kWp solar PV	£4,227,000	Yes	HoS - Commercial Assets	Electricity consumption (kWh)	Investment for the installation of 321 kWp solar PV array on Guildhall Car Park roof approved at Council meeting in December 2025.
Princesshay 2 Car Park	2.36 Install LED lighting		No	HoS - Commercial Assets	Electricity consumption (kWh)	Cannot currently proceed due to need for electrical upgrade. Once this has been completed, LED lighting business case would be viable.
Data	2.37 Move Council data from Council based data centres to the Cloud	Unknown at present	Part	HoS - Digital & Data	% of Council data in Cloud	16% of servers have been migrated from data centres located in Civic Centre to Azure (Microsoft cloud storage). Hardware no longer used has been powered down, with physical decommissioning options currently being investigated.
Energy	2.38 Ensure all Council energy is from renewable tariff	Unknown at present	Yes	HoS - City Centre & Net Zero	% of Council energy on renewable tariff	Current energy contract with Clean Renewable sources all energy from wind, solar and hydroelectricity sources within the UK.

3. Transport & equipment

Area of Focus	Action <small>(where labelled a/b/c this indicates options)</small>	Cost	Currently funded? <small>Yes / No / Part</small>	Lead officer	Metric	Current status <small>(green = near completion, orange = significant progress, yellow = some progress, red = no progress)</small>
Refuse Collection Vehicles	3.1a Phased introduction of Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) from 2025 - 20% increase per year, to reach 100% HVO	£9,614,000	Part	HoS - Environment & Waste	Diesel / HVO consumption / year	3x e-RCVs currently in operation, out of a total of 11x RCVs. Trial of HVO to be started in 2026, on 3x RCVs and 2x telehandlers, with fuel to be stored in onsite tank that will only allow for small number of vehicles to use HVO. Awaiting Capital funding decision on expansion of the electric fleet going forward.
	3.1b Use HVO in all Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCVs) until vehicle lease period ends. When lease period ends, replace with electric RCV.	£12,428,000	Part		• Diesel / HVO consumption / year • No. of ICE RCVs in fleet	
Specialist vehicles	3.2a Phased introduction of HVO from 2025: 20% increase per year, to reach 100%	£4,479,000	Part	HoS - Environment & Waste	• Diesel / HVO consumption / year • No. of vehicles using fossil fuels	Trial of HVO to be started in 2026, on 3x e-RCVs and 2x telehandlers, with fuel to be stored in onsite tank that will only allow for small number of vehicles to use HVO. Awaiting Capital funding decision needed on expansion of the electric fleet going forward.
	3.2b Electrify vehicles where possible when lease period ends, with 25% specialist vehicles electrified. Phased introduction of HVO from 2025: 20% increase per year, to reach 100%	£4,508,000	Part			
Other vehicles (i.e. non-specialist)	3.3a When lease period ends, replace with EV	£1,147,000	Part	HoS - Environment & Waste	• Diesel / HVO consumption / year • No. of ICE vehicles in fleet	Awaiting Capital funding decision.
	3.3b Phased introduction of HVO from 2025: 20% increase per year, to reach 100%. When lease period ends, replace with EV	£1,149,000	Part			
	3.3c Use HVO in all non-specialist vehicles until lease period ends. When lease period ends, replace with EV	£1,154,000	Part			
Portable equipment	3.4a Phased introduction of HVO from 2025: 20% increase per year, to reach 100%	£223,000	Part	HoS - Environment & Waste	• Diesel / HVO consumption / year • No. of equipment using fossil fuels	£10,000 due to be spent on electrical portable equipment at end of 25/26 financial year as part of a phased electrification of equipment, funded through underspend elsewhere.
	3.4b Electrify equipment where possible when lease period ends, with 25% equipment electrified. Phased introduction of HVO from 2025: 20% increase per year, to reach 100%	£212,000	Part			
Commuting	3.5 Introduce financial incentives to increase uptake of public transport	Unknown at present	Part	HoS - HR, Workforce Planning & OD	% of staff using public transport to commute	40% discount currently available for all staff on Stagecoach South West buses, and all train travel within 30 miles of Exeter. 2025 Staff Travel Survey found that 24% of respondents commute using bus or train.
	3.6 Provide covered cycle storage, showers and lockers at all Council sites to encourage uptake of active travel				% of staff using active travel to commute	Covered cycle storage at most Council sites available, and cycle-to-work scheme in place. 2025 Staff Travel Survey found that 28% of respondents commute by walking, running or cycling.
	3.7 Introduce Electric Vehicle (EV) Salary Sacrifice scheme to encourage uptake of EVs.				Implementation of scheme	Options to be researched. 2025 Staff Travel Survey found that 42% of respondents commute by car, van or motorcycle. Of these, 3% are EVs.
Business Travel	3.8 Ensure all pool cars are electric	Unknown at present	No	HoS - Environment & Waste	% of pool cars fleet electrified	2x electric (50%), 2x hybrid petrol (50%) cars currently available as pool cars of total pool car fleet of 4.
	3.9 Introduce electric pool bikes (e-bikes and e-cargo bikes)			HoS - Environment & Waste	Introduction of e-bikes	E-cargo bikes currently in use by Environmental Health team but not yet available to book as pool bikes for all staff.
	3.10 Implement Sustainable Travel Policy that mandates use of low and zero carbon travel alternatives for business travel			HoS - HR, Workforce Planning & OD	Implementation of policy	Sustainable Travel Policy implemented in September 2024 includes travel hierarchy for business travel, with internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles and aviation least favoured on hierarchy.
EV Charging	3.11 Further expansion of EV Charging Network across Council owned assets	Unknown at present	Yes	HoS - City Centre & Net Zero	No. of EV charging points across Council owned assets	Devon & Torbay Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) project currently underway with several ECC car parks due to have EV charging infrastructure installed. Initial installation activities commencing in April 2026. There are currently 13 Pod Point charge points across Council owned assets.

4. Land Use Change

Area of focus	Action	Cost	Currently funded? Yes / No / Part	Lead officer	Metric	Current status (green = near completion, orange = significant progress, yellow = some progress, red = no progress)
Tree planting	4.1 Increase P&GS canopy cover in line with ECC Tree Strategy objective which aims to increase the whole city's canopy cover from 20% to 30% by 2044	Unknown at present	No	HoS - Operations	Canopy cover % across Exeter	799 trees planted in 2025. An assessment completed in 2023 by Treeconomics, assessing the canopy cover of the whole city of Exeter, found the estimated canopy cover to be 20.2%, higher than the UK national average (17%) for towns and cities.

5. Procurement

Area of focus	Action	Cost	Currently funded? Yes / No / Part	Lead officer	Metric	Current status <small>(green = near completion, orange = significant progress, yellow = some progress, red = no progress)</small>
Improve data capture	5.1 Improve data capture, with minimum corresponding sector spend recorded in procurement records	£0	No	HoS - Legal & Democratic Services	% of spend allocated sector	Net Zero team to investigate spend report and assess how data capture can be improved.
Contract management	5.2 Make it a requirement that all suppliers for new contracts exceeding £50k should state associated GHG emissions with that contract for each financial year, or as a minimum suppliers should provide the corresponding sector for spec to minimise the effort and error associated with manual allocation, and this info be recorded in procurement records	£0	No	HoS - Legal & Democratic Services	Introduce requirement	Carbon Data Request form created in November 2024 and is sent to all suppliers awarded with contracts over £100k. Further investigation to be made over how the information can be used, and how we can increase return rate of these forms.
Procurement Policy	5.3 Implement a Sustainable Procurement Policy	£0	No	HoS - Legal & Democratic Services	Implementation of policy	Procurement and Net Zero team to discuss the implementation of a Sustainable Procurement Policy, with timeframes to be agreed. Examples of other similar policies to be assembled.

6. F-gases and Waste

Area of Focus	Action	Cost	Currently funded? Yes / No / Part	Lead officer	Metric	Current status <small>(green = near completion, orange = significant progress, yellow = some progress, red = no progress)</small>
Quantify ECC's own waste volumes	6.1 Produce an annual ECC waste report that includes total tonnes/annum, breakdown into categories by weight, final destination of waste reported. This will form a base year against which targets can be set	Unknown at present	No	HoS - Environment & Waste	Tonnes of waste per employee / annum	Current waste collection procedure doesn't allow for tonnes of waste collected to be measured or analysed.
Reduce waste going to landfill or being incinerated	6.2 Ensure clear waste and recycling facilities and signage provided within Council buildings	Unknown at present	Yes	HoS - Environment & Waste	Evidence of practice, and case studies	New waste and recycling facilities with improved signage provided in Civic Centre in August 2025. Net Zero team to work with Building Managers across other buildings within Council estate to improve facilities and signage.
	6.3 Adopt a no-printing policy. Ensure all documents distributed are electronic.	£0	No	HoS - HR, Workforce Planning & OD	Evidence of council policy and practice, and case studies	Printing discouraged where possible.
Quantify ECC's full inventory of F-gas	6.4 Create inventory of refrigeration, air conditioning and heat pump equipment and for each item, record the refrigerant type, the charge capacity and the time in use during the reporting period to plan a reduction programme	Unknown at present	No	HoS - Asset maintenance	tCO2e/year from F-gases	F-gas type, charge capacity and time in use kept in inventory by Property Enabling team.

7. Overall Organisation

Area of focus	Action	Cost	Currently funded? Yes / No / Part	Lead Officer	Metric	Current status <small>(green = near completion, orange = significant progress, yellow = some progress, red = no progress)</small>		
Improve understanding of climate emergency and carbon reduction measures	7.1	Implement Carbon Literacy training to all staff and Councillors	£7,200	Yes	HoS - City Centre & Net Zero	% of staff and Councillors who have received training and become certified		337 (41%) existing staff and Councillors (out of 817) have received Carbon Literacy training, 187 (23%) are certified as Carbon Literate.
	7.2	Develop communications programme to highlight achievements and projects delivered in reducing carbon emissions within the Council and externally	£0	N/A	Executive Office Manager	Frequency of published comms related to climate change action		Communications Planner developed for carbon reduction projects for city wide and Corporate activity, to raise awareness and knowledge of environmental sustainability and inspire internal and external audiences to take positive climate and nature action, supporting corporate and city-wide carbon reduction activity.
	7.3	Enabling all staff to contribute towards carbon reduction measures across all ECC services	£0	N/A	HoS - HR, Workforce Planning & OD	No. of staff working on carbon reduction measures		4x officers in Net Zero Team, 1x officer in Executive Team working as Programme Manager for City Wide activity. 18x Climate and Nature Champions have been nominated within each Council Service, to act as the main contact and advocate for all climate and nature related topics within the City Council.
	7.4	Continue to work with partners locally and nationally to reduce carbon emissions	£0	N/A	Executive Office Manager	Evidence of participation in collaborative projects		Part of Devon Climate Emergency Tactical Group, South West Net Zero Hub IACCO, SWEEG, Exeter Partnership Climate and Nature Group, Civic University Agreement (Exeter).
Integrate carbon reduction measures into all Council decisions and policies	7.5	Ensure all Council decisions are informed by an analysis of whether they would help or hinder the reduction in carbon emissions for the council and the city	£0	N/A	HoS - Legal & Democratic Services	Evidence of council policy and practice		Committee reports contain 'Environmental Implications' section at end, but often not completed sufficiently. Discussions about implementing training with OMB on how to fill out the 'Environmental Implications' section. Research currently being made on Doughnut Economics model and how concept can be incorporated into Council decisions. A briefing on Doughnut Economics has been prepared and will be taken to SMB.
	7.6	Review City Council policies to determine their negative and positive impact on reducing Council carbon emissions	£0	N/A	HoS - HR, Workforce Planning & OD	Evidence of council policy and practice		Carbon reduction discussions integrated more into OMB meetings and 6monthly reviews with relevant representatives
	7.7	Investment Plan to determine what resources would be required to achieve carbon reduction measures	Plan produced as part of annual SWEEG membersh ip fee	Yes	HoS - City Centre & Net Zero	Evidence of study determining resources required		Costed Organisational Carbon Footprint Projections' report completed by the CEE at the Unviersity of Exeter determines resources required to reduce carbon emissions under 3 scenarios: business as usual, mid and max.

Previously completed projects that are not included in Carbon Reduction Plan

Date	Sector	Action completed
2007	Non-domestic buildings	Construction of highly energy efficient Ark Store, the off-site RAMM collection store
2007	Procurement	Launch of Council's own environmental accreditation, Green Accord
2013	Non-domestic buildings	70 kWp solar array installed at Civic Centre (Phases 1 & 2)
2013	Non-domestic buildings	50 kWp solar array installed at Materials Reclamation Facility
2013	Non-domestic buildings	40 kWp solar array installed at The Ark Store
2013	Non-domestic buildings	22 kWp solar array installed at Oakwood House
2014	Non-domestic buildings	EV charging facilities installed at John Lewis, Guildhall, Mary Arches, Matford Park and Ride, Cathedral & Quay, and Magdalen Road car parks, Oakwood House office, and Civic Centre.
2014	Non-domestic buildings	LED lighting installed in Harlequins, Mary Arches and Cathedral & Quay car parks
2015	Non-domestic buildings	Oil boilers replaced with gas boilers in Civic Centre and Corn Exchange
2015	Non-domestic buildings	150 kWp solar array installed at Mary Arches Car Park
2015	Non-domestic buildings	122 kWp solar array installed at John Lewis Car Park
2015	Non-domestic buildings	24 kWp solar array installed at RAMM
2015	Non-domestic buildings	29 kWp solar array installed at Clip 'n' Climb Centre
2015	Non-domestic buildings	26 kWp solar array installed at Wat Tyler House
2015	Non-domestic buildings	8 kWp solar array installed at Belle Isle
2016	Non-domestic buildings	1.2 MWp solar array installed at Matford Centre
2021	Non-domestic buildings	Implementation of Building Management System (BMS)
2022	Non-domestic buildings	Construction of Passivhaus St Sidwells Leisure Centre completed
2022	Housing	Construction of Passivhaus Extra Care Scheme Edwards Court completed
2023	Non-domestic buildings	124kWp solar array and small battery store at Riverside Leisure Centre
2023	Non-domestic buildings	Battery storage technology installed at Matford Centre and John Lewis car park
2023	Transport	EV chargers at Exton Road Operations Depot to accommodate full electrification of refuse collection fleet and other vehicles used at depot
2023	Land Use Change	Construction of Water Lane Solar Farm & Batteries - 1.2 MW solar array and 2 MW battery storage facility, with private wire to Exton Road Operations Depot
2023	Procurement	Green Accord accreditation updated, rebranded and relaunched
2023	Procurement	Development of Sustainable Food Policy
2023	Non-domestic buildings	120 kWp solar array installed at Riverside Leisure Centre
2024	Non-domestic buildings	Upgrades to roof insulation at RAMM
2024	Non-domestic buildings	16 kWp solar array at RAMM
2025	Procurement	Tighter emission reporting requirements for contracts over £25,000 introduced

Metrics from the Corporate Plan relevant to Carbon Reduction

Priority	Directorate	Department	Level	Metric	Data Source	Contacts For data	Included in our CRP/KPIs?	Notes
Homes	People & Community	Housing Services		an annual target for retrofitting the council's housing stock		Michelle/Lawrence	both	
Homes	Operations	Asset Maintenance	Service Delivery Metrics	Retrofitting our council houses to reduce carbon emissions and energy bills	Codeman database	Adrian Pengelly	both	
Local Economy	Place	Environment & Waste	Service Delivery Metrics	Safe, accessible and sustainable licenced taxi services across the city.	Uniform record number of licensed vehicles	Simon Lane	KPIs	
Sustainable Environment	Operations	Asset Maintenance	Service Delivery Metrics	Increased use of renewable energy by the council	University of Exeter Report (SWEEG)	Alice Gent	both	
Sustainable Environment	Operations	Asset Maintenance	Service Delivery Metrics	Reduced carbon emissions from Council buildings and services	Codeman database	Alice Gent	both	
Sustainable Environment	Place	Net Zero & City Centre	Strategic Partnerships Metrics	Adoption of an electric vehicle strategy for the city	Statement		N/A	Strategy adopted in April 2025
Sustainable Environment	Operations	Asset Maintenance	Service Delivery Metrics	Decarbonisation of Leisure facilities	Statement	Alice Gent	both	
Sustainable Environment	Operations	Asset Maintenance	Service Delivery Metrics	Energy efficient council homes	Codeman database	Michelle Davidson	both	
Sustainable Environment	Executive Office	Partnerships	Strategic Outcome Metrics	Increase in renewable energy sources available for the city	University of Exeter Report (SWEEG)	Alice Gent		
Sustainable Environment	Place	Net Zero & City Centre	Strategic Partnerships Metrics	Milestones towards the delivery of new District Heat Network in the City	Statement	Victoria Hatfield		
Sustainable Environment	Operations	Environment & Waste	Service Delivery Metrics	New MRF with reduced emissions	Awaiting delivery of MRF	Alice Gent		
Sustainable Environment	Executive Office	Partnerships	Strategic Outcome Metrics	Year on Year reduction on GHG emissions for the city	University of Exeter Report (SWEEG)	Amy Brett-Schenider		

Area of Focus	Action (where labelled a/b/c this indicates options)	Total cost	Lead Officer	Metric / progress indicator	Current status (green = near completion, orange = significant progress, yellow = some progress, red = no progress)
	1.1				
	1.2				
	1.3				
	1.4				
	1.5				
	1.6				
	1.7				
	1.8				
	1.9				

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Equality Impact Assessment: Exeter City Council's Carbon Reduction Plan

The Equality Act 2010 includes a general duty which requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate discrimination**, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

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.

Authorities which fail to carry out equality impact assessments risk making poor and unfair decisions which may discriminate against particular groups and worsen inequality.

Committee name and date:	Report Title	Decisions being recommended:	People with protected characteristics potentially impacted by the decisions to be made:
Strategic Scrutiny 4 June 2026	Exeter City Council's Carbon Reduction Plan	Strategic Scrutiny review the Carbon Reduction Plan (Appendix A). Members note and support work undertaken to incorporate Positive Current Trajectory	Disability, Sex/Gender, Age, Pregnancy & Maternity

Committee name and date:	Report Title	Decisions being recommended:	People with protected characteristics potentially impacted by the decisions to be made:
		(PCT) measures as set out in the Carbon Reduction Plan, into Service Plans, as well as intended outcomes from the Corporate Plan, and integrating the Corporate Performance Dashboard.	

Factors to consider in the assessment: For each of the groups below, an assessment has been made on whether the proposed decision will have a **positive, negative or neutral impact**. This must be noted in the table below alongside brief details of why this conclusion has been reached and notes of any mitigation proposed. Where the impact is negative, a **high, medium or low assessment** is given. The assessment rates the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact – some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
Race and ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers; asylum seekers).			There is no evidence available of specific impact.
Disability: as defined by the Equality Act – a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term	Positive	High	Active travel or sustainable travel initiatives support positive mental health and wellbeing and increased accessibility for those less able. For those City Council employees that have a disability, some active travel options may not be accessible.

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
adverse impact on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.	Positive	High	Buildings built to Passivhaus standard, support positive mental health & wellbeing for individuals. Healthier and warmer homes, no need to switch on heating, as well as energy efficiency of homes. 11.9% of homes in Exeter are classified as being classified as being 'fuel poor'.
	Positive	High	Housing retrofit, provides efficient warmer Council homes warmer homes, improve health outcomes in colder times of the year, and reduce heating costs.
	Positive & Negative	Medium	Some energy efficiency schemes offering home improvements support those who claim various benefits, dependant on eligibility criteria. Those who are not on various benefits, would not be eligible. 1.4% (750) of homes in Exeter are currently heated through renewable or district heat sources
	Positive	Low	Those with a disability living in Exeter is 26% of the population. Some active & sustainable travel options may not be accessible to those with mobility challenges. Promotion of sustainable travel options to those able to use alternative methods, and in return support those with a disability. Eg disabled parking spaces. Those that can make changes are encouraged to and staff feedback is sought via an annual travel survey. Engagement with the transport providers, through the Transport Working Group, to improve accessibility for residents.
	Positive	Medium	New EV charging infrastructure will be accessible for those with disabilities. Overall, there may be a small loss of parking bays available for those that are more mobile.
Sex/Gender	Positive	High	As a result of tackling the impacts of climate change there will be less pollution and healthier environment for expectant mothers, and those with health conditions. Male workers who work predominantly work in

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
			close proximity to diesel vehicles/equipment benefit from electrification of vehicles and equipment.
Gender reassignment			There is no evidence available of specific impact.
Religion and belief (includes no belief, some philosophical beliefs such as Buddhism and sects within religions).			There is no evidence available of specific impact.
Sexual orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual).			There is no evidence available of specific impact.
Age (children and young people aged 0-24; adults aged 25-50; younger older people aged 51-75/80; older people 81+; frail older people; people living with age related conditions. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs).	Positive	High	Delivering Net Zero across the city is likely to be embraced by younger people who live, study, work or socialise in Exeter. Research carried out by Cardiff University across the UK, found that younger age groups demonstrated a stronger engagement with climate change action.
	Positive	Medium	Those that are older or frail may need to keep their homes warmer in colder times of the year and cannot make use of sustainable transport options – which has a negative impact on carbon emissions. It is important that the council promotes and supports home improvements to help make homes warmer and heating more sustainable and continue housing retrofit and Passivhaus projects. 16.7% of the Exeter population are aged 65 and over.
	Positive	Medium	The building of new sustainable active travel routes, and provision of leisure activities will support positive mental health and physical wellbeing and increase accessibility young and old. Reduced emissions can provide improvement in air quality, especially beneficial to younger and older people, as well as those with specific health conditions.
	Positive	High	Reduced use of fossil fuel within City Council operations, equipment and vehicles lowers pollution levels, resulting in an improvement in air

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
	Negative	Medium	quality and a better working environment for officers. 4.6% (6,005) of the population of Exeter consider themselves to have bad or very bad health, improvements in air quality may support these individuals.
	Negative	Medium	Extreme weather conditions effect officers working outdoors and may result in poorer health for older staff, impacting service delivery. Ensure better work equipment, uniform, and working conditions are risk assessed appropriately. Not all individuals that are older have access to a mobile device. When promoting/talking about activity, or severe weather warnings, ensure communications are not solely on digital comms /using social media.
Pregnancy and maternity including new and breast feeding mothers	Neutral	Low	As a result of tackling the impacts of climate change there will be a healthier environment for expectant mothers, as well as the ability to walk/exercise in a safe environment
Marriage and civil partnership status			There is no evidence available of specific impact.

Actions identified that will mitigate any negative impacts and/or promote inclusion

Officer: Jo Pearce

Date: 26 May 2026

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REPORT TO CUSTOMER FOCUS AND STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 18 June and 4 June 2026

Report of: The Scrutiny Programme Board

Title: Annual Scrutiny Report 2025-26

Is this a Key Decision?

No

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 2025-26.

2. Recommendations:

2.1 The Annual Scrutiny Report 2025-26 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 2025-26.

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 note what has been 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 2025-26 and is set out in detail at Appendix A attached to this report.

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

7.1 Good governance contributes to the Council's priority of "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 impact 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 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

Scrutiny Annual Report 2025/6

Exeter City Council



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Foreword from the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Board



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Cllr Matthew Williams
Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Board
(2025/26)

March 2026

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 and make a positive contribution to work in the city. The Scrutiny Programme Board supported by the Democratic Services Team have overseen more change during this year including a new scrutiny committee Chair and changes within the Democratic Services Team.

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 the 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.

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 2025/26 year.

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 priorities.

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
- 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 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:

- 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
- Portfolio Holders report to scrutiny committees to update Members on activities within their portfolio
- There is a page on the Councillor Hub devoted to scrutiny providing Members with supporting information and guidance to assist them in good scrutiny practice.

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 and re-iterates the importance of Scrutiny being Member-led. The Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Programme Board can be found on Page 269 of the Constitution.

Scrutiny Programme Board

Scrutiny Programme Board



Chair - Cllr Matthew Williams

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

Strategic Scrutiny Committee



Chair - Cllr Liz Pole



Deputy Chair - Cllr Kevin Mitchell

Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee



Chair - Cllr Catherine Rees



Deputy Chair - Cllr James Cookson

Looking back over the previous year 2024-2025

- Public information has been updated for clarity, on Exeter City Council website, regarding the Community Lottery following a Customer Focus Scrutiny Session.

Year in Review: Strategic Scrutiny Committee 2025-2026

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- The Strategic Scrutiny Committee has met on seven occasions during the municipal year 2025/26, including one special meeting.
- There were no call-in requests during this period.
- There was a recommendation made to the Executive with regard to an item on Unauthorised Encampments.
- One petition was referred to the committee by Council entitled Save Northbrook Pool.

Year in Review: Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee 2025-2026

- The Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee has met on seven occasions during the municipal year 2025/26.
- No call-in requests were received during this period.
- There were recommendations made to the Executive with regard to items on Potential Closure of Northbrook Pool, Box-shifting and the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFT).
- One petition was referred to the committee by Council entitled To extend Article 4 direction to include all of Hillcrest Park and Doriam Close.

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
UNAUTHORISED ENCAMPMENTS	SMB Review of viability and impact of a negotiated stopping policy underway. Evidence from stakeholders and community groups input to inform protocol review.
PETITION ARTICLE 4	A petition by residents will be held in order to inform any future Article 4 review.
AIR QUALITY MOTION	Members informed the scope of Council's air quality strategy consultation. Timestamped further scrutiny.
CARBON DESCENT REPORT	Current trajectory terminology would be used in future reports in place of business as usual.
CITY WIDE NET ZERO	Links would be made with the county nature recovery strategy.
LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION	Member feedback shaped the submission.

Feedback from other Members of the committee:

TOPIC	IMPACT
AIR QUALITY MOTION	Good to enable formal members involvement in the start of this process.
UNAUTHORISED ENCAMPMENTS	This was the most meaningful session we've looked at - listening to residents' concerns with the petition, hearing from travellers' advocates and the recommendation for a negotiated stopping policy was a positive outcome.

Feedback from the Strategic Management Board:

TOPIC	IMPACT
SHARED PROSPERITY FUND	Balanced discussion about priorities.
MARKETS & STREET TRADING IN EXETER	Enabled good understanding of current situation in Exeter.
CARBON DESCENT REPORT	Detailed presentation about the costs of de-carbonisation.
CITYWIDE NET ZERO	Appreciation of the wide range of activity with partners to tackle net zero.
AIR QUALITY	A thorough scrutiny assessment of the approach to the Air Quality management and the consensus to produce an Air Quality Strategy this year.
PETITION ARTICLE 4	Petition – to Extend Article 4 Direction to include all of Hillcrest & Doriam Close. Understanding this would not have the desired outcomes.

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

IMPACT

NORTHBROOK POOL PETITION

Community Asset Transfer policy has been reviewed and updated.

Improved clarity of understanding of Scrutiny's role in the year spend and the MTFP.

Cross party recommendations were considered by the Executive and taken into account, informing thinking. Budget planning input into the MTFP will be informed by resident's surveys.

Improved understanding of all aspects of budget monitoring and setting.

Police met with Inclusive Exeter to improve understanding and engagement.

Young people's voices were heard and as a result the Deputy Leader is establishing a youth panel.

The Portfolio Holder now meets regularly with City Centre Councillors which feeds directly into the Community Safety Partnership.

Widening Public Participation in key city centre issues. Community Safety Partnership will provide an annual report.

Base line publicly established, so that progress can be measured year on year.

KEY PEOPLE ACTIVITY ACROSS THE COUNCIL

BOX SHIFTING.

Cross party shaping of recommendations for the Executive Committee.

Feedback from other Members of the committee:

TOPIC

IMPACT

NORTHBROOK POOL PETITION

This enabled residents to be heard.

ASB IN THE CITY CENTRE

The result was a very illuminating meeting in which residents, including younger people, finally felt heard. Work on ASB in the city centre has progressed outside of Scrutiny between ward cllrs and the Deputy Leader of the Council. This work is effective collaboration.

KEY PEOPLE ACTIVITY ACROSS THE COUNCIL

This report was very illuminating and held the promise of hopeful change going forwards. Outlined is a big programme of work, which will be very positive.

BUDGET

Proposals were put forward by Scrutiny which was a positive step, a peppercorn rent for Citizens Advice had already been progressed.

MTFP

Clear setting out of the MTFP and opportunity to get clarity regarding mechanics of the financial plan and underlying priorities.

BOX SHIFTING

Greater transparency of the situation for Exeter and the resulting reduction in income coming to the Council than should be the case.

Feedback from the Strategic Management Board:

TOPIC

IMPACT

NORTHBROOK POOL PETITION

Positive suggestion to explore community running of the pool with the Trust, which was taken on board by Executive.

ASB IN THE CITY CENTRE

Heard real life experiences from a range of people in the city.

KEY PEOPLE ACTIVITY ACROSS THE COUNCIL

Positive feedback from the committee was welcomed by the HR Team.

MTFP

The format was further refined, leading to scrutiny proposals being considered during budget debate.

BUDGET MONITORING

Improved understanding of Council's financial position was achieved during the year.

Case Study: ASB in City Centre

Looking Ahead to 2026-2027

June
2024

Scrutiny request from Councillors Michael Mitchell and Tammy Palmer.

September
2024

Scrutiny Programme Board allocated to the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee.

January
2025

Following a unanimous vote ASB in the City Centre, its causes and possible solutions was added to the work plan.

25 Sept
2025

Great session of Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee. Agreement that the Community Safety Partnership would report back in a years' time. Evidence was provided by 4 external agencies, including Inclusive Exeter, and young people from a local secondary school.

The Scrutiny Programme Board will continue to support the scrutiny committees to agree the format and content of the work programme held on the 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, Evaluation of the Commercialisation Strategy, Progress on new strategy to end Homelessness, Reducing the number of empty homes in Exeter and Community Safety Partnership Update.

Strategic Scrutiny Committee – regular Live & Move programme update, Air Quality, Bike Parking and Net Zero items.

The Forward Plan is circulated to Members and is available on the Council Website.

The following topics will be scrutinised:

- Rivers Transparency
- Unadopted roads/management companies
- Bike Parking
- Draft Homelessness Strategy
- Community Safety Partnership Report
- Commercialisation strategy
- Budget
- Tenants Energy Review of Passivhaus Council Homes
- Reducing the number of empty homes in Exeter
- Key People Activity Across the Council
- Air Quality
- Net Zero

Recommendation

Councillor Moore proposed, seconded by Councillor Read that the concerns of inclusive Exeter be presented to the police and DCC and formally to ECC regarding how we better work with our diverse communities and following a unanimous vote, was CARRIED.

Since September 2025:

As a direct result of this scrutiny session the police have prioritised meeting business owners in Sidwell Street to build relationships with diverse communities.

The Community Safety Partnership will report to Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee in September 2026

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Briefing Note

This note summarises the changes to the Asset of Community Value regime in England as introduced by the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026 in the context of Community Land Transfers and Community Asset Transfers. This briefing note also considers some implications for the Council as well as community groups.

Current Assets of Community Value (ACV) Regime – Right to Bid

What is an ACV? A building or other land in a local authority's area is considered to be land of community value under the Localism Act 2011 if in the opinion of the local authority:

- an actual current use or a use in the recent past of the building or land (which is not an ancillary use) furthers/ed the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, and
- it is realistic to think that there can continue to be OR is a time in the next five years non-ancillary use of the building or land which will further (whether or not in the same way) the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community

Who can nominate? A person that is a voluntary or community body with a local connection to Exeter (or where relevant a parish council) can nominate an ACV. Supporting evidence must be provided to accompany the application.

Currently it is the responsibility of the Council's Estates team to determine nominations of ACVs. If the landowner requests a review this is undertaken by the City Development team.

Right of appeal against a decision? If a decision is made to list the building or other land as an ACV, the landowner has the right to ask the local authority to review the decision. If the decision is made not to list the building or other land the nominating group does not have a right of appeal.

Implications for landowner? The listing does not create a right for the community to buy the asset nor is there a right of first refusal on a sale. There is no restriction on what an owner can do with its property, once listed as an ACV, so long as it remains in its ownership. However, the provisions do impact what can be done with an ACV when a 'relevant disposal' is proposed to be entered into.

Subject to some exceptions, at the point at which a 'relevant disposal' of an ACV is proposed to be entered into, the owner must notify the local authority in writing of its wish to dispose of the asset. This triggers an interim moratorium period of six weeks, which allows community interest groups to make a written request to be treated as a potential bidder. If no such requests are received within the initial moratorium period, the relevant disposal can proceed. If a request is received, a second moratorium period of six months is triggered, which allows community interest groups sufficient time to prepare and raise money to bid for the asset on the open market.

Following the conclusion of the moratorium period, the owner of the asset can choose freely who to sell the asset to and for how much.

What about any compensation? An owner of listed land is entitled to compensation from the local authority where they have incurred loss or expense in relation to the land which would be likely not to have been incurred if the land had not been listed.

English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026 – Right to Buy

What's changed? The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2026. It makes significant amendments to the ACV regime. The relevant provisions are however not yet in force (except to the extent commenced for regulation-making purposes) and there is no indication of when they will come into force.

Until the relevant provisions are commenced, the current community right to bid regime under Localism Act 2011 and associated regulations continue to apply.

In summary the changes are:

1. replacing the community right to bid with a community right to buy
2. expanding the definition of an asset of community value to include economic wellbeing and economic interests
3. removing the requirement for past community use to have taken place in the recent past
4. introducing sporting assets of community value, with automatic and indefinite listing for qualifying sports grounds and related supporting land
5. introducing review rights for community groups where a nomination is refused
6. giving community groups a first opportunity to purchase listed assets when the owner wishes to sell
7. extending the purchase process to 12 months where a community buyer is identified
8. allowing an owner to request a progress review at the six-month point
9. introducing an independent valuation process where the owner and community buyer cannot agree a price

What are the implications? The implications of these changes are likely to be:

- **More assets capable of being listed as ACVs** – The definition of ACVs is being expanded to include economic wellbeing and economic interests. Commercial premises can be listed. Nominations can be based on longer-term or historic community use rather than just in the recent past and thereby increasing scope for nominations. Sporting ACVs nominated remain on the list indefinitely. Such a broadening is likely to increase the volume and, in some cases, the complexity of nominations received.
Summary: This represents a shift to a wider and more permissive regime and is likely to increase the number and complexity of listings, which will have resource and capacity implications for the Council.
- **Sports Facilities** – Local authorities will have a proactive duty to list sports facilities. Local authorities have an initial six-months to establish a baseline list, with a review every five years, and an obligation to consider and include qualifying land irrespective of community nomination (thereby creating an additional assessment step for all ACV nominations to consider its sporting status). Assets once identified are indefinitely listed, removing the current five-year sunset. The interpretation of what a sporting facility is based on a narrow statutory definition: *“any place where sports or other competitive activities take place in the open air and where accommodation has been provided for spectators, consisting of artificial structures or of natural structures artificially modified for the purpose.”*
Summary: This introduces a new proactive workload for the Council (particularly in the initial six-month period), alongside an ongoing monitoring obligation, fundamentally shifting the role from reactive processing to active asset identification.

- **Community groups and reviewing decisions** – Nominators for ACVs will acquire a new right to seek a review. New Regulations yet to be published will govern appeals, but it is anticipated from the reading of the statute that nominators will be granted the right to appeal to First Tier Tribunal from the review.
Summary: This creates a more balanced but potentially more contested nomination regime. This is likely to increase the challenges and appeals and may require considered decision-making by the Council in the first instance.
- **Community groups and right to buy** - The right to bid will become a right to buy (or first refusal) following the owner's notice of intention to enter into a relevant disposal. The nominating party will be the 'preferred community buyer' with the right to buy if it gives notice within 6 weeks. The statute allows for 'alternative community buyers' if the 'preferred community buyer' withdraws, fails to make sufficient progress or otherwise falls away from the process, and could potentially be a fallback option. If the 'preferred community buyer' does not purchase the asset the owner has 18 months to sell.
Summary: This represents a fundamental shift from a bidding system to a transactional one, placing greater emphasis on the capacity of the original nominating body and reducing parallel competition between community groups.
- **Involvement of local authorities as mediators** - The LA will now be directly involved and is expected to facilitate a joint meeting with the owner and 'preferred community buyer'. Owner and preferred community buyer have 8 weeks to negotiate. An independent valuer is to be appointed (and paid for by the Council) within 8 weeks where the 'preferred community buyer' has not made an offer at the end of the 8-week negotiation period. The 'preferred community buyer' has twelve months to make an offer. An owner may make a request to assess the 'preferred community buyer's' progress after six months.
Summary: This introduces a new role for the Council, including direct cost exposure (e.g. valuation fees) and increased officer time over a prolonged and more complex right to buy process.

Community Land Trusts and Community Asset Transfer can take advantage of the opportunities created by the proposed right to buy regime.

Community Land Trusts

Community Land Trusts (CLTs) are community-led and non-profit organisations established to acquire, hold and manage land or buildings for the long-term benefit of the local community.

CLTs are commonly used to deliver community housing, workspace or community facilities, but can also acquire a wider range of assets where these contribute to social, economic or environmental wellbeing.

In the context of the proposed changes to the ACV regime, CLTs could play a role as delivery vehicles for community ownership of community assets. A CLT could avail itself of the new right to buy regime as it is a community body which could secure funding.

Community Asset Transfer

Community Asset Transfer (CAT) refers to the transfer of land or buildings from a local authority to a community organisation, usually at less than market value, where the proposed use will deliver wider social, economic or environmental benefits. It is not a

statutory scheme in its own right but is typically affected through local authority policy using existing disposal powers.

Exeter City Council's Community Asset Transfer policy is available here: [Community Asset Transfer - Exeter City Council](#).

CAT provides a complementary pathway to the new right to buy regime. The CAT policy could be reviewed and updated as part of any process of to update Council procedures for the new ACV regime.

WORK PLAN FOR SCRUTINY ITEMS 2026/27

Working Draft

Strategic Scrutiny Committee	Item	Strategic Director	Portfolio Holder	Origin of Business	Status
4 June 2026	Working Towards Net Zero - Exeter City Council's Corporate Carbon Footprint Report and Carbon Reduction Action Plan Progress Report	Strategic Director for Place (IC) Net Zero Project Manager (JP)	Portfolio Holder Climate, Ecological Change & Communities and Customer Services (Cllr Pole)		
4 June 2026	Annual Scrutiny Report	Scrutiny Programme Board	Deputy Leader & Portfolio Holder Support Services and City Management (Cllr R Williams)		
4 June 2026	Air Quality	Strategic Director for Operations	Deputy Leader & Portfolio Holder Support Services and City Management (Cllr R Williams)	Result of Air Quality item in November 2025	Deferred to November – consultation underway.
4 June 2026	Bike Parking	Strategic Director for Place	Portfolio Holder Climate, Ecological Change and Communities and Customer Services (Cllr Pole)	Proposal from Cllr Wetenhall (Dec 2025)	Deferred to November
	Portfolio Holder update – Leader				
10 September 2026	Community Land Trusts	Strategic Director People and Communities		Proposal from Cllr Wetenhall (Dec 2025)	
10 September 2026	Live and Move Programme Update	Chief Executive	Portfolio Holder Leisure Services, Healthy Living	Report from Strategic Scrutiny	

Strategic Scrutiny Committee	Item	Strategic Director	Portfolio Holder	Origin of Business	Status
			& Public Realm Management (Cllr Wood)	Committee 16 March 2023 half yearly	
10 September 2026	Residential Management Companies	Strategic Director for Place	Portfolio Holder City Development (Cllr Patrick)	Monitoring of Motion from Council 9 December 2025	
10 September 2026	City Wide Net Zero - Programme of work and update on delivery	Strategic Director for Place (IC) Service Lead Net Zero & Business (VH)	Portfolio Holder Climate, Ecological Change and Communities and Customer Services (Cllr Pole)		
19 November 2026	Portfolio Holder Update – City Development (Cllr Patrick)				
19 November 2026	Exeter Plan				
19 November 2026	Petition: Adopt Community & Citizens’ Assemblies as Part of the Exeter City Council’s Democratic Process (People’s Polling Petition)	Strategic Director for Corporate Resources (DH)	Deputy Leader (Cllr R Williams)		
19 November 2026	CIL Governance Report	Strategic Director for Place (IC)	Portfolio Holder City Development (Cllr Patrick)		
19 November 2026	Air Quality – incl. Annual Status Report, Revised Air Quality Action Plan and Air Quality Strategy	Strategic Director for Operations (AP)	Deputy Leader & Portfolio Holder Support Services and City Management (Cllr R Williams)		
14 January 2027	Portfolio Holder Update – Culture & City Centre (Cllr Lucy Findlay MBE)				

Strategic Scrutiny Committee	Item	Strategic Director	Portfolio Holder	Origin of Business	Status
11 March 2027	Portfolio Holder Update – Climate and Ecological Change and Communities and Customer Services (Cllr Pole)				
11 March 2027	Working Towards Net Zero - Exeter City Council's Corporate Carbon Footprint Report and Carbon Reduction Action Plan Progress Report	Strategic Director for Place (IC) Net Zero Project Manager (JP)	Portfolio Holder Climate, Ecological Change & Communities and Customer Services (Cllr Pole)		
11 March 2027	City Wide Net Zero - Programme of work and update on delivery	Strategic Director for Place (IC) Service Lead Net Zero & Business (VH)	Portfolio Holder Climate, Ecological Change and Communities and Customer Services (Cllr Pole)		

Items to be considered:

Items to be timetabled:

Rivers Transparency Template	Strategic Director for Operations (AP)	Deputy Leader and Support Services and City Management (Cllr R Williams)	Motion referred from Council 2 September 2025	Invite South West Water to attend and give evidence.
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Items to be scoped:

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