

**Portfolio Holder Priorities 2013/14  
Economy and Culture**

Help me run a successful business	
1	City Centre Strategy 2013/2022
	Draft Strategy has been approved after extensive consultation with the business community, other city centre users and the agencies responsible for its cleanliness, safety, development and important role as a hub for employment, important services and cultural activity. The City Centre Partnership Board membership and approach is being reviewed to be fit for purpose to oversee and drive delivery of the strategy. A programme of work will follow setting out how and by whom the key actions are to be taken forward.
2	Economic Development Strategy 2013- 2018
	Development of knowledge based economy strategy will shortly be finalised with the broader economic development strategy prepared by end of March 2014. The intention is to set out the way forward for supporting and growing the local economy as the basis for securing a continuation of the partnership approach between public and private sectors including key government agencies which has been so successful to date.
3	Advertise premises and sites through our on-line commercial property register
	In the year ending 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2013, the service handled 1177 new enquiries and 29 companies completed their expansion or relocation plans creating 370 jobs following support from the service. Of these enquiries, 88% were secured via the Council's website.
4	Promote the City nationally and internationally to secure investment and attract new businesses and skilled workers
	New website up and running and prospectus being finalised. New video launched and activities to now use these tools proactively as part of promotional campaign are being implemented.
5	Bring employers to major employment sites, including Exeter Science Park, creating upwards of 26,000 jobs in the next 15 years in the Exeter growth area
	First occupier now on site at Science Park and construction of new Science Park Centre will now start in Jan 2014 with some prospective occupiers being identified. There is an exciting prospect of Met Office investment in a new super computer which could be a significant magnet for further occupiers and boosting the development of the science park.
6	Support thriving district shopping centres including Topsham, Cowick Street, Fore Street, Heavitree, Magdalen Road
	Independent shops being assisted with support given to the development and distribution of five Trail leaflets aimed at raising the profile of areas away from the High Street. There has been a significant improvement in the relationship and engagement with independent traders in the City.  Support has been given to the Federation of Small Businesses in promoting Small Business Saturday to attract media attention to Fore Street and Cowick Street. A Small Business Saturday parking permit for Pay & Display car parks was also provided.

	<p>Topsham has its own leaflet aimed at attracting tourism.</p> <p>Initial meeting held with Cowick Street traders to discuss the possibility of a locally-led strategic plan for Cowick Street. A small group are now looking at developing a consultation of traders and the wider community.</p> <p>Disucssions are ongoing around improving engagement with Fore Street Heavitree traders.</p>
7	<p>Promote the City as a retail and visitor destination</p>
	<p>Activities to promote the city are ongoing involving coordinated activity with businesses directly contributing through the Exeter and Heart of Devon Tourism Partnership. For example 50,000 copies of the Winter in the City promotional brochure were printed and distributed throughout Devon, produced in partnership with the Express &amp; Echo. This was also included as an 8 page supplement in the paper (Oct half term). Also there is ongoing development of the promotional website <a href="http://www.ExploreExeter.co.uk">www.ExploreExeter.co.uk</a> to promote Exeter for day visits and short breaks and a national promotion of Exeter with an themed extensive PR campaign. There is some evidence that this is resulting in the city remaining attractive to visitors and keeping the city centre streets busy. For example the number of Park and Ride users has increased by 10% by the end of December 2013 compared with the previous year, an increase from over 608,000 to over 672,000</p> <p>The development and promotion of the city, and particularly the city centre, as a visitor destination is now recognised as a strategic economic priority and is being picked up through multiple areas of work including the City Centre Strategy, Cultural Action Plan and Parking Review.</p>
8	<p>We will introduce 'pay by phone' parking in all Council car parks to provide greater convenience and flexibility to customers wishing to visit and shop in the city.</p>
	<p>Contracts have been exchanged and pay by phone should be on offer in Council car parks from mid January.</p>
9	<p>In response to notice given by the County Council to terminate the existing Agency Agreement for civil parking enforcement, we will work with them to introduce more efficient and streamlined arrangements and, subject to financial considerations, will be looking to play a leading role in future provision to ensure that Exeter's residents and businesses continue to have effective and measured parking enforcement that balances the competing needs of the city.</p>
	<p>The city's civil parking enforcement service will transfer to the County Council on 1 April 2014. We are working closely alongside the County Council to ensure a smooth transition. The Parking Review will also include the on-street parking offer.</p>
10	<p>Following recent consideration of a petition at Full Council, we will work in partnership with the County Council and representatives of the community in Topsham to explore the available options for alleviating the reported pressures on parking space.</p>
	<p>Progress: The immediate issues have been identified and most relate to on street parking issues which are the remit of the County Council. Car parking capacity in Topsham will be considered as part of the Parking review.</p>

## Provide great things for me to see, do and visit

1	<p>Offer an inspiring programme of events, activities and exhibitions at the Museum, enriching the cultural lives of all who live, visit and work in the City</p>
	<p>October to December programme published which includes the 'flagship' exhibition 'West Country to Worlds End' 26th October 13 to 2nd March 14. Ongoing programme planning continues with visitor numbers remaining good particularly attracted by the high quality exhibitions RAMM is able to secure through its Arts Council funding and its growing reputation as a leading regional museum and art gallery.</p> <p>RAMM has worked in partnership with other organisations to broaden participation and access to the museum and to develop links with the Health &amp; Wellbeing agenda, through projects such as Essentially Me! with Exeter's Youth Inclusion and Support Team.</p>
2	<p>RAMM (Major Partners Museum Bid). Secure a successful bid.</p>
	<p>Application for the next round of significant funding to provide the essential underpinning of the quality and extent of the activities of the RAMM from the Arts Council will be being made in January with the result for this vital source of money being known in the Summer. This funding will be for the period of 3 years from April 2015.</p>
3	<p>Work with Parkwood Leisure to maintain and improve sporting and leisure facilities operated on behalf of the council</p>
	<p>The Members Working Group was set up to work with Parkwood to achieve an improved level of service for users of the facilities. There is a programme of improvement plans in place which will be revised and updated once the results of the independently produced Quest Assessments (industry acknowledged Quality Scheme) of the facilities are received. Each facility would then produce an improvement plan that relates directly to their individual assessments. The MWG will be able to monitor progress of these plans.</p> <p>Significant improvements over the past year have included the introduction of the social media Facebook presence for customers to be able to make online comments and enquiries. An online booking system has been introduced to make it easier for customers. The annual Customer Satisfaction Survey undertaken every August/September indicated an increase overall across all the facilities of 7% in the customer satisfaction ratings. Major improvements have been made in the refurbishments of Wonford and Clifton Hill fitness rooms and replacement of the bowling mat underlay at Isca Bowls Centre.</p> <p>Progress is also being made in delivering the replacement running track at the Arena which is due for completion next summer. This will result in a closure of the track but on completion Exeter will have a national standard track that will last up to 25 yrs and remain the number one athletics facility in the South West. Consultation with customers and clubs has been very positive and they are fully supportive of the Council's decision to replace the track despite the loss of their training and competition facility for a few months in the athletics season.</p> <p>More detail will be provided by the officer report to Scrutiny Committee and the presentation by the Parkwood manager.</p>
4	<p>Continue to give grant aid to Animated Exeter, Vibraphonic and Exeter Respect festivals</p>
	<p>The Council has supported these three successful festivals again this year. Vibraphonic's attendance was just under 5000 with some 300 artists involved. Exeter Respect attracted a diverse audience of some 20,000 over the two days in the summer. A successful application for £46800 has been made to the Arts Council fund, Grants for the</p>

	Arts, for Light Stream, an animation event in Fore Street over three nights of the festival in February 2014. Further details of these events are contained in the 2012/13 Arts Review report being presented to Scrutiny Economy including information on the success of the Unexpected Festival which took place in September and which engaged with some 20,000 people over 17 events.
5	Work with the Exeter Cultural Partnership to prepare a Cultural Strategy to develop the breadth and quality of activity in the City
	<p>An initial Cultural Action Plan has been presented to and received the support of Scrutiny Committee - Economy and Executive. This has set out four objectives agreed with the Cultural Partnership towards establishing the city as a regional cultural centre with aim of increasing involvement and participation at all levels. Progress with this will be reported back to future meetings.</p> <p>A bid, by Exeter Cultural Partnership with the support of Exeter City Council, has been submitted to the Arts Council and Visit England's Cultural Destinations Fund for a total of £347,600 over three years which will contribute to the delivery of the Action Plan with the intention of supporting cultural activity alongside the Rugby World Cup.</p>
6	Work towards the development of the new swimming pool and leisure facilities.
	The Project Board for Leisure Centre has been constituted and recruitment of the Project Manager is underway. Following a complex design and procurement process, construction is forecast to start in late 2015.
<b>Help me get back to financial independence</b>	
1	Continue to work with the Exeter and Heart of Devon Employment and Skills Board to promote investment in training provision for employers and progress projects which support local people to take advantage of job opportunities
	Encouraging developers to employ local people is being pursued through the planning process and a report recommending an approach to secure skills and employment plans and commitments to training from developers as part of the planning process has been considered by Planning Member Working Group and is on the agenda for this Scrutiny Economy meeting. With the departure of the officer supporting the Board further progress building upon success with other initiatives aimed at helping people into work and to receive training in work is delayed until a replacement is recruited. It is important to note that the work of the Board alongside other Boards in the area has resulted in the skills agenda now being one of the key priorities in the LEP Strategic Plan.
2	Work with local partners to explore how we can join up services to help residents to find or get back into employment
	The Employment and Skills Board is increasing its employer membership to add representation from sectors not covered and to increase its engagement in the business community. It has submitted/is lobbying the LEP to ensure skills issues are included in any proposals for additional funding to address challenges and opportunities for local people arising out of developments happening in and around the city. The Board includes representatives from Job Centre Plus, Exeter College and other organisations which directly and have resources to contract others to provide help or training for residents.

## Run the Council well

1	In partnership with the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Wellbeing, I will be reviewing the management arrangements for car parking assets that fall within my portfolio to explore whether a single management and enforcement regime can be introduced for all Council car parks to ensure that charging and other policies are consistently and fairly applied.
	Progress: A parking review will take place in 2014 and will address charging and other policies. The principle of bringing management arrangements for car parking assets in house was approved by Executive Committee in November and assets will be transferred into in house management arrangements, where practicable, as they become available. It is not proposed that we foreshorten any existing contracts nor is it envisaged that it will be practicable to take all the assets into the in house portfolio.
2	The management and policy framework for the River & Canal function will be reviewed to ensure that it remains democratically accountable, is fit for purpose and serves the best interests of the Council and the city. As part of this review, I will be asking officers to consider whether the longstanding Harbour Revision Order should be withdrawn.
	Progress on this has been delayed by other priorities but it remains my intention to review this function.

**Councillor Rosie Denham**  
**Portfolio Holder Economy and Culture**  
**January 2014**