

EXECUTIVE
(HELD AS A VIRTUAL MEETING)

Tuesday 7 July 2020

Present:

Councillor Bialyk (Chair)
Councillors Sutton, Foale, Ghusain, Harvey, Morse, Pearson, Williams, Wright and Wood

Apologies:

Councillors Leadbetter and K. Mitchell in their capacities as Opposition Leaders.

Also present:

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Director (BA), Director (DB), Director (J-PH), Director (JY), Chief Finance Officer, City Solicitor, Service Lead Housing Assets, Service Lead Housing Tenancy Services, Project Officer, City Development, Principal Project Manager (Strategic Policy) (JD), Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support, Democratic Services Officer (SLS) and Democratic Services Officer (HB)

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MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2020, were taken as read, and approved for signing by the Chair as correct at the earliest possible convenience.

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made.

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QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 19

A member of the public, Peter Cleasby, submitted the following question, related to Minute No. 68:-

- What was the total expenditure - including an estimate of staff time costs - on the tendering exercise, including preparatory studies, for the new leisure operator contract?

The Council Leader gave the following response:-

The operator procurement process has been running for a number of years, initially as an exercise for St Sidwell's Point before expanding to cover the whole leisure portfolio.

The tender process for the new operator has in itself been only a proportion of the total spend. The majority of the spend has been on ensuring an operator focus in the design decisions in relation to the St Sidwell's project and, latterly, in developing the estates strategy for the whole leisure portfolio which is essential work that holds the Council in good stead going forward.

The total cost has been £555,106 (ignoring accounting costs and this year) and has been fully funded from New Homes Bonus, not the Council Taxpayer.

Mr Cleasby asked a supplementary question:-

- given the subsequent intention now to insource the Leisure Services do you consider the above expenditure to have been appropriate?

The Leader responded that, in light of the extraordinary circumstances arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, this course of action is deemed the most appropriate and is considered to be the right decision for the city and one which it is hoped will be supported by both the Executive this evening and Council on 21 July 2020.

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POST-PANDEMIC RECOVERY OF LEISURE SERVICES

The Executive received the report on the recovery of the Council's leisure services as a result of the impact of COVID-19 and the requirement to secure a long term future for the Council's leisure services. The report set out a proposal for permanently in-sourcing the leisure service to create a new pathway to rebuild the Council's leisure offer to ensure a viable and sustainable long term future.

The Director (JY) set out the background research, rationale and future scenarios for opting to take the service back in house. Financial modelling for the in house option had been based on the operator's 2018/19 data with particular regard given to the UKactive June COVID-19 Impact Report which, drawing on a body of research including that of Sport England, highlighted future uncertainty given the extreme volatility in the leisure sector. This was anticipated to continue for up to two years. Although there was continuing dialogue nationally within the sector, Government guidance was awaited on a pathway to the safe re-opening of facilities. A resurgence of infections would have a further impact bringing more restrictive lockdown.

With behavioural change anticipated, affecting, for example, budget gyms and a high risk associated with a procurement approach as operators were unlikely to put forward a financially viable bid, the in-sourcing model proposed provided more direct control and was considered to be a safer approach given the high level of uncertainty caused by the pandemic. Many factors had to be taken into consideration in determining a net budget figure such as additional staffing, the need for social distancing of customers and environmental factors including stringent testing of plant to industry standards. This, however was a best estimate given the ever changing dynamic.

The initial transfer of the service would take place on 1 September 2020 with staff transferring to the Council to be under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE). A business case for the longer term governance options would be brought to a future meeting of Executive.

During discussion the following points were raised:-

- It is important to recognise other options but these contain a high level of risk for the Council and its finances;
- bringing the service in house was considered an exciting option which provides a greater opportunity to integrate with the Sport England Local Delivery Pilot;
- it was the best deal for the city to ensure the continuation of the service and to support staff within the service; and

- Members welcome the insourcing proposal and commend the swift action of officers in working towards opening the facilities as soon as the centres are safe and can meet Covid-19 secure guidelines.

The following responses were given to Members' queries:-

- a subsidy would be in place for an initial period during the phased opening but, because of the volatility of the sector and uncertainty over the changing landscape of Covid-19, it was not possible to estimate how long the subsidy would continue. The current model was based on an 18 month period and an update report following a detailed assessment of assumptions would be brought to the December Executive meeting;
- it was hoped to reduce subsidies by adopting innovative ideas to better meet the needs of communities; and
- the Government had not identified any specific funding to support the leisure industry but was being lobbied nationally by local authorities and operators.

The Director (JY) also stated that existing strategic work in bringing forward the Physical Activity and Built Facilities Strategies for leisure, which includes significant development plans for the Wonford and Exeter Arena sites, had been accelerated, and business cases were under development which, if successful, offer positive opportunities in the medium and long term future. Similarly, the Council had healthy partnerships with national governing bodies who are assisting in these developments and work was progressing on the flagship St Sidwell's Point Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre and the refurbishment of the Riverside Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre both of which had continued throughout the pandemic with careful control of activity on site to ensure safe social distancing. Current estimates were, in both cases, for a 2021 opening, subject to how the pandemic plays out.

RECOMMENDED that Council:-

- (1) agree to the permanent in-sourcing of the Leisure Services when the current contract terminates on 31st August 2020 and the abandonment of the procurement process;
- (2) agree to officers effecting an expedient transfer of staff and services into the Council and bringing forward a detailed business plan by 31 December 2020 setting out governance options for the future operation of the service;
- (3) support the allocation of a supplementary budget of up to £270,000 to allow the cost recovery agreement to be settled;
- (4) allocate a revenue budget of £1,542,310 to cover the costs of the transfer and the re-launch of the services;
- (5) allocate a capital budget of £330,000 towards the costs of re-opening facilities in a COVID-Secure environment, ICT systems and equipment and re-branding; and
- (6) allocate a capital budget of £1.5 million for the fitting out of St Sidwell's Point Swimming Pool and Leisure Complex.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the staged re-opening of leisure services take place from September 2020 when it is safe and cost-effective to do so; and
- (2) the cost recovery payment of £337,833 agreed with Parkwood Leisure which terminates the contract on 31st August 2020 be noted.

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OVERVIEW OF GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2019/20

The Executive received the report on the overall financial position of the General Fund Revenue Budgets for the 2019/20 financial year, which sought approval for the General Fund working balance, a number of supplementary budgets and the creation of a new earmarked reserve.

Members noted:-

- the transfer back to the General Fund Balance of £1.5 million instead of taking £780,000 from the General Fund Balance as had been reported in quarter three;
- the removal of £1.6 million of revenue contributions to capital and replaced with financing through capital receipts;
- the offsetting of statutory repayment of debt against voluntary repayments made in in previous years;
- the improved gain on the Devon Business Rates Pool;
- an increase in bad debt provision.
- transfer from earmarked reserve of £717,000 and transfer of a number of reserves into a single Earmarked Reserve 2020/21 budget to protect the Council's financial position; and
- supplementary budgets totalling £1,198,960 to be added to the 2020/21 budget, these budgets to be financed from Earmarked Reserves of £1,143,440, CIL Administration of £75,000 and the General Fund Working Balance of £118,520, offset by a reduced amount being taken from Neighbourhood CIL. The impact on the projected General Fund Working Balance would be to reduce it to £5,737,729, above the minimum requirement for the Council. Supplementary budgets of £331,670 were proposed but would be held pending certainty over the Council's financial position.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes and approves (where applicable):-

- (1) the net transfer of £717,309 from Earmarked Reserves as detailed in paragraph 8.11 of the report;
- (2) the supplementary budgets of £1,198,960 and budget transfers as detailed in paragraph 8.13 of the report;
- (3) the Earmarked Reserves at 31 March 2020;
- (4) the Council Tax account and collection rate;
- (5) the outstanding sundry debt, aged debt analysis and debt write-off figures;
- (6) the creditors payment; and
- (7) the General Fund working balance of £5,856,249 at 31 March 2020.

CAPITAL MONITORING 2019/20 AND REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME FOR 2020/21 AND FUTURE YEARS

The Executive received the report, which advised Members of the overall financial performance of the Council for the 2019/20 financial year in respect of the annual capital programme. The report also sought approval of the 2020/21 revised capital programme, including commitments which would be carried forward from 2019/20.

Particular reference was made to:-

- the £40,620,961 capital expenditure in 2019/20 and how it was financed;
- the available capital receipts of £4,333,210 of which £330,000 would help fund the transfer back to the Council of the Leisure Services; and
- a further funding request of £250,000 towards Pinhoe Station Road Playing Field upgrades which would be funded from Section 106 Agreements.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve:-

- (1) the overall financial position for the 2019/20 annual capital programme; and
- (2) the amendments and further funding requests to the Council's annual capital programme for 2020/21.

2019/20 HRA BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - OUTTURN

The Executive received the report, which advised Members of any major differences, by management unit, between the approved budget and the outturn for the financial year up to 31 March 2020 in respect of the Housing Revenue Account and the Council's new build schemes. Members were advised that an update on the HRA Capital Programme outturn was incorporated into the report to assist in providing a comprehensive financial update in respect of the Housing Revenue Account.

Particular reference was made to:-

- a small surplus to be added back to the HRA balance standing at £10.329 million with plans to spend much of this on the future capital programme to improve existing assets;
- request for a supplementary budget of £657,000; and
- capital expenditure of £15.7 million in the current financial year of which £7.2 million related to the existing stock and £8.5 million to investing in new Council homes.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes and approves (where applicable):-

- (1) the supplementary budgets of £657,040, as detailed in paragraph 8.4 of the circulated report;
- (2) the HRA financial position for 2019/20 financial year; and
- (3) the revision of the HRA Capital Programme to reflect the reported variations detailed in Appendix 4 of the circulated report.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2019/20

The Executive received the report on the current Treasury Management performance for the 2019/20 financial year and the position regarding investments and borrowings at 31 March 2020.

Particular reference was made to the receipt of £97,000 against an estimate of paying out £216,000 and taking loans at a positive interest rate.

RECOMMENDED that Council note the content of the report.

EMERGENCY BUDGET 2020/21

The Executive received the report on the impact of Covid-19 in relation to the finances of local authorities. Exeter had received £1.379 million of funding from Government, however the scale of income loss and additional expenditure incurred because of Covid-19 and the lockdown was larger than the additional funding received.

The Chief Finance Officer commented on the impact on business rates and the implications for the economy, particularly the key income streams for the city council in relation to the city centre, which were matters that would challenge the medium term financial plan. He highlighted the following details in respect of the need for the Council to make further savings of £5.8 million over the next three years:-

- an extra spend of £2.62 million including support for rough sleepers, creation of the wellbeing hub and providing new refuse vehicles;
- an income loss of £8.56 million;
- Government announcement of additional support anticipated in respect of fees and charges but not commercial rent;
- anticipated irrecoverable losses from sales, fees and charges for the year of £5.5 million with approximately £3.9 million compensation anticipated;
- gap of £11.2 million, representing nearly a third of the Council's gross budget of £35 million. A revised budget for 2020/21 was necessary to address the additional expenditure and loss of income experienced whilst maintaining the General Fund Working Balance above the minimum level of £3 million;
- proposal to help balance the budget included £1.4 million Government grant, £1.2 million from General Fund Working Balance, use of Earmarked Reserves; offsetting repayment of debts against previous re-payments, the receipt of £1.7 million from the RAMM Business Rates valuation appeal and reductions in service expenditure totalling over £1.7 million;
- future pressures included a pay award and supplementary budgets, possible additional costs bringing Leisure Services in house and the extension of rough sleeper support; and
- the District Councils' network was lobbying Government for support to both Leisure Services and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- the immediate action to support rough sleepers came at a cost to the Council of £180,000 but with only £24,000 received in grant;

- overall additional Government support of £500 million likely to be distributed to upper tier authorities and lack of clarity given when the Government announces support;
- the Council was committed to working with local businesses through the Place Board to ensure that Exeter recovers as quickly as possible from the crisis; and
- the Council is committed to maintaining front line services for the city

RECOMMENDED that Council:-

- (1) approves the Council's revised spending proposals in respect of both its General Fund and HRA revenue budgets;
- (2) notes that the future budget monitoring reports will assess the position against the revised budget and further decisions may be required depending on the economic impact being experienced as the year progresses; and
- (3) approves a budget of up to £1 million delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Chief Finance Officer. The budget to be used to fund urgent issues arising out of the response to Covid-19 and to offset the reductions in service budgets if required for urgent issues with the funds to be allocated from the income loss compensation announced by the Government.

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REVIEW OF THE GENERAL BULLER STATUE

The Executive received the report requesting the Council's Scrutiny Programme Board to investigate the continued appropriateness of the statue of General Buller and his horse Biffen on the junction of Hele and New North Road in Exeter. The request was presented in context of the Black Lives Matters movement against systemic racism and discrimination.

Particular reference was made to the recent increase in activism and outrage over all aspects of inequality following the death of George Floyd in America on 25 May 2020, with significant focus around the relevance of prominent statues on public land that personify racism and the glorification of a colonial past. Although Exeter had six statues of prominent white men who played a part in the city's history, the Buller statue was the most conspicuous by way of location and controversy. The recommendation would ascertain if the statue was still appropriate to the people of Exeter today.

Members were advised that a temporary board was being prepared to be affixed close to the statue by the end of the week and which would explain its history, the Black Lives Matter movement and how the Council proposed to respond to representations being received.

The proposal to investigate the significance of the statue would include assistance from the University of Exeter and Professor Todd Gray in fact checking and researching original archives. The Tackling Racial Harassment in the Community Group would also be involved.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- a large number of representations had already been received by email and letter expressing diverging views on the statue;
- it should not be the intention to re-write history, the statue having been erected some 115 years ago;

- as part of the scrutiny process, it would be important to recognise and celebrate the diversity of the city and, as such, involve as wide a cross section of the community in the scrutiny process as possible;
- the remit of the scrutiny process could be widened to consider other inequality issues; and
- consideration by the Scrutiny Programme Board was the appropriate way forward in the first instance with a recommendation to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee which should also set out a timeline.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Programme Board be requested to agree the investigation by the relevant Scrutiny Committee of the continued appropriateness of the statue of General Buller and his horse Biffen, and to act accordingly on its findings.

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COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Executive received the report updating Members on the Council's Social Housing development activity since the approval of the initial phase in October 2019. The report also sought approval for the establishment of a budget for in-year development opportunities where time constraints did not allow for a full Committee and Council reporting process to be followed. The report further sought approval for the acquisition of 3 - three bedroom houses in Anthony Road, Heavitree, Exeter, as part of the HRA Development Programme.

The report updated Members on the progress with the first tranche of development for 100 properties at a cost of approximately £18 million for the following sites:-

- 9 houses at Thornpark Rise;
- 10 houses at Bovemoors Lane;
- 21 flats at Hamlin Gardens;
- 60 flats at Vaughan Road;
- the Extra Care development at Edwards Court under construction to deliver 53 one and two bedroom flats early in 2021;

all delivered to Passivhaus standard by the Council's in-house team in conjunction with Exeter City Living.

- 17 non-traditionally constructed Laings properties had been demolished to be replaced with traditionally constructed dwellings.

The Council was continuing to scope the second phase of social and affordable housing programme, in some cases with Exeter City Living.

Members also noted the acquisition from Exeter City Living in the sum of £900,000 of the three houses in Anthony Road, Heavitree next to the Council's HRA housing estate, North Lawn Court, Exeter, these properties being originally intended for the open market. In order to assist in any future market acquisitions quickly, an additional budget of £3 million was requested.

The Director (BA) also reported a Government announcement of a £3 billion "green" package including a £50 million pilot programme for the retrofit of social housing at scale including elements such as insulation, double glazing and heat pumps. It was considered that the City Council was well placed to make a funding bid to participate in the pilot because of the innovative work already commenced within the Housing Assets and Development Team.

Members noted the:-

- contribution the above developments would make to the Council target of delivering 500 new properties in total within a 10 year period;
- commitment to building to Passivhaus Standards and aligning with the Council's Objectives regarding Carbon Reduction; and
- valuable increase to the City's social housing stock being brought forward in conjunction with the work of Exeter City Living as the Council's other development arm.

RECOMMENDED that Council:-

- (1) note the Housing Revenue Account Development Programme progress update;
- (2) approve the additional capital budget provision of £3 million to allow urgent market opportunities to be pursued and secured where the Committee reporting timescales do not allow a full reporting process to be followed;
- (3) grant delegated authority to the Director (BA) in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Council Housing Development and Services to spend the £3 million as referred to in paragraph 2.1.2 of the circulated report where in year market opportunities are identified; and
- (4) approve the acquisition of all three, three bedroom houses in Anthony Road, Heavitree, Exeter, as part of the HRA Development Programme at a cost of £900,000.

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THE INTRODUCTION OF A COUNCIL HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD

The Executive received the report which sought approval to establish a Council Housing and Development (CHD) Advisory Board to improve oversight and governance of the management and maintenance of Council Social Housing as well as the Council's ambitious Social Housing Development plans.

Particular reference was made to the need to meet regulatory standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing's (RSH) for all Registered Social Landlords and the relevance to the City Council with a housing stock delivering an income via tenants' rent of over £20 million and with assets worth over £240 million. The establishment of this Board was therefore in line with best practice and would represent a valuable addition to the Council's existing scrutiny process.

Members noted the proposed composition of the Advisory Board which would include a wide range of expertise provided by five external advisors/stakeholders, tenant representatives as well as Councillors. The report set out the proposed terms of reference for the Board.

RECOMMENDED that Council:-

- (1) approve the creation of a Council Housing and Development (CHD) Advisory Board, with the composition and terms of reference detailed in sections 9 and 10 of the circulated report;

- (2) agree the terms of reference set out in paragraph 9 of the circulated report and the Council's Constitution be amended accordingly;
- (3) request the Independent Remuneration Panel to consider the position of Chair of the CHD Advisory Board and whether it should attract a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) and, if so, the level of SRA, and recommend this to Council accordingly;
- (4) approve a budget of up to £16,000 to cover the cost of an additional resource, if required, and a budget of up to £10,000 for the Special Responsibility Allowance, if required.

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GREATER EXETER STRATEGIC PLAN: DRAFT POLICIES AND SITE OPTIONS CONSULTATION

The Executive received the report which sought approval to consult on the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESp) draft policies and site options consultation document and associated reports, to hold a further 'call for sites' to inform the plan making process and to increase the staff resources in the GESp team.

The Director (BA) advised that the approval to go out to consultation was being considered by the GESp constituent councils of Exeter, East Devon, Mid Devon and Teignbridge District Councils. She invited George Marshall from the GESp team to give the presentation, <https://app.box.com/s/ge36i69xsqjoaetuer7csc3e27edty6> which would be made to each of the Councils, taking Members through the development process with the aim of providing a strategic planning document covering the period 2020 to 2040. The GESp would be strategic in nature and would include:-

- an overarching vision;
- the planning strategy and strategic policies for:
 - Climate emergency;
 - Prosperity and homes;
 - Movement and communication
 - Nature; and
 - Quality places and infrastructure; and
- site allocations for strategic scale development: housing and employment.

Local Plans would need to sit alongside the GESp.

A series of evidence documents would be part of the plans for consultation which include the:

- Sustainability Appraisal: Environmental, social and economic assessment;
- Initial Habitat Regulations Report: Assessment of potential implications for European wildlife sites;
- Issues consultation: Consultation statement: How the responses from the previous consultation have been used to progress the GESp; and
- Equality Impact Assessment: Assessment of the potential impact of GESp content on protected groups.

Also associated with the GESp is a Joint Statement of Community Involvement, (Joint SCI) setting out the way authorities would jointly consult on the GESp. The Joint SCI had been consulted on in 2017 and had been updated to reflect the commentary received though that process (see Minute No. 78 below for further

detail). Approval of the consultation documents was taking place during July and August, with a leadership meeting in August to discuss any minor amendments before consultation commencement. Subject to approval from all four Councils, the eight week consultation would run from 21 September to 16 November 2020 with the responses informing the preparation of the Plan going forward. There would also be further opportunities to shape the plan post-consultation through the Member Reference Forum and Leadership meetings. Additional public consultation would be held as the plan progresses.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- the consultation would be far ranging allowing everyone to have the opportunity to fully engage in the consultation process; and
- comments had already been received by Members from the public who would be encouraged to use the consultation process once this starts in September.

The Portfolio Holder City Development and Planning referred to Exeter's continued commitment to this programme and welcomed the opportunity for the Leader, the Chief Executive & Growth Director working with him to agree the changes depending on the decisions of the other local authorities to ensure that the financial commitment would be made to full effect.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve the GESP team being brought up to eight full time equivalent members of staff and that local planning authority staff resources be provided equitably to the team through equalisation arrangements. Subject to future confirmation of the additional GESP staff roles that will be required for Exeter City Council this would likely equate to a total contribution of approximately £62,000 per annum towards staff costs, or an additional £33,330 per annum on top of existing staff contributions.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP) Draft Policies and Site Options consultation document be approved for public consultation;
- (2) the GESP Draft Policies and Site Options Sustainability Appraisal Report be approved for public consultation;
- (3) the Initial Habitat Regulations Assessment Report be approved for public consultation;
- (4) the content and conclusion of the GESP Equality Impact Assessment Screening Report be noted;
- (5) delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive & Growth Director in consultation with the Leader and relevant Portfolio Holder to agree changes to the documents presented at the meeting, following decisions made by the other GESP authorities and before they are published for consultation;
- (6) a 'call for sites' process be approved, alongside the consultation on the GESP Draft Policies and Site Options document presented at the meeting;
- (7) the content of the consultation statement for the 2017 Greater Exeter Strategic Plan Issues consultation be noted.

GREATER EXETER STRATEGIC PLAN: JOINT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Executive received the report on the Joint Statement of Community Involvement (Joint SCI) prepared for the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP). This document would be considered by the four Greater Exeter local planning authorities of Exeter City, East Devon District, Mid Devon District and Teignbridge District. The report included the proposed approach to public consultation for the GESP as it progresses through its statutory plan-making stages towards adoption. The Director (BA) stated that there was no legal requirement to consult on an SCI, but a draft had been subject to public consultation in 2017. It had been amended following the responses and to take account of the emerging Covid-19 situation and restrictions on social interaction. Every effort had been made to include flexibility in the statement of community involvement to enable full and meaningful consultation irrespective of Covid-19.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the contents of the Joint Statement of Community Involvement (Joint SCI) that has been prepared for the GESP be approved; and;
- (2) delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive & Growth Director in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the relevant Portfolio Holder to agree changes to the Joint SCI arising from decisions by the other Greater Exeter local planning authorities and approve it as a Local Development Document, noting that it will apply jointly to East Devon District, Exeter City, Mid Devon District and Teignbridge District Councils.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 - EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Act.

POST-PANDEMIC RECOVERY OF LEISURE SERVICES

The report on the recovery of the Council's leisure services as a result of the impact of COVID-19 and the requirement to secure a long term future for the Council's leisure services was taken in Part I of the agenda (Minute No. 68 above refers).

RESOURCES REQUIRED TO DEVELOP EXETER'S LOCAL PLAN

The Executive received the report which set out the staff resources required within the City Development Service for the development of Exeter's Local Plan and outlined the budget required to finance the evidence requirements associated with bringing forward the Exeter Local Plan.

Particular reference was made to ensuring that the Local Plan Team could meet the authority's statutory duty to produce an up-to-date Exeter Local Plan as well as all other statutory forward planning functions.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve the allocation of funding required for the evidence requirements associated with bringing forward the Exeter Local Plan.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the resources required to develop the Local Plan, including the proposed structure, roles, anticipated grades and financing and to proceed with the setting up of the new proposed team and the granting of delegated authority to the Director (BA), in consultation with Human Resources, to agree job descriptions and personal specifications for the new posts be approved; and
- (2) the recruitment of the Local Plan Lead and Project Officer posts and the granting of delegated authority to the Director (BA), in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Leader of the Council to progress the appointment of other posts when the Council's financial position permits it be approved.

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EXETER CITY GROUP - RECOMMENDATIONS ON GOVERNANCE AND OPERATING MODEL

The Chair reported that this item had been withdrawn.

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EXETER CITY LIVING LTD BUSINESS PLAN 2020/21

The Executive received the report which sought approval of the Exeter City Living Business Plan 2020/21, with the associated expenditure of previously drawn down loans for funding of business operations and development activity during the financial year 2020/21.

The proposals represented an upscaling of Exeter City Living's activities and would make a significant addition to the Council's ambitions for the city in line with the Exeter Vision 2020. Members noted the aspirations identified for particular sites across the city and welcomed the contribution that would be made to providing much needed, quality housing and the economic, social and environmental benefits that would accrue, now of even greater relevance as a result of the current Covid-19 pandemic.

RECOMMENDED that Council:-

- (1) approve the use of the previously approved Exeter City Council loans to Exeter City Living to fund the matters identified in the Exeter City Living Business Plan 2020/21;
- (2) approve Exeter City Living proceeding with the activities outlined and detailed in the Exeter City Living Business Plan 2020/21 and to include the operational activities and development works identified;
- (3) note that further requests for loans and/or expenditures may be submitted during the course of the financial year, should viable projects to progress ahead of the schedule in the Business Plan 2020/2021, or new opportunities which require funding in excess of the loans approved by the Council to date; and

- (4) note that some of the schemes currently being considered for feasibility review/further investigation may prove unviable and agree that these could be replaced/substituted with other schemes should the Board of Exeter City Living believe they are appropriate for expenditures/investment in the feasibility and pre-planning stage.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 8.07 pm)

Chair

The decisions indicated will normally come into force 5 working days after publication of the Statement of Decisions unless called in by a Scrutiny Committee. Where the matter in question is urgent, the decision will come into force immediately. Decisions regarding the policy framework or corporate objectives or otherwise outside the remit of the Executive will be considered by Council.