

## MINUTES

### Exeter City Futures Community Interest Company Board Meeting

Thursday 9 June 10am – 11.30am

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**LOCATION:** Exeter City Council, The Civic Centre, Phase 2, Rennes Room

**PRESENT:** **Karime Hassan (Chair)** • Chief Executive & Growth Director, ECC and CEO, ECF CIC  
**Zion Lights** • Councillor, Exeter City Council & Member Champion Net Zero Exeter 2030  
**Lisa Roberts** • Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive, The University of Exeter  
**Steve Strang** • Director of Estates and IT, Exeter College  
**Chris Tidman** • Deputy CEO, Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust  
**Elaine Anning** • Operations Director, Global City Futures  
**Roli Martin** • Managing Director and Head of Finance, Global City Futures  
**Jo Yelland** • Director City Transformation, Exeter City Council [via Teams]  
**Amoe Mkwena** • Associate, Hogan Lovells [via Teams]  
**Ellen Bright (Minutes)** • EA, ECF CIC

**APOLOGIES:** **Phil Norrey** • Chief Executive, Devon County Council  
**Glenn Woodcock** • Director, Global City Futures and Director, ECF CIC  
**Matt Gingell** • Company Secretary, ECF CIC

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#### 01 INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

The CEO welcomed new members to the ECF CIC Board meeting:

- Lisa Roberts, Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive, The University of Exeter
- Amoe Mkwena, Associate, Hogan Lovells. The ECF Board are delighted that Hogan Lovells have agreed to provide ECF with pro bono legal support. Amoe is University of Exeter alumni.
- Zion Lights, Councillor, Exeter City Council and Member Champion Net Zero Exeter 2030.

Karime notified the board that he will resign as the representing Director for Exeter City Council on the ECF board as Zion will now take on this role, as requested by the Leader of Exeter City Council, Phil Bialyk.

Confirmation of the board representative for Devon County Council is awaited.

## 02 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2022 were agreed as a fair representation of the meeting.

Matters Arising:

- West Exe - plans for a strategic hub are being progressed, which align to the city's net zero agenda as the hub will reduce the need for traffic into the city and provide an opportunity for parking and alternative active/e-mobility onward travel into the city centre. This is a strategic project that has flowed from the net zero plan and ECF will continue to monitor progress and help progression where possible.
- The Exeter Data Mill - funded by Impact Lab, this initiative is now coming to an end. There is an underspend on the project and Roli is writing a proposal for a time extension to use the remaining funds to pivot the work to develop a strategic city dashboard. A proposal will be presented at the next board meeting.

Further matters arising are to be discussed as they arise in the meeting.

## 03 CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT TO BOARD

Karime tabled his report which sets out progress on the work being done to progress the Net Zero Exeter 2030 Plan, together with a baseline greenhouse gas inventory for the city, to help understand how to monitor progress against the goals in the plan.

Taking assumptions built into carbon budgets, the report details the city's current emissions analysed sector by sector, and the actions required to meet the target dates.

Progress has been made on reducing carbon emissions in the city, although this is largely due to national grid reductions. There is still a great amount of work to be done to reduce city emissions i.e. housing stock, commercial buildings, transport etc.

Karime went through each of the areas and outlined the significant scale of change necessary to meet the 2030 target.

One of the constraints is organisational capacity to make progress; there is limited resource available. Karime recommended that the board is open to different ways to approach the issues. He gave an example of electric vehicle charging infrastructure. The government is providing funding for charging infrastructure in lamp posts so that anyone in the street can charge their car. There are companies within the private sector approaching the council ready to get on and do this.

Karime reminded the board that ECF was set up to stimulate innovation, small enterprise, and research and data application to solve problems in an urban area. Net zero and sustainability is just a part of the work, it also spans across many other areas including well-being, procurement and food production. The spirit of ECF was to build capability to solve city-wide problems, both in collaboration and finding ways to fund (e.g., the city fund and Exeter Velocities). It was about creating a whole ecosystem for the city to thrive. ECF as a vehicle is designed to work with other institutions and collaborate for shared city-wide outcomes.

A discussion ensued:

- Global City Futures has the skills and are ready to put together robust business cases for government funding for interventions. The up-front funding can then be used to go out to the private sector and procure.
- Budget is required to tackle specific interventions that cut across the whole net zero plan quicker.
- There is more to consider than just having the money to do the work. As Exeter is not a unitary authority the landscape is complex. With the electric vehicle charging infrastructure for example, different departments deal with different aspects of the lamp posts (the lamp post, the contract, the land) and so there are different partners to consider which cause barriers to progressing quickly. In addition to funding, work around influencing, political buy-in, positioning and alignment is required so that officers in the relevant organisations respond in the best way to move forward with the city's goals. ECF should be in a position to break down these barriers and make things happen. To achieve this, ECF needs engagement from all its partners and potentially other partners in the city in order to drive collaborative work on the ground, building trust and relationships.
- There is capability is within the city, but the resource and political will is not yet lining up to delivery. There is a need to develop partnerships with independent commercial sectors to move forward. Need to get other strategic partners in the same position and take some risks - try a few things quickly in order to get the pipeline going.
- A previous secondment from Devon County Council into the ECF team (for half a day a week) was beneficial as it enabled more effective and efficient collaboration to progress projects quicker.
- ECF enables the city some freedom to operate in a different way and break down barriers. More resource is needed behind it to drive a step change in action. Need to get officers and individuals from the right organisations at the right level working collaboratively on the plan.

- The aims are high, but would be achievable with the right course of action.
- The next step is to look at different opportunities for funding to enable ECF to progress with this.
- If the Council and ECF are minded to consider strategic investors, a prospectus is required to go out to the market setting out what is required and the city's objectives.
- Whilst there are practical and technical things that need a strategic partner, many of the goals are also around behaviour change. This is an expertise of the University and Karime and Lisa will pick up on how the University could potentially assist with some in-kind support in this area.

**The board unanimously agreed the ambition to reach net zero by 2030 is still the right goal, and there is no appetite to dial back from that. A step-change in approach is needed to move forward.**

#### 04 ECF DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION

Jo presented slides on the next steps for ECF. The challenge is huge, but there is massive potential within the city to collaborate and deliver on the plan. Now is the time to step up, the city is well placed to take a big step forward.

Jo talked through where ECF is today with funding. There is limited resource, funding is minimal and cashflow is a concern.

Jo outlined that additional funding is required to establish a full team, whether that is through in-kind support with individuals from partner organisations with the right skills and aptitude, or appointing new employees or consultants.

The proposal for moving forward is to utilise the in-year resources allocated by Exeter City Council to expand the portfolio of the current programme and design and deliver a number of short to medium projects to build on the work undertaken by ECF to date.

Jo went through the proposed priority projects in her presentation:

1. Continue to develop the Exeter Development Fund Concept and Model.
2. Deliver a City Dashboard and GHG monitoring system.
3. Consider what more could/should be done around the decarbonisation of Exeter's transport system.
4. Look at the role hydrogen could play in the city. A local company is already working with ECF on mobilising a green hydrogen environment. This is a good example of a private sector partner drawing in resources

from government and then partnering with ECF for delivery.

5. Expanding Community Energy Schemes. There is real potential to boost this work by linking in with Wellbeing Exeter and other programmes to help drive behaviour change. To build on learnings from the Wellbeing Exeter platform and existing community energy schemes, and scale them up across the city, targeted at the where there is the greatest potential for energy efficient homes (e.g. where people are eligible for existing funding). There is potential to upskill Wellbeing Ambassadors to become hyper-local carbon ambassadors. Can get this up and running quickly and get proof of concept.
6. Social action - bring together Comms Leads from partner organisations to agree approach to communications and information around net zero across the city, and how best to mobilise interest in the community.
7. Continued delivery of the National Lottery Changemakers Programme.

Jo then presented an indicative budget to deliver these projects this year. A budget is allocated from Exeter City Council to cover management costs and delivery of demonstration projects.

The budget indicated that it is necessary to find a mechanism (e.g. external funding) to draw in a core budget to enable ECF to continue its work.

Jo asked the board for their thoughts on pursuing alternative approaches to funding ECF - e.g. potential subscription schemes and other options available to secure funding for the longer term.

A discussion followed:

- It was acknowledged that there is some resource but it's not sustainable and ECF need to think about growing the number of partners involved to lever in extra funding or consider a subscription service.
- The example of international law firm Hogan Lovells joining the ECF Board was cited as an example of the appetite for this kind of partnering within the private sector, their clients are expecting this.
- KPIs will be captured in a strategic dashboard which will be developed for the city. The board should explore routes into corporate sponsorship to provide ECF with a data platform for this dashboard e.g., partnering with the Met Office.
- ECF communications are currently limited to pro-bono minimal support for 4 hours a week. Zion's background, expertise and global platform could be capitalised upon in drawing up a new communications strategy for ECF in collaboration with Comms Leads in partner organisations. Jo and Zion will discuss this further.

**The principle of ECF expanding into the private sector for investment is agreed by the board.**

**05 UPDATE: EXETER DEVELOPMENT FUND**

A one page update on the Exeter Development Fund is included within the board papers. The board are asked to welcome Roli and Elaine to their institutions to explain the model with their relevant teams, to help them understand how it works and spark interest to build momentum across the city.

**06 AOB**

A letter of commitment is required to ensure the ECF CIC can continue to operate as a going concern. Karime will talk to the Leader of the Council to put this in place.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 6 OCTOBER 2022**