

# EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Town Council virtual meeting held on Monday 9 November 2020

**Present:**

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

Devon County Councillor: R Scott

**Officers:**

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

**Apologies:**

Councillors: T Dumper and I Kirvan.  
Devon County Councillors: J Trail and C Channon.

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and thanked members for their patience as the earlier planning meeting had delayed the start of this Town Council meeting.

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

**C20/068. Council meeting minutes**

Councillor M Chapman proposed, seconded by Councillor P Stott, that the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Monday 12 October 2020 be approved.

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

**C20/069. Matters arising from previous minutes**

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

**C20/070. Declarations of pecuniary interests and dispensations**

Item	NONE
Councillor	
Pecuniary or personal	
Reason	

### **C20/071. 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.

### **C20/072. 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 B Bailey, and it was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council approves the minutes of the meetings held on 28 September 2020 and 12 October 2020 and any recommendations therein.

#### **Town Clerk's Report**

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

#### **Deputy Clerk's Report**

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

Members were informed that an item had been included on the Finance agenda to approve expenditure for legal assistance for the proposed water bottle filling sites as this was required in order to complete the licence agreements with East Devon District Council and Devon County Council. The expenditure included Devon County Council's legal costs, but East Devon District Council had not yet provided any indication of their costs. Councillor J Whibley suggested that he be kept informed should help be needed in communicating with East Devon District Council.

#### **Festival & Events Working Party**

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

#### **Flooding & Land Drainage Working Party**

The notes of the meeting held on 13 October 2020, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

There were concerns that a three-year cycle for cleaning drains was not sufficient and that proactive measures were needed in known areas to ensure properties and businesses were not flooded by surface water. Councillor R Scott agreed that, in his view, –a standard approach for all drains was not sufficient as some needed more attention than others, particularly where high vegetation existed. DCC were revisiting this to develop new schemes depending on the location and known issues.

Councillor R Scott confirmed that residents should be encouraged to use the Devon County Council Report It site as the benefits were that:

- An appropriate response could be given for the problem;
- Collecting the data helped with getting a better understanding of the budget requirements;
- A clear audit trail was available from start to finish.

### **Waterfront Working Party**

The notes of the meeting held on 20 October 2020, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

Concerns around the camber of the road and potential drainage issues will be interrogated from the previous planning application of the Tidal Defence Scheme and, if this is not clear, Kier and the Environment Agency will be asked to confirm the arrangements and ensure there will be no future flooding issues.

### **Community Organisations Liaison Panel (COLP)**

The notes of the meeting held on 26 October 2020, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

Royal British Legion were thanked for their efforts in delivering a well organised Remembrance Service amidst the lockdown restrictions.

### **Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party**

The notes of the meeting held on 27 October 2020, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

There were concerns around using a rooted Christmas tree in the Strand, namely:

- Exmouth Town Council had a standing arrangement with the landowner to erect a tree using the existing hole;
- The tree needed to be near a power source for the tree lights.

However, the Town Clerk will investigate the possibility of a rooted tree for future years.

### **Town Team & Tourism Forum**

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

Councillor M Chapman confirmed that StreetScene had stepped back from helping with the installation of the sculpture on the roundabout by the Powder Monkey for health and safety reasons and Exmouth In Bloom were now having to pay for this work to be completed. They were seeking financial assistance from the Town Team for this additional work. The Town Clerk confirmed that Exmouth In Bloom had been asked to provide further information before any decision could be made.

### **Town Maintenance Contracts TAFF**

The notes of the meeting held on 29 October 2020, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

### **Outside Bodies**

Councillor D Poor Confirmed that the Allotment Association had reviewed its annual budget and that the finances were in good order. The Allotment Association were intending to make good the fence that was recently removed.

Councillor D Poor had attended a webinar organised by the National Association of Local Councils on health challenges post Covid-19. He confirmed that Exmouth was advanced in matters relating to the health and well-being of its people.

Councillor D Poor confirmed that a meeting of the Woodbury, Exmouth and Budleigh (WEB) health and well-being board had taken place last week and the notes would be circulated when they became available.

Councillor O Davey stated that the Allotment Association treasurer was very knowledgeable and was able to deal with much more of the financial matters.

Councillor F Caygill confirmed that he will be attending a meeting with representatives of East Devon District Council to review an exit strategy for the existing CCTV system.

### **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.

Councillor J Whibley had also provided a written report and it was agreed that the Town Clerk will circulate this to all members.

Councillor B De Saram confirmed that he had asked for a response to his question raised at the last Cabinet meeting regarding Exmouth Town Centre falling within the top 10 most vulnerable localities in Devon. It was agreed that a copy of the response would be circulated to all councillors.

### **County Councillors' Reports**

A written report had been provided by Councillor C Channon and was circulated in advance of the meeting and noted. The report has been attached as an appendix to these minutes.

Councillor R Scott confirmed that the results of the recent resident's survey on roadside parking in the Town Ward, particularly the Colony area, conducted by Devon County Council, will be reviewed at the HATOC meeting in December. A decision will be made to determine if support is to be given in support of this scheme and the move to the design phase. This will require further consultations and decisions to be agreed before any action is taken, which is likely to be a lengthy process.

### **C20/073. External Audit Report for 2019/20 from PKF Littlejohn LLP**

The External Audit Report for 2019/20 from PKF Littlejohn LLP was circulated in advance of the meeting and noted.

The Chairman asked that the finance administrator, Julie Gregory, be thanked for her sterling work during this difficult period.

*Councillor B Toye joined the meeting.*

#### **C20/074. Exmouth Flood Defence Scheme – Flood Gates recommendations**

The report, including the legal advice, was circulated in advance of the meeting, and noted.

Concerns were raised and addressed regarding:

- Closing of highway gates and traffic being trapped on the seafront;
- Volunteers' liability and insurance;
- Legal advice on the final Memorandum of Understanding document.

Councillor P Stott proposed, seconded by Councillor J Whibley, and it was **RESOLVED** that:

- **Exmouth Town Council signs up to the tri-party Memorandum of Understanding with East Devon District Council and the Environment Agency, to allow community volunteers to operate non highway flood gates when alerted to do so;**
- **Delegated authority is given to the Town Clerk/Deputy Town Clerk to complete the agreement in consultation with the Flooding and Land Drainage working party.**

#### **C20/075. Appointment of Councillor Eileen Beech to various working parties**

Councillor M Chapman proposed, seconded by Councillor B Bailey, and it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor E Beech be appointed to the following working parties:

- Exmouth Transport Partnership;
- Festival and Events Working Party;
- Public Rights of Way Working Party;
- Waterfront Working Party.

#### **C20/076. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Town Council will be held on Monday 7 December 2020 at 7.15pm.

**The meeting concluded at 20.59pm.**

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 two webinars, one on Accelerating the Uptake of Electric Vehicles as part of the LGA series Decarbonising Transport, which was focused and enlightening, and one on Community Wealth, which was not, and did not seem particularly relevant unless you were in what could be termed a “left behind” area.

I attended two Strategic Planning meetings, one on various topics, including revision of the Local Plan, and one dedicated to Cranbrook new town, where negotiations continue between EDDC, DCC, Cranbrook Town Council, and the consortium of developers on development of the town centre, which comes down to an argument about “jam today” or “jam tomorrow”. Councillors resolved to continue negotiations but also to work on EDDC developing its own vision for the town centre through a Supplementary Planning Document.

I also attended the first meeting of the Queen’s Drive Delivery Group since the change of administration, which felt very different, particularly since meetings are now open to the public, a number of whom attended and spoke passionately in favour of various types of development they would like to see on the seafront. I was quoted in the local press for saying I would like to see all-weather attractions as part of any plans, remembering the days when I worked in my father’s pottery, which filled up with visitors whenever the weather turned wet; though since that was in SW Scotland, this was fairly frequently. It was pointed out that the Ocean already has under cover attractions, though the quote made it sound as though I favoured covering the entire seafront with amusement arcades. I look forward to the next meeting when I hope we can begin to make some plans for future development, with appropriate public consultation.

I spoke at Cabinet about the plight of the rough sleeper in Phear Park, and the lack of progress in getting him in to housing. I was told yet again that this is a very complex case, and I am now trying to be allowed permission to receive details of the case so that I can follow progress.

Planning last week had no Exmouth applications, and nothing that I felt had relevance to Exmouth, though the case of a holiday park where residents had been led to believe they could occupy lodges all year round should perhaps serve as a warning to those buying holiday accommodation to check what planning conditions apply.

I attended Scrutiny Committee, which was mainly concerned with the operation of the Standards Committee, which is reviewing its procedures.

I also spoke against a suggestion that all councillors should be registered with the DBS service. I have a DBS certificate, due to my work teaching young people to play guitar, but I do not see that it is relevant to the work of councillors.

## **District Councillor's Report – Councillor Bruce de Saram**

On **22nd October** I attended Strategic Planning and learnt about the progress made for Cranbrook Town Centre.

This Committee was asked to consider and debate the following issues about the proposal before them.

Does it deliver a town centre to the requirements that have been agreed by the Council?

- a. If not, are there sufficient grounds to depart from policy?
- b. What if any harm would arise from the East Devon New Community Partners offer?
- c. Are the Supplementary Planning Document proposals significantly better and are they achievable?

On the **28th October** I attended Cabinet and asked questions on **Item 11** Covid-19 response and recovery as to the situation which Exmouth finds itself in since a table presented in the report indicated that Exmouth Town Centre falls within the **top 10 most vulnerable localities in Devon**. I await the written response from the Officer concerned to my question as it could not be answered on the night.

I supported and spoke in favour of **Item 12** about the Exmouth Tidal defence Flood gates in which it was resolved that Cabinet

1. Agreed to permit East Devon District Council to be the primary responder to operating the highway flood gates in Exmouth, and
2. agree for East Devon District Council to sign up to the 3-party Memorandum of Understanding between East Devon District Council, the Environment Agency and Exmouth Town Council to allow community volunteers to be the primary responder for operating non-highway flood gates, with delegated authority granted to the Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment to complete the agreement in consultation with the Strategic Lead Governance and Licensing.

I also noted the comments made about the Poverty Working Panel and asked Cllr Armstrong when the time would be right to involve outside groups such as Exmouth Chamber of Commerce in this process. Cllr Armstrong agreed to follow this up which she has subsequently done and that is a very positive collaborative approach.

On **4th November**, I took part with fellow Exmouth colleagues in the monthly Planning Committee zoom meeting. Although there were no Exmouth applications before us for consideration, I did speak out on Agenda Item **20/1395/FUL (Minor) SIDMOUTH TOWN** proposing refusal but the Committee disagreed and voted in favour of it as per the recommendation before us. I also proposed that the committee should support **20/1442/FUL (Minor) COLY VALLEY** proposal for the Construction of new tramway halt, pedestrian access bridge, ramp, timber walkways and associated works to provide pedestrian link to Seaton Wetlands. This was agreed in line with the recommendation before us.

**On 5th November** I attended Scrutiny along with fellow Exmouth Colleagues and agreed with members that Portfolio Holders should bring forward reports for consideration to Scrutiny. I thought that Cllr Jung with his Coast, Country Environment Portfolio should go first but members disagreed and will instead ask Cllr Armstrong to deliver a Covid-19 housing and domestic violence update as proposed by Cllr Chapman. I took part in the debate around Standards Committee and Subcommittee issues referred from Chairman of Audit and Governance and Portfolio Holder for Governance and Transparency following October 2020 Council.

### **District Council Report   Joe Whibley**

District Council matters - I have chaired a meeting of the Licensing Sub-Committee at which I am delighted to say that the fleet of disability equipped taxis in Exmouth was increased by one.

I have been undertaking conversations with businesses in and around the town regarding both the plans to make permanent trading easier on The Strand, and with regards to the Coronavirus pandemic and associated lockdown and continue to do so.

I have, as an education professional, instigated a petition on DCC's website regarding free school meals which, thanks to an 'overpaid primadonna footballer', is no longer relevant, but I shall continue to monitor said matter as the government has not agreed to provide holiday meal vouchers beyond the Christmas holidays.

### **County Councillor's Report – Councillor C Channon**

- Councillor J Trail and I had a meeting with Ed Lewis of Acorn Developments regarding the proposed planning application for the remainder of the Rolle College land on the ERADE site. We had a very useful discussion and when the application is submitted, we will be requesting clear conditions regarding vehicle access to the site and the routes travelled. We do not want any replication of the problems we have experienced at Plumb Park
- A small group of local councillors, an East Devon Council officer and two members of the clergy have met to discuss how vulnerable residents in Littleham might be better supported during the pandemic. These meetings have been led by Rev. Sam Burnett from the Wave. He has also been in contact with the Salvation Army Food Bank to see how if they would be happy for us to set up a distribution depot at the Littleham Leisure Centre. In addition to the food bank parcels we intend to offer to provide fresh and frozen foods. I have donated £2,000 from my Locality Budget to start this off. Councillors J Trail and R Scott have donated another £1,000 to the Brixington Free Church Food Bank and another £1,000 to the Woodbury one.
- At the WEB Board meeting last Wednesday, I reported that I was receiving complaints from residents in the WEB area regarding unhelpful advice from some of our Medical Practices, who advise patients who go to A&E or Exmouth Minor Injury Unit rather than contact them. I am not sure exactly what our doctors and nurses are doing although they say they are very busy.