# EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
## S106 & CIL Working Party

Notes of the meeting held at 2:00m on 15th December 2020 Via zoom.

**Present**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Councillor Fred Caygill | FC | Exmouth Town Council |
| Councillor Steve Gazzard | SG | Exmouth Town Council |
| Councillor Brian Bailey | BB | Exmouth Town Council |
| Councillor Aurora Bailey | AB | Exmouth Town Council |
| Councillor Pauline Stott | PS | Exmouth Town Council |
| Councillor Michel Rosser | MR | Exmouth Town Council |
| Councillor Joy Whipps | JW | Exmouth Town Council |
| Councillor Cherry Nicholas | CN | Exmouth Town Council |
| Councillor Brian Toye | BT | Exmouth Town Council |
| Jamie Buckley | JB | East Devon District Council |
| Sulina Tallack | ST | East Devon District Council |
| Lisa Bowman | LB | Town Clerk Exmouth Town Council |
| Mollie Carey | MC | Note Taker Exmouth Town Council |

### Welcome and apologies

FC welcomed members as Chair. No apologies were given.

**1. To approve the notes from the previous meeting dated Tuesday 21 July 2020.**

The notes were approved as a true record of the meeting.

**2. Matters arising from the previous meeting**

There were no matters arising.

**3. To approve the annual CIL report for the financial year ending 31 March 2020.**

Members discussed the Annual CIL report following explanation from LB and ST and unanimously agreed that it should be approved for publication on the Town Council's website and for submission to East Devon District Council.

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**4. To receive a report from Jamie Buckley, Community Engagement and Funding Officer for East Devon District Council on the outcome of the recent S106 sports vote and agree any follow-up action**

Members of the working party had, prior to the meeting, received a report and supporting letter from the Chief Executive of East Devon District Council, Mark Williams, which provided an update on the outcome of the recent community vote and a recommendation that the outcome of the vote should be upheld, without the need for further consultation.

JB gave a verbal explanation of the report and explained that, under usual circumstances, and as was advertised throughout this voting process, if certain age groups or locations are significantly under-represented compared to the actual population of the town or parish, additional measures could be taken to make sure the demographics correctly represent the population.

Members expressed disappointment that the results of the vote were not yet available but it was noted that this meeting was intended to discuss the analysis of the data and to ensure that all ages in Exmouth were represented fairly and not to announce which projects would receive funding.

Members were in agreement that the results fairly represented the population of Exmouth and that no age range or ward was under-represented. It was therefore agreed that the Working Party would recommend acceptance of the voting results by Exmouth Town Council at the next meeting of the Council on January 11th 2021 and that following ratification of that recommendation, the result would be disclosed at a special meeting to be arranged in the New Year. A press release would also be issued to ensure that members of the public were made aware of the outcome of the sports vote ASAP.

**Dates of future meetings**

It was agreed that the S106 & CIL working party will meet on Tuesday 12th January at 12:00pm following the Exmouth Town Council meeting on the 11th of January.

LB to arrange for the meeting dates for 2021 to be circulated to members.

The meeting finished at *3:30pm*

# Exmouth sports projects voting report

**Methodology**

Exmouth had £300,000 of Section 106 Sports money available to spend. Since 2008, East Devon District Council has had the ground breaking policy of allowing town and parish councils to spearhead the project to spend it, and allows communities to put forward their ideas and make the final decisions as to what it is spent on. We're not aware of any other district or borough council that allows the community to decide how the money is spent.

Usually, projects to spend Section 106 Sports money involve gathering in ideas from the community and then going out to the local community at events and locations to get their votes in person for which projects they want to see happen. This isn't possible during the Coronavirus situation so we worked with Exmouth Town Council's Section 106 / CIL Working Party to agree a way to do this online.

It's difficult to do voting online in a way where you can verify that the data you get back comes from the area you want votes from, and that the same people aren't voting multiple times. We devised a way of doing this by sending out letters in the post to 5,000 randomly selected households giving each one a unique code which their household could use to go online and fill in one voting form. They could fill in this one form as an individual or with multiple members of the household. Households could also request a paper copy of the voting form.

Due to the limitations of the survey software we have and methodology used, we could not record multiple age groups within one household form against multiple project votes, so we took the age group of the respondent for the statistical returns against the 3 projects a household form could vote for.

This has meant that our breakdown of age range demographics is not as reliable as it would have been if we had taken the survey in person. However this was the compromise for progressing the voting online during the pandemic. Our form means we only record the respondent's age range against the vote. Where a household may actually have several age ranges within it. This has the effect of statistically showing over and under representations in two age ranges, when in reality those households may have had individuals that fall into several age ranges. So we don't categorically know if our statistics are totally representative of all those within a household who may have voted for the 3 household project options, only that they represent the person filling out the form. Without carrying out the survey face to face with an individual this is difficult to entirely mitigate.

This letter voting methodology has resulted in overwhelming positives as well:

- We were able to progress the voting, where otherwise the pandemic would have halted this.
- A 20% response rate which is unusually high for consultations was achieved. An excellent result.
- Households (rather than individuals) were written to which means more people were consulted than the 5000 letters sent.
- Households were targeted randomly. This means a level playing field for all of the projects, with none disadvantaged.

- A good proportion of the vote was made by mixed age, multi-occupancy households. All age groups have had the opportunity to respond.
- The results show a good geographic spread across Exmouth.

It is for the positive reasons above that we are recommending that we use the data we have on the s106 sports voting, considering it to be representative enough given the limitations placed upon us by the pandemic conditions and knowing that it equally covers Exmouth and that households were randomly slected.

**Number of responses**

1,082 valid voting forms were received, which is a great response rate. 1,036 voting forms were submitted online. 46 were received on paper, after respondents requested paper versions that were posted out to them with a pre-paid return envelope.

Each of the 5,000 letters sent out contained a unique code, which households had to input when they voted.

52 forms were invalid and so were deleted. The table below shows why the forms were invalid:

| Reason why form was deleted | Number of forms deleted |
| --- | --- |
| Deleted as voted for more than 3 projects | 20 |
| Deleted as voted for no projects | 3 |
| Deleted as code already used | 16 |
| Deleted as code was incorrect | 13 |

**Age groups**

We received 1,366 age group responses on the 1,082 voting forms. Households were asked both on the online information and again on the voting form itself to either nominate one person from their household to vote, or submit one joint voting form with a maximum of three projects ticked from multiple / all people in their household. Multiple age ranges were not recorded against household project votes.

| Age group | Number of people involved in the voting forms | % of people involved in the voting forms | % of people in that age group in Exmouth that could have voted * | % difference |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Under 18 | 165 | 12% | 14% | -2% |
| 18 to 39 | 196 | 14% | 26% | -12% |
| 40 to 59 | 427 | 31% | 28% | +3% |
| 60+ | 578 | 42% | 32% | +10% |

*Official figures obtained from the Office for National Statistics.

From this data, those aged 18 – 39 are under-represented by 12% in the voting and those aged 60+ are over-represented by 10%. However as the voting method gave everyone

equal access, and due to the inability to safely gather further forms in person, we are recommending that the voting results are used as they are and consider them representative enough given the situational limitations and likelihood that household votes meant more than one age range had seen the consultation within the household.

## Locations

Households were asked to tell us their postcode, it was explained that these would be used to see if any particular Wards were under-represented. 1,032 households gave postcodes that could be allocated to one particular Ward. 49 households gave postcodes that covered more than one Ward, so their votes will still be counted but can't be allocated to a particular Ward.

| Ward | Number of households from that Ward that voted | % of voting forms | % of actual Exmouth households within that Ward* | % difference |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Brixington | 213 | 21% | 20% | +1% |
| Halsdon | 264 | 26% | 20% | +6% |
| Littleham | 242 | 23% | 24% | -1% |
| Town | 196 | 19% | 24% | -5% |
| Withycombe Raleigh | 117 | 11% | 12% | +1% |

*Numbers of households came from EDDC Elections.

The differences between the percentages of households voting in different Wards are not significantly different to the actual percentage of households in those Wards. The response rate was excellent and due to the randomly selected nature of the households we are content that Exmouth as a whole is well represented.

## Next steps and conclusion – the impact of Coronavirus

Under usual circumstances, and as was advertised throughout this voting process, if certain age groups or locations are significantly under-represented within the voting compared to the actual population of the town or parish, additional measures would be taken to make sure the demographics correctly represent the population. This would be based on face to face voting where we could be certain of our base data demographics. As explained above, due to our household voting form, we don't categorically know all the age groups within household returns, which makes it difficult to accurately target an age range for more votes.

Although the statistical results are that those aged 20-39 are under-represented by 12% and votes including those aged over 60 are over-represented by 10%, we're proposing that the voting forms received to date are used, rather than a method being undertaken to try and make the results more representative. Limitations with the process we used in order to progress the voting mean that where we have households with multiple age groups, our statistics only record the respondent's age range. Therefore the base data does not allow us to be sure about the age range percentages.

This is because the results come from mixed households, so the actual exposure to numbers consulted and different age groups can be higher than our statistics show. At a

20% return, the rate of engagement is excellent anyway and higher than from other consultations, this coupled with the random nature of the way in which households were selected means that none of the projects were disadvantaged.

The impact of Coronavirus means it still isn't possible / advisable yet to go out in person as we normally would to get any additional votes.

In addition, we had to completely change the way we gathered in votes, and had to make sure that those voting were from Exmouth and weren't voting multiple times. This method has meant that the other option, statistical weighting, that may have been possible to correct any under-represented or over-represented groups isn't meaningful in terms of age groups.

As a result of this, the most equitable way forward is to use the data as we have it. Considering it representative enough given the limitations of the pandemic, understanding it is a great return rate, was from completely randomly selected households and that more people have seen the consultation due to the household responses representing more than one individual.

The options below briefly outline the techniques that could be used to make the results statistically more representative, with the significant disadvantages of each option. As such we have discounted both of them in favour of using the pure data from the 1,082 voting forms gathered in so far.

**An explanation of the ways of correcting the imbalance in age group representation that have been discounted given the age range data is against household respondent**

### 1. Gathering in extra votes

If we were to accept that statistically those aged 18-39 are under-represented in the voting (ignoring the limitation of the household form not recording each age range within the household), we could have gathered in extra votes from that age group. This would have naturally reduced the percentage of those aged 60+ included in the voting too. However, we have discounted this option due to the significant disadvantages.

**Advantages**

- This would allow more people aged 18-39 to vote and slightly reduce the percentage of those aged 60+ included in the voting.

**Disadvantages**

- Usually this would be done face to face. In the current Coronavirus situation where this would need to be done online, it would be very difficult to get the views of this sector of the population using a reliable method. Although they're an age group most likely to be online, using an online method to gather extra votes would be more open to people voting more than once or voting from outside of Exmouth. The method we used before to conduct a reliable online vote made sure that everyone could only vote once, rather than vote multiple times, and also made sure that everyone that voted lived within Exmouth. This time we would need to use a method that would mean everyone could only vote once, they lived within Exmouth, and were aged 18-39 – this would be more complicated. In addition, these votes would need to be gathered from the Town Ward if possible.

- As well as reducing the percentage of those aged 60+ involved in the voting to make the results more representative of Exmouth as a whole, it would also reduce the percentages of those aged under 18 involved in the voting.
- This method would take quite a while to devise and carry out.

## 2. Weighting the data

To improve the issue of those aged 18-39 being under-represented in the voting and those aged over 60 being over-represented, we could have weighted the data, according to consultation best practice.

This is a technique used to get accurate levels of representation of certain groups in Exmouth. Data for under-represented age groups would be given more or less weight to make the sample a better representation of the actual population..

We have discounted this option due to the significant disadvantages below.

**Advantages**

- This would make sure that each age group is represented in more similar proportions of the age groups actually within Exmouth, although not the same.
- We wouldn't need to gather in any further votes, so it would be able to be done fairly quickly.

**Disadvantages**

- As our source data hasn't recorded which age group within a household multiple age range response against which project voted for, we can't be 100% sure which age ranges we need to weight.
- The best way to get votes from different age groups in the current climate in a way we could make sure everyone that voted lived in Exmouth and didn't vote multiple times involved asking households to submit one voting form either from one person or multiple people in their household. Weighting can only be performed on the voting forms submitted by one age group, it can't be done on the 284 forms submitted by multiple age groups. These forms would still have been included but wouldn't be weighted, regardless of the age groups of people that voted using it. So although this would make the age groups in the same proportions as exist in Exmouth for those where only one age group voted so would be improved, it wouldn't for those where more than one age group voted. So age groups would be better represented, but would still not be in the same proportions as within the population of Exmouth.
- Multiple people could be responding using one form, but be from one age group or different age groups. Weighting could not account for this, as its information we do not know.
- It doesn't give any more people the opportunity to vote.
- As we would be weighting it by more than one question (see Ward analysis below), this process is more complicated and the weighting would have to be carried out by an external company that can do this, this would cost £270.