

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party

Notes of the meeting held at 3pm on Tuesday 11th May 2021 held remotely via Zoom

Present

Councillor Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor Andrew Toyne	AT	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Brian Bailey	BB	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Frank Cullis	FC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Mike Rosser	MR	Exmouth Town Council
Nicky Nicholls	NN	Transition Exmouth Chair
Lisa Bowman	LB	Exmouth Town Council Officer
Jennifer Wellington	JW	Exmouth Town Council Notetaker

Apologies

Councillor Steve Gazzard (Ex-officio)	SG	Exmouth Town Council
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1. Welcome and apologies

TD welcomed members to the meeting and apologies were noted.

2. Election of Chair

TD was nominated by FC, seconded by OD, to be re-elected as Chair of this working party. No further nominations were received. Members were asked to vote, and TD was duly elected as Chair.

3. Approval of previous meeting notes and matters arising

The notes of the previous meeting held on the 13th April 2021 were approved.

Update on Meeting Street

LB updated members that Devon County Council (DCC) have decided to use the Meeting Street facility for their own purposes. This means that the potential to acquire the building and use it as a community Eco Hub has gone.

The Town Council had not earmarked any funds for the Meeting Street building as it was hoped that CIL funds could be used to acquire it as a facility for the community. Money has been accrued by the Town Council in line with its aspiration to purchase a freehold Council building and LB had investigated the possibility of leasing the old Post Office building in the Magnolia Centre, which is now for sale, in this context. However, this was deemed unsuitable for the Town Council's purposes and there are no other properties currently in the pipeline for investigation.

Members were reminded that any Eco Hub would need to have revenue plans in place to covering the ongoing costs.

Bike Collection

The bike collection scheme, in collaboration with Ride On, was launched in April 2021 and has been very successful. Around 30 bikes have been collected so far, with 5 already sold on by Ride On. Overall, the quality of the bikes collected has been good.

Ride On are hoping to promote the collaboration now the purdah period has ended.

The Town Maintenance Team usually collect any bikes on a Friday morning and a member of the team has volunteered to deliver them to Ride On once a full vanload has been collected (the first delivery was undertaken by an external removal company due to the amount that was collected when the scheme first started).

Due to the success of the collections so far, Ride On have offered the Town Council a second Dr. Bike session.

Co-bikes

OD updated members that the land allocated for the Co-bikes stand to the side of the pumping station control box outside of the LED Sports Centre, is East Devon District Council (EDDC) land and not DCC's as previously thought.

EDDC has started to acquire estimates for the ground works and plan to request financial support from the Town Council in due course.

eCargo Bike Project

TD updated members that the Transition Exmouth eCargo bike project has been progressing well, but volunteers have found the bike difficult to ride.

Environment Bill

Due to the other work pressures, LB explained that she had not yet completed the actions from the previous meeting in relation to the Environment Bill but hopes to complete them this week.

Members discussed the resistance of some Councillors to support the Bill at the Annual Town Council meeting. It appeared the main concern of those Councillors related to the following:

- The use of citizen assemblies
- The perceived link to Extinction Rebellion
- The cost of implementing various environmental actions

Members also expressed surprise that this Bill created such a controversial discussion at the Annual Town Council meeting as both DCC and EDDC support the Bill.

Water bottle refilling project

MR highlighted his frustration at the lack of coherent working between the three councils that cover Exmouth (DCC, EDDC and the Town Council). He felt that both

EDDC and DCC were creating barriers for the Town Council to complete the water bottle refilling project.

LB updated members that the Deputy Town Clerk has contacted DCC to question why they signed the Heads of Terms on the basis of a licence to use the site outside of the train station, but are now asking for a lease. No reply has yet been received from DCC.

It was noted that the Terms of Reference state that this working party would “*work with higher tier local authorities and DALC to deliver this plan through all relevant means.*” However, the reality of working with EDDC and DCC to deliver the water refill station project (as well as the beach wheelchair project) had been significant delays due to ongoing legal issues relating to land ownership. It was felt that there was an unnecessary amount of red tape which was hindering progress of this and other Town Council led projects and that officers at District and County level need to be authorised and given a degree of autonomy to approve projects without the need for legal support.

It was subsequently proposed by MR, seconded by FC, that the Town Council should write to both the Leader of DCC and the Leader of EDDC to highlight the ongoing issues of landownership and request greater collaboration for this and future projects, especially in the context of initiatives which support the respective Councils’ declaration of a Climate Emergency.

Mini-forest planting

BB explained that he had spoken with Mark Willams at EDDC regarding planting mini-forests in Exmouth. Mark seemed positive about the idea, with the potential of making this an EDDC project with Town Council support.

Action: To raise this at the next Tree TAFF meeting, to be arranged, to ensure no duplication of work across working parties.

4. To discuss potential project(s) for submission to the UK Community Renewal Fund

The UK Community Renewal Fund is the UK’s response to the previous EU funding. It appears that the fund is for larger projects, applied for by district councils. However, it is hoped that an Eco Hub project may qualify. Members were updated that Catherine Causley has been in contact with EDDC regarding this, but no further update could be provided at this stage.

The closing date for applying for this fund is May 19th 2021.

5. To receive an update from Transition Exmouth

NN updated members on the following from Transition Exmouth:

- eCargo Bike Delivery Project – this project has been progressing well, but more volunteers are needed to ride the bike. Deliveroo are hoping to come to

Exmouth, so Transition Exmouth will wait to see if this service becomes a competitor to the eCargo bike delivery or whether both services can coexist.

- Library of Things – the library is coming together well, with items being collected and the I.T software now in place. It is hoped the library will open in June 2021.
- The 'Our Place, Our Planet' website is getting enquires from other towns to join.
- There has been a positive rise in the amount of people litter picking.
- The Thelma Hulbert Gallery appears to be hosting a climate event at Ocean in June 2021. Transition Exmouth had written to the gallery to ask if they wanted to work together, but no response has been received yet. JWe sent a link to the event to members during the meeting.

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

No updates were given.

7. Any other business

LB circulated DCC's email regarding the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership's citizen's assembly to all Councillors last week and briefly explained the content of the email to members.

Further information on the citizen's assembly can be found on the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership's website.

8. Date of future meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for the 8th June 2021 at 3pm via Zoom.

The meeting finished at 16:23pm.