

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL - EXMOUTH TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

Notes of our meeting of Monday 18th November 2019 at 10:00am in the Chamber, Exmouth Town Hall.

Action points in yellow

PRESENT

Tim Dumper		TD	Exmouth Town Councillor (Chair)
Olly Davey	OD		Exmouth Town & EDDC Councillor
Pauline Stott		PS	Exmouth Town Councillor
David Poor	DP		Exmouth Town Councillor
Ian Kirvan	IK		Exmouth Town Councillor
Brian Bailey		BB	Exmouth Town Councillor
Roma Patten		RP	ECA (Exmouth Community Association)
Jan Gannaway	JG		Transition Exmouth, Sustrans, & Cyclepath Exmouth
George Shorters	GS		Exmouth Taxi Association
John Colby	JC		ALRUG (Avocet Line Rail Users Group)
Tony Jackson		TJ	ALRUG
Derek Fishpool	DF		DCC Public Transport
Richard Brown	RB		DCC
Chris Comer		CC	Stagecoach, Deputy Operations Manager
Tim Clatworthy	TC		Exmouth Town Council

APOLOGIES & INTRODUCTIONS

Lisa Bowman		LB	Exmouth Town Clerk
Andrew Ennis	AE		EDDC
Lewis Ward		LW	GWR

1. NOTES OF MEETING OF 16TH SEPTEMBER 2019.

6d5 (p.3): RB corrected that the problem was not that the materials were of inferior quality, but that they take some time to bed down. This site is under review, but the same materials would be used again.

2. ACTION LOG & MATTERS ARISING

- a) The Exeter Road lamp columns not yet in service: Some old cables still need replacing; Western Power Distribution hoping to complete this early 2020.
- b) 6d3 (p.3): IK thought that with the recent resurfacing of the Parade, the lines marking the loading bay would have been moved to allow 3 buses to park without blocking the pedestrian crossing. RP added that 5-6 buses parked simultaneously here was not unknown. **RB to report this to the Traffic Team.**
- c) 6d7 (p.3): Buses, including double-deckers, are still using Featherbed Lane. CC requested that each incident spotted be reported to him at chris.comer@stagecoach.com
- d) 6h2 (p.3): Discussion at the meeting indicated there was still no cycle parking at Lidl.

3. BRIEF UPDATES

- a) Bus Shelter Replacement Programme
 - i. Whilst Fernbank has taken over almost all of Exmouth's bus shelters, since then they have not been very responsive though they are currently looking at options with DCC's Mark Phillips. It was noted that we have an ageing population that needs shelters and seats.
 - ii. IK observed that many of our shelters were at the end of their lives, some literally falling to bits, the Parade in particular being embarrassing; but at the same time we were trying to encourage people to visit the town and use public transport.

- iii. DF said Exeter had similar problems, though with different providers, and that whilst a company may be able to provide shelters, in the current economic climate it was difficult to also provide maintenance; progress has been made, but the funds were coming to an end.
- iv. RP hoped we could get a representative from Fernbank at a future meeting and show them around our shelters; ETC now has a comprehensive list and map of all Exmouth shelters; **however this should be updated after recent changes.**
- v. Members were pleased with the new shelter at Parkside Drive, but puzzled as to the process by which it had been installed, and whether it was a replacement for the shelter which had been removed further up the road. DF said he would enquire of Mark Phillips, and pointed out that planning permission was not needed to install a new bus shelter.
- vi. **TD and BB thought these issues should form part of a Full Council agenda.**

b) CCIF Bid

- i. LW had said, in conversation with JC, that we would get a decision on our bid in December or early January.
- ii. BB warned that a CCIF bid submitted with Town Team 2 years ago (to fund a dinosaur mural on the back wall of the station next to the platform, to be seen from the train and platform when walking out of the station) had still not received a definitive answer, though they had recently received some half-hearted "it might happen" statements from GWR.

c) ITI Business Plan

Stagecoach have little desire to operate at the rear of the station (a) on cost grounds, and (b) on the assumption that passengers will not to walk the short distance from the town centre to the station. RP will pass on her papers to TD before she moves away.

d) GESP (Greater Exeter Strategic Plan) & local statistics

GESP should be finalised by 2023. Population of Exmouth in 2011 was 34,000; probably 37,000+ now; in 10 years' time could be 42,000. However, we do not have any more building land; Goodmore's Farm is likely to be the last major development. However the population may still rise through 'windfall developments' such as extensions, house conversions to flats, infilling, and more rooms in HMO's; and these additions are not taken into account in the Local Plan. Furthermore, the number of visitors is more difficult to predict.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCY

- a) TD informed the meeting that he is Chair of ETC's Climate Change TAFF as well as of ETP and would like to see greater liaison between the groups; and asked members of this meeting for their thoughts as to what we might address together.
BB suggested that **what we do in ETP and Climate Change meetings re Climate Change should be publicised** to motivate the public, showing that action is being taken and inviting greater public interest.
- b) Electric vehicles:
 - i. There was due to be a pilot scheme, but this has been scaled back to Exeter only.
 - ii. Where will the charging points be? A lot of houses in Exmouth do not have private drives. The Watersports Centre will have several, and EDDC is working on their charging points in every car park scheme.
 - iii. OD reported that batteries are becoming cheaper and are very reliable. Renault batteries are leased so can be exchanged at the end of their lives.
 - iv. Co-cars of Exeter: electric carshare. **Olly to contact Mark Hodgson.** JG commented that we should be looking beyond car use in any case.

c) Pedal cycles and e-bikes:

- i. JG passed round a sheet of ideas [attached] from TE (Transition Exmouth) on public and private transport, urban areas, cycling and walking, and hopes ETC will listen to these suggestions. Suggests a springtime promotional day for ETC to work with TE and Sustrans.
- ii. Sales of e-bikes shooting up; can cycle to work without getting hot & sweaty! In Norway you can rent an e-bike for a year, then buy it after that.
- iii. It was suggested that children be encouraged to learn how to ride bikes (some adults have never ridden a bike): Perhaps councils, local police and cycling clubs may have schemes which could be investigated?

d) Town Centre Pedestrianisation:

RP: Geoff Morris had extensive ideas for pedestrianisation for Exmouth town centre. **To share with a later ETP meeting.**

e) Stagecoach:

No proposals at the moment. Electric vehicles: cost & range disadvantages.

f) Rail:

- i. Overhead rail electrification here very unlikely in short to medium term. If 3rd rail allowed this would be quicker & cheaper. DF mentioned hydrogen fuel cells as "the way forward."
- ii. UK train-fares are expensive compared with other countries, and our refurbished trains are still using 40-year-old diesels!
- iii. UK falling behind in battery design. Fuel cells are a possible alternative but currently prohibitively expensive.

5. STAKEHOLDER REPORTS

a) ALRUG (AVOCET LINE RAIL USERS' GROUP) (TJ & JC)

1. RP had talked with GWR Managing Director Mark Hopwood re. the loss of our local line connections at Exeter St Davids to London in the mornings and evenings. With ALRUG's help some of these had already been re-instated and it is hoped that others will be improved in the May 2020 timetable changes.
2. New repair depot at Exeter St Davids: Matthew Golton, GWR's Commercial Development Director, is hopeful that this will improve the reliability of local services, and also raise the profile of Exeter and the southwest in the national rail network.
3. **The new GWR timetable incorporates some major changes. It is now available at staffed stations and online:**
<http://www.avocetline.org.uk/december-2019-timetables-now-available/>.
4. Service interruptions on Avocet Line: improvement over last year - 225 instead of 300 - but with our elderly rolling stock, further improvements will be hard to achieve.
5. Short-formed trains: Whilst it is not possible to accurately monitor short-formed trains (those running with fewer carriages than diagrammed for) numerous instances have been noted.
6. Rolling stock: GWR will retain their eight Class 143 Pacer trains beyond 31st December. As these units do not comply with PRM (Persons of Reduced Mobility) regulations they will operate coupled to units that are compliant. The reason for the retention of this rolling stock is the late cascade of units from Thames Valley to Bristol and thence the Bristol units to Exeter.
7. Exmouth Station Walkway: Despite a promise made by James Anstee of DCC on 25th September, the semi-blocked channels have still not been cleared. **TJ to follow this up and, depending on what is eventually agreed, also raise the question of lighting.**

Thank you to TJ and RP for contributing notes to this section.

b) GWR (GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY)

No-one from GWR was present and no updates had been sent.

c) DCC PUBLIC TRANSPORT

1. The budget looks good for this year, but next year unpredictable as the upcoming General Election may change priorities.
2. Stagecoach are obliged to give DCC 70 days' notice of any timetable changes.
3. There are moves afoot to provide a centralised information service for all bus services.

d) DCC HIGHWAYS

1. RB will be moving to a new team shortly (last day 16th December); his replacement on ETP as yet unknown. On behalf of the group TD thanked RB for his contributions to ETP.
2. Residents' parking: The report is not yet completed and will be sent to HATOC March 2020. We will hear from this month's HATOC regarding the restrictions from the previous HATOC meeting.
3. Maintenance: There is a month's work to be done before Christmas and more in the New Year. However there will be less money for patching and resurfacing.
4. Footways: A meeting will be held on 20th November to discuss resurfacing of the Magnolia Centre, which may involve a mixture of blacktop and slabs.

e) STAGECOACH

1. Stagecoach Southwest has been without an Operations Manager since August, but James Mooney will be starting in this role on December 2nd.
2. The new Exeter Bus Station should be completed winter 2020.
3. No timetable changes coming up.
4. The Exeter night bus now takes in Exeter Central Station.
5. CC to look into the 98/157 problems. DP to email CC his observations of early or late departures of this service.
6. CC has already taken action to provide the 57 service more time due to the Topsham redevelopment delays.
7. Buses stacking up in Exmouth Parade: In part this was due to Martin Gibbon moving buses from outside LED to the Parade.
8. Passenger experiences:
 - a. On occasions upstairs passengers (in this case, RP & TC) had been inconvenienced when buses had missed out a stop (e.g. Exmouth's 'Hospital Corner') despite the bell being pressed; in both cases a downstairs passenger had mistaken their stop and cancelled their request to get off. Apparently ringing the bell upstairs gives a different alert to the driver than ringing the bell downstairs, to allow the driver to give upstairs passengers more time to alight. RP and TC, seeing the bell had been rung, did not press the bell upstairs and thereby missed their stop. Suggest that Stagecoach display notices in 2-decker buses to advise customers to ring the upstairs bell even if the "Bus stopping" sign is illuminated.
 - b. Some drivers pull off while passengers are still finding their seats or on the stairs.
 - c. At busy times some passengers sit on the stairs.
 - d. On parts of the 57 route, riding upstairs can be quite uncomfortable; however Barrack Road will be resurfaced in 2020.

f) EDDC CAR PARKS

In the absence of AE, there was no report from EDDC Car Parks.

g) TAXI OPERATORS

1. GS commented that none of the changes they have been asking for, have been delivered.
2. Their No Abuse campaign has reached national news.
3. Signage on station taxi rank is wrong.
4. Lighting by station pedestrian crossing: Apparently this is the wrong sort of lighting. RB has chased up the relevant team but received no reply. BB invited to attend next Taxi Association meeting.
5. Use of rear entrance of station: Car Park is DCC's. RB: No surface deterioration on GWR land. TD: We need to confirm who owns which parcels of land there. TD to work with GS to get this moving or accept it is not going to happen.
6. Some drivers exiting Queen St then turn right past AJ's. This is on DCC Cllr Richard Scott's to-do list.
7. Trips to Bristol: Drivers are sometimes asked to go to Bristol, where they are fined as our diesel vehicles contravene Bristol's clear air policy. Some areas pay their drivers £3,000 - £3,500 to cover these costs. DP suggested that as a Council, **ETC write to Bristol City Council regarding this charge (currently £9 per taxi and van.)**
8. Persuading drivers to buy electric vehicles is very difficult as a new car can cost £37,000 with EDDC's £1,000 tax on top of that as well as a 9-month waiting list. There being 160,000 taxis in UK, drivers are obliged to go for brand new cars.

h) CYCLE TRAIL ISSUES

See also section 5 of these notes.

JG and AE have cycled right round Exmouth and note there are very few cycle-parking places. **RB to pass this on to DCC Transport Team.**

6. AOB

BB has arranged a meeting between DSFRS (Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service) and TARA (The Avenues' Residents' Association) to set up an informal speedwatch at the Liverton Business Park/ Salterton Road junction, in advance of a possible Police speedwatch. He suggested traffic lights for this junction and said there was a lot of disgruntlement in Littleham ward over this issue, and **it should be brought up at the next Full Council meeting.**

7. Next meetings: TBA

Please let Reception know asap if you cannot make these dates, and arrange for a deputy to stand in for you. Please also let TC know in good time if you need hard copies of the agenda/notes so as not to delay the start of the meeting.

The meeting closed at 12.15pm.