

STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16 June 2022

Present:

Councillor Rob Hannaford (Chair)

Councillors Leadbetter, Allcock, Branston, Harvey, Jobson, Lights, Moore, J, Oliver, Read and Vizard

Apologies:

Councillors Asvachin, Knott and Mitchell, K

Also present:

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Director of City Development, Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support and Democratic Services Officer (SLS)

In attendance:

- | | | |
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| Councillor Philip Bialyk | - | Leader of the Council |
| Councillor Josie Parkhouse | - | Portfolio Holder for Leisure Services & Physical Activity |
| Councillor Laura Wright | - | Portfolio Holder for Culture, Corporate & Democratic Services |
| Councillor Duncan Wood | - | Portfolio Holder for Climate Change |
| Councillor Diana Moore | - | Attending Under Standing Order 20 |

7 **Minutes**

Subject to the following typographical amendments relating to Minute No. 4 and a question to the Leader in relation to Exeter City Futures, to read *neither* rather than *either* statutory power or policy-making authority, and in relation to Minute No. 5 and in the reference to city centre parking to read *affected* for *effected* and also in relation to a reference to graduates remaining in the city which should read the *affect* not *effect* of Brexit, the minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2022 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as correct.

8 **Declaration of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made by Members.

9 **Questions from the Public Under Standing Order No.19**

In accordance with Standing Order No.19, the following question had been submitted by a member of the public, Mr Cleasby and was circulated in advance to Members of the Committee. Councillor Wood, Portfolio Holder for Climate Change attended the meeting and gave the following response as set out in italics below:-

Question to the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change – Councillor Wood

Will the relevant Portfolio Holder please list the achievements of the Council's Transport Working Group in the year since it was established?

The membership of the Transport Working Group was finalised in February 2022 and the first meeting was held on Wednesday 16 February 2022. The priority areas of focus which the Group established have been used to provide a consistent message

to Devon County Council in our strategic discussions with them around transport in the city. The Group has not met since the change in Portfolio Holder in May but a new date will be put forward shortly.

As a District Council, Exeter City Council is neither the Transport Authority nor the Highway Authority. Both of these functions fall to Devon County Council as the upper tier authority. The issue of transport is vital for the future of our city and incredibly important to our residents, businesses, visitors and the environment. Our ability to influence and steer policy around transport is therefore crucial. The Working Group is specifically to act as a critical friend to himself as the Portfolio Holder and help be a unified voice for the City Council in all matters related to transport.

Mr Cleasby asked a supplementary question on whether the Transport Working Group had sent any specific messages to the Transport Authority to date?

Councillor Wood responded and stated that the Working Group had not met since he became the Portfolio Holder, and he was not aware that any detail had been specifically passed to Devon County Council, but he would make enquiries. Following a further comment, Mr Cleasby confirmed that he had only had sight of the terms of reference and was not aware the minutes were available. The Chair suggested that if the minutes were in the public domain, they would be made available.

10 **Questions from Members of the Council Under Standing Order No. 20**

In accordance with Standing Order No. 20, the following questions were submitted by Councillor Oliver in relation to the Portfolio of Councillor Parkhouse and also from Councillor Diana Moore in relation to the Portfolios for Councillors Wood, Wright and Morse. The questions were circulated in advance to Members of the Committee. The responses of the Portfolio Holders are set out in italics below: –

Question to the Portfolio Holder for Leisure Services & Physical Activity – Councillor Parkhouse

1. Having noted with concern that Cornwall and other Councils have closed popular local swimming pools, please can the Portfolio Holder tell me if closures of swimming pools have been considered in Exeter?

Councils across the UK have been considering cost saving measures such as higher prices and even closing pools with the energy price rise heating pools has increased by 150% since 2019. However, Exeter City Council remains committed to swimming pool provision in the city. The Council brought 170 members of staff in house and offered local government terms and conditions and a minimum of a living wage. Through Covid and also post pandemic the leisure market has seen unprecedented turbulence. Energy costs are further restricting operators ability to run services, whether they be in private hands, Council run or in a trust.

In Exeter we have invested over £52m in our leisure estate, including the new St Sidwell's Point flagship centre which has just opened, and a refurbished Riverside Leisure Centre. As we speak, £1.5million of additional improvements are taking place to the roof at Riverside so it can host solar Photovoltaic panel (PV) and reduce operating costs. A further £750,000 was recently agreed by Council to enable pre development work to take place at Wonford. We are dedicated to trying to provide the best facilities in our most deprived communities.

The Council will continue to work with Sport England to develop a future leisure strategy that safeguards our current leisure provision whilst looking to invest further. Senior Sport England officers are visiting in late July to outline the process and formal partnership approach to investing in the leisure portfolio.

Questions to Portfolio Holder for City Development - Councillor Morse (The Leader, Councillor Bialyk offered the prepared responses as Councillor Morse was unable to attend the meeting)

Please can the Portfolio Holder report on the following:--

1. Turnover of staff in the planning team over the past 2 years?

The retention rate (direct employees only) was 85% based on date range of 1 June 2020 – 1 June 2022.

He added that-

- *ONS reports Public Sector 1 year retention rate at 84% (2019)*
- *Leading people management sources cite employee retention rates during 2022 at 15 – 17% (CIPD/Ceridian/Monster Jobs)*

2. The proportion (both the number of roles (1) and the proportion of the staff budget (2) in the planning team that are employed on a consultancy basis, and for how long these contracts are expected to continue for ?

(1) (the number of roles)

- *39.2 Full Time Equivalent(FTE) on agreed structure*
- *28.2 FTE direct employees*
- *5 FTE Current Agency/Consultants*
- *11 FTE vacant posts (direct employed) compared to structure (recruitment in progress)*

Agency/Consultant contract end dates range from 31 July 2022, January 2023 or until such time as the direct employed posts are appointed into

(2) Proportion of agency staff/consultants cost VS directly employed salary costs

- *17% spend on Agency/Consultants*
- *83% spend on directly employed (+ on costs)*

The Leader advised that the following additional information would be included in the minutes:-

Table 1.offers a breakdown

	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Variance</i>	<i>% Actual Costs</i>
<i>Total Staff Pay including on-costs</i>	<i>664,648</i>	<i>943,200</i>	<i>-278,552</i>	<i>83%</i>
<i>Agency Staff/Consultants</i>	<i>138,039</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>138,039</i>	<i>17%</i>
	<i>802,687</i>	<i>943,200</i>	<i>-140,513</i>	<i>100%</i>

3. The number, if any, of planning officers seconded or allocated from the planning team to work to the Liveable Place Board or any other bodies ? (E.g. Exeter City Futures).
 - *There are no planning officers seconded or allocated to the Place Board of Exeter City Futures.*
 - *City Development provides a secretariat for the Liveable Exeter Place Board.*
 - *The Director of City Development supports the Chair of the Place Board.*
 - *One Project Manager is seconded to Exeter City Living.*

4. What measures are being taken to recruit, retain and support officers in the planning team?
 - *The Director City Development has taken steps to implement the approved City Development structure, ensuring that all four teams have the right skills and capacity to do their jobs effectively and efficiently, maintain morale and ensure a healthy working environment.*
 - *A new Assistant Service lead (Major Projects) has recently been appointed.*
 - *A resourcing and recruitment plan, has been formulated, which will be implemented in phases.*
 - *Phase 1 will see the launch of a national advertising campaign, later this month, aimed at recruiting permanent roles to fill all vacant posts. This includes the Service Lead role (previously filled on a temporary agency basis)*
 - *A new Planning Enforcement role has been created (replacing the existing temporary agency role) and will be recruited.*
 - *City Development is delivering all of its statutory functions, but there are significant gaps in the structure as detailed.*
 - *There is a dearth of qualified planners nationally and recruitment to fill vacant posts has become increasingly competitive in recent years.*

The Leader also referred to a recent discussion with representatives of the South West Employers Panel who confirmed that recruitment and retention was proving to be a major concern for many employers in the South West, and Councils were not alone in finding issues in recruiting staff at this time.

Councillor Moore asked a supplementary question in relation to the support and follow up offered to planning staff, bearing in mind the high levels of work. The Leader advised that he was aware that support was offered through the Council's Management teams, along with the HR Department. He was not aware that any Director or Managers had indicated there was a support issue amongst the staff.

The Chair suggested that a written request outlining the Council's well-being support structure, including any buddying or mentoring offered be made to staff generally but also in the Planning Department. Councillor Moore thanked the Chair for making that request.

Questions from Councillor Diana Moore to Portfolio Holder Climate Change - Councillor Wood

1. Would the Portfolio Holder consider and introduce carbon literacy training for officers and councillors, such as that provided free (unless certification is required) by the Carbon Literacy project for Local Authorities?
(www.carbonliteracy.com)

The majority of the Net Zero team have been through Carbon Literacy training, with two members of the team currently going through train the trainer for carbon literacy. This will enable the Net Zero team to deliver carbon literacy training in-house for officers and Elected Members. Councillor Wood said that he had carbon literacy training booked in through the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) very soon.

2. Please can the Portfolio Holder provide an update on the structure, roles, and a summary of remit of the ECC Net Zero team and progress towards the recruitment to this team?

The Net Zero Team are not directly linked to the report coming before the Committee today which relates to city wide challenge of getting Exeter to Net Zero Carbon by 2030 and is a collaborative area of work led by Exeter City Futures. The focus of the ECC Net Zero team's work is towards reducing carbon emissions produced through services delivered by the City Council – such as museums, waste collection, our housing stock, leisure and our back office services. The City Council's Carbon Reduction Action Plan will be coming to Committee later this year, which will be the work programme of the team.

Two new members of the Net Zero team were recruited this spring, those are the Sustainability Officer and the Net Zero Data & Support Officer.

Victoria Hatfield – is the Service Lead for ECC Net Zero & Business

There are four staff members in the ECC Net Zero team and Jo Pearce is the Net Zero Project Manager.

Councillor Moore welcomed news of the carbon literacy training and asked if some training could be offered to officers to ensure a consistent approach to completing the Carbon implications section in the Council's reports to Committee.

The Portfolio Holder thanked the Member for the suggestion and he confirmed that he would liaise with the Net Zero & Business Team Lead.

Questions from Councillor Diana Moore to Portfolio Holder Culture, Corporate and Democratic Services – Councillor Wright

Please can the Portfolio Holder provide an update on the following:-

1. The numbers of organisations that have signed up to the SWAN Charter (Safety of Women at Night)?

20 organisations have signed up so far.

2. Will the Portfolio Holder be recommending that the Council itself sign up this Charter?

The Portfolio Holder said that she would have recommended signing up to the SWAN Charter, but the Leader had ensured that the City Council had signed up on line, as soon as the Charter was produced. The Charter is a University of Exeter led initiative and have developed this as part of their Safety of Women and Girls at Night work.

Councillor Moore added that she could not see that the City Council was listed on the web site as one of the organisations that had signed up to the Charter and enquired if there was an error on the web site.

The Portfolio Holder advised that she had just checked the web site and the Council was now listed.

3. What monitoring is being undertaken to assess the impact of the Charter on improving the safety for women?

In November 2021, a partnership led by the University of Exeter, was awarded funding to tackle crimes against women at night by the Home Office's Safety of Women at Night Fund. Over the five month project period and by working collaboratively with partners across the city, the project successfully delivered a number of initiatives one of which included the Charter. The timescale for both submitting the bid and spending the money was extremely short and the final monitoring criteria is still being worked on and forms part of an additional Safer Streets 4 Bid.

The longer term aspirations are a reduction in offences and that is what they are hoping to see and an increase in reporting but these may not be seen straight away. The Strategic Partnership Analyst for Devon and Cornwall Police already provides quarterly crime trend reports to the Community Safety Partnership and this will continue during 2022 and beyond. The report includes police data and analysis on a number of areas which will help the Community Safety Partnership evaluate the success of the project and where further work is needed.

Councillor Moore thanked the Portfolio Holder for the information which was very helpful and asked if the Council had signed up for training of the CCTV operatives, particularly in terms of identifying and handling situations involving vulnerable women at night.

The Portfolio Holder responded that training for the CCTV operatives was already under way including for recent recruits in the CCTV Control Centre, many of whom were former members of the police force.

The Portfolio Holder also responded to a question from the Chair and confirmed that she sat on the Community Safety Partnership with Councillor Pearce, Portfolio Holder for Communities & Homeless Prevention and Councillor Ghusain Portfolio Holder for City Management and Environmental Services, and collectively they will discuss how they will share any pertinent information with Members.

11 **Progress Report from Exeter City Futures and the City of Exeter Greenhouse Gas Inventory**

The Chief Executive & Growth Director made a presentation (a copy of the presentation is appended to the minutes) and reported on the progress from Exeter City Futures Community Interest Company on the work being done to progress the Net Zero Exeter 2030 Plan, together with a baseline Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory for the city. The report quantified the reductions required to achieve Net Zero by 2030 and identified more specific and timely metrics for monitoring progress towards carbon neutrality in each emissions sector along with key performance indicators as a strategic dashboard for the city. It also outlined the scale, opportunity, and pace of the challenge and step change in resources, activity and policy making

both at a local and national level, required for the city to achieve a Net Zero city by 2030. Members were invited to comment on the report that would be presented to the next Executive.

In setting the context, Exeter City Futures offered a collaboration between the key public sector partners within the city (Exeter City Council, Devon County Council, the Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Trust, Exeter College and the University of Exeter and Global City Futures) to deliver on Net Zero, but also to build on sustainability, resilience, innovation and productivity, well-being and an inclusive agenda in respect of the city's communities. The delivery of a whole system change approach to Net Zero includes looking at policy, but also the physical and social environment, and whilst there was potentially life changing positive social change, there was recognition that individuals as well as the collective need would each have their own future challenges. Organisations and institutions in the city would also have to consider their own behaviour. The Chief Executive & Growth Director referred to the vision that Exeter will be a carbon neutral city by 2030 and the aspiration that the Exeter of the future will have grasped the opportunities ahead, based on Exeter's excellent reputation for climate science.

The Chair referred to advance questions received from a Member, (appended to the minutes along with a set of draft recommendations received for information). The Member welcomed the report and the ambitious target of 2030, which was 20 years ahead of the national target set by the public sector and commented on the Council's report as follows -

- concern that not all of the University of Exeter's key monitoring targets and areas identified for change such as retrofitting were replicated in the Council's report.
- that a mechanism including an adequate supply chain should be encouraged to enable individuals, as well as the Council for their own housing stock, to be able to carry out retrofitting work.
- a planning consideration to reach a level of energy independence would help meet those targets, but there was no positive indication of how that related to the current restraints of Photovoltaic (PV) on buildings to enable this to happen.
- the University report has made reference to an 11% target and suggestions for a clean air zone and other measures such as a work place parking levy as well as looking at increasing walking and cycling rates. Such measures and targets should be referred to the Council's Transport Working Group for action as well as consider if there any implications for the Exeter Transport Plan.
- a lack of policy target to reach a suggested target of a rate of recycling of 70% by 2030.
- rolling out a food waste collection service would increase the recycling rate to 50% and, if glass collection was included, that rate would go even higher.
- in conclusion, the Member suggested two key points for consideration should be to monitor all of the targets set out in the University's report, and despite the drive to Net Zero by 2030 requiring collaborative action across many areas of the Council, there was no mechanism such as a standing committee to address this.

The Chief Executive & Growth Director responded to a number of the questions and stated that the Council's report had only included the headline areas, but it was acknowledged that everything needed to be done and the cooperation of other partners and organisations would be needed. The setting and adoption of targets was possible, but adequate resources were needed to address the obstacles. Exeter City Futures have brought together organisations to consider the targets as well as

working with the County's Transport Authority to look at overcoming any obstacles. The Member reiterated the comment she made earlier relating to the University's full list of policy areas which were not included in the Council's report suggesting they were needed to ensure that policy would need to flow from all of the University's measures and targets identified in order to achieve the targets.

The Chief Executive & Growth Director responded to a Member's enquiry stating that the Council could only work within national development guidelines and currently house builders could still deliver houses with gas boilers, which would have to be retrofitted in time. Members from both Scrutiny Committees have been scrutinising the City Development Fund, which included a land ownership model that offered more control rather than being dependent on national policy. The Director City Development added that the Exeter Plan will be a statutory document but it also offered a way to convene and mediate a contested space with developers, stakeholders, communities and the local planning authority. The whole system approach referred to in the Council's report will present a strategic challenge for planning. He also responded to a comment on the scope for putting Photovoltaic Panels (PV) on Listed Buildings This was governed by different legislation to protect and enhance the setting and fabric of such buildings. Any significant intervention through further legislation required a balanced approach. The real challenge to address the rest of the city's housing stock, remained.

Members made the following comments and the Chief Executive & Growth Director responded where appropriate and as set out in italics:-

- delivering on Net Zero 2030 was clearly a huge challenge and should be seen as a call to action for the Council. Despite the focus on skills and having a world leading university in the city, physical barriers such as a lack of affordable housing and the availability of the right kind of jobs to help graduate retention persisted. There ought to be an opportunity for the Council to lead on progressing incentives through the Government and local businesses to offer support for improvements such as PV panels, insulation or retrofitting boilers as this was just too big a financial barrier to leave to individual households.
- despite the delays in the County Council's Active Travel ambitions, which was not without some controversy, further trials for a neighbourhood street model in all of the city centre wards and beyond would be welcomed and ensuring alternative transport and affordability was included.
- it was acknowledged that delayed supply chains were holding up the rolling out of the implementation of the collection of food waste, but there might be an opportunity to approach one or two larger local authorities such as in London or Manchester to see if there was an opportunity to pool their vehicle resources in some way to overcome this delay. *The Director (DB) would be made aware of the suggestion of pooling vehicle resources with other Local Authorities and would report back to Members.*
- although biodiversity was included in the recommendation it was not referenced in the report as a target action for Exeter. The idea of creating a pricing structure had initially seemed very appealing and a tangible way to value nature, but it could also offer some justification for the destruction of habitat by replacement on another site as part of planning controls. *Bristol and Lichfield Councils have established a mechanism to enable developers to pay for ongoing management of land sequestration. Efforts would be made to find an opportunity to investigate more detail of this work and, potentially, consider a pricing mechanism for such carbon off*

setting that could be included in the planning system and enable Devon to come up with its own unique way.

- clarification on whether it was the budget of Exeter City Futures or the Council that would be exceeded was sought. *It was the city's carbon budget not the financial budget which would be exceeded by 2026 although the challenge relating to local authority finances remained.*
- as there may be a tipping point for future fuel type used for large commercial vehicles, perhaps a more generic approach for reducing carbon emissions in transport should be taken rather than setting targets due to the ever changing technology and resulting pace of change. *Flexibility over the management of commercial vehicles was needed and discussions over alternative fuel sources such as with hydrogen manufacturers. The County Council would likely have views about such matters and the return in carbon terms.*
- many essential car users those in the care sector who were reliant on their cars for work, may not be able to make the move to electric cars and buses by 2030. *The challenge over policy and financial issues would require work over the future years, Exeter City Futures were working with a number of companies and through these strategic partnerships for solutions such as an electrification of fleet vehicles or how to incentivise the transport network.*
- further examination of the assumption in the Council's report of the conversion of 50,000 cars to electric, as any reduction in the number of journeys should be included in the modelling, along with the impact of congestion and air pollution. The Member also sought an explanation of the strategy to prioritise the electric charging infrastructure at such an early stage, when the overall plan would require very significant change on every street and might prevent the agility that will be needed. *There was good reason to make an early investment to encourage people to purchase electric vehicles and allay any fears of not having a convenient charging point infrastructure. A number of the bus companies have also indicated they will no longer buy diesel engines and so if the charging infrastructure was put in place that could make the decision to change easier for them.*
- if there was an opportunity for Exeter City Council's commercial waste services to expand their business, or if those leasing Council property could be encouraged to use their services. *The Director (DB) has been working with a waste management company based on the Exeter Science Park to look at ways to scale up the City Council's commercial operations. The forthcoming report to the Executive on waste in relation to the Council's Greenhouse Gas Emissions report will include a discussion about those commercial contacts.*
- that whilst funding would be a question for respective Governments, there should be recognition that the Council has made an effort to find innovative ways of progressing ways to meet the Net Zero challenge.
- it was essential that public transport be seen as a public service and properly funded.
- why was the energy from the Energy to Waste plant on Marsh Barton and the new housing on the outskirts of Exeter by the Devon Motel not connected to a District Heating system. *The business case made for the Energy to Waste plant was supported by Teignbridge District Council, but it had not been possible to secure the deal with the volume house builders in Teignbridge.*
- it was suggested that as much of a visual message as possible be given to the Council's Communication team to share with the public to be aware of the challenges ahead. *The message including the challenges will be shared through Exeter City Futures.*
- the different means of individuals to be able to participate should be borne in mind in the messaging. The Member referred to some residents in her ward

who were supportive but initiatives such as road changes had meant that their livelihoods had been disproportionately affected as individuals. There was a need therefore for any move to behavioural change to be communicated sensitively. *The request was acknowledged and directly correlated with the intended messaging.*

The Chair hoped that despite the cost of living crisis that there may be an opportunity to reinvigorate the economy through public spending to develop the green technology and the infrastructure needed. The Chief Executive & Growth Director referred to the various incarnations of the county's Devolution deals and the consistent message that Exeter has made a solid case to pursue green innovation. It was important to be clear locally about the direction of travel and wait for the right opportunity which he was confident that the Leader at the County Council would support.

The Chair referred to the discussion and sought Members' support for an additional recommendation to set up a Standing Overview Group to scrutinise the all-encompassing piece of work that will be needed by both the City Council and all of our partners. The detail and operation of the new Group would be presented to the Scrutiny Programme Board. It would include the opportunity to enable witnesses to present evidence to ensure the whole process will be properly scrutinised. The challenge of the effort to tackle climate change with limited resources was acknowledged. Members expressed support for the additional recommendation.

The Strategic Scrutiny Committee supported the report and requested that comments made by this Scrutiny be relayed to the Executive when it considers the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory report. Strategic Scrutiny Committee supported approval by Executive of the following:-

- (1) the Exeter Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and that the pace and scale of change required to deliver on the Net Zero 2030 goal will require a step change in resources, activity and policy making both at a local and national level,
- (2) the importance of biodiversity and carbon sequestration in addressing the challenge of delivering a Net Zero Exeter and invite a presentation to a future meeting of Scrutiny Committee on practical proposals for linking the planning and development system with the climate and ecological emergency involving a mechanism to deliver net biodiversity gain on development sites and carbon offsetting within Devon, this could comprise a Natural Capital Delivery Partnership; and
- (3) a Standing Overview Group be established, with the Scrutiny Programme Board requested to consider the detail of operation to enable further scrutiny of the collaborative work needed by the Council's partners as an ongoing and significant piece of work.

12 **Presentation on the Role of Scrutiny**

The Corporate Manager Democratic and Civic Support referred to the important role of scrutiny within the Council's democratic process in acting as a critical friend for the Authority and enabling the 26 Members who made up the two Scrutiny Committees to be able to contribute to the Council's policies and procedures.

Members were reminded of the approach within the Authority:-

- Scrutiny Committee Members had the opportunity to address and scrutinise the decisions being taken by the Executive by attending the meetings as well

as initiating a call-in of Executive decisions, provided it met one of the four criteria set out in the Council's Constitution.

- questions could be put forward to Portfolio Holders on their particular spheres of responsibility within the Council with a standard format to highlight the ongoing programme of work, service delivery, financial performance and other matters on the portfolio has been developed. It was noted that this format would be used for the Portfolio Holder reports going forward to the next cycle of Scrutiny Committees.
- a Forward Plan of business for the Executive for the future period was published and offered the opportunity for a particular matter to be brought forward through a more collegiate approach through scrutiny, via the Scrutiny Programme Board.
- the opportunity existed for Members to suggest a Task and Finish Group or Spotlight Review to raise particular items of interest or urgency. Members of the Scrutiny Programme Board had also developed a proforma for Members to make such requests which is shared with the Strategic Management Board and the Scrutiny Programme Board for determination and timetabling against other requests that may come forward.
- a forthcoming meeting of the Governance Review Board would ensure that the Council continued to improve on recent changes made, which included promoting greater public access with public speaking permitted at Council and the Executive meetings.

The Corporate Manager Democratic Services and Civic Support referred to the example of scrutiny working which had been very evident at this evening's meeting both from the detailed questions to Portfolio Holders, pertinent questions on the reports and from that an additional recommendation for a time limited Standing Overview Group to facilitate a way forward for a key matter for the Council. He also responded to the following Member's comments: -

- the Forward Plan offered an opportunity both internally and externally to identify future business and whether it was appropriate for additional discussion at Scrutiny, via a request to the Scrutiny Programme Board, before the matter was discussed at the Executive. There was also the opportunity to place an item of business directly on the Scrutiny agenda.
- the appointment of Chairs and Deputy Chairs were made as the result of nominations made at the Annual Council meeting, voted en bloc as a Council decision. There had been opposition Chairs of Scrutiny Committee and whilst this could be a matter for discussion in the future, such appointments remained a Council decision.
- lockdown had offered an opportunity to broadcast meetings via zoom, but face to face meetings required an individual recording with a member of the Communications Team present at the meetings. Currently only the decision making meetings of Council, the Executive and Planning Committee were recorded. Members of the public were able to attend all Committee meetings, including Scrutiny Committees and the agendas were published well in advance of the meetings. The Chair made a request for officers to explore a cost effective way of broadcasting these meetings and it was confirmed that the Governance Review Board will be asked to consider any future plans to broadcast meetings of Scrutiny.

The Chair reiterated that the Governance Review Board was particularly committed to strengthening scrutiny along the lines that have been outlined this evening. He referred to the approach which included cross party working and promoting inclusivity. At the Chair's invitation, Councillor Vizard, as Chair of the Customer

Focus Scrutiny Committee echoed the opportunities for cross party working, ensuring an open and transparent process and encouraging Members to come forward with topics for discussion.

Members noted the update.

13 **Forward Plan of Business**

Members noted the Forward Plan.

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 7.50 pm

Chair

DRAFT