

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (ECONOMY)

21 January 2016

Portfolio Holder Priorities 2015/16

Updates against priorities for all Portfolio Holders are included within this report.

Members will note that some Portfolio Holders report to a different scrutiny committee and are unable to take questions at all committees.

Portfolio Holder for City Development: Councillor Rachel Sutton

	Priority	Update
1	Continue to work towards low carbon initiatives including district heating schemes at Monkerton, City Centre and SW Exeter and sustainable travel proposals including railway station provision and improvements, park and ride and delivery of footpath/cycle networks	The Monkerton District Heating Agreement has now been concluded. Newcourt station has opened and Executive have agreed to fund £1.35m towards Marsh Barton station. An alternative to Alphington Park and Ride has been proposed for Ide but this is subject to positive public consultation.
2	Submit a Development Delivery Plan to the government and start work on a longer-term planning and infrastructure strategy for Greater Exeter	Submission of DDDPD delayed to April/May 2016 to follow decision on Exeter Road appeal and treatment of student accommodation in housing supply. Work has commenced on a longer term sub-regional study with East Devon District Council, Teignbridge District Council, Mid Devon District Council and Devon County Council. Infrastructure Officers Group working on the Greater Exeter infrastructure priorities.
3	Negotiate local labour/contractor agreements as part of new planning commitments	There is a lack of a policy basis to insist on agreements and so little progress has been made. Procedures will be reorganised to increase this priority.
4	Progress delivery of IKEA, Princesshay Leisure and the leisure complex and address issue posed by retail proposals in the Honiton Road corridor and at M5 Junction 27	IKEA continues to make slow progress towards approval of reserved matters. Princesshay Leisure application to be determined on 20th January. Planning appeal, over six days, was conducted into proposals at Moor Exchange. Decision probable towards the latter half of 2016. B and Q application to be determined in February/March. Mid Devon District Council have made no final decision on the content of its plan relating to J27 M5.
5	Ensure council consents are in place to deliver the Exe Flood Prevention Scheme	Following the approval of planning permission, two outstanding areas of detail have been resolved at Mill on the Exe and Countess

	Priority	Update
		Wear. There is an ongoing process of discharging the requirements to satisfy planning conditions.
6	Work with the University of Exeter to provide appropriate student accommodation	A consultant has been commissioned to report on student accommodation issues. Results to be considered by the University Task and Finish Group and Planning Member Working Group in January 2016. Student accommodation schemes are being considered at Longbrook Street, Radmore and Tucker, Renslade House, ECFC and the bus depot.
7	Establish the business case for the creation of a new Housing Development Company	Business case to be prepared in early 2016.
8	Support the Exeter Community Forum in the development of a Community Strategy to inform future spending for New Homes Bonus and Community Infrastructure Levy	The Exeter Community Forum have held a series of community meetings through November where residents have been invited to attend and give their comments on what their priorities are for their neighbourhoods in response to local development. This information is now being collated and will be available on the website – www.exetercommunityforum.net , where people will have the opportunity to comment or leave further feedback. Consultants are now developing a Community Strategy for the city that will be presented to Community Scrutiny on the 1 March.

Portfolio Holder for Economy and Culture: Councillor Rosie Denham

	Priority	Update
1	Enhance the knowledge economy with particular emphasis on the Innovation Exeter initiative to raise the profile of the area for inward investment and to address skills development	Exeter City Council together with Devon County Council and our neighbouring district councils of Teignbridge and East Devon are working with the University of Exeter, Exeter College and the Met Office on Innovation Exeter with the aim of making this city region one of the UKs leading knowledge economies. Richard Ball has been seconded to the Innovation Exeter team at the University to progress this work. Mark Goodwin, Deputy Vice Chancellor, has been tasked with the responsibility of leading this programme on behalf of the partnership. KPMG has been instructed by the university of Exeter to shape the Innovation Exeter strategy and the early work is being fed into the debate around the devolution agenda. Members recently supported the Internet of Things bid made in

	Priority	Update
		in conjunction with Andromeda, this work - which addresses how data analytics could be used to help solve many of the day to day problems we experience, ranging from traffic congestion, to health and energy needs – sits under Innovation Exeter. A central plank of Innovation Exeter is creating the culture of innovation and there will be many initiatives that are happening and will happen in the city that we will want to nurture with the aim of achieving our vision.
2	Deliver a successful Rugby World Cup 2015	RWC2015 delivered without incident in Exeter. The event is the subject of a report to Economy Scrutiny Committee in January 2016, detailing full income and expenditure and the impact the event had on the city. Legacy projects to continue for the next 3 years. As a result of Sandy Park hosting RWC2015, they will be hosting the European Rugby 7s for the next 3 years.
3	Procure an operator for the new leisure complex	An officer has been appointed to procure and operator for the new leisure complex.
4	Work with the Business Improvement District (BID) Board to progress the City Centre Strategy	A "Monitoring Board" has been set up to monitor income through the BID levy, which includes representatives from ECC, 2 Exeter BID board members and the BID CEO. Exeter BID Business Plan is being actioned with projects being developed and rolled out, which do not necessarily relate to the previous city centre strategy. Discussions to take place with Exeter BID on how the City Centre Strategy will be implemented.
5	Review the way we deliver and fund tourism activities in the future	Discussions have been held to look at the possibility of sharing the tourist facilities with others but to date no solution has been identified. Officers continue to look for ways of reducing expenditure and increasing income with the objective of reducing the cost of providing the service. The recent transfer of the visitor centre on the quay from Quay House to the Custom House and the development of more events at the quayside are contributing to this objective.
6	Look at alternative governance arrangements of the RAMM	Report commissioned from external consultants exploring the options for governance change, business case supporting this proposition and potential route forward. Draft report with Portfolio Holder for initial comment, which will be followed by any necessary further work by consultant.
7	Adopt a new Parking Strategy and develop the Parking Action Plan	The consultants' report on the Parking Strategy has been further delayed but a report on the recommended Strategy and Action Plan will be considered in the March 2016 committee cycle

	Priority	Update
8	Develop a new Waterways Partnership for Exeter to steer the future of Exeter's waterways	The first meeting of the Waterways Partnership Board was 16 November 2015
9	Progress Exeter City Futures work with Andromeda and key partners	Work is now underway. Social media launch is set for 11th January 2016. Councillor briefing 13th January. Main media launch 28th January. Consultation and Q&A sessions booked in for after PURDAH. Communication strategy & policies agreed.

Portfolio Holder for Health and Place: Councillor Keith Owen

	Priority	Update
1	Address antisocial behaviour by introducing a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)	The proposed PSPO is currently subject to consultation, ending January 22, 2016.
2	Increase the recycling rate from 34% to 35% and increase year on year	<p>The target 1% uplift in recycling rate will not be achieved due to a combination of factors that have unfavourably impacted upon the recycling calculation formula, namely increased tonnages from litter bins and street sweepings (residual waste), decreased tonnages in leaf sweepings and garden waste output (counted as recycling), and excluded data on community-based recycling schemes. Unfortunately, these abnormalities to trend equate to a 1% reduction in recycling rate.</p> <p>Measures to increase recycling rates such as additional 'micro' bring-banks and collaborative working with the University, have yet to show up in increasing yields of recyclates.</p>
3	Improve cleansing of the city centre and implement new ways of keeping the city looking good	Work continues with Exeter BID to agree funding for a second hot wash machine and a deep clean/rapid response team for the city centre. A focus on graffiti removal for the Rugby World Cup was successful and will be maintained as necessary.
4	Work with Devon County Council to tackle the issue of weeds and highway verges	A three year plan has been agreed with Devon County Council (DCC) for the Exeter city weed spraying and highways verges maintenance programme, funded from DCC, Exeter City Council (ECC) and Exeter Board
5	Review management of the Exe Estuary Harbour	A working group of officers from ECC, East Devon District Council (EDDC) and Teignbridge District Council (TDC) has been formed to address operational management issues jointly. The emerging Waterways strategy may seek to

		find a new solution for the strategic/legal governance of the Harbour but this will not be resolved in 2015/16.
6	Support Exwick Sports Hub by transferring the playing fields to Exeter College	This can be completed once Exeter College has agreed the terms of the lease.
7	Renew the Gambling Policy	New and improved policy has now been approved by Council and implemented.
8	Reduce the carbon footprint of our vehicles by 3%	Successful pilot of fuel economisers completed and an invest to save case for rolling out to all RCVs approved (ordered and due to be fitted to remaining RCV fleet in January 2016). Reduction in engine idling project has been successful in changing drivers' behaviour, and should make an overall contribution to carbon emissions from our main fuel-heavy vehicles.
9	Consider an evening trade waste collection service	In partnership with BID, a survey of all BID members will be conducted in January 2016 to ascertain the viability of such a service for the City Centre.

Portfolio Holder for Enabling Services: Councillor Ollie Pearson

	Priority	Update
1	Improve procurement arrangements	Our attempts to appoint a permanent officer were unsuccessful and a second advert has provided only one potentially suitable candidate. We are interviewing on 18 December. However, our interim officer has drafted revised Contract Regulations and a second interim has been appointed to provide a thorough review of procurement practices in the Council. This piece of work is due to report back in March 2016.
2	Maximise income opportunities from the Civic Centre and Guildhall	We have been working with various parties who have shown interest in taking space within the Civic Centre. The number of private bookings of the Guildhall continues to grow.
3	Enable customers to self-serve via digital services	Supplier will be selected and approved by the Channel Shift Board in February. Work with services will continue in January to confirm priorities for services to be delivered through the Digital Platform. The new council website is due to be launched on 22 January 2016.
4	Progress the development agreement for the Princesshay Leisure scheme at the Bus and Coach Station site	Heads of Terms have been agreed with The Crown Estate on the Development Agreement and these are now in the hands of solicitors. The Outline Planning Application is scheduled to be considered by full Council in January. Planning consent has been secured for the new bus depot at Matford and construction is

	Priority	Update
		now underway. Planning will shortly be submitted for the existing depot site for a mixed use student scheme and a conditional contract is in place for the disposal of that site. Work is underway on the design of the new bus station.
5	Implement the recommendations in relation to the ward boundary changes for Exeter	A report is being presented to special meetings of Executive and Council in January 2016, regarding the Polling Places Review which was a consequence of the ward boundary changes. All other aspects of the ward boundary changes will be implemented for the May 2016 elections
6	Prepare a Corporate Asset Management Plan	Initial consultant's report on the framework has been received. Draft documentation to be drawn up by Corporate Manager Property in new year
7	Deliver a robust health and safety compliance regime for corporate property	Initial survey work with property managers complete. Corporate Property restructure identifies resource and priority
8	Roll out the Renewables Investment Programme	Approved Programme of solar investments completed (final installation being the Livestock Centre roof) in 2015. New projects to be identified in Energy Strategy in 2016.
9	Progress the Council's aim to be an energy-neutral Council	LED lighting installation completed in Civic Centre, progressing to car-park and other Council buildings in 2016 and 2017. More efficient gas boiler has replaced oil-fired boilers at Civic Centre. PV array installations at multi-storey car parks and Matford completed at year end. For our Fleet - fuel reduction programmes, driver behaviour programmes, and electrifying fleet have assisted the drive for carbon neutrality.
10	Produce a plan to get residents registered on the electoral roll	We are continuing to canvass hard to reach areas of the city (student population in particular). We have received approval from Executive to increase staffing within Electoral Services by 1/2 a post which will specifically help with more elector engagement.

Portfolio Holder for Customer Access: Councillor Heather Morris

	Priority	Update
1	Publish a Homelessness Strategy to ensure efficient and effective management of homelessness	A Homelessness Strategy Task and Finish group has been meeting to formulate the new strategy. This will be a joint strategy between Exeter City Council and Teignbridge District Council and will build upon partnership working between the two authorities and wider

	Priority	Update
		statutory and voluntary sector partners.
2	Work with partners to deliver joint programmes, including Targeted Families, Integrated Care Exeter and Exeter Community Hub	Partnership working continues to be a key strand of Housing Needs work. The strands of MEAM (Making Every Adult Matter), ICE (Integrated Care Exeter) and The Exeter Community Hub are being brought together under the ICE structure to ensure consistency in development. A new post is in the process of Job Evaluation to provide support to managing these cross cutting agendas with recruitment due in early 2016.
3	Introduce further initiatives to improve standards in the private rented sector	We continue to work with and through the multi-agency Private Rented Forum on a number of initiatives. A Landlord's Handbook has been published and is available online and work is currently underway on a handbook for tenants. A successful tenant information day took place in the city centre on 26 October 2015 and officers are presently undertaking a survey in partnership with the CAB on tenants' experiences of the private rented sector. This will be used to inform further policy initiatives. We are also leading discussions at the Private Rented Forum about the possibility of introducing an Exeter Rental Standard, designed to assist tenants in finding good quality, well managed accommodation.
4	Prepare for further changes to local welfare including the Local Council Tax Scheme	Executive has agreed to recommend to Council the continuation of the current scheme for 2016/17. Proposals will be developed for Members' consideration for the 2018/19 Scheme.
5	Help customers with their financial challenges by continuing to work with Job Centre Plus (JCP), providing money management and debt advice and facilitating a Credit Union	A Local Delivery Partnership Agreement with JCP came into force when Universal Credit (UC) went live in Exeter on 9 November. As part of this agreement, we help DWP calculate housing costs, help customers to make an on-line application for UC, and assist with budgeting advice and the transition to a single monthly payment in arrears. A successful bid for funding from the Money Advice Service means that EMAP (our partnership with CAB & Homemaker SW) can continue until March 2017, enabling us to provide more money/debt advice to residents of Exeter. We have been able to identify £36k from Local Welfare Support to assist customers with saving or access to affordable credit. A pre-tender document has been sent to both Plymouth and Plough & Share Credit Unions.
6	Revise the Council's policy for the allocation of social	Changes to the allocation policy including the removal of Band E, removal of non bidders

	Priority	Update
	housing	and those who refuse accommodation and the badging of some properties to encourage working household to apply will be implemented in April 2016. In early 2016 current applicants and support agencies will be advised of how the changes impact them and given the opportunity to discuss their wider housing options.
7	Work with partners to tackle rough sleeping, within current resources	The new Assertive Homeless Outreach service was launched on the 1 October 2015. With TUPE arrangements there has been a delay in recruiting a team leader although temporary arrangements are in place. A 3 month Safe Sleep initiative has been launched with an additional 26 night shelter units being available for rough sleepers. Additional funding to assist has been brought in from Devon County Council and East Devon Council to facilitate this alongside Exeter City Council resources. Working in partnership with Julian House, BCHA and St Petrock the additional resource provides a platform to engage the hard to reach group into accommodation. There is also the opportunity to focus on those who refuse help or present too high a risk to provide accommodation for in terms of a more enforcement based approach.

Portfolio Holder for Housing Revenue Account: Councillor Rob Hannaford

	Priority	Update
1	Agree a new Housing Strategy 2015-2020	Officers have produced a draft housing strategy and this will be reported to Scrutiny Committee and Executive in the next cycle of meetings.
2	Improve standards in our social housing stock	We have continued to deliver programmes of planned and reactive investment in our social housing stock in order to improve standards for our tenants. The future capital programme will, however, be substantially impacted by government-imposed policy and financial changes.
3	Improve the management of our housing assets and achieve greater value for money from housing contracts	An external review of housing asset and contract management has been commissioned and completed which identifies the scope for achieving improved value for money. Options arising from this review will be reported to future meetings of Scrutiny Committee and Executive.

	Priority	Update
4	Examine alternative options for communicating with and engaging council tenants	Feedback on present methods of communicating with tenants has been very positive. Participation in the Housing Performance Scrutiny Partnership has increased and tenants have additionally been asked to consider and suggest what other forms of engagement they might like to see. A Housing Community Partnerships Officer has been appointed to develop further community-based initiatives.
5	Review the way we deal with reactive repairs	This has also been addressed through the external review of asset management. Contractor performance is, however, strong and the volume and costs of reactive repairs are both falling.