

**EXETER CITY COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE  
18 JUNE 2013**

**COUNCIL  
16 JULY 2013**

**EXETER ST JAMES NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Members about the outcome of the Exeter St James Neighbourhood Plan referendum and to seek Members' agreement to ask Council to adopt the Neighbourhood Plan as part of the statutory development plan.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Exeter St James Neighbourhood Plan was presented by the Forum at the Planning Member Working Group on the 16 October 2012. A report to Executive on the 20 November 2012 informed Members of progress on the production of the Plan, agreed the Council's response to the consultation process and granted delegated powers to proceed.
- 2.2 Members will also recall that a report to Executive on 19 March 2013 informed Members about the outcome of the examination of the Exeter St James Neighbourhood Plan, agreed the Council's response to the examination report and granted delegated powers to take the process forward to referendum.

**3.0 OUTCOME OF THE REFERENDUM**

- 3.1 The referendum on the Exeter St James Neighbourhood Plan was combined with the County Council elections on the 2 May 2013. 91.6% of those voting were in support of the plan. This is a slightly higher percent in support than achieved by Eden's Neighbourhood Plan (the first referendum held) and significantly higher than Thame's Neighbourhood Plan (which also held a referendum on the 2 May). Whilst the turnout for St James was low, at 20.8%, the ward often has a lower than average turnout.
- 3.2 Where a referendum results in a majority Yes vote (i.e. over 50% of those voting) legislation requires that the Council adopts the neighbourhood plan as soon as reasonably practicable for it to come into legal force. As more than 50% voted in favour of the Exeter St James Neighbourhood Plan, it must now be adopted by the Council. The Plan will then become part of the statutory development plan and will be used to help decide planning applications in the St James ward.
- 3.3 Exeter St James Forum has made impressive progress in producing their Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan will be only the second in the country to be adopted.

**4.0 PUBLICISING A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

- 4.1 As soon as possible after deciding to adopt a neighbourhood plan the Council must publish on their website a statement setting out the decision and their reason for making that decision ("the decision statement"). A draft of the decision statement is attached at Appendix A. A copy of the decision statement will be sent to Exeter St James Forum.

4.2 The Council must also publish on the website the neighbourhood plan and details of where and when the plan may be inspected. The Council also intends to publicise the Plan by issuing a press notice and placing an article in the Exeter Citizen.

4.3 A copy of the Neighbourhood Plan is available in the Members Room.

## **5.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 (i) That Executive offers its congratulations to Exeter St James Forum on their success in the referendum;
- (ii) Agrees the decision statement (attached at Appendix A);
- (iii) Recommends that Council adopts the Exeter St James Neighbourhood Plan as part of the statutory development plan.

**RICHARD SHORT**  
**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR CITY DEVELOPMENT**

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)**

**Background papers used in compiling this report:**

None

**EXETER CITY COUNCIL  
EXETER ST JAMES NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN DECISION STATEMENT**

**The decision:**

To adopt the Exeter St James Neighborhood Plan as part of the Council's development plan as soon as reasonably practicable in accordance with section 38A(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**Reasons for making that decision:**

More than half of those voting in the Exeter St James Neighborhood Plan referendum on 2 May 2013 have voted in favour of the plan.

**EXETER CITY COUNCIL**