



EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

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**Town Hall,
 St. Andrews Road,
 Exmouth,
 Devon,
 EX8 1AW**

13 March 2009

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

1. Introduction by the Mayor

I am pleased to see so many people present at this the most important meeting, the Annual Town Meeting. We have a different format for this evening's meeting to promote participation in a number of important topics that the Town Council believe are important for the community.

Firstly I have a few personal comments to make. I stand before you as Mayor of Exmouth still wondering where the last two years have gone. The time has quite simply flown by and there have been a whirlwind of activities, functions and events to attend. It is not possible to name all the events I have attended as time does not permit however I am grateful to all who have offered invitations to the various functions over the last two years – I will miss them when I step down and wish all organisations my best wishes for the future.

It has been an immense honour and privilege to be Mayor of Exmouth. It has enabled me to witness the hard work, commitment and enthusiasm that the people of Exmouth freely give to organisations that support and define our community. As so often the case it is the people that work behind the scenes of organisations that make so many things possible: these truly are the unsung heroes and for these I am grateful.

The current economic climate has undoubtedly had an impact on families and traders in Exmouth. This situation has been exacerbated by the decision of Plymouth University to close the doors of Rolle College for the final time in July 2008. Rolle College had a profound influence on Exmouth, as many of those students who were attracted to study in Exmouth remained, settling down in the town, starting families and working in the area. Indeed many teachers in our local schools are from Rolle College.

It is important that the community not only feel sadness at the loss of Rolle College but also compassion for every person and family that is struggling financially. As a

town we feel the loss of every business and shop that closes and our collective heart goes out to every resident that loses their job.

The last two years have indeed seen some ups and downs for the Town however we have our new lifeboat station under construction which is set to be a beautiful structure worthy of our Town. Also the new Harlequins leisure facility with ten pin bowling and soft play area for the younger children will at last provide some facilities worthy of a town which depends increasingly on tourism for its economy.

We must see Exmouth achieve its full potential and now, more than ever before, we need to join together to conquer the big challenges that face our beloved Town.

I said thank you last year to all those who make such an amazing contribution to the vibrancy and life of this Town. I wish to thank everyone for making my two years as Mayor of Exmouth a period in my life that I will never forget. In particular fellow Councillors for their support, staff at the Town Hall who, with our Town Clerk work quietly and efficiently for the whole community, and of course our very own Town Crier, Garth Gibson. No one can ever accuse Garth of being quiet but to him I owe great thanks for his support and friendship over the last two years!

As I approach my last two months as Mayor I am looking forward to two major events:-

- Firstly the Mayor's Charity Ball on Saturday 18th April; I look forward to good support from the town for this annual and wonderful function which celebrates the civic life of the Town. This year all funds raised will be given to the St. John's Ambulance here in Exmouth for equipping their new ambulance.
- Secondly the Adoption of the Rifles on Saturday 25th April is set to be a wonderful occasion with hundreds of troops marching through the town and a ceremony in the Strand. This promises to be a memorable event and one I will be proud to be part of.

2. Achievements in 2008/9

The Council's Mission

Here is a reminder that the Council, like all organizations has a mission and this is summed up in the following words:-

- To improve the quality of life for Exmouth residents, the experience of visitors and build on the characteristics which make Exmouth special.

To go with the Mission is the Town Council's slogan:-

- 'Exmouth Naturally – Arts, Leisure and Environment'

The slogan sums up so much of what Exmouth aspires to be and future changes should take account of this.

Our achievements as a Town Council over the year include the following:-

- Retaining Quality Council Status for another 4 years meeting rigorous standards in doing so;
- The main promoter of Town Management which has been especially effective in recent times. It is even more essential in current times when the private and public sector need to work together more closely than ever to ensure that Exmouth survives the economic downturn and is in good shape and able to take advantage of the recovery;
- Taking on new planning functions from EDDC in the form of tree applications and advertisement consents;
- Providing grants to local organisations thus supporting the community in all its huge variety of cultural, sporting and voluntary activities;
- Making £20,000 worth of grants with the project fund to help communities within the town more self sufficient in achieving for themselves;
- Running another brilliant Exmouth Festival;
- Supporting the Jurassic Coast Team in their work to protect and promote the wonderful coast upon which we are the Western Gateway;
- Support Exe Estuary Partnership to reconcile the uses of the Exe Estuary and protect the natural value which it represents;
- Work on community safety with local organisations and the police;
- Keeping graffiti and fly posting under control;
- Providing flower towers and giving strong support to Exmouth in Bloom resulting in winning the Coastal Towns category for Exmouth in Bloom,
- Working as strong and influential partners with EDDC and DCC on regeneration proposals for Exmouth;
- Support for Exmouth Interpretation Centre has remained unwavering and strong;
- A measured response provided to the Local Government Review debate and preparation to work strongly with Principal Councils in whatever shape or form they emerge from the current process.

3. Organisation and Accountability

The Town Council has 25 elected members returned from 5 wards each with 5 members. The Committees of the Council are Planning, Regeneration and General Purposes and Finance. Working Parties are set up as required. Examples include Public Rights of Way Working Party, Exmouth Public Transport Partnership, Christmas Lights Working Party and Summer Festival Working Party.

The public can raise issues and concerns at public question time at each Ordinary Council meeting.

All meetings of the Council and its Committees are open to the public and press except where expressly excluded by resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. The public have the right to ask questions and make statements immediately prior to the commencement of each Council Meeting.

4. Councillors

The Councillors for Exmouth Town Council are as follows:-

BRIXINGTON

Mr T A Cope (Trevor)	LD
Mr M Ackland (Michael)	Cons
Mr D Chapman (David)	Cons
Mrs M Chapman (Maddie)	Cons
Mr D Nicholas (Daryl)	Cons

EXMOUTH TOWN

Mrs P Graham (Pat)	LD
Mrs M Hardy (May)	LD
Mrs EE Wragg (Eileen)	LD
Mr S Gazzard	LD
Mr I Stewart (Ian)	LD

HALSDON

Mrs L M Elson (Lynne)	Con
Mrs V Duval-Steer (Vivian)	Con
Mrs J Whipps (Joy)	Con
Mr R Turner (Richard)	Con
Mrs P Stott (Pauline)	Con

LITTLEHAM

Mr K Harper (Ken)	Con
Mr J Humphreys (John)	Con
Mrs S Sutton (Sandra)	Con
Mr B Walker (Brian)	Con
Mr M Williamson (Mark)	Con

WITHYCOMBE RALEIGH

Mrs J Mitchell (Jean)	LD
Mr M J Mitchell (Malcolm)	LD
Mrs B O Taylor (Brenda)	LD
Mr R J Taylor (John)	LD
Mr S C Wragg (Steve)	LD

Details of addresses and telephone numbers for Councillors can be obtained on request from the Town Clerk and are available on the Exmouth website and at the library and on notice boards within the town. A copy is attached to this annual report.

5. Chairmanships and Vice-Chairmanships of Committees

Mayor	Councillor Joy Whipps
Deputy Mayor	Councillor Daryl Nicholas
Chairman Finance	Councillor Sandra Sutton
Vice-Chairman Finance	Councillor Vivian Duval-Steer
Chairman General Purposes	Councillor Pauline Stott
Vice-Chairman General Purposes	Councillor Maddie Chapman
Chairman Planning	Councillor Lynne Elson
Vice-Chairman Planning	Councillor Brian Walker

6. Town Council Officers

Town Clerk townclerk@exmouth.gov.uk	John Wokersien
Town Manager townmanager@exmouth.gov.uk	Tony Collins
Assistant to the Town Manager tmassistant@exmouth.gov.uk	Suzanne Birkett
Office Manager and Members Services Officer officemanager@exmouth.gov.uk	Sue Cody
Summer Festival Organiser (Part Time) nicky@exmouthfestival.org.uk	Chris Woods one year contract, Nicky Nicholls (Maternity leave)
Administrative Assistant –Accounts (Part Time) admin@exmouth.gov.uk	Julie Gregory
Secretary (Part time) admin@exmouth.gov.uk	Mandy Westlake
Receptionists (Job Share) reception@exmouth.gov.uk	Valerie Holland Rons Boatman
Caretaker (Part time) and Town Maintenance Officer	Ted Breeze

All officers can be contacted via Town Clerk, Exmouth Town Council, Town Hall, St Andrews Road, Exmouth EX8 1AW. Tel:01395 276167 Fax:01395 276168 or email at the addresses shown under name.

You can also view information about the Council on the official website www.exmouth.gov.uk. This also provides information on nearly everything relevant to the Town from Doctors to Play Groups, from Swimming Clubs to Wildlife of the area.

7. Finance

The precept was set at £283,304 for 2007/2008 equating to a precept of £21.75 for band D properties. For 2008/2009 this was increased to £315,637 equating to a precept of £24.05. For 2009/10 the Precept has been frozen at the previous year's level. The Town Precept continues to be amongst the lowest for the larger Town/Parish Councils in the District and indeed in England.

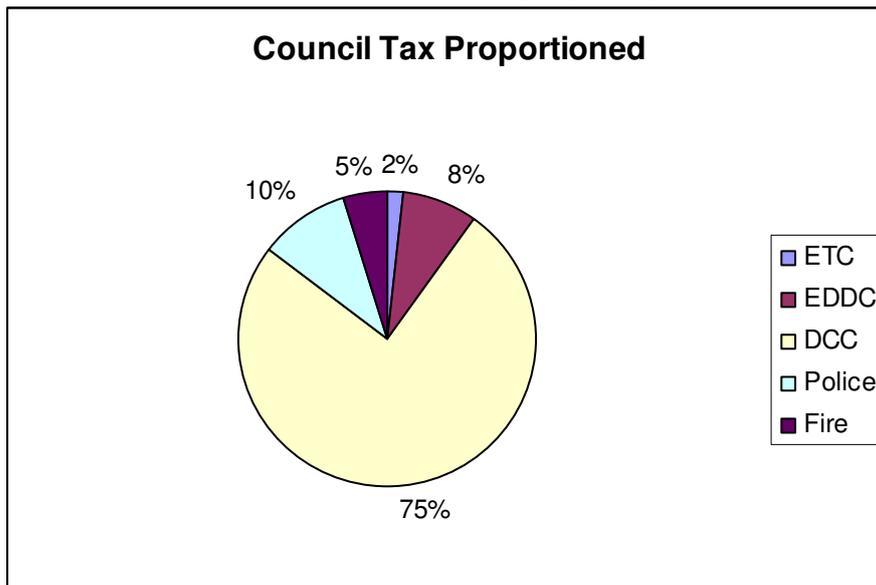
The Council has complied with the Audit Regulations and appoints a professional internal auditor. Accounts for the previous year have been certified by the District Auditor.

8. Council Tax

Council Tax for the three Local Authorities responsible for Exmouth were at the following levels in 2008/9:-

- £24.05 for Town Council – (Equates to £315,637)
- £118.24 for East Devon District Council;
- £1,063.89 for Devon County Council;
- £142.19 for Devon and Cornwall Police Authority;
- £66.58 for Devon Fire Authority
- **£1,414.95 in total**

Council Tax Share based on a band d property per annum



Precept raised in 2008/9 for Exmouth Town Council was £315,637 compared to £283,304 in the previous year.

9. Budget Requirement for 2008/9 compared to 2007/8

2007/8	Services	2008/9		
		Total Spending	Total Income	Net Spending
£000		£000	£000	£000
36	Town Management	51	23	28
28	Town Maintenance	31	4	27
102	Administration	131	14	117
28	Grants	28	0	28
30	Accommodation	35	0	35
58	Other Services	89	9	80
282	Total	365	50	315

10. Community Safety

Under S17 of the Crime and Disorder Act Town and Parish Councils with District and County Councils have responsibility with the police and other bodies for public safety. In Exmouth the Exmouth Action Group meets regularly and has objectives to deal with pressing issues in the town. Councillor Steve Gazzard is the Town Council's representative on this group with the Town Clerk.

11. Other Legal Requirements

The Council is registered under the Data Protection Act 1998, The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Model Scheme), and has adopted a resolution under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote racial equality between people of different racial groups. The Council has taken all necessary steps to comply with the code of conduct for councillors.

John Wokersien
Town Clerk