EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ECONOMY
6 MARCH 2008

NATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATOR RESULTS 2006/2007
HOW EXETER'S RESULTS COMPARE

1   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   A full analysis of Exeter's performance indicator results for 2006/07 has been sent to
        Members under a separate cover. This report provides an overview of the
        performance of those services covered by this committee. The other two Scrutiny
        Committees will receive a similar report covering services within their remit.

2   BACKGROUND

2.1   Exeter's performance indicator results for 2006/07 were published in the Corporate
        Plan. The Audit Commission subsequently published audited comparative data in
        December 2007.

2.2   The graphs contained within the detailed analysis compare Exeter's results against
        authorities in the Council's benchmarking group and therefore provide a comparison
        against other broadly similar councils.

2.3   The graphs have been arranged so that councils with comparatively good performance
        are shown on the left side of each graph. Those councils with comparatively poor
        performance are on the right side of each graph. Exeter's results are highlighted on
        each.

2.4   The Audit Commission uses national upper and lower quartile figures as benchmarks
        against which to judge service performance. The detailed analysis shows quartile
        figures for all English district councils against each graph. Services should generally
        be aiming to be in the top quartile (i.e. the best performing 25% of councils in the
        country).

3   RESULTS OVERVIEW

3.1   Exeter is in the top quartile for 20 indicators out of a total of 65 where comparisons
        are possible (31%), compared to 25 out of 67 (37%) last year. It is in the bottom
        quartile for 9 indicators, compared with 11 last year.

3.2   This year has seen improvement in 41 indicators with 8 of these achieving a higher
        quartile rating than last year. However, 29 indicators show a lower performance than
        last year, with 13 achieving a lower quartile rating than last year. Out of the 10
        indicators that fall within the remit of this Scrutiny Committee, only 3 have poorer
        performance. These are BVPI 106, 109b and 204 (See below).

Planning

3.3   The percentage of new homes built on brown field sites (BVPI 106) fell from 87.5% in 2005/06 to 80.42% in 2006/07. This maintained Exeter's position in the second national quartile. This indicator will inevitably fluctuate dependent on the mix of developments in the pipeline in any particular year. Some authorities are achieving 100% on this indicator, including Eastbourne, Oxford, Worcester and Worthing within our benchmarking group. However, performance is affected by the context of the planning strategy for the area, in particular, the availability of brownfield sites. In Exeter, many brownfield sites have been re-developed over the last decade.

3.4   The Council processed 76.71% of minor applications in 8 weeks (BVPI 109b), compared with 80.46% in 2005/06. Exeter fell from the top to the third national quartile. Exeter is eleventh in the benchmarking group for this indicator. The best performing council in the group was Worcester with 94.69%. Some authorities achieve higher performance by refusing to negotiate amendments to planning applications, requiring applicants to make fresh applications. This is at the expense of customer satisfaction.

Appeals

3.5   The percentage of appeals allowed against the authority's decision to refuse planning applications (BVPI 204) rose from 27.9% in 2005/06 to 32.1% in 2006/07. This placed Exeter in the third national quartile and tenth in the benchmarking group. This change is not significant in terms of the number of appeals determined (about 50 to 60 per annum).

4   RECOMMENDED

(1) That Members consider the report and indicate whether they wish to receive any further information on any particular issue(s).

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