

SCRUTINY ECONOMY COMMITTEE
8 November 2012

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORT PORTFOLIO
PROGRAMME FOR 20012/13 PROGRESS AT HALF YEAR

IMPROVING SERVICE DELIVERY

- The City Development service has a pivotal role to play in delivering the City Council's corporate vision. A priority this year will be to complete a systems review of City Development that achieves our ambition of delivering good development and in the process generating high income levels, such as through New Homes Bonus, while meeting the desire for greater community involvement.

The systems review started in May and started to take demand over the summer. The initial permanent team of four has been expanded to six and is now consolidating before expansion. Provisional calculations for New Homes Bonus indicate an award of in excess of £900,000 will be earned for each of the next six years, over 50% above the Council's target.

HOUSING OUR COMMUNITIES

- Now the Local Development Framework strategy has been adopted we need to progress consultation on and adoption of an Affordable Housing SPD that includes guidance on the introduction of the higher affordable housing requirements in the Core Strategy, the future mix of units, approach to viability assessments and the calculation of off-site financial contributions.

Executive has agreed a draft Affordable Housing SPD which is subject to public consultation until 16 November. The SPD addresses all the issues highlighted.

- Key focus must be to bring forward outline and full planning permissions to enable the implementation of the proposed new communities at Monkerton and Newcourt and preparation of a development brief in partnership with the local community, for strategic growth at Alphington.

Planning Committee has approved detailed permission for nearly 900 homes this Council year, over 600 of them at Newcourt. Outline applications for about 1,160 homes are due to be considered shortly at Monkerton and 58 homes at Newcourt. Progress is being made on a S106 agreement for 700 homes at Dart land Newcourt. Meetings have commenced with residents of Alphington on the preparation of a development brief.

A CITY OF GROWTH AND BUSINESS

- Implementation of a comprehensive approach to infrastructure planning including adoption of a Community Infrastructure Levy, maintenance of an up to date Infrastructure Delivery Plan and establishment of governance arrangements for CIL and the NHB major infrastructure fund.

The Council has completed the two consultation stages. Further investigations are being undertaken on retail issues following a recent report of a planning inspector who departed from the previous line that it is possible to differentiate between types of retail.

- Adoption of development principles for the Bus Station, consideration of a feasibility study, submission of an outline planning application for the development and approval of

reserve matters application for the first phase. The project will require successful negotiations to relocate the Bus Depot and a finance package for non commercial facilities.

Development principles have been adopted, investigations and negotiations continue on design and funding including the inclusion of a proposed replacement swimming pool for The Pyramids. A masterplan has been agreed for Exmouth Junction identifying a potential relocation site for the Bus Depot.

- Completion of improvements to London Inn Square and King William Street Car Park to coincide with the opening of the proposed JLP store.

The scheme has been implemented and the JLP store opened on schedule on 12 October.

- Implementation of the Princesshay artwork and improvements to support Cowick Street and Heavitree local shopping centres and development of proposals for Central Station forecourt and around Central Library.

The Princesshay artwork has secured planning permission and is shortly to be installed. The first phase of Cowick Street improvements, cleaning and lighting of the railway bridge has been actioned and the remainder will follow. The design of proposals at Central Station has been agreed, notice is being given to tenants by Network Rail and a detailed contract specification is being prepared. Discussions with the County Council regarding public realm improvements around the Central Library are ongoing.

QUALITY OF LIFE

- To update the Council's Open Space Strategy and records of locally important heritage.

Initial work has started on the open space strategy and public consultation has commenced on changes to the local list of heritage buildings.

A SUSTAINABLE CITY

- Development of viable proposals for district heating schemes at Monkerton and the Grecian Quarter/Heavitree Road.

Negotiations on Monkerton have reached a critical stage. A study has been commissioned to inform how to proceed in the Grecian Quarter. A detailed feasibility study has been jointly commissioned with the RD&E Hospital, Exeter University and Devon County Council to inform how to proceed in the City Centre. This study is due to be completed in November. ECC will then be asked to make decisions about the role it will be prepared to play in delivery and the operation of the network.

- Consideration of a Design Review Panel to raise the quality of development.

Other Devon authorities have been approached regarding a joint panel, Exeter would generate insufficient work to justify its own panel.

- Progress implementation of the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Discussions continue with appropriate bodies such as Natural England on how this relates to funding for mitigation of Natura 2000 sites.

- Preparation and adoption of an SPD on sustainable construction and an approach to allowable solutions.

Priority has been placed on resolving sustainable construction and low carbon energy issues on current planning applications at Monkerton and Newcourt since these provide the main opportunity to deliver change.

THRIVING COMMUNITIES

- Preparation of an Issues & Options DMDPD, conduct of public consultation upon it and consideration of the results.

The document, renamed the Site Allocations and Development Management document, has been prepared, and agreed for consultation by Executive. A report to Executive in early 2013 will consider a proposed response to the 300 representations received.

- Establish procedures and consider applications for neighbourhood plans and support for communities, such as St James Forum, through the process.

A protocol has been agreed by Executive. St James Forum and area has been formally designated and a public consultation by the forum on a draft plan is underway.

- Establish a register of Assets of Community Value in response to any regulations.

The legislation took effect at the end of September. Executive has established procedures and advise has been published on the website..

PUBLIC REALM SERVICES - PARKING, WATERWAYS & FLOOD PREVENTION

- explore the integration of the parking enforcement and community patrol teams to create a new community enforcement & safety team.

This has not yet been progressed because of an external review of civil parking enforcement in Devon, commissioned by the County Council. This review potentially impacts on the City Council's future role in managing CPE; it's initial recommendations are due in December.

- work to determine the preferred option for upgrading Exeter's flood defences and putting in place a local funding partnership that will secure financial contributions from a range of agencies in both the public and private sectors and will in turn unlock the core funding from central government.

Identification of schemes and associated funding solutions to address significant flooding issues in the City affecting the River Exe and Northbrook. We will also be undertaking an early review of the Council's policy framework, and decision-making arrangements, in respect of the river and canal to improve democratic accountability and ensure the city is best placed to maximise the potential of this asset.

Discussions on funding the River Exe scheme are ongoing. The Leader of the Council has indicated that the City Council will contribute £3 million to an agreed scheme and the County Council has formally agreed to match this contribution. The contribution from government is estimated to be £12 million. Private sector contributions for the remaining £6 million are currently being sought via the Local Enterprise Partnership. A core officer group from the City Council, County Council and the Environment Agency has been established to progress the scheme. A formula has been established to allow S106 contributions to the River Exe scheme to be sought from appropriate developers.

The flood protection scheme for Northbrook will be included in the next capital programme. Officers are currently finalising recommendations regarding the future management of the river and canal and a report is due to be considered by Executive in the near future.

- progression of the various ideas/initiatives generated by the Parking Task and Finish Group successfully setup by Scrutiny – Economy. These reports to be provided to Executive for future consideration.

The report on new tariff bands will be considered by Executive in November.

- the completion of the King William car park refurbishment in readiness for the opening of the John Lewis store.

Completed on time.

**Councillor Rachel Sutton
Portfolio Holder Sustainable Development and Transport
November 2012**