

# Draft

## Corporate Plan

Planning for our future

2007 – 2010

2008/09 update



Exeter City Council

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## Leader and Chief Executive's Introduction

We are pleased to introduce Exeter City Council's Corporate Plan, which sets out the Council's key priorities for 2007-2010.

2008 will be a momentous year for the people of Exeter and the Council as the Boundary Committee undertakes its structural review of local government in Devon and makes recommendations to Government on unitary structures. Work with the Boundary Committee will be a high priority over the next year as we build on the strengths of our earlier case for a unitary council for the city. But, as the achievements set out in our Corporate Plan clearly illustrate, this ongoing work has not diverted us from the significant amount of work with our partners to provide the highest quality public amenities and to deliver the highest level of public services for the people of Exeter. Exeter continues to stand out as a successful city with a dynamic economy and an excellent quality of life.

As the financial climate becomes more difficult over the next few years, we will endeavour to maintain our excellent record as a financially prudent, value for money authority. The commitment and capacity of councillors and staff are critical to our success to date and we must commend them for the achievements and ambitious vision contained in this plan.

We are confident that Exeter and the Council will have a successful future, whatever challenges arise in the short-term, and we look forward to playing a significant role in that future.

We welcome all views on the future priorities and performance of the Council. If you would like to comment, please contact [policy.unit@exeter.gov.uk](mailto:policy.unit@exeter.gov.uk).

**Cllr Adrian Fullam**  
**Leader of the Council**

**Philip Bostock**  
**Chief Executive**

# Summary

## Content

This plan is divided up as follows:

Part 1 – How we developed our priorities

Part 2 – An overview of how we are performing against our priorities

Part 3 – An outline of the financial resources (an outline of how our spending helps to achieve our priorities)

Part 4 – An overview of how we manage and review our performance

Part 5 – An explanation of how we manage the risks that could impact on our work

## Our key priorities

The Plan is built around the key priorities that we have set for 2007-2010. These are:

- a) Work with partners to improve the city and the quality of life for all
- b) Work with partners to improve the Council

We have 8 strategic objectives that fit within the two key priorities as set out below.

### **A Work with partners to improve the city and the quality of life for all**

1. ensure that there are enough well-designed, well-maintained and affordable homes in the city
2. enhance and protect the environment, reducing the causes and minimising the impact of climate change
3. further improve the character of the city and facilities for culture and leisure
4. maximise the potential of all our citizens by tackling social disadvantage and deprivation
5. ensure that Exeter is a buoyant, dynamic and innovative regional city with sustainable growth

### **B Work with partners to improve the Council**

6. have strong and clear governance arrangements that enable the communities of Exeter to influence and help shape decisions about their locality and the city
7. use resources effectively and provide high performing, value for money services that focus on customer needs
8. promote an extremely positive image and reputation and ensure high levels of customer satisfaction

## **Our mission**

To enhance Exeter as the regional capital and to work in partnership to improve the quality of life for all people living in, working in and visiting the city.

## **Our values**

All of our work is underpinned by a commitment to:

<b>Take pride in our city</b>	We will take pride in our city and the contribution we make to its success
<b>Focus on communities</b>	We will empower individuals, groups and neighbourhoods to have a bigger say in the services they receive and the places where they live
<b>Be responsive and efficient</b>	We will ensure that any services we provide, or pay for, are of the highest quality that can be achieved within the resources available and are clearly focused on the needs of our customers
<b>Communicate effectively</b>	We will communicate effectively with people outside and within the Council
<b>Value our employees</b>	We will be an employer of choice and ensure that all our staff are committed to our goals and are enabled to achieve their full potential

## Part 1: How we developed our priorities

This section of the Plan explains how we have developed our priorities for 2007-2010 based on an analysis of the social, economic and environmental factors facing the city and the views of the residents and communities of Exeter.

### Analysis of issues affecting the city

The purpose of the city's community strategy, the Exeter Vision, is to clearly set down where the city wants to be in 20 years time and how, with our partners, we can get there. The Government has challenged all local councils and their partners to develop sustainable community strategies. The strategies will need to embody the principles of sustainable development at a local level and focus on four priority areas. These are:

- **Sustainable consumption and production** - To live within our resources, we need to achieve more with less. This requires us to change the way we design, produce, use and dispose of the products and services we own and consume.
- **Climate change and energy** - We need to secure a profound change in the way we generate and use energy, and in other activities that release greenhouse gases. We must set a good example and encourage others to follow it.
- **Natural resource protection and environment enhancement** - Our health and well-being are closely linked to the quality of our air, water, soils and biological resources. Our landscapes, seascapes and wildlife are inseparable from our culture and inspire art and literature. Our economy and key industrial sectors are directly and indirectly reliant on functioning ecosystems. Natural resources are vital to our existence.
- **Creating sustainable communities and a fairer world** - No community, here or overseas, wants to be faced with problems which lead to them becoming caught in a cycle of degradation and poverty and all the associated problems this creates. The Government's aim is to create sustainable communities - places where people want to live and work, now and in the future.

In September 2006, we commissioned the European Institute for Urban Affairs to produce a report on how Exeter compares to other cities across England. The report highlighted:

- Unemployment levels in the city have continued to fall
- Crime rates are low with notably fewer burglaries and robberies than the regional and national average
- Exeter is a relatively healthy city with life expectancy for both men and women above the national average
- Educational attainment at year 11 is below the national average
- Property prices have risen
- Two areas within the city are within the top 10% of most deprived nationally
- Pollution levels have increased in some parts of the city due to increasing traffic levels

A full copy of the report can be found on our website [www.exeter.gov.uk/onecouncil](http://www.exeter.gov.uk/onecouncil) (see the 'Analysis of the state of English cities' report).

The Exeter Vision Partnership has appointed Local Futures to compile a comprehensive evidence base of issues for the city, including an assessment of community needs. This work, together with the findings of the 'Analysis of the state of English cities' work will set out the current priorities within Exeter, which will inform a refreshed Exeter Vision, to be published in Autumn 2008.

## Government initiatives and legislation

### White Paper – Strong and Prosperous Communities

In October 2006, the Government published its White Paper entitled 'Strong and Prosperous Communities'. Its aim is to give local people and local communities more influence and power to improve their lives and to secure better outcomes. The Government wants to deliver better public services by giving local councils more power to lead their communities, shape neighbourhoods and bring local public services together. This includes:

- Enhanced Leadership – councils should have a strong focus on shaping their "place" and building local identity
- Neighbourhood Involvement – extending local people's influence over local decisions and how to extend partnership working
- Improved service delivery – improved financial efficiency, but also better service delivery, greater integration, and clearer accountability

This will mean changing the way we work so that we, along with our partners, can respond more flexibly to local needs, delivering efficient services whilst at the same time providing good value for money.

### Spending review

The latest Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR07) presents a challenging financial settlement for the Council for the next three years. Exeter's increases in Formula Grant for the next three years are 1.4%, 0.9% and 0.8% respectively. CSR07 also proposes a significant reduction in the Local Authority Business Growth Initiative (LABGI) funding from £1 billion in CSR04 to £150 million over CSR07 and outline proposals indicate that there will be no LABGI funding for 2008/09. We have benefited greatly from this initiative in the past.

Our latest Medium Term Financial Plan has taken this as well as other spending pressures into account. The overall position that has been highlighted is that reductions of £600,000 to the base budget for 2008/09 will be necessary in order to have a balanced budgetary position whilst maintaining the General Fund Balance at a reasonable level. Our Senior Management Team has already agreed a savings target for each directorate to ensure that the overall £600,000 savings target is met.

*These savings have been achieved by protecting frontline services as far as possible. The emphasis has been on maximising income where it is felt appropriate to do so whilst seeking efficiency savings in back office areas.*

### Performance Management

A new National Indicator Set will be put in place from April 2008. This will delete the existing Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) and introduce many new indicators for the Council to monitor. An extensive internal review has been undertaken and as a result many BVPIs will be retained where they provide important information for effective service delivery. In order to ensure we are still able to benchmark performance against retained BVPIs, we have identified those authorities that are keeping the same indicators.

For several new indicators where no baseline information is available, targets for 2008/09 have not been set. Meaningful and challenging targets will be set as soon as there is data available for these indicators. For retained BVPIs, wherever possible we have aimed to set targets in the top quartile.

### Comprehensive Area Assessment

From April 2009, independent external assessment of local authorities will change. Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) will be replacing Comprehensive Performance Assessment, Children's Services Joint Area Reviews, Annual Performance Assessments for children and young people and social services star ratings for adult social care. The key components of CAA are: performance against the national indicator set; an annual area risk assessment; the annual scored 'direction of travel' judgement and the annual scored 'use of resources' judgement.

### The needs of customers and Exeter's communities

As a community leader we work with numerous partners to contribute to the overall quality of life in the city, but we are also concerned with providing the highest quality public services and the widest access to those services. Individual services are continuously assessing service levels and making improvements in line with legislative requirements and customer feedback.

### The Council's strategic objectives

Last year we reviewed our priorities, or strategic objectives, to set out what we want to achieve over 2007-2010. We identified our priorities in light of the challenges facing Exeter, including those issues local people told us were important and issues of local and national concern. Our key priorities reflect those Vision themes where we can have maximum impact as shown in the table below.

Strategic Objective	Vision Theme
1. Ensure that there are enough well-designed, well-maintained and affordable homes in the city.	City where everyone has a home.
2. Enhance and protect the environment, reducing the causes and minimising the impact of climate change.	City where the environment is cared for.
3. Further improve the character of the city and facilities for culture and leisure.	Cultural and fun place to be. City where people are healthy and active.
4. Maximise the potential of all our citizens by tackling social disadvantage and deprivation.	City of strong communities.

Strategic Objective	Vision Theme
5. Ensure that Exeter is a buoyant, dynamic and innovative regional city with sustainable growth.	A prosperous city.
6. Have strong and clear governance arrangement that enable the communities of Exeter to influence and help shape decisions about their locality and the city.	Excellence in public service.
7. Use resources effectively and provide high performing, value for money services that focus on customer needs.	Excellence in public service.
8. Promote an extremely positive image and reputation and ensure high levels of customer satisfaction.	Excellence in public service.

The themes within the Exeter Vision where we can have the biggest impact are ‘a city of strong communities’, ‘a prosperous city’, ‘a city that cares for the environment’, ‘a city where everyone has a home’, ‘a city where people are healthy and active’, ‘cultural and fun place to be’ and ‘excellence in public services’. Although we contribute towards achieving all of the themes contained in the Exeter Vision, our partner organisations such as the police, the County Council and the Primary Care Trust have a greater role to play in delivering some of the themes and will take a lead role in these areas.

Whilst the strategic objectives cover medium term (three year) priorities, we have also identified the immediate priorities for 2008-2009 and factored these into the Council’s corporate planning arrangements. The following schematic clearly sets out the Exeter Vision themes, the Council’s strategic objectives and corporate priorities 2008-2009.

## Exeter Vision (20 year aspirations)

- 1 City where everyone has a home
- 2 City where the environment is cared for
- 3 Cultural and Fun Place to Be
- 4 City where people are healthy and active
- 5 City of Strong Communities

- 6 Prosperous City
- 7 Accessible City
- 8 Electronic City
- 9 Safe City
- 10 Learning City

● Excellence in Public Service

## Strategic Objectives 2007-2010

### Work with partners to improve the City and the Quality of Life for All

- 1 Ensure that there are enough well-designed, well-maintained and affordable homes in the city.
- 2 Enhance and protect the environment, reducing the causes and minimising the impact of climate change.
- 3 Further improve the character of the city and facilities for culture and leisure.
- 4 Maximise the potential of all our citizens by tackling social disadvantage and deprivation.
- 5 Ensure that Exeter is a buoyant, dynamic and innovative regional city with sustainable growth.

### Improve the Council

- 6 Have strong and clear governance arrangements that enable the communities of Exeter to influence and help shape decisions about their locality and the city.
- 7 Use resources effectively and provide high performing, value for money services that focus on customer needs.
- 8 Promote an extremely positive image and reputation and ensure high levels of customer satisfaction.

## Corporate Priorities 2008-2009

- 1 Pursue an urban-centric, unitary council for Exeter.
- 2 Ensure that the Council is prepared for success in the 2009 Comprehensive Area Assessment.
- 3 Work with partners to publish a new Sustainable Community Strategy and LAA that will improve the social, economic and environmental needs of an urban Exeter.
- 4 Respond constructively to budgetary pressures by introducing new ways of working that improve the quality and value for money of front-line services.
- 5 Ensure that the community and neighbourhoods are engaged effectively and are able to influence service delivery and spending decisions.
- 6 Drive activity that supports all the Council's strategic objectives, with a particular emphasis on housing in 2008/09.

## Consultation

We have a continuous programme of consultation and engagement with our residents and communities which informs our activity. We use a range of methods to ensure that we hear the views of all our residents. These include:

- Wavelength - our citizens' panel which is made up of 1000 people representing all sections of our community.
- Community Forums – these give all citizens the chance to talk to us and our partner agencies about issues that concern them.
- Reaching out – tailored consultation to hear the views of people who are traditionally hard to reach.
- Surveys – used to obtain detailed feedback about our services.
- Focus groups – used to obtain detailed feedback about our services.
- Exhibitions and roadshows – used to launch new ideas and initiatives.

We are 19th out of 381 councils nationally for overall customer satisfaction. Results of the Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) satisfaction survey also revealed that clean streets, low crime levels and the provision of affordable housing make Exeter a good place to live. Aspects that needed to improve included traffic congestion, activities for teenagers, affordable housing, crime levels and wage levels.

*A survey of customers to our Customer Service Centre revealed that 96% felt that their enquiry had been dealt with efficiently or very efficiently.*

Over the course of the next year we will be taking a more formal approach to using customer data to manage performance and respond to customer needs. We will be analysing data from our customer database as well as the results of various consultation exercises and other customer profiling exercises. This will allow us to understand the different needs of our customers and to identify patterns of need by specific groups of people. This in turn will mean that we can deliver better services to our customers that are tailored to their individual needs.

More information about the full range of consultation we undertake and the feedback we receive can be found on our website ([www.exeter.gov.uk/consultation](http://www.exeter.gov.uk/consultation)).

## Part 2: Our recent achievements and what we will achieve between 2007 - 2010

This part of the Plan takes each of our key priorities in turn and looks at what we will be doing over 2007-2010 to deliver our 8 strategic objectives. As the Corporate Plan will be updated every year, we focus in particular on what we will be doing over the next year (2008-2009). We also highlight associated plans and strategies that contribute towards each objective and identify the key measures of success for each. A full summary of our Best Value Performance Indicators and Local Indicators can be found in appendix A and a progress report against the Comprehensive Equality Scheme is contained in appendix B.

### Working with partners to improve the city and quality of life for all

#### **Strategic Objective 1: Ensure that there are enough well-designed, well-maintained and affordable homes in the city**

The increase in the number of people threatened with homelessness and the increasing number registering their need for social housing in Exeter makes housing a high priority for us. In 2007/08 we had 1620 clients approaching us for advice and assistance around their homelessness/housing needs and on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008, we had 5770 clients on the housing register. All members of the community should have the opportunity to be provided with a decent home. We want to improve private sector homes that are unfit or in need of renovation, modernise our Council-owned homes, adapt homes to meet changing household needs and make all homes as energy efficient as possible.

The average wage level of residents in Exeter is below the regional average. House prices are extremely high relative to earnings. The average property now costs almost ten times the median individual full-time wage. Owner occupation is beyond the reach of many households, particularly first time buyers. Accordingly demand for affordable rented accommodation is considerable and outstrips supply.

Planning plays an important role in ensuring that we provide well-designed homes for people. Where people live has a major effect on their life. If where they live is well-planned, well-designed and is well-connected to local services, their quality of life is likely to be a great deal better than those who live elsewhere.

#### **Our key achievements 2007/08**

- The revised Housing Strategy 2007-2012 has been approved. Stakeholders were consulted and the results showed public support for the existing priorities with more emphasis on affordable rented housing and low-cost ownership. The new strategy has resulted in us seeking to change our planning policies to increase the percentage of affordable units on Section 106 sites from 25% to 35%.
- We continue to work in partnership with Registered Social Landlords and developers to provide affordable housing across the city for those households

entered on the housing register. Over the last year 121 households were accommodated in new homes as a result of enabling activity by the Council. 64 households in new affordable homes – 43 for rent and 21 in low cost home ownership products<sup>1</sup>, and 57 households in other suitable affordable accommodation created through leasing, refurbishment, homeless prevention and empty home initiatives (EXtraLet) – 33 for rent and 24 in low cost home ownership products.

- Our Housing Service has conducted a census of all our tenants to identify their needs. A Project Board has been established to manage and respond to the issues raised by the census. Two key areas of work will be identifying and responding to the individual needs of tenants and building a profile of tenants so that the service is better tailored to suit the needs of specific groups. For example, providing large print letters to people with sight difficulties, ensuring contractors are aware when tenants are deaf or hard of hearing, and providing people whose first language is not English with information they can understand.
- We have reduced the number of households in temporary accommodation to 216.
- Our new private letting service, EXtraLets, continues to develop. Units supplied to the scheme by private owners are offered to families who are likely to become homeless using assured shorthold tenancies. This prevents the families from having to be accommodated in temporary accommodation. At the end of March 2008, there were 37 properties on the scheme.
- Of the 800 high risk Houses in Multiple Occupation licensed, 200 have been inspected to ensure that they reach acceptable standards. In addition a further 100 privately rented properties have been inspected and brought up to an acceptable standard of repair.
- The PORCH (Prolific Offenders Rehabilitation through Co-ordinating Housing) project provides a co-ordinated approach to supporting prolific and priority offenders released into Exeter, East and Mid Devon areas. Each person offered assistance through PORCH is housed in local communities. An evaluation of PORCH by the University of Plymouth concludes that the project has had a number of successes during its first 12 months of operation. In total 66 clients were engaged by the Project, of whom 34 were found accommodation. Others have been assisted into employment and training courses and there is evidence of a 'slowing down' of criminal activity as a result.
- Our Housing Service has published a suite of customer information leaflets together with a new Tenants' Handbook and Leaseholders' Handbook. These publications give customers more detailed information of the range of services we provide, the process for accessing them and the standards we aim to meet.
- The affordability and energy efficiency of over 200 private rented properties was improved through financial assistance to landlords to replace inefficient heating systems with gas central heating systems into their properties, linked to the installation of insulation.
- We have worked closely with Devon Care and Repair Home Improvement Agency to promote their services to the most vulnerable householders, including their handy person scheme.

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<sup>1</sup> Home ownership products include shared equity schemes where a purchaser buys a proportion of the property from the housing association and pays rent on the rest, or where the purchaser receives an interest free loan for a proportion of the property's purchase price and does not have to pay it back unless the property is sold.

## Our plans for 2008/09

Action	Responsible Officer	Expected Outcome
Provide 50 new homes for rent	DCE (Director of Community & Environment)	Increased housing opportunities
Explore the introduction of an accreditation scheme for private rented housing	DCE	Properties brought up to an acceptable standard of repair. Improved quality of life
Review the warden service in line with the emerging Supporting People Strategy	DCE	Older and vulnerable people provided with security and reassurance
Publish an updated Homelessness Strategy and continue to meet or exceed our prevention targets	DCE	Greater help for homeless families. Reduction in homeless cases and reduced temporary accommodation spending

## Associated plans and strategies which will help achieve the objective

[Exeter Home Choice Policy](#)

[Homelessness Strategy](#)

[Housing Revenue Account Business Plan](#)

[Housing Strategy 2007-2012](#)

[Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy](#)

[Older Persons Housing Strategy](#)

[Resettlement Strategy](#)

[Tenant Participation Agreement](#)

## Key measures of success

Reference code	Measure	Actual 07/08	Target 07/08	Target 08/09	Target 09/10	Target 10/11
NI 155 (LPI HO10)	Number of affordable homes delivered <sup>2</sup>	58	100	50	130	150
NI 156 (LPI HO3)	Number of households living in temporary accommodation	216	220	180	150	150
NI 158 (BV 184a)	Percentage of local authority homes classed as non-decent	21.55%	21.50%	11.30%	3.80%	2.20%
LPI HO13	Total number of homelessness preventions	N/a	N/a	375	375	375

<sup>2</sup> The current affordable housing programme shows that approximately 70% of new supply will be provided through Section 106 agreements with private developers. These targets are therefore subject to change depending on market conditions and developers existing plans remaining unchanged.

## Strategic objective 2: Enhance and protect the environment, reducing the causes and minimising the impact of climate change

An initial review of the Exeter Vision, the city's community strategy, identified that the city needs to do more to ensure that it develops in a balanced and sustainable way. The environment is the most valuable and precious asset that we possess. We depend on it for our quality of life, including food, resources, energy, recreation and for the success of the economy.

*Our most recent Wavelength survey paid particular attention to the issue of climate change. The results revealed 84% of respondents felt that climate change presented a massive or big problem to the world and that 89% felt that it was important for individuals to take action to reduce their own greenhouse gas emissions.*

It is therefore important that local action is taken to minimise the impact on the environment in order to maintain and improve quality of life for both present and future generations.

### Our key achievements 2007/08

- We published our Environmental Strategy 2007-2012, which replaces the existing Corporate Environmental Strategy (2001-2006) and the Environmental Strategy for Exeter (2002-2007). The strategy draws together and evaluates the effects of the Council's own policies and practices on the environment, with the aim of reducing environmental damage. The strategy also sets out plans to protect and enhance Exeter's environment to reduce the city's impact on the global environment. The document explores the key environmental challenges facing Exeter and the objectives that are needed to address them.
- In January 2008, we adopted a Climate Change Strategy for the city. This sets out key themes for how we, working with others, can take the lead in reducing carbon dioxide emissions within Exeter by 30% by 2020 (from 1990 levels). The strategy includes an action plan to reduce emissions from energy consumption, transport use and waste disposal and for how the city can adapt to the effects of climate change, covering the period to spring 2009. The strategy was informed by a public consultation exercise and extensive research by the University of Exeter into Exeter's carbon dioxide emissions and the potential for reduction. The Strategy has received the firm support of the Exeter Vision Partnership.
- We are one of 45 local authorities to take part in the fifth phase of the Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management Programme, which aims to provide a comprehensive programme to measure and manage the greenhouse gas emissions produced by the Council's activity. The Council's carbon footprint for 2006/07 has been estimated as approximately 3,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide, of which energy use in buildings accounts for almost two thirds of emissions, fleet transport nearly one third, and business mileage, waste and water use have only a small effect on the footprint. A Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan has been produced which sets out a systematic approach to reducing the Council's emissions and identifies key actions for the Council to take to meet the target of a 20% reduction in emissions by 2013. The Council also has a number of environmental performance indicators to monitor waste

production, paper consumption, energy and water use, which are monitored annually and targets for improvement set.

- Members have endorsed the joint City and County Council Strategy for Park and Ride in Exeter. The strategy proposes a number of actions, including doubling the number of parking spaces, identifying and implementing a new Park & Ride site on the west of the city, maintaining the Digby site for Hospital Green Travel use. High quality toilets, baby changing facilities, CCTV coverage, improved lighting and site-operative accommodation will be provided at all 'city-centre bound' P&R sites and ensuring that each location is served by security/information operatives.
- A Green Infrastructure Study has been commissioned to identify the principal features of the green infrastructure which exists in Exeter and East Devon. Baseline assessments have been completed and a stakeholder workshop held. The proposals are due to be completed during summer 2008.
- As part of the ongoing work to enhance the quality, cleanliness and safety of the public realm, we urged people to 'Love Life, Hate Rubbish' with the launch of an anti-litter campaign to encourage more people to use litter bins. We have also been proactive in discouraging people from putting their rubbish out too early. Officers have actively enforced littering and dog fouling legislation, issuing 558 litter fixed penalty notices and 65 dog fouling notices. We have prosecuted 5 people for dog fouling offences and 131 for littering offences.
- We have published a sustainability checklist to guide applicants for planning permission. The checklist encourages applicants to think about more sustainable forms of design and construction.
- As part of the long-term plan to establish a circular walk around Exwick (the 'Exwick Loop') which links into the Green Circle at Exwick Cemetery, the Walking Project contributed £10,000 to the creation of a path from Exwick Lane and St Peter's Mount across Luggs Farm. The final 60m stretch of this path from St Peter's Mount has been completed.
- We have contributed to the work led by the County Council to improve Sir Alex Walk from Countess Wear to Topsham. The City Council will provide funding to improve the Tumbling Hills part of this walk.
- We have worked in partnership with Devon County Council to provide new toilet, and security and information facilities at Matford Park & Ride and Honiton Road Park & Ride. The toilet facilities at the Matford Park & Ride site incorporate a rainwater harvesting system that uses rain collected from the roof to flush the toilets, it is estimated that the system will save 60,000 gallons of water a year. At the Honiton Road Park & Ride site, both the men's and women's toilets have baby changing facilities and there is also a disabled toilet.
- A project has been set up jointly by the Council and Devon Wildlife Trust to explore ways of increasing the city's biodiversity, building the citizens' understanding of the importance of wildlife in the city and setting up a city-wide partnership to sustain these ideas long-term.
- A climate change levy has been introduced on users of all City Council car parks. This is likely to raise £100,000 a year and will be invested in sustainable energy/transport projects. Allocation of this fund will be overseen and screened by a multi-sector group,<sup>3</sup> independent of the Council. This group, called the

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<sup>3</sup> Membership of this group is expected to include community groups, residents, businesses and a Council Member (with expert technical advice from the University and others).

Parking Levy Evaluation Team, will invite project ideas/proposals from local organisations and the public for allocation of this funding. They will then short-list proposals according to agreed criteria before inviting the public to vote for their preferred ideas from that short-list. The purpose throughout will be to invite public participation in critical issues of climate change.

- A consortium led by Sustrans, the sustainable transport charity, won Big Lottery funding to support the extension of their 'TravelSmart' programme to Exeter. Working in partnership with the County and City Councils, the Sustrans 'TravelSmart' programme will offer tailor-made travel information and advice to individual households; highlighting in particular, public transport, walking and cycling alternatives to the car. We will be contributing £5,000 per annum for three years. We have also facilitated the innovative pilot work which involves linking advice on sustainable travel with the opportunity to give advice on energy efficiency.
- In partnership with Environwise, we have developed a self-assessment sustainability tool, the 'Green Accord', which enables contractors to rate their approach to sustainability. The achievement of a minimum sustainability standard is now a prerequisite to being a council-approved construction contractor. 94% of the Council's current contractors achieved the minimum standard, 20% of which were granted the highest level of approval.
- We have installed a wood pellet boiler at Belle Isle Nursery, which provides heating and hot water for the Council's glasshouses, which house delicate plants over the winter and stock for the city's floral displays and hanging baskets. The banking hall has sun pipes and 'wind catchers' installed which allows natural light and ventilation to replace artificial light and air conditioning. And we have also installed three wind turbines, which are located at the Civic Centre, the Exeter Corn Exchange and Belle Isle Nursery. We are one of the first to link wind turbines into our power supply. These will help us to meet the Government's target of reducing CO2 emissions.
- We have worked in partnership with all the councils in Devon; including the County Council, Westcountry Energy Action Trust and NEA to bid for and be awarded a grant under DEFRA's community energy efficiency fund to develop 10 Warm Zones throughout the county which will improve energy efficiency to 15,000 houses in Devon over the next 3 years, 2,000 of which will be in Exeter. The Warm Zones have been identified to ensure that the most vulnerable households in the city who are likely to be affected by fuel poverty will be offered financial assistance to provide insulation measures.
- The pilot service for the collection of trade paper and cardboard for a fixed fee of £3.00 per collection visit commenced in October 2007, using a hired vehicle and a temporary crew of two, and aimed at the existing 1,200 trade waste clients. The pilot trade waste recycling service has been very successful with 541 out of 1,200 trade waste clients opting for the service (an original target client of 400 to 600 was assumed). Over 6 tonnes of paper and cardboard is being collected and recycled every week, equating to over 300 tonnes of waste being diverted from landfill every year, with consequential disposal costs savings. It has been agreed that a vehicle should be procured and permanent crew appointed.
- We jointly developed and launched a campaign with the Express & Echo, EDF Energy and Exeter Tidy Britain to reduce plastic bag use by 25% and promote reusable 'green' bags for shopping.

- Activities associated with the Home Energy Conservation Act, including financial assistance awarded to over 1,000 households in Exeter, has resulted in a 2.7% reduction in energy use in the city during the year. This has been achieved through assisting householders with energy efficiency measures in over 1,000 dwellings.

### Our plans for 2008/09

Action	Responsible Officer	Expected Outcome
Implement the action plans of both the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme and the Climate Change Strategy	DCE	Reduce the Council's carbon footprint and levels of carbon emissions. Raising the profile of climate change in Exeter
Extend the Green Accord to other areas of the Council's work and seek external accreditation of the scheme	DCE	All work carried out by the approved construction contractors will meet the sustainability criteria. Reduction in carbon emissions, recycling materials, minimising travel to the benefit of local people and the wider community
Develop a Tree and Woodland Strategy that protects and enhances the city's treescape in a sustainable way	DCE	Make the city a green and pleasant environment in which to live and work. Reduce carbon dioxide emissions
Further improve the city's recycling rate to more than 35%	DCE	Reduced waste going to landfill, and carbon emissions, leading to a greener environment
Publish the city's air quality action plan	DCE	Sustainable environment. A better quality of life for all
Help deliver new buildings with lower CO2 emissions, through our planning and building control powers	DED (Director of Economy & Development)	Sustainable environment. Lower carbon emissions in construction
Publish a draft Core Strategy which sets out policies for sustainable development in the city	DED	Setting out the vision, objectives and strategy for the sustainable development of the city

### Associated plans and strategies which will help to achieve the objective

[Affordable Warmth Strategy](#)  
[Air Quality Strategy](#)  
[Allotment Strategy](#)  
[Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan](#)  
[Carbon Management Strategy](#)

[Climate Change Strategy 2008-2018](#)  
[Environmental Strategy 2007-2012](#)  
[Housing Strategy 2007-2012](#)  
[Leisure Strategy](#)  
[Local Development Framework/Local Plan](#)  
[Private Sector Housing Strategy](#)  
 Procurement Strategy  
[Parks and Open Spaces Strategy](#)  
[Recycling Plan](#)

**Key measures of success**

Reference code	Measure	Actual 07/08	Target 07/08	Target 08/09	Target 09/10	Target 10/11
BV84a	The volume of household waste collected per head of population (Kg)	323.49	400	372	379	380
NI 192 (BV82ai)	Percentage of household waste recycled	29.45%	27.5%	35%	37%	40%
NI 185	CO2 reduction from Local Authority operations	New for 08/09	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a

### **Strategic objective 3: Further improve the character of the city and facilities for culture and leisure**

Exeter is the regional capital of the South West and is a city of great character and historic interest. It is important to the city's economy and culture that this character and interest is maintained. Equally important is the need to encourage innovation so that high quality places of contemporary character are created which will stand the test of time.

The relationship between growth and conservation will continue to be one of the most important issues facing Exeter in the future. The quality and character of the built environment is of prime importance, not only to residents but also in attracting new commercial investment to the city and in the development of Exeter as a centre for tourism. If not properly managed, rapid growth could result in damage to those qualities which form the basis of Exeter's attraction. The task facing us is to balance the need for growth with protection of the historic environment.

#### **Our key achievements 2007/08**

- The updated Leisure Strategy 2007-2012 was approved by the Executive as a document for consultation. It is one of a set of strategies that covers cultural issues such as play, the arts and tourism. The draft strategy details the work of the Leisure and Museums unit over a five year period.
- The Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM) has begun work on a £15 million programme of modernisation and transformation. Work on the Ark, our purpose built museum collections store has finished, and the keys have been handed over. A programme of activities/events has also been developed to keep the museum at the heart of the community during its closure. Funding has been secured to link Rougemont Gardens to RAMM. During 2007/08 RAMM had 228,693 visitors.
- Development agreements have been entered into on the Old Electricity Building on Exeter's quayside and the Bridger Marine site in the Haven Road car park. The Old Electricity Building will be refurbished to provide a boutique hotel, restaurant, shop and sculpture gallery space. Bridger Marine will relocate its chandlery building to the Haven Road car park, releasing its existing site for the future construction of a new water sports building. We have prepared detailed designs in conjunction with the Highway Authority for the new link road through Haven Road car park and a new junction on to Water Lane.
- Cricklepit Mill and its associated water wheel has been refurbished and restored. We led efforts to find an appropriate long-term use and recently Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT) moved its headquarters to the restored Mill. Along with this restoration work, DWT has built a stunning extension to the building, which is of contemporary design and has a "green" roof. We have funded additional work to improve the walkways and landscaping around the building and DWT hope to raise sufficient funds in due course to complete the restoration of the leats to the side of the Mill adjacent to Western Way.
- Just nearby, work on the Custom House is also complete, with substantial interior restoration and installation of a lift to make it suitable for permanent occupation, and to reveal the building in all its glory. The Archaeological Field

Unit is now stationed here. The building will continue to be open to the general public through the city's Redcoat guided tours, which take in the quay area.

- Four new pieces of public art have been provided at Princesshay, a number of older works relocated and revised interpretation facilities agreed. New street lights have been procured on the riverside walk alongside the River and a significant improvement implemented on the Isthmus incorporating an old maritime buoy. Floodlighting has also been installed at the Custom House.
- The Underground Passages re-opened to the public in September 2007, with an exciting new interpretation centre.
- As part of an exciting new three year Big Lottery funded project, Exeter has a team of three play rangers who organise and run free outdoor play sessions in parks and open spaces across the city as well as a new Community Artist who runs creative sessions at various venues. The scheme, which is targeted predominantly at children between five and thirteen encourages children to engage in creative play outdoors. We have also increased the number of events and activities promoting the Valley Parks – talks, walks and activities.
- Exeter played host to the prestigious English Schools Combined Events Athletics Championships. Over 200 of the country's best young athletes competed at the Exeter Arena in combined events. Exeter Arena is considered to be one of the best facilities in the country for this type of event.
- The extensive diverse programme of festivals and events continue to develop, reaching a wide range of local, regional and national audiences. The Council's festival portfolio collectively attracts an audience of over 27,000 to 148 ticketed events with a further 35,000 plus attending 130 free events.
- Working closely with water sports clubs in the city, we have plans to build a new 25 metre pool at Clifton Hill to replace the existing pool at the Pyramids.
- King George V Playing Fields changing rooms have been substantially refurbished to provide better facilities and to encourage more use of the facility by young people of both sexes.
- In December we provided a temporary ice rink for the second year running, with 30,000 visits.
- We have completed two years of Swim4free which has been a popular attraction for the city's youngsters. All residents under the age of 18 could take advantage of free swimming at selected times in the school holidays. Due to its success the scheme was extended to four pools in the city.
- In the past year, the Leisure & Museums team has continued to concentrate on creating new recreational opportunities for the over 12s, with the installation of several multi-use games areas, teenage shelters and skate facilities of various kinds. While younger children have been well catered for with play areas, it has become increasingly obvious that young people themselves and the city in general, is keen that their older brothers and sisters have somewhere safe and interesting to spend their spare time.

## Our plans for 2008/09

Action	Responsible Officer	Expected Outcome
Further develop the free play city project and continue to deliver the Play Strategy	DCE	More young people able to take advantage of the city's play facilities. Improvement of health of young people, reduction in casual crime
Complete the refurbishment of Hamlin Lane and Bromhams Farm changing rooms and develop proposals to refurbish the Flowerpot changing rooms	DCE	Improved changing room facilities for those using the playing fields. Encourage more young people to engage in sporting activity
Continue to make progress with the scheme to improve and extend RAMM	DCE	Enhanced participation in museum events, for all
Progress the new swimming pool project, keeping costs under continual review to ensure value for money	DCE	Access to a healthy and active lifestyle for all

## Associated plans and strategies which will help to achieve the objective

[Arts and Media Strategy](#)  
[Community Safety Strategy](#)  
[Cultural Strategy](#)  
[Exeter Canal Basin Delivery Strategy](#)  
[Leisure Strategy 2007-2012](#)  
[Play Strategy](#)  
[Tourism Strategy](#)  
[Waterspace Strategy](#)

## Key measures of success

Reference code	Measure	Actual 07/08	Target 07/08	Target 08/09	Target 09/10	Target 10/11
NI 10 (BV170a)	Visits to museums and galleries (per 1,000 population)	1,920.47	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,400
BV119a	Percentage of residents satisfied with the Local Authority sports and leisure	N/a	N/a	N/a	67%	N/a
NI 119	Self-reported measure of people's overall health and well-being	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a

## Strategic objective 4: Maximise the potential of all our citizens by tackling social disadvantage and deprivation

Although Exeter is a prosperous city, some areas of the city experience a combination of linked problems such as poor education experience, low incomes, ill health, high crime rates and sub-standard housing. Exeter has three super output areas within the 10% most deprived nationally<sup>4</sup>. In addition to this, latest figures show that although the figures are improving, Exeter is still below the national average in terms of GCSE pass rates<sup>5</sup>, and the number of 16 to 17 year olds in full time education is lower than the national average.

We want to work with our partners to tackle these issues and ensure that all of the people in Exeter aspire to the highest levels of achievement in all fields of activity.

### Our key achievements 2007/08

- Our Comprehensive Equality Scheme 2007-2010 was published in September 2007. This sets out our commitment to progressing equality and diversity across the city and follows on from the previous Corporate Equality Plan. The scheme has been developed after consultation with a number of groups across the city including black and minority ethnic people, young people and people with disabilities. The Scheme includes information on what we have achieved so far, how we will monitor and evaluate performance and how we propose to improve in the future.
- In preparation for the new national concessionary bus fare scheme which came into operation in April 2008, we have worked with our partners to negotiate a shared service arrangement with Devon County Council (DCC), in which DCC will continue to provide an administrative service on our behalf. This arrangement will deliver significant economies of scale by avoiding duplication of effort. In addition to the statutory scheme and in response to local debate, we have also elected to offer companion passes for people with severe disabilities for use on bus services within and from Exeter.
- The Domestic Violence Forum held another successful awareness campaign in November which received good press attention and we continue to work with the Devonwide forum (ADVA) to improve support to victims. The Exeter Racist Incidents Action Group (ERIAG) has been active in addressing problems in Belmont Pleasure Ground and were able to make quick links between the police, community groups and the parks manager when incidents happened.
- 197 households in greatest financial need received financial assistance totalling over £1.1 million either to undertake essential repairs or to adapt their homes for their needs. In all cases the assistance has ensured that the householders have been able to remain living in their own homes.
- We led on the establishment of the Exeter Positive Steps Fund. Positive Steps focuses on people of working age in Exeter to help improve their skills, build confidence and raise self-esteem, assisting them on the road to work and training and/or improve their earning potential. Working closely with Devon Community Foundation (DCF), we are contributing £125,000 over 3 years towards a grant making budget of £358,000 which includes support secured

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<sup>4</sup> Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007, Communities & Local Government Website

<sup>5</sup> Achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A\* - C

from the European Social Fund. Some 46 community and voluntary groups have been supported to deliver projects. Interim results indicate that so far 655 people (all from typically hard to reach groups) have taken part in projects. Out of these, 55 have found work, 106 have taken up training, 158 have become volunteers and 10 have come off benefits. Attempts are being made to find a funding mechanism for continuing this activity and to date two private sector organisations have expressed a desire to support such an initiative.

- Over 1,000 homes were made decent, principally through financial assistance awarded to low income households to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.
- Staff in our Customer Service Centre are leading the way in building links with deaf people. Customers can now indicate that they are deaf and then be greeted by one of our signers or contact us by text message.
- Exeter has been able to set up its own Family Intervention Project after being named as a RESPECT action area. This has allowed us to work with those families living in chaotic circumstances. 20 families in total have been referred to the project; 3 families have already completed successful intervention and 8 families are currently being supported.
- We have worked in partnership with the police to provide secure sanctuary rooms in our own housing stock, as well as owner occupied and housing association properties, where the tenant is at serious risk of violence from an abusive partner or former partner. The scheme is aimed at reducing the number of victims who have to go into a refuge. In 2007/08 we assisted 14 clients with the sanctuary scheme.
- A local group of parents of children with autism presented an idea for an inclusive playground which would particularly suit the needs of their children. We found and donated a site, helped with a successful application for funds, and are supporting the group further by arranging the installation.
- One of the six or seven annual Playdays which are organised in the city's bigger parks is a Respect Playday. This focuses on creating opportunities for play which also bring children into contact with other cultures, promoting understanding and community cohesion. The Playday draws on the work of partners from minority ethnic groups.
- The Free Play City project has play rangers operating in target parks in areas with high deprivation indices and working with children and young people there. The project is funded by the Big Lottery Fund and builds on work already carried out by the City Council's play development staff.
- The wards whose residents are most vulnerable to fuel poverty have been identified and have been included in the Exeter Warm Zone.
- The Leisure & Museums team has recently completed a new draft Leisure & Museums strategy. As part of the consultation process we are undertaking specific consultation with groups representing ethnic and social minorities from the city.
- As part of the development process for its completely new permanent displays, the museum commissioned a review by a specialist access consultant of the draft designs. The aim was to ensure optimum access for people with physical, sensory and learning disabilities, recognising that these needs can sometimes conflict. The consultant worked with the external design team and the museum staff, and several changes were made.

- Over 500 households living within 100 houses in multiple occupation, often associated with poor standard accommodation and low income households, have been brought up to an appropriate standard through a combination of enforcement and as a result of licensing regulation.
- We have awarded almost £700,000 to the voluntary and community sector through its Grants Committee. Grants have been awarded for capital projects, towards rental of Council owned property and for general funding purposes.

### Our plans for 2008/09

Action	Responsible Officer	Expected Outcome
Develop a Warm Zone in the South of the city to help reduce the number of households in fuel poverty and increase the number of beneficiaries by 25% over 2007/08	DCE	Reduced fuel poverty, warmer homes, reduced carbon footprint and improved energy efficiency of 1,500 houses
Make further improvements to the way that the Council deals with Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) on housing estates	DCE	Reduction in ASB. The quality of life of neighbours who have suffered from antisocial behaviour will be improved
Give financial assistance to 200 low income households to improve, repair or adapt their homes	DCE	Properties brought up to an appropriate standard of repair, removal of health and safety hazards and improved quality of life for occupiers
Ensure that all Directorate Equality Plans contribute to an effective corporate Comprehensive Equality Scheme for 2008/09	DCS (Director of Corporate Services)	Higher satisfaction levels across all of Exeter's communities
Continue to deliver a training programme to staff and managers on; diverse cultural needs in Exeter, responsibilities under equalities legislation and principles of promoting equality, including recruitment and retention where appropriate and working with contractors and partners	DCS	Increased staff, contractors and partners awareness of equality issues and higher satisfaction levels amongst all of Exeter's communities
Develop a Community Engagement Strategy for the Council	ACX (Assistant Chief Executive)	Enhance community engagement. Residents and communities better able to be involved in decisions affecting them. Ensure services are better targeted to peoples' needs

## Associated plans and strategies which will help to achieve the objective

[Affordable Warmth Strategy](#)  
[BSL Charter for Devon](#)  
[Communications Strategy](#)  
[Comprehensive Equality Scheme](#)  
[Directorate Equality Schemes](#)  
[Economic Development Strategy](#)  
[Housing Strategy 2007-2012](#)  
[Play Strategy](#)  
[Social Inclusion Strategy](#)

## Key measures of success

Reference code	Measure	Actual 07/08	Target 07/08	Target 08/09	Target 09/10	Target 10/11
BV 226c	Total amount spent on Advice and Guidance in the areas of housing, welfare benefits and consumer matters which is provided directly by the authority to the public	£382,301	£350k	N/a	N/a	N/a
NI 187	Tackling fuel poverty – people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
NI 1	Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a

## **Strategic objective 5: Ensure that Exeter is a buoyant, dynamic and innovative regional city with sustainable growth**

Exeter plays an important regional capital role, being strategically located at the centre of a large and diverse region with excellent transport and communication links to all parts of the country. Promotion of the city as a dynamic regional city has been at the forefront of our agenda and the Exeter brand and identity have been of vital importance to the success we have achieved to date. It is important that we work with our partners to ensure that Exeter's reputation as a dynamic, knowledge-based economy and a serious business location is maintained.

We are committed to working with our partners to facilitate the continued and sustainable growth of the Exeter economy in the interests of Exeter residents, adjacent authorities and the business community. We want to be economically inclusive and maximise the potential of all our citizens so that they are able to benefit from the prosperity of the city and the wider area.

Everyone has a role to play in developing the positive conditions needed for sustainable growth and employment. People with the required skills, motivation and aspirations are needed to fill the jobs available. Business confidence and investment is required to secure and create new job opportunities and the public and voluntary agencies are needed to contribute in providing business support.

### **Our key achievements 2007/8**

- The new City Centre Strategy 2007-2012 has been approved. The aims of the strategy are to secure and build on the Council's competitive advantage, give a better first impression, deliver a vibrant centre which offers attractions for all and achieve an even safer environment.
- We are working closely with East Devon District Council and Devon County Council through the New Growth Point initiative to deliver a range of key developments in East Devon and Exeter. A key objective will be to deliver low carbon construction in these new developments.
- Work is progressing on the development of a Science Park on the outskirts of the city. We have agreed to contribute £750,000 to progress the first phase, with partners contributing additional money particularly the Regional Development Agency providing a grant for the purchase of the site and for necessary infrastructure.
- A marketing campaign is being developed and delivered to promote Exeter as the regional capital, focussing on the new retail heart of the city.
- Marketing activities are ongoing promoting Exeter as a successful regional centre for investment or relocation. Development of the science park and the opening of the expanded Innovation Centre provide the opportunities for new or growing companies.
- The 20 September 2007 marked the completion of the Princesshay development project. We worked closely with Land Securities to deliver the project on time. With over 60 shops, Princesshay includes a state of the art Debenhams store and a superb variety of cafes and restaurants. Newly introduced pedestrianised streets and spaces will be used for a year round programme of events and activities. The scheme has won the British

Council of Shopping Centre Supreme Gold Award 2007 and the International Council of Shopping Centres 2008 award for best medium sized new development.

- The Guildhall car park underwent a £1.2 million refurbishment and now has improved decking and lighting and a new pay-on-foot payment system. The car park gained a Commendation in the 2008 British Parking Awards 'Best Refurbishment of the Year'.
- We are currently negotiating with Land Securities, regarding the former Debenhams' site and proposals for the future form of development and mix of uses has been agreed. A planning application for change of use of the upper part of the building to residential uses has now been submitted.
- The local community of Heavitree has been consulted with the initial proposals to enhance Fore Street, which includes improvements to hard surfaces, street furniture and public art.

### Our plans for 2008/09

Action	Responsible Officer	Expected Outcome
Review whether there should be derestriction of the number of hackney carriages	DCE	Local transport needs determined and local decision made for Exeter
Work with Land Securities to remodel the old Debenhams building and bring it back into use	DED	Further city centre regeneration
Work with the University to help deliver its planned expansion in teaching and residential accommodation	DED	Development of the University. Increase in the number of students living and studying in Exeter
Assist the New Growth Point team in delivering new housing and employment	DED	Significant housing provision and new strategic employment sites to support the development of the wider city economy
Continue to support the Science Park Partnership, by helping to set up a Science Park company and secure planning consent for the development	DED	New science-based businesses are created, so maintaining economic growth, job availability, improving the quality of local employment and resultant impact on economic, social and environmental well-being
Carry out all the basic technical work in order to develop a Master Plan for the re-development of the Bus Station	DED	Further city centre regeneration
Prepare a new Economic Development Strategy for Exeter and the Heart of Devon	DED	A new strategy that sets out a vision for the sub-region and working framework for the economic partnership and other key stakeholders

Action	Responsible Officer	Expected Outcome
Support the business sector to establish a Business Improvement District (BID) for Exeter	DED	Protect and improve the economic potential of each and every business within the BID
Establish an Employment and Skills Board to address and promote skills development in the workforce	DED	Higher levels of attainment and an increase in employment related training activity

### Associated plans and strategies which will help to achieve the objective

[City Centre Strategy](#)

[Communications Strategy](#)

[Exeter and Heart of Devon Economic Development Strategy](#)

[Exeter Vision](#)

[Local Development Framework/Local Plan](#)

[New Growth Point Strategy](#)

[Regional Economic Development Strategy](#)

[Tourism Strategy](#)

### Key measures of success

Reference code	Measure	Actual 07/08	Target 07/08	Target 08/09	Target 09/10	Target 10/11
BV109a (NI157)	Percentage of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks	70.39%	60%	60%	60%	60%
NI 170	Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years	N/a	N/a	0	0	0
NI 5 (BV3)	Overall satisfaction with local area	N/a	N/a	N/a	85%	N/a

## Working with partners to improve the Council

### **Strategic Objective 6: Have strong and clear governance arrangements that enable the communities of Exeter to influence and help shape decisions about their locality and the city**

During 2008, the Boundary Committee for England will be undertaking a review of the structure of local government across Devon and, before January 2009, recommend a unitary structure for consideration by the Government. The Council has recognised consistently the merits of unitary authorities and it will be working with the Boundary Committee to ensure that proposed governance arrangements meet the needs of Exeter.

People want choice over the services they receive, influence over those who provide them and higher service standards. Strong, clear and effective leadership is critical in achieving this and has been crucial to the recent development of Exeter. We want to build on this work and enable our Councillors to be champions for their local community, having more powers to sort out local issues and encourage our citizens to have a bigger say in the services they receive and the decisions we make, including those people that are traditionally hard to reach, such as disabled people, young people and those people suffering multiple disadvantage.

We have four pilot 'My Neighbourhood' projects taking place across the city in Exwick, St David's, Newtown/Polsloe and Kings Heath/Clyst Heath. The objective of the 18-month pilot is to set up and develop inclusive local partnerships, embracing existing local community groups, as well as inviting and enabling local people not currently involved, to join the partnerships. Each partnership has the brief to identify local issues, to raise these with agencies concerned and, being allocated an initial budget of £5,000 per area, will be able to decide on the use of small local grants for local initiatives to improve the neighbourhood.

We have an extensive range of methods for consulting our communities. We regularly consult citizens through Wavelength, our citizens panel made of 1000 people from all sectors of the community. We also run Community Forums five times a year to give people the opportunity to talk to us and other agencies about issues that concern them. Services have started to build consultation into their service planning process and regularly run ad hoc consultation exercises.

Despite this progress, there are still areas that could be improved including showing more effectively how consultation feedback influences service delivery, more sustained engagement work with users rather than ad hoc surveys and making better use of technology to engage with people.

## Our key achievements 2007/08

- The 'My Neighbourhood' project is reaching out to communities across the four pilot areas in Exeter and helping to set up residents associations and a My Neighbourhood Partnership in each area to ensure that residents have a way of raising their concerns with the Council, the police and other statutory service providers. The project is being backed by £71,000 funding, £20,000 of which will be available to be spent on schemes chosen by the partnerships. The partnership in each of the areas is gathering residents' views on how the £5,000 for each area could be spent to improve the neighbourhood and to help build community cohesion. In the Kings Heath area, two community notice boards have been purchased, the residents association have received some set up costs, and a summer gardening competition is being organised.
- An Officers' Community Engagement Working Group has been established. The Group will be working towards the development of a Community Engagement Strategy for the Council. Issues raised by local communities in the Neighbourhood Engagement Work will be considered in the way that we deliver services. As a result of the Officers' Group there is clear cross Council support for neighbourhood engagement work.
- People who want to play an active part in shaping their communities now have a really simple way to find out what consultation is being done in their area and make their views known. The Consultation Finder service launched on our website allows people to register their interest in future consultations and receive email alerts when such information is published. They can search by area, date and interest, and download details of the consultations taking place and related documents.
- Initial consideration has been given to the Councillors' Commission report - Representing the Future, which looks at the incentives and barriers for attracting a wide range of people to become local government Councillors. A more formal consideration will be given to the 61 recommendations in the light of the Government's response which is expected in Spring 2008.
- We have used IML voting handsets for consultation work on the Home Choice Scheme. This gives interactive engagement using new technology. It allowed people to vote and indicate their preference on a range of questions and options on the Home Choice Scheme.
- The second Young People's Day took place on the 1 November. Following feedback from the day, the Vibraphonic festival now includes an under 18 music event and the youth animation planning group has set up projects and events for young people which will be fed into Animated Exeter and other activities.
- A consultation day for people aged 50 and over was held in July to seek views about services in the city and what is important for quality of life. The day was organised by the City Council in partnership with DCC, the PCT, Link Age Plus and Age Concern. Over 150 people attended. Feedback from the day will be taken into account whilst preparing the City Centre Area Action Plan.
- In December 2007 we agreed to sign up to the South West Charter for Member Development. A self-assessment of the Council's current position is being undertaken and an action plan is being developed prior to formal sign-up. A Councillor Development Framework has been adopted and a pilot scheme of Personal Development Plan (PDP) discussions with Councillors has commenced with a view to rolling out the scheme in due course to other

Councillors who wish to participate. The PDPs aim to assist Councillors in identifying their own development needs in order that the Council can respond through the provision of appropriate learning events and resources.

- A Resident Auditor Team, made up of eight tenant representatives has made a series of recommendations to improve our Housing Repairs Service. In response to this, a number of service improvements have been introduced. These include providing staff with additional training on diagnosing housing repairs so that contractors are better able to deal with repair requests on their first visit, introducing more appointment time slots to fit in with school runs and offering some repairs outside of normal office hours e.g. Saturday morning.
- We have worked successfully with the University, Students Guild, police, private sector landlords and community representatives in developing an active forum with issues of the impact of student housing within the private sector, leading to the development of several joint initiatives to improve community cohesion.
- Living Here: West of the Exe has been launched by RAMM in partnership with the Northcott Theatre, and with groups and individuals in the four wards west of the river. Its aim is to build community cohesion, awareness of identity and heritage and a focus for using the past to understand the present.
- In response to demand we are designing and launching a ferry which is specially fitted to carry cycles across the Exe at Topsham, to link the estuary cycle path at about half way down the estuary.
- We have worked with the Devon BSL Charter Group to hold our third Sign Vision Conference. This brought together deaf people from across the county who were provided with information on recycling and the environment, healthy living and improvements in access to services. Key recommendations from delegates are listed in the post conference report.
- Consultation was undertaken within Exeter with members of local communities and voluntary agencies in the development stages of the Exeter Warm Zone and a number of individuals and organisations have been identified as energy champions who will ensure the success of the Warm Zone.

### Our plans for 2008/09

Action	Responsible Officer	Expected Outcome
Further develop the role of Tenant and Leaseholder Committee (TALC) including engaging more hard to reach groups	DCE	Enhance community engagement
Pursue an urban-centric, unitary council for Exeter	CX (Chief Executive)	Better joined up services for all of Exeter residents and attainment of the five key outcomes expected by the government
Evaluate the Neighbourhood Engagement Pilots with a view of recommending options for roll out across Exeter to Elected members	ACX	Enhance community engagement. Residents and communities better able to be involved in decisions affecting them. Ensure services are better targeted to peoples' needs

Action	Responsible Officer	Expected Outcome
Ensure that effective arrangements are in place for community involvement, including the operation of the community forums	CX	Enhance community engagement. Residents and communities better able to be involved in decisions affecting them. Ensure services are better targeted to peoples' needs

### Associated plans and strategies which will help to achieve the objective

[Access to Information Policy](#)  
[BSL Charter for Devon](#)  
[Communications Strategy](#)  
[Consultation guide](#)  
[Social Inclusion Strategy](#)

### Key measures of success

Reference code	Measure	Actual 07/08	Target 07/08	Target 08/09	Target 09/10	Target 10/11
LPI CC1	Percentage of dwellings recorded by the Valuation Office which have returned a voting registration form (excluding void properties)	96.10%	95%	95%	98%	98%
NI 3	Civic participation in the local area	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
NI 4	Percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a

## **Strategic Objective 7: Use resources effectively and provide high performing, value for money services that focus on customer needs**

Our success to date in delivering high quality, efficient services is reflected in our status as an 'excellent' Council, and in the results of our recent customer satisfaction survey, which showed that overall satisfaction with the Council has risen again. We recognise that to maintain high performing services, we need to build upon the good work already taking place. We are committed to continuously improving all of our services and have in place a series of improvement plans, which are supported by a robust performance management framework (see Part 4: Reviewing our performance).

We already have an excellent record of providing efficient services and have identified £2.2million cashable savings in the last two years. In addition to this, we have consistently levied low Council Tax increases. We have the fifth lowest Council Tax charge of all district councils in the country.

In addition to identifying efficiency gains through our budget planning process, we recognise that there are significant opportunities to improve the quality and efficiency of services by joint working. If we are to continue to improve services and provide the value for money that communities want, we realise that we will need to challenge traditional methods of service delivery and work with others. In response to this, we are already working with our partners in other authorities to identify collaborative ways of delivering projects and services.

As both an employer and a deliverer of services, we are committed to ensuring that no recipient of services provided by us receives less favourable treatment and that we address the needs of all our customers. The way we deal with customers is the most important element of our work, and the promotion of a customer-focused culture and improved access has always been a priority.

### **Our key achievements 2007/08**

- We are on track to be awarded the Council-wide Charter Mark, with the Chief Executive's Department, Corporate Services and Community and Environment Directorates already having achieved the accreditation.
- An enhanced telephone service has been made available as part of the expansion of the current Customer Service Centre. This aims to deliver the same level of service over the telephone as that currently enjoyed by face-to-face customers.
- Further improvements have been made to the Council's website to allow customers to self-serve. The '[My Exeter](#)' tool allows customers to enter their postcode and access useful local information such as ward Councillor, nearest schools, bin collection dates, planning applications etc. Our website has recently been ranked top of the 'hit parade', with no other district authority in the country having more usage than the Council's website, according to Society of Information Technology Management's (SOCITM) Better Connected survey.
- We have developed a much enhanced website to engage prospective job applicants, highlighting the varied range of employment opportunities on offer. The website promotes, more directly, our commitment to encourage applicants from more diverse backgrounds and streamlines our recruitment arrangements.

- A Home Working trial commenced in the Housing Benefits section. Running alongside this, is a mobile working project for 'outdoor workers'. Services involved are currently developing specific proposals for mobile working, which will identify clear and measurable efficiency/productivity gains and offering more flexible working arrangements for our staff.
- Gas and electricity contracts were tendered electronically resulting in savings in terms of the cost of energy and the resources needed to tender the work.
- We have been re-awarded recognition as an Investor in People (IIP) organisation. The assessor was very complimentary of staff's motivation, enthusiasm and commitment both to personal development and also service improvements. The feedback was exceptionally positive and stated that we had moved on significantly over the last 3 years.
- We have created 'RAMM Out and About' while the main museum building is closed. This includes school visits, RAMM in a van, touring exhibitions, temporary exhibitions at the Guildhall and travelling activities.
- As part of the review of the Council's recruitment advertising contract a joint partnership was agreed with Bath and North East Somerset and South Gloucestershire Council. This has enabled us to achieve significant savings from avoiding a full and lengthy procurement exercise and also attracted and negotiated very competitive rates through a joint process with greater purchasing power. It has also enabled us to work with Bath and North East Somerset to review our back office processes as they use the same software solutions and have streamlined their systems.
- Our Housing Unit commissioned a mock inspection of its landlord services in October 2007 to ensure it compares with the higher performing value for money providers. The findings from this inspection will help to create a comprehensive service improvement plan.
- We have continued the Be Active For Life programme, after it had ceased as a British Heart Foundation pilot, in order to promote healthy lifestyles among our staff.
- A number of services across the Council have received external recognition for the excellent services provided. These include Internal Audit, Housing Advice and Legal Services.
- We have successfully worked in partnership with various community groups and organisations to establish the Exeter Warm Zone which will attract at least £500,000 investment into the city by the Warm Zone funder, E-on, over the next 3 years.
- We are working in partnership with Devon County Council and Devon Care and Repair Home Improvement Agency to improve the working of the county wide home improvement agency to ensure value for money from the agency and a high level of service. Part of this will involve running a focus group to elicit the views of clients, the majority of whom are vulnerable through being elderly, having a disability or on low income.

## Our plans for 2008/09

Action	Responsible Officer	Expected Outcome
Develop and agree a revised procurement strategy founded on best practice	DCE	Improved procurement processes, increased sustainability and efficiency savings
Continue to work towards achieving a new harbour authority for the River Exe	DCE	Estuary users have more control over management of harbour
Implement a trade waste recycling service using the experience gained in the pilot and collect over 300 tonnes of recyclables	DCE	Reduced trade waste going to landfill
Continue to improve our care of public places including authorisation and training of Police Community Support Officers to deal with litter and similar offences and to implement improvement to the dog warden service	DCE	Improved environment, increased customer satisfaction
Ensure the successful conclusion of the HR on-line recruitment project and review the operation of the HR service in light of resulting service issues	DCS	Streamlined recruitment arrangements and consequent efficiency savings
Monitor the implementation and operation of the enhanced telephony service and evaluate the potential for expanding the service provided to achieve improved service provision and efficiency savings	DCS	More efficient service provided. Increased customer satisfaction
Progress the mobile working project to secure more efficient and cost effective service delivery in Contracts and Direct Services, Housing and Environmental Health Services	DCS	Improved value for money and customer responsiveness
Work with partners and the IDEa to complete a peer challenge in preparation for the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)	CX	Key strengths and areas where improvements could be shown
Explore further opportunities for streamlining and redesigning service delivery and options for delivery through alternative	CX	Improved value for money and customer responsiveness

Action	Responsible Officer	Expected Outcome
channels		
Obtain external validation of the high levels of customer service across all services through Council-wide Charter Mark	CX	Recognition that we are providing excellent customer service
Conduct a review of Strategic Planning, including links to service planning, development of a positive performance management culture and financial planning as part of preparation for the Council's Use of Resources judgement	ACX	Clear alignment of priorities with services, performance and finance. Efficient ways of working
Develop proposals for a review of Service Planning	ACX	The Council has a common approach to service planning that enables Members and directors to track how individual services are helping to meet the Council's priorities, deliver continuous improvement and focus on customer needs
Create a new operation under the civil parking enforcement legislation to deliver effective on and off street enforcement	DED	Integrated on and off street enforcement service. Efficiency savings from combining two previously separate enforcement functions
Review of business processes and customer services in Planning	DED	Increased customer satisfaction and efficiency savings

### Associated plans and strategies which will help to achieve the objective

[Access to Information Policy](#)  
 Annual Efficiency Statement  
[Communications Strategy](#)  
[Complaints Procedure](#)  
[E-Government Strategy](#)  
[Information Management Strategy](#)  
 Medium Term Financial Plan  
 Procurement Strategy  
 Service Improvement Plans

### Key measures of success

Reference code	Measure	Actual 07/08	Target 07/08	Target 08/09	Target 09/10	Target 10/11
LPI CC5	Percentage of customers who thought that staff had the knowledge to deal with their enquiry there and	93.53%	80%	95%	95%	95%

	then					
BV 78a (NI 181)	Average time for processing new benefits claims (days)	25.74	23	N/a	N/a	N/a
NI 179	Value for Money – total net value of on-going cash-releasing value for money	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
BV12	The number of working days/shifts lost to the council due to sickness	9.16	8	8	8.5	8

## **Strategic Objective 8: Promote an extremely positive image and reputation and ensure high levels of customer satisfaction**

The way that we deliver our services is increasingly being informed by public satisfaction, so residents' perceptions of us are ever more important. Good communication is essential to addressing this issue. As a Council we already have a good track record of telling our citizens what we do and how we provide them with value for money. We have an award-winning newspaper the 'Exeter Citizen' which is delivered to all households and businesses in the city, we ensure that our branding is consistently linked to our services and we maintain a good relationship with the local press. However, we recognise that if we want to continue to improve customer satisfaction, the way we manage our image and reputation at a local, regional and sub-regional level will play a key role.

### **Our key achievements 2007/08**

- Expansion of the Customer Service Centre (CSC) has now taken place with an additional 6 service positions and 3 interview rooms having been created. This has given us the additional space required to allow for the Housing Benefits customer service to be delivered through the CSC since October 2007. Following closely along behind this, is an enhanced telephony service. This means that calls to the Council's normal switchboard number and housing benefits number will now be dealt with by the staff within the Customer Service Centre who will try, using the skills they have obtained from delivering the service on a face to face basis, to answer the straightforward queries and deal with service requests. This will reduce the traffic to back offices and improve the service to the caller.
- The excellence of RAMM's vibrant volunteer programme has been recognised with an Investing in Volunteers Quality Standard award. This is the UK's best practice standard for volunteering and RAMM's volunteer programme was assessed against; challenging standards for the recruitment, involvement, support and retention of volunteers. RAMM excelled in all aspects of this assessment and is now the first organisation in Exeter to have won this award.
- Belmont Park's Sensory Garden, designed and maintained by the Council, won a Planting Places award from Sustainability South West, the region's sustainability champion. The garden includes herbs, ferns and flowers that provide year round sights, smells and textures for all visitors as well as four hand painted family friendly benches. The garden, which opened in Spring 2007, was selected for its contribution to the health, wellbeing, biodiversity, sense of place and quality of life in the region.
- Exeter's Fairtrade City Campaign won the 'Media and Communications' Award in the National Fairtrade Fortnight Awards 2007. The awards, which are organised each year by the Fairtrade Foundation, reward examples of best practice in terms of promoting Fairtrade within the local authority and the wider community.
- Our website has been ranked top of the 'hit parade'. No other district authority in the country has more usage than the City Council's site, according to Society of Information Technology Management's (SOCITM) Better Connected survey. The Council takes 10<sup>th</sup> position out of 467 local authority websites. Recently a

range of online reporting forms and a new online job application process have been added to the website.

- A substantial part of the DEFRA grant awarded to establish the Devon Warm Zones was used to develop high quality marketing materials and a professionally developed website all of which will have a significant impact upon the success of the scheme, together with the quality training that will be provided to community energy champions who will have responsibilities for promoting the scheme.
- We have continued to ensure all publications/facilities meet our corporate branding requirements.

### Our plans for 2008/09

Action	Responsible Officer	Expected Outcome
Consider the introduction of a 'Scores on the Doors' scheme for city food businesses	DCE	Better regulation and promoting good standards of hygiene in food businesses
Work with the police and Trading Standards to reduce the sale of alcohol to minors from premises we licence	DCE	Reduced ASB and casual crime
Increase the use of mobile CCTV both via a new van mounted system and increasing the range of our existing mobile cameras	DCE	Enhanced community safety
Monitor the roll-out of the new three year diversity training programme to managers and front line staff and review how the effectiveness of the programme is evaluated	DCS	Higher satisfaction levels amongst all of Exeter's communities
Ensure that the Housing Benefits customer service and back office interaction as part of the expansion of the Customer Service Centre expansion, works effectively and seek ways of achieving further enhancements to the service provided to customers	DCS	Ability to provide more effective and joined up services via the Customer Service Centre, avoiding confusion for the customer. More efficient processes, reduced traffic to back offices and automated service requests
Work with partners to publish a new sustainable community strategy and Local Area Agreement (LAA) that will improve the social, economic and environmental needs of an urban Exeter	CX	Better quality of life for all Exeter citizens

## Associated plans and strategies which will help to achieve this objective

[A Community Strategy for Devon](#)

[Analysis of the State of English Cities](#)

[Business case for unitary Exeter](#)

[Communications Strategy](#)

[Exeter's Concept for Unitary Local Government in Devon](#)

[INLOGOV Report – April 2006](#)

[Local Area Agreement](#)

[Local Government Structure in Exeter – Summary report, MORI, August 2006](#)

[Outline case for unitary status – April 2006](#)

## Key measures of success

Reference code	Measure	Actual 07/08	Target 07/08	Target 08/09	Target 09/10	Target 10/11
BV74a (NI 160)	Local Authority tenants' satisfaction with landlord service	N/a	N/a	87%	N/a	N/a
NI 14	Avoidable contact – the average number of customer contacts per received customer request	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
NI 140	Fair treatment by local services	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a

## Part 3: Finances

Each year the Council is required to produce a Statement of Accounts showing its financial position and income and expenditure for the year. These summary accounts are prepared to provide a simplified version of the accounts.

The Council has a very strong track record in producing the Statement of Accounts with a clean bill of health being issued by the Audit Commission each year. The audit of the 2007/08 accounts is currently underway.

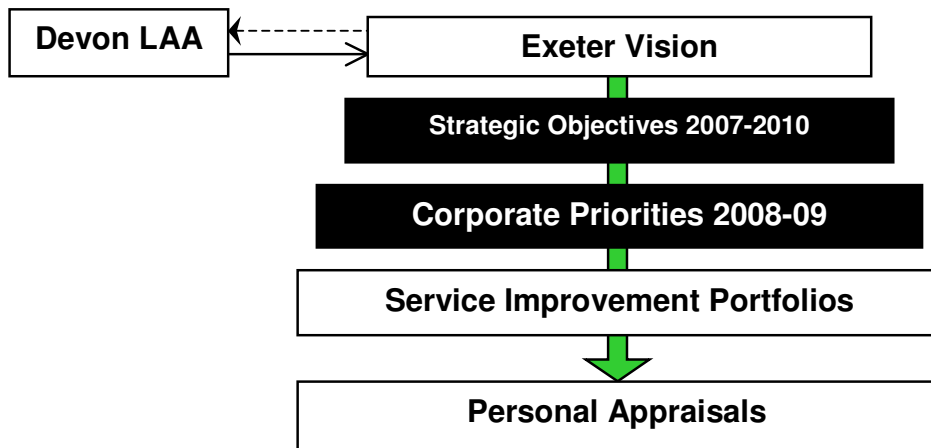
This section will be completed as soon as the 2007/08 accounts have been finalised.

### **Contracts awarded**

We did not award any contracts during 2007/08, which involved the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts.

## Part 4: Reviewing our performance

We have a comprehensive performance management framework that supports the effective monitoring and management of performance. The main elements of our performance management arrangements are summarised in the diagram below.



**The Exeter Vision** is the city's community strategy for the next 20 years. It was written in consultation with key partners in the city. It sets out the priorities for the city. It is currently being reviewed and will be published in Autumn 2008.

The Council's **Strategic Objectives** support the themes of the Exeter Vision. They set out the priorities for the Council. They are reviewed every five years.

The Council's **Corporate Priorities** are set annually and support the strategic objectives. They set out the priorities for the Council in the forthcoming year.

Each service maintains a **Service Improvement Portfolio**, which identifies its key partners, customers and priorities. They are designed to focus on outcomes and service priorities to ensure that work is targeted and meaningful. Service improvement portfolios identify key performance indicators, help challenge how services contribute to strategic objectives, and identify ways of increasing service contribution to corporate priorities such as business continuity and value for money. All actions within the service plans are linked to the Council's strategic objectives.

Each member of staff has an **Annual Personal Appraisal** where they review performance against targets and set objectives for the forthcoming year. These objectives feed into their service plan and are also grouped under the Council's strategic objectives.

The Council must also take account of the priorities set by the **Devon LAA**. The Local Strategic Partnership is responsible for monitoring achievement against the LAA targets that are specific to Exeter.

### **Monitoring and reporting performance**

The Council uses a combination of statutory, local and management indicators to monitor performance. Following the introduction of a new National Indicator Set and the deletion of the previous Best Value Indicators, a review of all our performance indicators has been undertaken. As the Council is keen to ensure enough performance information is collected in order to manage services effectively, many Best Value indicators will be retained.

Directors regularly review performance indicator results and progress against planned actions. These are also reviewed every six months by Scrutiny Committees. In 2006, we procured integrated performance management software to help focus on managing performance as well as reporting on it. Performance information is now available to all officers and Members on a quarterly basis.

Communicating and assessing performance across the Council is done in a variety of ways. Regular meetings are held between the Strategic Management Team and Portfolio Holders to consider the performance indicators that fairly reflect the overall performance of the Council and progress on the CPA improvement plan. For this purpose, the Council uses a basket of key performance indicators. These are regularly reviewed at Strategic Management Team and at Portfolio Holders meetings.

Also, the website and the Exeter Citizen are used to communicate performance to the public. A summary of our key achievements and overall performance is distributed to all households in Exeter.

### **Data quality**

The Council is dedicated to ensuring all our data is accurate and reliable. This is reflected in a recent report issued by the Audit Commission, which increased the Council's data quality score from 2 to 3.

The availability of quality, timely, accurate and comprehensive performance information is critical for the Council's decision-making process. Performance indicators are used to inform decisions on the allocation of resources and the setting of priorities and targets. They are also used to compare the Council's performance with other councils and to enable external bodies and the public to scrutinise the effectiveness of the various services that are provided.

The Council has set the following objectives:

- The aim is to have 100% accuracy 100% of the time
- None of the Council's performance indicators will be qualified by external auditors
- Each performance indicator will have a named officer who is responsible for collecting and reporting the information
- Performance data will be collected and reported in an agreed format
- A quality assurance procedure will be followed to ensure accuracy of data

## Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2007/08

The Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2007/08 highlighted the following key features of the Council's performance. The Council:

- continues to manage and use its resources well and achieve good value for money. Council tax levels are low and both user satisfaction levels and service usage are high
- has developed a comprehensive improvement plan in response to its housing services external review
- has a clear and robust set of plans which support the delivery of the Exeter Vision, the city's community strategy
- has a well structured business planning process in place throughout the organisation which ensures that objectives are cascaded effectively
- has a good and improving arrangement for managing and developing its workforce and the Council's Investor in People accreditation has recently been renewed
- is aware of the need to continue to work in partnership to ensure that public services are delivered in the most effective way possible
- is performing well in both the use of resources and data quality management arrangements.

The letter also contained the following recommendations. The Council should:

- continue to focus attention on securing improvement in under-performing services - including the processing of planning and housing benefit applications;
- improve target-setting by making targets more challenging and more outcome-based and measurable, rather than process or systems-based;
- ensure that partnership and shared service working opportunities are progressed in order to deliver benefits - insofar as this is practicable while the outcome of Local Government Re-organisation in the county is unknown;
- take action in response to opportunities for improvement identified in the Council's auditor's use of resources and data quality reviews.

A full copy of the Council's Annual Audit and Inspection Letter is available at:  
[www.exeter.gov.uk/districtaudit](http://www.exeter.gov.uk/districtaudit)

## Part 5: Managing risks

We are committed to the effective management of risk at every level so that we can:

- preserve and protect the Council's staff, assets and reputation
- promote corporate governance by ensuring risk management and internal control systems are effective and robust
- enhance and protect the local environment
- improve business performance
- promote a risk aware culture in order to avoid unnecessary liabilities and costs, but to encourage the taking of calculated risks in pursuit of opportunities that benefit the organisation.

We have established a risk management policy and procedures, and a risk management group that is charged with ensuring that the corporate risk register is regularly reviewed and kept up-to-date. The published corporate risk register identifies the Council's High and Medium risks and shows the mitigation measures actioned and planned for in order to manage the risks faced in delivering our priorities. This can be found at:

[www.exeter.gov.uk/riskmanagement](http://www.exeter.gov.uk/riskmanagement)

We recognise that risk management must be an integral part of our performance management framework and embedded throughout the Council. To achieve this, a risk management module is to be integrated with our performance management system to allow service managers to access performance and risk information in one place. This will be rolled out on a service-by-service basis.