

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party

Notes of the meeting held at 3pm on Tuesday 24th November 2020
held remotely via Zoom

Present

Councillor Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor Frank Cullis	FC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
(Ex-officio)		
Councillor Mike Rosser	MR	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Catherine Causley	CC	Transition Exmouth (Guest)
Lisa Bowman	LB	Exmouth Town Council Officer
Jennifer Wellington	JW	Exmouth Town Council Notetaker

Apologies

Councillor Andrew Colman	AC	Exmouth Town Council
Nicky Nicholls	NN	Transition Exmouth Chair
Councillor Andrew Toyne	AT	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Brian Bailey	BB	Exmouth Town Council

1. Welcome and apologies

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

2. Approval of previous meeting notes and matters arising

The notes of the previous meeting held on the 27th October 2020 were approved.

Co-cars update

OD updated members that he was still trying to move forward a project to install a Co-cars space with Andrew Ennis, East Devon District Council (EDDC) Carparks Team.

In principle EDDC seemed keen to support this project but formal agreement needed to be implemented.

A Facebook campaign is due to be run to gauge interest. If given the go-ahead, it is thought that the space could be located at either the Town Hall or Estuary car park. The cost would either be covered by EDDC or a yearly permit could be brought.

Electric cars

No update had been received regarding the implementation of electric car charging points.

However, SG raised a safety concern that as electric cars are almost silent, they are dangerous to those who are visually impaired. He suggested this Working Party write a letter to the East Devon MP regarding putting pressure on car manufacturers to install something onto/into the cars so that they create some noise.

Action: LB to write a letter to Simon Jupp MP to highlight safety concerns related to electric cars. This is in the context of SG informing members that an announcement had been made by a Government Minister some time ago and the need to seek clarification that the good intention had been implemented.

Tree Task and Finish Forum (TAFF)

The first meeting of the Tree TAFF is scheduled for Friday 27th November 2020. Simon Pardoe and MR had previously shared thoughts and ideas which will be put on the table to help shape the future of this TAFF.

Community Fridge link with Allotments

OD confirmed that an initiative by an allotment tenant at Hamilton Lane allotment site to coordinate the donation of surplus fresh allotment produce to Exmouth Friends in Need for Christmas. LB suggested that there might be scope to extend this to provide surplus allotment produce to the Community Fridge which is being established through Devon County Council (DCC), potentially to be located at the Exmouth Library and OD agreed to raise this with the allotment association committee. Members were also updated that a Community Fridge had been launched in Littleham (details can be found on Facebook).

Ride On

Members were updated that Exmouth Town Council (ETC) will publicise the collection of bikes as an ongoing initiative throughout the year. The frequency will be dependent on the availability of the Town Maintenance Team to pick-up the bikes. It was thought this would be an easier way to operate the collections rather than holding quarterly/annual bike collections.

The collected bikes will be stored in the arches in Manor Gardens and then the bikes will be delivered to Ride On, Exeter.

Action: LB and JW to work on this project moving forward.

Plastic Reduction Working Party (PRWP)

The closing meeting, originally scheduled for 2nd November 2020, was postponed. This was due to the need to resolve legal procedures regarding the installations of

the water refill stations and no update was provided from EDDC StreetScene on the 'mini-recycling centre' trial in the Magnolia Centre.

Once these legal procedures for the water refill stations have been resolved and an update on the Magnolia Centre bins provided, another meeting of the PRWP will be planned.

Members were made aware that through Visit Exmouth, ETC have promoted Refill in the past and have also copied and displayed Plastic Free posters.

TD also mentioned the need to progress the accreditation of Exmouth as a Plastic Free community, especially as the Coronavirus pandemic becomes less. At present Plastic-Free Exmouth have been concentrating on clearing the beach/seafront.

Action: LB to revisit options ETC has to promote environmental initiatives once the second Coronavirus lockdown is lifted and businesses are reopened.

3. To receive an update on the consultation for the Interim Devon Carbon Plan (going live on the 7th of December)

LB updated members about the Interim Devon Carbon Plan, as part of the Devon Climate Emergency group, and that the consultation for this Plan will be going live from 7th December 2020.

It was suggested a collective response should be submitted for this plan by ETC, as well as encouraging ETC representatives to attend relevant webinars that are being provided by the Devon Climate Emergency group.

CC stated that Transition Exmouth plan to submit a response, as well as from herself as an individual.

Action: ETC will promote the consultation and any other relevant information from the Devon Climate Emergency group through the Council's social media accounts and the item will be put on the agenda for discussion in the New Year.

4. Information arising and updates from East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) meeting

TD had circulated a summary of this AONB meeting prior to the Working Party meeting.

However, he briefly explained the key points to come out of the AONB meeting:

Area of Exmouth within the AONB area

Only a part of Exmouth is in the AONB area. However, there is some flexibility in terms of eligibility for funding via the AONB's Sustainable Development Fund (open for applications until Monday 30th November 2020).

It was noted that Transition Exmouth are looking into this fund and any possible projects that could be eligible for the funding.

EDDC Ecologist

It is hoped that EDDC will be able to prioritise the appointment of an in-house Ecologist at some time in the future who would be able to advise on ecological matters within the planning process, amongst other duties.

FC added that there is a need for the Ecologist be a broad-expert.

The appointment of a Climate Officer at EDDC is also in progress.

A report is currently being written of the iconic species living in the AONB area which will be used in publicity and for conservation and development.

Although worthy of protection, FC highlighted that the 3 bats and 2 butterfly species highlighted by the AONB may not resonate with the public as much as more commonly known animals, such as hedgehogs. This would be something to bear in mind.

It was noted that stronger planning conditions are needed to enforce the incorporation of nature-friendly design features into planning applications (e.g. holes in fencing for hedgehogs to move from garden to garden or bird boxes). OD confirmed that through his role on EDDC's Planning Committee, he was aware that some developers in the past have been open to these ideas.

5. To receive an update from Transition Exmouth

CC reported that despite the global pandemic, Transition Exmouth have achieved a lot in 2020:

- The Transition Exmouth Umbrella Group held a meeting recently and the personnel bios for those who are hoping to join the Umbrella Group will be circulated prior to the AGM, which will be held on Zoom soon.
- The 'Our Place, Our Planet' (OPOP) website launch in October 2020 was well attended.
- Transition Exmouth have applied for funding to set-up a 'Library of Things' and associated woodworking workshop. The 'Library of Things' will be a place where members of the public can borrow items, such as tools, rather than having to purchase them. This will coincide with a woodworking workshop to learn general DIY skills.

CC should find out if the funding bid was successful by mid-December 2020.

- A lack of available community space in Exmouth has hampered community activities and CC urged the Town Council to work with EDDC and DCC to find a solution as this was deemed to be an impediment for many community organisations.

- Discussions were ongoing regarding the creation of a mobile hub that can be tailored to different campaigns and driven around to different areas in Exmouth.
- CC asked for confirmation on the status of the unspent funding allocation for partnership working with Transition Exmouth and LB confirmed any underspend could be put into the reserve pot at the financial year end for Transition Exmouth to use next year, if agreed by Councillors.

LB added that ETC would be setting budgets for the next financial year and there was scope to set a new budget for 2021 but advised caution as the Council's precept is likely to be adversely affected by the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on the Town's Council Tax base.

- LB confirmed that space in the Clerks magazine for an OPOP promotion article had been secured and the website has been promoted through ETC's social media channels and is being promoted via staff email signatures. There was also scope to promote OPOP at Exmouth Festival in 2021, if it goes ahead.
- A suggestion was tabled about selling or giving away branded goods to promote the OPOP website. However, LB and TD confirmed that initiatives like this have been unsuccessful in the past. LB also clarified that the Tourist Information Service office are not able to sell items, due to money handling policies and no till/card machine. However, other locations could be considered. Also, the production of promotional items could be seen as counter-productive to the environmental cause so another suggestion was whether a couple of Councillors could write or create a video blog or article that can be promoted on social media. This could include what they have started to do or stopped doing after looking on the OPOP website.
- CC explained that the Ellie's Fund crisp packet collection would not be reinstated as due to the vast amount of volunteer time needed to keep it running and a change in policy regarding the financial reward scheme offered by TerraCycle. However, Brixington School are collecting this waste stream Ipplepen Parish Council run a community bin for various waste streams so this could be something to investigate in the future.

6. To receive an update on other relevant matters from Town Council working parties and outside body representatives

Prior to the meeting, TD had circulated an email to the other Chairs of ETC Working Parties asking for any updates.

Flooding and Land Drainage Working Party

Councillor Bruce de Saram reported, via email, that the flood defence work being undertaken by the Environment Agency (EA) and Kier on the seafront had been progressing well and the new flood gates are to be installed soon.

Planning Committee

A response was provided by ETC's Planning Committee on Central Government's Planning White Paper as it was felt the proposed Paper was inadequate and lacked emphasis on environmental concerns.

7. To agree a representative to attend the In Exeter/Exeter Cycling Campaign webinar workshop for Low Traffic Neighbourhoods for reporting back to Exmouth Transport Partnership

A link to information regarding the In Exeter/Exeter Cycling Campaign webinar workshop for Low Traffic Neighbourhoods was circulated with the agenda prior to the meeting.

Action: It was agreed that OD attend this webinar and report back to ETC's Exmouth Transport Partnership (ETP) meeting.

SG raised that any action pursued with regards to cycling provisions must not disadvantage pedestrians.

It was noted that DCC is promoting cycling via its Winter Wheelers campaign.

Action: Relevant social media posts for DCC's Winter Wheelers cycling event will be liked/shared on ETC's social media channels.

5. Any other business

None.

6. Date of future meeting

Next meeting is scheduled for 5th January 2021 at 3pm via Zoom.

The meeting finished at 16.25pm.