

# EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

## Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party

Notes of the meeting held at 3pm on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021 held remotely via Zoom

### Present

|  |    |                                |
|--|----|--------------------------------|
| Councillor Tim Dumper                    | TD | Exmouth Town Council (Chair)   |
| Councillor Frank Cullis                  | FC | Exmouth Town Council           |
| Councillor Olly Davey                    | OD | Exmouth Town Council           |
| Councillor Steve Gazzard<br>(Ex-officio) | SG | Exmouth Town Council           |
| Councillor Mike Rosser                   | MR | Exmouth Town Council           |
| Lisa Bowman                              | LB | Exmouth Town Council Officer   |
| Jennifer Wellington                      | JW | Exmouth Town Council Notetaker |
| Nicky Nicholls                           | NN | Transition Exmouth Chair       |

### Apologies

|                          |    |                      |
|--------------------------|----|----------------------|
| Councillor Brian Bailey* | BB | Exmouth Town Council |
|--------------------------|----|----------------------|

\*Apologies given after the meeting had started.

#### 1. Welcome

TD welcomed members to the meeting.

#### 2. Approval of previous meeting notes and matters arising

The notes of the previous meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021 were approved.

#### 3. Matters arising

##### Electric car safety

TD investigated the concerns raised by SG on the safety of electric cars. It seems that safety legislation was passed in July 2019 for new, fully electric vehicles of 4 wheels or more, with further legislation for new hybrid vehicles to be passed in July 2021.

##### Response to the Interim Devon Carbon Plan consultation

TD updated members that the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) did not respond to the Interim Devon Carbon Plan on behalf of the sector. This was due to a

lack of resources, but TD was advised that DALC send a representative to the Devon Climate Emergency Group meetings.

#### Small grants information

Information on small grants was circulated to NN which she is collating to look at what Transition Exmouth could apply for.

#### RideOn

JW had been in touch with RideOn and the Town Council plan to launch a bicycle collection scheme from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. Collections will be on an ad-hoc basis, with Exmouth Town Council's (ETC) Town Maintenance Operatives collecting the bicycles, putting them into storage and the Town Council arranging to deliver them to RideOn once the storage area is full (estimated 6 bicycles per delivery).

RideOn will be producing promotional material for this scheme.

#### Tree Task and Finish Forum (TAFF)

MR highlighted that the explanation of the Tree TAFF was not clear in the previous Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party notes from 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

**Action: JW and LB to amend the reference that *the Tree TAFF meeting on a 6-month basis to the Tree TAFF will meet monthly for a duration of 6-months.***

#### East Devon District Council (EDDC) Asset Management Forum

OD had asked Tim Childs, EDDC, before the Asset Management Forum, for an update on the water bottle filling stations project. He explained how the Heads of Terms have been agreed but EDDC are waiting for the installation company to send details to them of how the stations will be installed. There are also some legal documents with the EDDC Legal Team.

**Action: OD to contact the Deputy Town Clerk and update her on his conversation with Tim Childs.**

In addition, SG added that the EDDC Cabinet meeting will be presented with a paper on electric charging points as a company appears keen to install car charging points at no charge to the authority.

### **4. Update against the 10-point plan**

Members discussed the 10-point plan, written in collaboration with Transition Exmouth, and what actions have been achieved to date:

1. *ETC to partner with Transition Exmouth on a bid to the Lottery Climate Action Fund to create an ECO / Community Hub for Exmouth in the town centre:* Transition Exmouth had put in a bid for funding to the National Lottery but were unsuccessful.  
LB reported that she believed that another Devon town's local community radio station had set-up an eco-hub recently but had run into problems because of the Coronavirus pandemic / income difficulties and that issues

regarding ongoing revenue costs needed to be factored into any aspirations to set up a hub. LB confirmed that the Meeting Street building could still be an option, but it is still in the process of being transferred back to Devon County Council (DCC).

**Action: LB to follow-up on the progress of the Meeting Street premises.**

2. *ETC to plant trees on all “unowned” patches of land, plant wildflowers for pollinators and stop all use of pesticides and herbicides on council property and use only organic fertilisers:*

Using the Pear Mapping software, it is possible to identify patches of land in Exmouth that do not appear to have land titles allocated to them so could potentially be areas that could be investigated for tree planting. However, the time needed to find out if these areas are really unowned pieces of land would not be a cost-effective exercise. In addition, the work of the Tree TAFF, which includes partnership working with landowners (i.e. EDDC), has been identified as a better way forward with regards to planting trees.

Wildflower planting is being pushed by Wild Exmouth, with other grounds maintenance issues i.e. good longer-term pollinator planting and drought-resistance plants to conserve water, being investigated in-house through the Town Maintenance Overview Working Party (input from this meeting would be welcomed).

3. *ETC to create a website in partnership with Transition Exmouth giving information on how people can tackle climate change as individuals - and link to this in the footer of all ETC emails, and on all ETC publications:*

The ‘Our Place, Our Planet’ (OPOP) website is now up and running, with a link to it through ETC’s staff email signatures and through ETC’s website and social media channels. LB has also had an article regarding the OPOP website and partnership working with Transition Exmouth published in the national Clerk’s magazine.

4. *ETC to switch to a renewable energy supplier in all Council buildings, and lobby EDDC and DCC to do the same:*

The energy supply at Gorfin Hall and the Tourist Information Service office is switching to renewable energy from September 2021. This switch will also take advantage of the feed-in tariff from the solar panels installed at Gorfin Hall.

EDDC buildings are already powered by renewable energy.

5. *ETC to support the Transition Exmouth events programme (to run from April to September 2020), starting with an Energy Advice Clinic in the Town Hall:*

The ongoing Coronavirus pandemic has delayed events but ETC and Transition Exmouth plan to pick up and support events where possible when restrictions relax.

6. *ETC to create a Bike Pool for use with the Bikeability programme in Exmouth primary schools, so that every child has access to a suitable bike. Bikes to be reclaimed and refurbished (explore partnership with Ride-on, who repair bikes for re-use in Exeter):*

The Bikeability event has not been able to proceed yet due to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic but the collections with RideOn will begin from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

**Action: JW/LB to investigate using RideOn's services to refurbish bicycles.**

7. *ETC to run Environmental Days for all schools and adults to expand on their excellent first conference in 2019:*

It is unlikely that ETC will run an Environmental Day this year but there may be scope to run something in 2022.

8. *ETC to work with EDDC to install drinking water fountains throughout town – railway station, Strand and two along beach:*

The delays with proceeding with this project were discussed during Matters Arising.

9. *ETC to commit to use only Organic, Fairtrade products in all Council hospitality and catering:*

Fairtrade products are already being used within the Town Council due to it being a contingent requirement for Fair Trade status that the Town Council passes a resolution supporting Fairtrade, and agreeing to serve Fairtrade products (for example, in meetings, offices and canteens).

However, Fairtrade food and drink options will need to be investigated for other Town Council events, such as the Mayor's charity event or the Mayor's Civic Service. It is important to note that the charity event has a price-point and using local products with lower food miles may be the way forward in this instance.

10. *ETC to work with Transition Exmouth and local bike shops to provide subsidised electric bike hire:*

OD explained how he has been speaking with Co Cars and EDDC to install electric car charging points. EDDC has also expressed an interest in Co Bikes, with initial ideas to install a bicycle point in between the Sports Centre and train station.

SG congratulated TE and ETC on what they have achieved in a challenging year.

TD endorsed SG's congratulations and added his thanks to LB for her hard work and Clerk's magazine article.

## **5. Update against Environmental Audit**

LB explained how the timing of planning to go back to the office would be a good time to look at the areas we have control over, as identified in the Environmental Audit, to help implement change i.e. paper usage and staff and Councillors travelling to work and meetings.

A DCC newsletter emailed to LB contained information regarding a new tool to calculate the emissions of communities, developed by the University of Exeter.

**Action: LB to forward this newsletter to NN to use.**

## **6. Press release on the Town Council's progress and future intentions**

As a lot of the current 10-point plan actions had been achieved (where possible), members felt that creating a new 10-point plan would be beneficial.

As the Annual Town Meeting has been postponed due to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, a press release of what the Town Council has achieved and its future intentions could be published in the local press so that members of the public can understand what the Town Council has been doing with regards to the climate emergency.

A suggestion of a page on the ETC website for capturing members of the public's ideas could be a way to influence future intentions.

RideOn gifted to the Town Council a free Dr. Bike maintenance session, for up to 11 bicycles, as a way of thanks for setting up a bicycle collection. It was suggested that the 11 spaces could be used as a way of promoting engagement between the Council and the public. The spaces available could be given away as prizes for those who suggested ideas for the Town Council to consider.

**Action: LB and TD to look at the Environmental Audit and draft some targets or policies which will be brought back to the Working Party for discussion.**

## **7. To receive an update from Transition Exmouth**

NN provided the following update on behalf of Transition Exmouth:

- The Library of Things project is processing well with 25 volunteers signed up to help. Coronavirus permitting, it is hoped that the Library will be opened early Summer 2021 at Littlemead Church.  
Laptops are currently being set-up along with a barcode system. Soon, a call for items will be published to help stock the library.
- Additionally, the eCargo Bike delivery project, in partnership with Exmouth Cycles, is progressing well. A bike has now been branded and the service will be launching soon.  
20 businesses in Exmouth are keen to be involved in the pilot and the software for the delivery system is being worked on.

Money from National Transition grants has been used to set-up the foundations of this project. However, further financial support is needed for promoting the service and other associated costs.

**Action: NN to send an invoice to ETC to claim back the costs associated with this project.**

- Promoting the OPOP website, via branded shopping bags that live in Exmouth and circulate around the town for reuse and sharing, was discussed. Ensuring the bags were made ethically is a must and an idea that the bags are all different and hand-made by local people was put forward. In addition, sending out promotional bookmarks in primary school children's bookbags is also being considered. NN estimates that 5,000 bookmarks will cost around £300 to produce. LB suggested that the bookmarks could also link to Exmouth Library's summer reading challenge. A social media event and press release in the local press is another suggestion to promote the OPOP website to the wider Exmouth community. It is hoped that any promotion will be scheduled for July 2021, with the potential for weekly updates throughout the month.
- SG raised that if he can help with any promotion of Transition Exmouth's events as Mayor of Exmouth to please contact JW.
- TD reminded members that Catherine Causley had offered a free training session which would cover some of the issues relating to the climate emergency and steps for Councillors to consider.

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

##### HR Group/Full Council

At the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 Full Council meeting it was agreed that ETC employ two new members of staff; one full-time and one part-time.

The full-time position will be for a Community Projects Officer working on a range of ETC projects, including some of the aspirations of the Exmouth Neighbourhood Plan.

The part-time position will focus on the climate and ecological emergency as well as community resilience.

Both positions will be on a 12-month fixed term basis initially with the job specifications currently being written to be approved by the HR group.

## 9. Any other business

### EDDC household recycling rates

For the members information, EDDC published a press release stating that the recycling rates in EDDC are tenth highest in England. TD added that EDDC's waste per household amount is the lowest in England also.

OD wished to pass on his congratulations to EDDC.

### Devon Community Together Climate Emergency Response Support Network

LB informed members that she had signed up for Devon Community Together Climate Emergency Response Support Network.

### DCC Waste and Resource Strategy Document consultation

The consultation for the review of the DCC Waste and Resource Strategy runs from Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March to Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

**Action: LB and TD to draft a response for the Working Party to discuss at the next meeting.**

## 10. Date of future meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for the 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 at 3pm via Zoom.

The meeting finished at 16.50pm.