

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

Date of Meeting: 22 June 2026

Report of: Chief Executive

Title: Corporate Plan Progress and Performance – Half Yearly Report

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Executive

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 This report is to update Executive on the progress made against the priorities and areas of focus in the Corporate Plan 2025-2028, up to the end of the 2025/2026 finance year. The full progress summary can be found in Appendix A.
- 1.2 Executive is also asked to note the new Corporate Performance Framework which has been developed. The framework provides a series of measures using trusted data to help assess how well the council is performing against the intended outcomes in the Corporate Plan 2025-2028. The Corporate Performance Framework report can be found in Appendix B.
- 1.3 This report will be brought to Executive Committee on a half-yearly basis. The Strategic Management Board will monitor progress and performance every quarter to keep all actions and measures under review and ensure successful delivery of the Corporate Plan objectives.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 That Executive notes the progress that has been made against the priorities and objectives in the Corporate Plan 2025-2028.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

- 3.1 To enable members, employees and stakeholders to be informed about progress against the outcomes set out in the 2025 – 28 Corporate Plan and performance against the key strategic outcome and service delivery measures.

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

- 4.1 The Strategic Directors and Heads of Service, are asked to review priorities, outcomes and measures contained in the Corporate Plan 2025-28 on a quarterly basis. The Executive Committee are asked to review this every six months. Financial resources will be allocated to support the delivery of strategic priorities outlined in the plan, and these will be identified within the annual budget setting process.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

5.1 There are no specific financial implications contained in this report.

6. What are the legal aspects?

6.1 There is no specific legal obligation for local authorities to publish a corporate plan. However, they are considered to be good practice and demonstrate effective governance. They are widely used by local authorities as a strategic management tool to set out a council's vision, priorities and objectives.

6.2 The main statutory duty that relates to corporate plans is the Best Value Duty which was introduced by the Local Government Act 1999. This requires local authorities to secure continuous improvement in how they carry out their functions '...having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness'

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

7.1 Members will note the legal aspects above. The Monitoring Officer has no additional comments.

8. Report details

8.1 The three-year Corporate Plan 2025-2028 was approved by members on 22 July 2025. The plan outlines 4 key priorities of Local Economy, Homes, People and Sustainable Environment, underpinned by A Well-Run Council. Under each priority is a series of intended outcomes and areas of focus. A full update against the areas of focus can be found in Appendix A.

8.2 The Corporate Plan is important because it provides a clear strategic direction for the council, setting out the long-term priorities, intended outcomes and key actions that will guide decision-making, resource allocation and service delivery. It gives members, officers, partners and residents a shared understanding of what the council is seeking to achieve and helps ensure that activity across the council is aligned to the council's priorities.

8.3 Since the approval of the plan in July 2025, extensive work has taken place with Strategic Directors and Heads of Service to develop a Corporate Performance Framework to enable robust monitoring and evaluation of the Corporate Plan. This consists of all of the measures set out in the Corporate Plan. The full Corporate Performance Framework report can be found in Appendix B.

8.4 The Corporate Performance Framework is equally important because it translates the outcomes and actions in the Corporate Plan into measurable indicators using trusted data. This enables the Council to track progress, identify areas of strong performance and where improvement is needed, and take timely corrective action. Together, the Corporate Plan and the Corporate Performance Framework strengthen accountability, support transparency, demonstrate the Council's commitment to continuous improvement, and provide assurance that priorities are being delivered effectively and efficiently for the benefit of residents and communities.

8.5 The key highlights from Appendix A and Appendix B are set out below.

Key highlights

Overall, the Council's performance is strong with over 85% of the measures identified in the Corporate Plan either in line or improving against targets. There are a number of standout results, with several measures significantly exceeding target.

Local Economy

- Street trading and markets growth was particularly strong alongside consistently high service standards in food hygiene compliance and street cleansing, graffiti and litter reduction.
- Work continues to support city centre vitality through a positive approach to regeneration, enabling flexible uses and facilitating schemes that contribute to increased footfall, cultural activity and reduced vacancy rates.
- A public consultation is underway for the City Centre Strategy and the Culture Strategy, with the final Strategy's being recommended for adoption at September Executive and October Council 2026.

People

- Exeter Leisure memberships increased, while perceptions of Exeter as a safe place to live also exceeded target.
- The creation of a City Centre Community Safety Team was approved by Council in January 2026. The new team will be provided with powers to address anti-social behaviour across Exeter.
- Four new priorities for Safer Exeter, the Community Safety Partnership, were agreed by Safer Exeter March 2026 for the next 3 years. An action plan has been developed to deliver the 4 priority themes.
- The Wonford Community Hub and King George V schemes to improve community sport and playing field facilities have been agreed. These schemes are now proceeding to delivery.
- The Newtown Active Travel Scheme is under construction, with a new walking and cycleway through the Triangle Car Park being delivered.

Homes

- Delivered some of the strongest headline results, with new homes completed up (480 built in 2024/25) , social rent share outperforming the region at 53.1%, and social housing units also up year on year by 23.0%.
- A Housing Needs and Homelessness restructure was completed this year which saw the formation of an 'Early Intervention and Prevention Team' and a dedicated casework service that will support all potential approaches from customers including those rough sleeping.
- The first phase of the Vaughan Road development has been completed offering 35 additional 1 and 2 bedroom council units.

Sustainable Environment

- Excellent progress on carbon reduction with a 15.4% reduction in the City Council carbon footprint, supported by strong gains in renewable energy generation.
- Awarded Silver Status for delivering Carbon Literacy Training across the council
- The council's costed Carbon Reduction Plan was approved by Executive April 2026, the first of its kind across Local Authorities in England, a pioneering project

developed by the Centre for Energy and Environment at the University of Exeter. Delivery is through existing Service Plans, as well as successful external grant funding.

- The council is leading Exeter's Nature Towns and Cities accreditation application with support from partners including Devon Wildlife Trust, the University of Exeter and the Met Office. Successful accreditation will result in Exeter being designated a 'Nature City' with potential to unlock significant funding. The project is currently in the engagement phase with more than 1,000 people taking part in the recent 'Wild Exeter' survey.

A Well-Run Council

- Performs strongest in financial management and service efficiency, including 99.1% of invoices paid within 30 days, a reduction in sundry debt arrears, and significant growth in online self-service transactions, all of which demonstrate strong operational delivery.
- Progress is also being made in advancing the Council's equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) agenda, with delivery of the EDI plan, development of inclusive policies and training, and improved use of workforce data to monitor outcomes and inform future action.
- Progress is being made to implement the Consultation and Engagement Strategy, establishing clearer standards, strengthening coordination across services, and promoting more inclusive, evidence-based engagement with residents and stakeholders.
- The Government completed its Fair Funding Review, reforming the allocation of grant funding to English local authorities from 2026/27 based on updated assessments of relative need, area costs, and resources. This resulted in the first multi-year Settlement in a decade, covering the period from 2026/27 to 2028/29. As a result of this, the anticipated reductions of £3.5m for 2026/27 were no longer required. This enabled a balanced budget to be set.

8.6 There are some areas which are performing at below the expected level. These are summarised below:

- Comparing 2026 Q1 with Q1 2025 / 2024 / 2023 business creation and closures, there is a slight reduction in business births (-10). We will continue to engage with InExeter and Devon Chamber in how we support businesses and individuals to set up and grow a business across Exeter.
- The number of residents reporting Exeter as a welcoming and inclusive city is below target 63% vs 72%. This reflects a perception-based measure influenced by a range of factors, including wider economic conditions, community cohesion and the city experience.
- Inactivity amongst people in our priority neighbourhoods has increased by 2.8% vs a target reduction of -2.00%. This is a national trend with a number of factors contributing including complex lives, cost of living and structural inequalities.
- There has been an approximate drop of £900 in Ward Grant spend (2.5%) for 2025/26. 2026/27 data is not yet available. Further work will be undertaken to publicise ward grants through councillors and community builders.
- Improving access for disabled facilities and warm homes grants is currently -19.39% against a targeted improvement of 5% year on year.
- Recovery of overpaid Housing Benefit down -5.7% vs 2.0% increase. Permanent staff resources for the recovery of overpaid Housing Benefits has enabled a housekeeping exercise of historic debts to be performed and driven up write-offs during 25/26 compared to 24/25
- Internal health and safety training/compliance for workforce is low at 66.4% vs 90.0% target.

- Complaints processing is currently below the target to provide a satisfactory remedy for 50% of cases before reaching the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). There was a drop in the number of complaints in 2024/25 (8) compared to 2023/24 (10). However, whilst 50% of cases in 2023/24 were successfully resolved locally, none of the 10 cases in 2024/25 were remedied prior to reaching the LGO.

8.7 Actions have been identified to address areas which are performing at below the expected level. These actions will be added to Service Plans and kept under regular review by the relevant Strategic Director and Head of Service.

9. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

9.1 A full Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) was conducted when the Corporate Plan was approved in July 2025. Progress has been made against the agreed actions contained within the EQIA including the development of an Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, the roll out of Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Training for council employees and the introduction of a Consultation and Engagement strategy that will help to ensure that all voices are heard when developing plans to deliver against the outcomes identified in the Corporate Plan

10. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

10.1 The new Corporate Plan 2025 - 2028 includes several initiatives aimed at reducing the carbon footprint and promoting sustainability, by working in partnership to reduce carbon emissions, by supporting the delivery of District Heat Networks, securing affordable clean and secure energy for the city and bringing forward an Electric Vehicle Strategy for the city.

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

11.1 The decision directly contributes to the Council's Corporate Plan as it relates to the monitoring and delivery of that plan and provides safeguards and assurance that the priorities and objectives will be delivered in a timely way.

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

12.1 The risks associated with projects or initiatives identified in the plan will be assessed as they are approved on an individual basis and included in the Council's Risk Registers as appropriate.

13. Are there any other options?

13.1 No other options have been identified.

Chief Executive

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

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

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

None

List of Appendices:

- Appendix A Corporate Plan 25-28 Half Yearly Review
- Appendix B Corporate Performance Quarterly Report May 2026