

## **EXECUTIVE**

Tuesday 1 November 2022

Present:

Councillor Bialyk (Chair)

Councillors Wright, Denning, Ghusain, Morse, Parkhouse, Pearce, Williams and Wood

Also present:

Councillor Jobson (as an opposition group Leader)

Councillor D. Moore (as an opposition group Leader)

Apologies:

Councillor K. Mitchell (as an opposition group Leader)

Also present:

Chief Executive & Growth Director, Director Net Zero Exeter & City Management, Corporate Manager – Executive Support, Active & Healthy People Programme Lead, Harbour Master Exeter Port Authority and Democratic Services Team Leader

In attendance:

Emily Reed - Devon Climate Emergency Partnership (Devon County Council)

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### **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2022, were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

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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**

No questions from members of the public were received.

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### **REVISIONS TO STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING POLICY**

The Executive received the report which sought Member approval to make a number of minor revisions to the Council's Street Naming and Numbering Policy, which would clarify the Council's position on Street Naming and Numbering and would ensure effective implementation through the Council's IT support service – Strata.

Reference was made to the report which had been considered by the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee on 6 October 2022 and led to some further amendments to the policy, which were outlined in the report.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council approve:-

- (1) the revisions to the Council's Street Naming and Numbering Policy, including the proposed amendments in paragraph 9 of the report, as identified at Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee on 6 October 2022; and

- (2) future revisions to the policy be delegated to the Director with responsibility for Planning and Development in consultation with the Chair of the Planning Committee.

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### **THE DEVON CARBON PLAN**

The Executive received the report of the recently released Devon Carbon Plan, which had been produced by the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership. The report outlined the work of the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership in researching and producing the Devon Carbon Plan. The report highlighted the two Net Zero target dates of 2030 for Exeter City Council and 2050 for Devon County Council and the impact on achieving the target. The report highlighted that transport was the third largest emitter of carbon emissions in the region and the importance of working with Devon County Council as the transport authority to align the work.

The Leader moved for the following additional recommendation to be included:-

- To request that Devon County Council identify Exeter as an early innovation zone or test bed for net zero initiatives.

It was explained that the reason for the additional recommendation was that the 2050 County target for Net Zero was a challenge. Exeter City Council had already been undertaking implementation work with a focus on practical actions and interventions which had highlighted the expertise available in the area on delivering the Net Zero target. If Devon County were to identify Exeter as an Innovation Zone for Net Zero, the expertise available in the City could assist the County 2050 target and also help advance the City Council 2030 target.

The Leader confirmed Exeter City Council would continue to work to the established target for Net Zero 2030 and highlighted that the Devon Carbon Plan was Devon County Councils' plan.

Emily Reed, (Climate Emergency Project Manager) from the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership was in attendance and provided a presentation on the Devon Carbon Plan. Particular points raised during the presentation included:-

- The Devon Climate Emergency Partnership was established in 2019, and included a broad range of partners, which included all local authorities in Devon, third sector and private organisations.
- The Partnership had committed to working to reduce carbon emissions to Net Zero by 2050 at the latest, despite some partners having earlier target dates. The Partnership was also working to improve the resilience of Devon's environment and prepare communities for living in a warmer world.
- The Net Zero task force was formed of 15 specialists and chaired by Patrick Devine-Wright from the University of Exeter to develop the Devon Carbon Plan, which was a strategic county wide plan.
- The Devon Carbon Plan was developed through an open call for evidence with 893 submissions received, a Youth Parliament meeting with 75 representatives from schools across Devon and thematic hearings to bring expertise to address the themes and create the Interim Devon Carbon Plan. Public consultations were also undertaken to form the final plan.

- There were eight objectives outlined in the Devon Carbon Plan, which included minimised energy consumption and phasing out fossil fuels.
- Key themes included changing behaviours and encouraging community engagement, sharing knowledge and skills, accessing finance and additional resources.
- Energy supply options included using less energy, moving to renewable energy and developing a means to capture unavoidable carbon emissions.
- Existing houses and commercial properties would be retrofitted with energy efficiency measures and low-carbon heating technologies. New buildings would need to be built to Net Zero standard, to save on the cost of future retrofitting.
- Transport was aligned to the Council's plan for reducing the need for travel, moving to sustainable transport options and introducing technology reduce vehicle emissions.
- There was a need to develop a demand for providing nutritious and sustainably produced food, reducing Greenhouse Gas emissions from farming and maximise carbon storage in the environment.
- The proposed governance structure was presented, which highlighted the response group, who would oversee delivery of themes outlined in the plan and a change forum to represent the people of Devon. Indicators would be used to monitor progress of the plan which would be reviewed by the response group.

Councillor Jobson, as an opposition group leader, spoke on this item and highlighted a suggestion that recommendation 2.5 in the report should be a biannual (six monthly) update to Strategic Scrutiny.

Councillor D. Moore, as an opposition group leader, spoke on this item. She welcomed the report and enquired about aviation emissions, which were missing from the transport section. Clarification was also sought on the Equality Impact Assessment which stated that certain religious groups maybe against retrofitting buildings, and welcomed contributions of religious groups for action on climate change.

Councillor D. Moore, further enquired if there would be any additional work on the alignment of the County Council and City Council Net Zero plans and what could be prioritised. She highlighted that there were ongoing discussions on establishing an oversight committee to monitor progress on meeting the 2030 Net Zero target and it was important that Devon County Council provide information on the progress.

During the discussion the following points were made:-

- thanks were made to the Climate Emergency Project Manager for the informative presentation;
- the additional recommendation was welcomed and would further highlight the level of ambition and expertise at the City Council and strengthening working relationships with partners;
- achieving the 2030 target in Exeter would be beneficial for Devon County Council in reaching their 2050 target; and
- there were gaps in the emission reporting which needed to be addressed, which included the 35% emissions from buildings. Legislation was also needed

from central government to enforce new building construction to meet the Net Zero standard.

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change highlighted that the challenge in Devon was that the region covered a vast urban, coastal and rural area, with particular issues with transport in rural areas. The Devon Carbon Plan had been assembled from a range of contributors to deliver a large and complex plan for 2050, however Exeter was still committed to its 2030 goal. 22% of greenhouse gas emissions in the city was from transport, which Devon County Highways as the authority for transport were focussed on addressing, and were working with the City Council. Exeter needed to be an early innovation zone for net zero initiatives work going forward.

Emily Reed, (Climate Emergency Project Manager) in responding to questions and points raised stated that: -

- she represented the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership and could not speak on behalf of Devon County Council in regards to the additional recommendation;
- the University of Exeter, in helping to develop the plan, had advised that aviation emissions accounted for only a small proportion of emissions in Devon and there had been greater focus on building and transport emissions; and
- there was a specific work being undertaken on buildings and building legislation, which involved working with central government to allow local authorities to enforce higher building regulation standards. Conversations were also ongoing between local authorities on requesting higher quality builds ahead of legislative change.

Following the discussion, as well as in addition to the additional recommendation, the Leader moved an amendment to recommendation 5 in the report and a further additional recommendation for inclusion as follows:-

- to request that a **biannual** update be presented to the Strategic Scrutiny Committee on the progress made in delivering the Devon Carbon Plan; and
- to request an all-Member Briefing/Scrutiny, with presentations from Devon County Council.

It was explained that the reason for the amendment and additional recommendation was to allow regular updates to the Strategic Scrutiny Committee and ahead of these meetings, to provide an inclusive Members briefing to ensure that all Members could attend and ask more detailed questions.

The amendments were seconded by Councillor Wright, which was voted on and unanimously supported.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council:-

- (1) note the Devon Carbon Plan;
- (2) reflect on the implications for the City of Exeter's goal of a Net Zero Exeter 2030, given the Devon Carbon Plan target for Net Zero being 2050, in-line with Government's goal for the country. Transport being one of the largest sources of carbon emissions for the City and County, the consequences of reductions to Net Zero by 2030 were profound and Members may wish to satisfy themselves that the 2050 goal provided a supportive policy context for the city of Exeter's Net Zero plans;
- (3) agree to continue working in collaboration with the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership in reducing county carbon emissions;

- (4) agree that Exeter City Council led projects on the implementation of the Devon Carbon Plan be scrutinised by Exeter City Council's Strategic Scrutiny Committee;
- (5) request that a biannual update be presented to the Strategic Scrutiny Committee on the progress made in delivering the Devon Carbon Plan;
- (6) reflect and discuss the ambition of the Devon Carbon Plan and how it relates to the ambition of a clean growth region;
- (7) request that Devon County Council, identify Exeter as an early innovation zone or test bed for net zero initiatives; and
- (8) request that an all-Member Briefing/Scrutiny be arranged with presentations provided from Devon County Council.

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### **LEGAL OBSTACLES TO PORT MARINE SAFETY CODE COMPLIANCE**

The Executive received the report on the options for meeting the requirement to obtain appropriate legal powers to achieve a Port Marine Safety Code compliance. The Executive had previously approved measures to work towards compliance with the Department for Transport's Port Marine Safety Code. To be fully compliant with the Port Marine Safety Code a Harbour Revision Order was required, which would provide the Council with the needed powers to keep water users safe, address hazardous vessels and enable income streams to contribute to the running costs for the harbour team.

Particular reference was made to the Port Marine Safety Code, which was an industry standard for managing marine and port facilities which provided control of the waterways and would alleviate potential legal implications to the Council. A recent diesel oil spill incident on the Exeter Ship Canal could have been avoided if the harbour authority held the appropriate powers to issue a special direction order to have the non-compliant vessel leave the port within 28 days.

Councillor D. Moore, as an opposition group leader, spoke on this item. She welcomed the work on the Harbour Revision Order and enquired if the Portfolio Holder would make a public statement on the environmental impact of the recent incident to ensure the public were fully aware of the current situation.

Councillor Jobson, as an opposition group leader, spoke on this item and supported the report.

During the discussion the following points were made:-

- the harbour patrol team covered a large area with limited powers in place to ensure safety compliance. Having the legal powers to act against inappropriate behaviour or vehicles would be appropriate; and
- any potential charges levied in the future would help with the safe management and maintenance of the canal and estuary for all users, rather than purely for raising revenue.

The Portfolio Holder for Recycling, Waste Management and Waterways thanked the Harbour team for their swift action in containing the pollution from the recent diesel oil spill incident. The report had been taken to the Exeter Harbour Board for information and attaining Harbour Revision Order (HRO) had been supported. Details on issues such as charging would be established as the progress on attaining a HRO moved forward. The main area of concern was on making improvements to safety and port maintenance, and ensuring that the water was clean and safe for all users.

In response to a Members' question, the Director of Net Zero Exeter and City Management and the Harbour Master - Exeter Port Authority explained that a public consultation would be undertaken to establish charging scales. Current payments received from water users were for costs of storing boats away during winter. Details on the resources for the collection of fees were still to be established and would be dependent on what the charges would be and the most effective form of taking payments.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council approve:-

- (1) that work on obtaining a Harbour Revision Order be commenced to continue the progress towards a Port Marine Safety Code compliance; and
- (2) the allocation of a one-off budget of up to £150,000 to allow for the Harbour Revision Order process and to provide contingency in case of a public enquiry.

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### **EXETER PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

The Executive received the report on the proposed Exeter Playing Pitch Strategy which outlined both current and future demand for formal sports pitches in Exeter, and provided a framework for resource prioritisation and informed planning decisions. The strategy would be reviewed on an annual basis to monitor the changing sports landscape in Exeter.

The Exeter Playing Pitch Strategy provided an important evidence base for the Exeter Local Plan and demonstrated the Council's commitment to improving playing pitches across the city. The Strategy was being delivered to the methodology outlined from Sport England and independent consultants. The Strategy also provided a framework for partnership working and delivering on the outlined priorities and had been endorsed by Sport England.

Particular reference was made to the community sports hub approach and the extensive consultation that had been undertaken with more than 100 sports clubs, who had contributed to the strategy. Future proposals would go to a public consultation and the local steering group partners would work to push priorities forward and implement programmes in the city.

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure Services & Physical Activity moved an amendment to the recommendations: -

- (1) That the Executive recommends and Council approve the Exeter Playing Pitch Strategy subject to financial constraints.

It was explained that the reason for the amendment to the recommendations would provide clarity that the options for discussion were still in draft form and subject to financial constraints, which would mean all proposals would still be subject to planning and appropriate public consultations.

Councillor D. Moore, as an opposition group leader, spoke on this item. She welcomed the Strategy and enquired about 3G football turf pitches and associated environmental problems and whether consultants had been advised on alternative options for improvements. She further enquired if special consideration had been given to people with disabilities?

In responding, the Active & Healthy People Programme Lead explained that the Football Association was currently researching pitches and trialling the use of

different materials over 3G and were liaising with various organisations. Several inclusive clubs had contributed to the strategy and all groups would be welcome to contribute to the Strategy which would be updated on a regular basis.

Councillor Jobson, as an opposition group leader, spoke on this item and welcomed the report.

Members welcomed the report which provided the means to identify resources and make improvements to playing pitches in the city.

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure Services & Physical Activity thanked officers for the work that had been undertaken and noted the playing pitch strategy recognised the investment in community sports hub and that the Exeter Playing Pitch Strategy would be reviewed on an annual basis.

Following the discussion, Councillor Parkhouse moved and was seconded by Councillor Wright to amend the recommendations in the report which were voted for and supported unanimously.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council approve the Exeter Playing Pitch Strategy subject to financial constraints.

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### **ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT 2021-22**

The Executive received the Annual Scrutiny Report for 2021-22, which provided an annual update of the work of Scrutiny during the 2021-22 municipal year.

Particular reference was made to the Scrutiny Procedure Rules in the Council's constitution which highlighted that the Scrutiny Programme Board would produce an annual scrutiny report to go to Council, having been presented to the Strategic Scrutiny Committee on 29 September 2022 and Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee on 6 October 2022.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council approve the Annual Scrutiny Report 2021- 2022.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.47 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 on**