

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Town Council virtual meeting held on
Monday 12th October 2020

Present:

Councillors:	S Gazzard (Chairman).	
	F Caygill.	M Chapman.
	A Colman.	F Cullis.
	O Davey.	B De Saram.
	T Dumper.	L Elson.
	I Kirvan.	C Nicholas.
	D Poor.	M Rosser.
	A Sadiq.	P Stott.
	A Toye.	B Toye.
	J Whibley.	J Whipps.
	T Woodward.	

East Devon District Councillor: P Millar.

Officers:

Lisa Bowman, Town Clerk.
Chetna Jones, Deputy Town Clerk.

Apologies:

Councillors: A Bailey and B Bailey.
Devon County Councillor: J Trail, R Scott, and C Channon.

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting, including candidates for co-option. The Chairman confirmed that condolences had been sent to the family of Ian Stuart and council members acknowledged Mr Stuart's work for the benefit of the town.

Public Forum: There were no questions from members of the public.

C20/058. Council meeting minutes

Councillor O Davey asked that the minutes were amended to add "NOT" before "opportunity to have a say in the emerging Greater Exeter Strategic Plan" and this was agreed.

Councillor P Stott proposed, seconded by Councillor M Chapman, that the amended minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Monday 3rd August 2020 be approved.

The minutes of the meeting (previously circulated) were received, amended, and signed as a true record.

C20/059. Matters arising from previous minutes

It was confirmed that East Devon District Council will be contributing 50% of the costs of purchasing the safety buoys.

C20/060. Declarations of pecuniary interests and dispensations

Item	FESTIVAL & EVENTS WP CHRISTMAS PLANS
Councillor	L Elson
Pecuniary or personal	Personal
Reason	Employee of Hospice
Item	CO-OPTION OF VACANCY IN WITHYCOMBE WARD
Councillor	All Councillors
Pecuniary or personal	Personal
Reason	Candidates known to them

C20/061. Exclusion of the Press and public

There were no items on the agenda that would be discussed in Part II of the meeting that involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

C20/062. Reports and minutes from Committees, Working Parties, other local bodies, the Town Clerk/Deputy Town Clerk, District and County Councillors as appropriate (Standing Order 6.2)

Planning Committee

Councillor L Elson proposed, seconded by Councillor F Cullis, and it was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council approves the minutes of the meetings held on 1st September 2020 and 14th September 2020 and any recommendations therein.

Town Clerk's Report

The Town Clerk's report, which had been previously circulated, was noted.

The Town Clerk was congratulated on her work with the Tree Charter. The work was in line with the work of the Climate and Ecological Emergency working party.

Councillor F Caygill raised concerns of overgrown trees in the Avenues and it was agreed that he raise these directly with Devon County Council.

It was noted that several lights on the Exe Estuary Trail were not working following an audit and that it would not be an insignificant cost to repair these. The Town Clerk will obtain quotes for the repair work before reporting back.

Deputy Clerk's Report

The Deputy Clerk's report, which had been previously circulated, was noted.

Concern was raised that East Devon District Council's Streetscene were proposing to remove the palm trees along the seafront and it was agreed that Councillor T Dumper in conjunction with the Deputy Clerk will speak with Streetscene to confirm this.

Festival & Events Working Party

The notes of the meeting held on 7 September 2020, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

Councillor J Whipps confirmed that due to current covid-19 restrictions, the Town Council will not be holding its annual Christmas Fayre, but plans were underway for a Christmas Tree Festival to be held in Holy Trinity Church.

Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party

The notes of the meeting held on 8 September 2020, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

Councillor T Dumper confirmed that Transition Exmouth, with the help of the Town Council, will be launching a new website “Our Place, Our Planet” on 26th October at a part-physical and part-virtual event.

Community Resilience Working Party

The notes of the meeting held on 9 September 2020, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

Councillor T Woodward confirmed that an updated map of salt/grit bins and their status had been passed on to the Neighbourhood Highway officer and County Councillors.

Councillor T Woodward added that residents need to be prepared and act now to protect their properties before the weather gets worse. The Deputy Clerk reminded councillors that empty sandbags were available and can be filled with garden soil if sand was not available.

Councillor M Chapman informed members that Brixington Primary School had asked for financial help with purchasing salt/grit for the school and it was agreed that this matter should be raised with Devon County Council directly as it was the statutory body responsible for schools.

Exmouth Transport Partnership Working Party

The notes of the meeting held on 15 September 2020, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

Councillor M Rosser joined the meeting.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the Neighbourhood Highways Officer will be raising the matter of a developing a cycling network in Exmouth with the Highways Team.

Town Team & Tourism Forum

The notes of the meeting held on 16 September 2020, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

Town Maintenance Contracts TAFF

The notes of the meeting held on 21 September 2020, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

Councillor I Kirvan confirmed the invitation to tender has been published and the closing date to receive tenders is noon on 23rd November.

Flooding & Land Drainage Working Party

The notes of the meeting held on 22 September 2020, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

Members considered the recommendation to proceed in principle with the tri-party agreement for the operation of the flood gates in Exmouth following completion of the Tidal Defence scheme,

The Deputy Clerk informed members that information had been received earlier that day and advised that both the Environment Agency and East Devon District Council, the other two parties of the tri-party partnership, were taking advice from their legal teams and the Town Council will not be discouraged from doing the same. As the agreement was a non-binding legal document, the Town Council may wish to consider obtaining a quote for advice on a light touch basis.

Councillor M Chapman, seconded by Councillor F Cullis, and it was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council obtain advice prior to proceeding with discussing this matter.

The Chairman confirmed that the recommendation was deferred until legal advice had been obtained.

CCTV Working Party

The notes of the meeting held on 23 September 2020, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

Public Rights of Way Working Party

The notes of the meeting held on 23 September 2020, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

Councillor F Caygill raised a concern about vehicles using a public right of way by Castle Lane and it was agreed that he email Councillor B De Saram with more details.

Community Organisations Liaison Panel (COLP)

The notes of the meeting held on 28 September 2020, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

Woodbury Exmouth and Budleigh Health and Wellbeing

The notes of the board meeting held on 17 September 2020, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

It was noted how well the recent flu vaccination event was organised and Dr B Coakley was thanked for his efforts in arranging this.

Outside Bodies

Councillor O Davey confirmed that the Allotment Association had uploaded the new constitution on to its website. Set times for bonfires had been agreed and the situation will be monitored so there were no adverse effects with neighbouring residents.

Councillor B De Saram had provided a written report and this was noted. Councillor B De Saram thanked all the volunteers who helped with the litter clearing along the Exe Estuary.

District Councillors' Reports

The Chairman thanked Councillor B De Saram and Councillor O Davey for their written reports, which were circulated in advance of the meeting and were noted. The reports have been attached as an appendix to these minutes.

Before leaving this meeting Councillor Whibley provided a written report and it was agreed that the Town Clerk will circulate this to all members. The report has been attached as an appendix to these minutes.

Councillor M Chapman informed members that she had attended a meeting of the Poverty Working Panel where discussions took place on co-ordinating with local community organisations and supporting people affected by reduced or loss of income as a result of being furloughed or made redundant.

Councillor F Caygill informed members that he had attended a meeting with the Developer and Police to resolve issues at the former Rolle College site.

Councillor P Millar confirmed that the Queen's Drive Delivery Group meeting was being held on 15th October and that he had spoken with members of Coast Watch regarding their current site on the seafront.

Councillor P Millar added that he welcomed the news of the recent sports vote where over one thousand votes had been received to date.

Councillor P Millar confirmed that at the recent Cabinet meeting four member champions had been agreed. The details were available on East Devon District Council's website.

County Councillors' Reports

There were no County Councillors present at the meeting.

C20/063. Local Council Award Scheme

The report and associated documents were circulated in advance of the meeting.

Members discussed the recommendation as highlighted within the report:

1. That the Council ratifies the adoption of:
 - A Health and Safety Policy.
 - A policy on Equality.
 - A community engagement policy.

- An action plan with related budget corresponding to community engagement.
 - A scheme of delegation.
 - A Training policy
2. That the Council confirms by resolution that it meets the criteria for the Quality Award as per Appendix A of the report and endorses the application to NALC for formal accreditation under the scheme.

Councillor T Dumper proposed, seconded by Councillor L Elson, and it was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council ratifies the recommendation as highlighted above.

The Mayor, Councillors and the Community were thanked for their assistance, and the Town Clerk for her hard work in putting together the associated documents.

C20/064. Co-option of Councillor for Withycombe Raleigh ward

Written applications were received from four candidates, three of whom were present at the meeting and were given a few minutes each to present themselves.

Members were invited to vote for their chosen candidate and a clear majority was identified in the first round of voting.

Councillor J Whipps proposed, seconded by Councillor F Caygill, and it was **RESOLVED** that Mrs Eileen Beech be co-opted for the office of Town Councillor for Withycombe Raleigh ward.

C20/065. Recruitment of a full time Supplementary Town Maintenance Operative

Councillor M Chapman proposed, seconded by Councillor B De Saram, and it was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council recruits a full time Supplementary Town Maintenance Operative following the imminent retirement of an existing part-time employee.

C20/066. Appointment of Councillor David Poor to the Planning Committee as a representative for Littleham ward.

Councillor L Elson proposed, seconded by Councillor J Whipps, and it was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council appoints Councillor D Poor to the Planning Committee as a representative for Littleham Ward.

C20/067. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Town Council will be held on Monday 9th November 2020 at 7.15pm.

The meeting concluded at 9.23pm.

Signed..... Date.....

(Chairman)

Appendix – East Devon District and Devon County Councillors' Reports

District Councillor's Report – Councillor Olly Davey

Since the last Town Council meeting, I have attended a Strategic Planning meeting, a briefing from the Cranbrook members, Planning Committee and my first meeting of the Housing Company TAFF. Strategic Planning concerned itself with EDDC's response to the Government's proposed changes to planning procedures and expressed concern especially at the algorithm changes which would mean the housing target for E Devon rising from 950 homes a year to over 1600. Planning officers are dubious that such a target is even achievable and raised questions over how the figures are calculated. There was also concern at the proposal to extend Permitted Development, since this route has been rarely used and does not even seem to be popular with developers. Other proposals were also queried, though measures to make the planning process more accessible through the use of modern technology were welcomed.

Planning had only minor Exmouth applications, mainly there for procedure reasons to do with the applicants being involved in various ways with EDDC. The Cranbrook briefing was interesting in shedding light on how the community is developing, and how it sees its needs. I also asked a question about the District Heating Network and why it had failed to meet its target of converting to renewable energy, specifically biomass, though this is not without its own environmental issues. The answer was to do with the economics of biomass as a fuel against gas, and EON do not currently feel that conversion is economically viable.

The Housing Company TAFF was intended to approve moving forward with the establishment of a company, operating independently of EDDC, but working closely with it, which would be free of the constraints placed on Local Authorities in house building. The idea was that it would operate as a developer, building social and affordable housing. I nominated an Independent councillor for Vice Chair, who then went on to question the whole basis of setting up such a company. The meeting eventually resolved to accept my proposal to use the recently completed Housing Needs Survey as a basis to identify what kind of housing is needed and then to explore models the Council could adopt to deliver it.

I was consulted on the permissions given for various events on the beach, a paddle boarding event, and a fun run, and also the funfair. Since officers seemed to feel that these were Covid compliant, and because I have been aware that many businesses have been extremely resourceful in putting Covid safety first, I felt able to support these going ahead, though I was in the minority of Exmouth councillors. The Leader finally took the decision to allow these to proceed, while understanding the concerns of members, and assured us that officers would visit to ensure safety measures were in place and being observed.

I have also been involved in the case of a homeless man sleeping rough in Phear Park, having been contacted by the office of Simon Jupp, MP, asking me to take the

case forward with EDDC. A local lady has been taking food and necessities to the man involved and had been contacting her MP to demand action. I subsequently found, from speaking to the man, that Councillor Paul Millar was also on the case, and he and I have been in contact with Housing Options to ask why they have not so far been able to find accommodation for this man. It is a complex case, and we continue to work on it, in the hope of resolving the matter before the weather worsens.

I have also been contacted by a member of Extinction Rebellion, asking for an explanation for the Cabinet decision to grant Business Rate relief to Exeter Airport. They feel this is incompatible with the administration's intention to put Climate Change at the centre of all decision making, by subsidising a highly polluting industry. I have written to the Leader asking for a justification of this measure and reminding him that groups like XR will continue to scrutinise decisions and hold EDDC to account. Clearly, jobs are at stake, but so is the climate, and I shall await his reply with interest.

Finally, the good news. I have ascertained that EDDC's electricity contract is for 100% renewable energy, and that all electricity used at the Town Hall therefore comes from renewable sources. In reality, this means that the energy company purchases sufficient renewable energy to meet customer usage, though the electricity you are actually using at any given time may not actually have been generated that way.

District Councillor's Report – Councillor Bruce de Saram

On 16th September I sat in on the Strategic Planning Committee meeting and made a contribution to the debate in terms of digital planning, by strongly supporting the need for the public to get more access to the planning system to view the relevant documents online.

I attended Overview on 24th September and supported the proposal re-submitted by Cabinet to have the Healthy Weight Declaration signed off. However despite my best efforts this has ended up on the Forward Plan for ongoing consideration to see if progress can be made, as it was felt that such a declaration was ultimately the responsibility of the Upper Tier Councils and not District ones.

On 25th September as part of the OPCC Cllr Advocates scheme I sat in for a part of the Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel and heard about the deep dive report into the 101 call handling service and listened to the Q and A's raised by Panel members on this topic.

On 7th October along with fellow Exmouth Cllrs I attended the Planning Committee and was pleased to propose that we approve the recommendation which was a Variation of Condition 1 (plans condition) and condition 8 (tree protection) of planning consent 19/0996/VAR, to include an additional plan which proposes the felling of a horse chestnut tree and replacement with an American Sweetgum (liquidambar) tree so that ultimately as I said we have the Right Trees in the Right Place.

On 29th September I attended the Exe Estuary partnership meeting as our ETC Rep and there are 3 key financial messages to give readers:

1. Exe Estuary partnership does need to plan to carry forward any surplus funds, so they are not spent.
2. We, i.e. ETC, maintain our regular partnership contributions.
3. Exe Estuary management needs to secure project-related funding.

The signage project work in Exmouth was referred to as part of the Exe Estuary Delivery Plan and I on behalf of ETC congratulated the Team on this excellent piece of work. The beach cleans were also mentioned and in particular we at ETC need to thank the Volunteer groups in Exmouth (**Lisa/Jeff/Steve to put out a suitable press release to thank them**) for all that they do. There will be another virtual Winter Forum on 21st October.

District Council Report Joe Whibley

This has been a quiet month, however I have, as you know, been working in conjunction with Streetscene with regards to the opening of the toilets at the Railway Station. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank you all for your decision at the last town council meeting, and am happy to note that the toilets will now be open for an additional two hours a day and without, for now at least, the cost of leasing a further vehicle.

I have been delighted to note that the situation in the Strand has mellowed somewhat and that all parties appear to have been playing by the rules. Plans are, via licensing and planning, being developed to ensure that a more collaborative, less unwieldy system of utilising outside space are in place by next Summer – important given the prospect of further ongoing restrictions.

Additionally, I have been, in conjunction with several fellow councillors, undertaking casework with a number of residents regarding housing issues.