

# EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

## Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party

Notes of the meeting held at 3pm on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2020  
held remotely via Zoom

### Present

Councillor Andrew Colman	AC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Andrew Toyne	AT	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Frank Cullis	FC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
(Ex-officio)		
Councillor Mike Rosser	MR	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council
Lisa Bowman	LB	Exmouth Town Council Officer
Jennifer Wellington	JW	Exmouth Town Council Notetaker
Simon Pardoe	SP	Exmouth Tree Warden (Guest)
Nicky Nicholls	NN	Transition Exmouth Chair

### Apologies

Councillor Brian Bailey	BB	Exmouth Town Council
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### 1. Welcome and apologies

TD welcomed members, and guest attendee SP, to the meeting and apologies were noted as above.

A quick update was given on the 'Our place, Our Planet' website launch as a lot of the members present also attended the launch. A more detailed update was provided later in the meeting.

### 2. Approval of previous meeting notes and matters arising

The notes of the previous meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020 were approved.

#### Tree Charter Update

The last Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party meeting discussed establishing Exmouth Town Council (ETC) as a Tree Charter branch. LB suggested

that, although straight-forward to join the Tree Charter, the aims and reasons for joining need to be considered.

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) published a document on how Councils should use their Tree Charter status, in line with three Tree Charter strategies:

1. Using your Neighbourhood Plan (NP): Exmouth's NP has already been published with some tree policies already in place. However, when the NP is reviewed, more policies could be added.
2. Adoption of a Tree Warden scheme: SP has been recruited via East Devon District Council (EDDC) as a Tree Warden. Therefore, working in collaboration with him could be a way forward.
3. Drafting a tree guidance document around the management of trees: This Working Party, along with ETC's Community Organisation Liaison Panel (COLP) have been keen to undertake a tree survey, which was an action in the NP. This survey could form the basis of a tree guidance document.

**Action: LB welcomed ideas on possible aims of joining the Tree Charter and members are to raise any ideas with her.**

Members were asked to note that the council does not have to be Tree Charter branch to apply for free trees from the Woodland Trust.

#### Work of Tree Warden

SP explained his role as a Tree Warden and how the above Tree Charter strategies could link in with this.

He explained how he contacted EDDC four years ago to speak with the Tree Warden, but no-one could locate them. Then, in 2018, EDDC tried to revive the Tree Warden scheme and SP became the Warden.

The Tree Council co-ordinate the scheme, with Wardens doing as much or as little as they can. SP raises awareness of trees via Facebook through Exmouth Tree Projects, which he started three years ago and more recently working with Wild Exmouth and Transition Exmouth. A Celebration of Trees event was held in collaboration with Wild Exmouth last November where members of the public could learn more about trees and plant saplings. There was also an orchard planting project. In addition, a small Tree Group meets on an ad-hoc basis.

Due to the size of Exmouth, SP suggested that there should be several Tree Wardens, maybe one per ward.

SP joined the Tree Charter as an individual and explained how ETC's projects and Working Parties would fit the criteria for joining the Tree Charter.

A discussion was then had around the need to plant more trees and the idea to set up a strategy to plant more in partnership with other organisations, for example SP, EDDC, Wild Exmouth, the Woodland Trust and Devon County Council.

**Action: Due to the range of ideas that could be implemented with regards to trees, LB suggested that a sub-committee be set-up to focus exclusively on trees.**

**LB to set-up a meeting with TD, SP, MR, and FC to discuss ideas around the TAFF which would then be taken to Full Council for approval.**

#### Green energy supplier for East Devon District Council buildings

OD confirmed that TGP are the corporate energy supplier for EDDC's buildings, supplying 100% renewable energy (made up of solar, hydro and wind, which alternates through the seasons).

There was no further update on plans to install solar panels on the Town Hall roof.

There was also no further update on smart meters, but it was noted that Gorfin Hall had run into a problem with having a smart meter installed as the account was registered as a large business account. The lack of a smart meter created a problem when trying to sell-back solar energy to the grid.

**Action: LB to forward information regarding smart meters to OD.**

It was also reported that EDDC StreetScene are increasing the number of electric vehicles in their fleet as well as the amount of battery-powered hand-held machinery.

#### Ride On bicycle collection point

Ride On are keen to work with ETC to establish a bicycle collection point in Exmouth. However, the following needs to be considered:

- The location of the collection point; Phear Park compound or Manor Gardens arch storage?
- When the bicycles can be dropped-off or collected
- How to get the bicycles to Ride On
- How to ensure the bicycles that are dropped off/collected have not been stolen

If it were decided that the Phear Park compound is the best location, there are security issues to consider.

**Action: LB to talk with the Deputy Town Clerk to discuss how ETC's Town Maintenance Team could help with this project.**

OD added that he plans to meet with Co Cars to bring Co cars and bicycles to Exmouth.

### Social media and communication strategy

JW will be attending a webinar on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020 with regards to using social media to enhance the council's communications.

### **3. Update on the 'Our Place, Our Planet' website launch**

NN updated members on the of launch of the 'Our Place, Our Planet' website held on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

The event was a mix of a live broadcast from the Strand and a Zoom meeting. A lot of positive feedback was received after the event, with Tiverton, Budleigh and Sidmouth keen to 'add their place' to the website.

The website is always going to be a work in progress, with information being updated with more local links. However, how the feedback page and comments are monitored needs some more thought moving forward.

The Transition Exmouth Secretary has sent out a press release of the launch event. However, further promotion may come in the form of a poster or sticker, a bigger event in Spring 2021 or through schools. Transition Exmouth are to consider this in January 2021.

LB added that the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) or the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) could be approached about the possibility of further promotion of the launch.

**Action: LB and JW to liaise with NN regarding additional promotion.**

MR and TD praised members for the work they have done.

FC raised the issue that when searching for the site using a non-Google search engine, the website does not come up very high on the results. NN explained that this is something Tim Mann, the website developer, is looking into and Google Analytics is to be added soon.

### **4. To receive an update on other relevant matters from Town Council working parties, outside body representative and Transition Exmouth**

#### Exmouth Transport Partnership (ETP)

The Neighbourhood Highways Officer at DCC plans to put ETP in touch with the appropriate Senior Traffic Technician (Programme) who has responsibility for traffic management initiatives to discuss the Partnership's aspirations relating to active travel.

#### Public Rights of Way Working Party (PROW)

The Deputy Town Clerk is currently working on the Bapton Valley Park improvement project. It is hoped that a fully costed scheme will be presented to the Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Working Party and subsequently the Full Council meeting in November or December 2020.

### Flooding and Land Drainage Working Party

A tri-party arrangement is being drawn up between the Town Council, the Environment Agency (EA) and EDDC, to facilitate the operation of the non-highway flood gates on the seafront, using ETC's Community Resilience volunteers.

### HR

Training opportunities are to be included on the next agenda.

### Quality Council

The registration forms have been submitted to the accrediting body, for the Council to be considered for a Silver Quality Council award.

If awarded, a Silver Quality Council is contingent on demonstrating strong links with the community.

### Community Fridge

LB has been in contact with a DCC Officer who is hoping to set up a Community Fridge in Exmouth. It was suggested that this initiative could be linked successfully to the Allotment Association to reduce the amount of excess fruit and vegetables that go to waste.

**Action: OD to pick this project up with the Allotment Association when the Community Fridge is launched.**

Sidmouth's free food shop was also mentioned as an example of an initiative which aims to reduce food waste.

### Plastic Reduction Working Party

A closing meeting is planned for the 2<sup>nd</sup> November to tie-up loose-ends from the outstanding projects of this Working Party.

### Festival and Events Working Party

Due to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, ETC will not be organising a Christmas Fayre this year. However, it is hoped a small-scale Christmas Tree Festival at Holy Trinity Church will be able to go ahead.

As for New Year's Eve fireworks, the Police suggest no fireworks displays should go ahead this year due to the risk of transmitting Coronavirus at public gatherings.

Environmentally, fireworks can be considered harmful due to what they are made of, the smoke and the noise. However, members felt this was not something to be too concerned about as the display is only usually small-scale.

Although ETC may run the risk of being 'killjoys' if no firework display is put on, it was reported that other councils have been cancelling their firework displays and putting the money towards school meals. This follows on from central government's decision not to continue free school meals over the October half term holiday. Smokeless fireworks or a laser show could also be an option.

A decision on fireworks will be taken at the next meeting of the Festival and Events Working Party.

## **5. Any other business**

### Finance

TD explained that the Council was just starting to put together its budget for 2021-2022. The current year's budget includes provision of £2500 for partnership projects with Transition Exmouth. Due to the Coronavirus, most planned events could not go-ahead this year so there is some residual funding left in the revenue budget. TD suggested that the partnership funding should be increased to £5,000 for next year.

NN commented that in addition to events and resources, Transition Exmouth have also had an idea to create a mobile interpretation centre to promote green projects and this might necessitate funding

**Action: TD and NN to get together and agree the level of financial support needed for next year and to let LB know. This will then be considered when planning next year's budget.**

### Crossing point at Dinan Way

MR raised the issues that, if the Bapton Valley were to link to the new Goodmores Farm development, a crossing point would need to be created on Dinan Way. TD confirmed that this need has been discussed directly with DCC officers in the context of the Town Council providing match funding for the Dinan Way Extension.

### Other community groups

NN asked about grant funding opportunities for other community groups. LB confirmed that ETC can only provide financial support to community groups if they fit the criteria. All grant information is available on the ETC website.

SP asked for clarification about the Town Council's land ownership in relation to tree planting and for conformation that, apart from owning the allotments, ETC own no other land. LB confirmed that this was the case. SP asked whether allotment holders could be encouraged to plant fruit trees on their plots and confirmed that fruit tree whips are available through some of the community tree schemes.

**Action: This suggestion to be considered as a potential aim/action of the new Tree TAFF.**

## **6. Date of future meeting**

Next meeting 24<sup>th</sup> November at 3pm via Zoom.

The meeting finished at 16.40pm