

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party

Notes of the meeting held at 3pm on Wednesday 13th October 2021 held remotely via Zoom

Present

Councillor Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Mike Rosser	MR	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Andrew Colman	AC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Andrew Toyne	AT	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Frank Cullis	FC	Exmouth Town Council
Nicky Nicholls	NN	Transition Exmouth Chair
Carol Jay	CJ	Transition Exmouth
Lisa Bowman	LB	Exmouth Town Council Officer
Catherine Causley	CC	East Devon District Council Officer

1. Welcome and apologies

TD welcomed members to the meeting and apologies were noted.

2. Approval of previous meeting notes and matters arising

The notes of the previous meeting were proposed for approval by OD, seconded by AT and approved by all.

3. E-cargo bike status update - CJ

CJ gave an update on the recent e-cargo bike Crowdfunder appeal. The Town Council's eleventh-hour contribution of £1000 meant that Transition Exmouth reached its milestone / target two and were eligible for £1500 match funding from DCC. Other pledges and private donations subsequently allowed TE to reach milestone three @ £5000 and this was matched by £5000 from DCC which is reflected on the Crowdfunder website. An approach has also been made to EDDC for more match funding which might be able to cover costs for storage and charging points. CC confirmed that EDDC was helping with some of the investigations / initial drawings for these aspects and it was noted that a decision on funding support is due by October 19th. The funds raised by Crowdfunder will fund two e-cargo bikes. The proposal is to use the Love Topsham model with the bikes hired out by members via a centralised booking process with each participating business required to provide their own rider and insurance. CJ further explained that the model needed to be sustainable and not too onerous on the TE volunteers to administer.

4. Update on ECO hub idea on site of Imperial Recreation toilets – Call of Nature – NN

Nicky Nichols had presented a proposal to Full Council in September 2021 which focussed on the scope to adopt the Imperial Recreation Ground toilets and develop them as an ECO hub in the context of East Devon District Council's review of public toilets. A discussion ensued about the scope to work up a proposal for the project in advance of the results of the public toilet consultation. It was decided to wait until the results are known but that some scoping work could be done in the meantime. There was broad support for the idea of an ECO hub to be funded via CIL funds regardless of the outcome of the public toilet review. LB cautioned members on the need to consider ongoing revenue costs for any associated build project.

5. Water refill stations

An update was requested by TD in respect of the water refill stations. Members again expressed frustrations at the delays, with this project attributable to the involvement of lawyers, but it was noted that two of the refill stations are now progressing. CC confirmed that she had investigated the issues at EDDC around the delays to the project but, due to conflicting accounts of what had happened, felt that she could not add any further value to the process and would be stepping away.

6. DALC AGM and Conference

TD congratulated BB on his recent election to the DALC board. It was noted that LB and Councillor Steve Gazzard also represent ETC on DALC's Larger Councils Committee and that TD represents ETC on DALC's County Committee.

TD has also recently been confirmed as Chair of DALC'S re-launched Climate and Ecological Emergency TAFF with the aim of sharing best practice with other town and parish councils.

Thanks were expressed to the Deputy Clerk, Chetna Jones, for her excellent presentation at the recent DALC conference relating to the Town Council's experience of responding to the climate and ecological emergency.

CJ enquired about the scope to promote the OPOP website more widely and also a status update for the plans to recruit a climate and ecological emergency officer for the Town Council. It was noted that the OPOP website has been promoted in various ways, including the national, SLCC Clerk's magazine and various DALC networking events; also that the job specification for a new officer is in hand but other pressures have inevitably led to a delay in progressing the recruitment.

7. Tree enforcement

It was noted that FC had recently questioned via the Planning Committee whether authorised tree works to protected trees are checked by EDDC's tree officers. A discussion ensued about capacity issues and the role of EDDC in maintaining EDDC's tree stock. Several suggestions were made regarding options for community involvement /monitoring, including the use of Councillors, volunteers and drones, but

it was accepted that the Town Council does not have any enforcement powers in this area.

8. Woodland Trust proposal on outskirts of Exmouth

TD and FC reported that they had recently responded to an invitation by the Woodland Trust to attend a site visit on the outskirts of Exmouth for a potential land acquisition by the Trust. No further updates on the status of the project were available. FC also highlighted that one of the shortlisted companies for the Earth Shot prize (Restor) provided satellite mapping which would be invaluable in identifying potential land.

9. Jane Habermehl's Tree Planting initiative with schools

TD provided a status update report on Jane Habermehl's tree planting project with various Exmouth primary schools. Planting dates are proposed for November / December. The EDDC countryside team are involved in training the volunteers and with educational input and donations have been received from Clinton Devon and Saving Devon's Treescapes Project.

Jane Habermehl had requested £62.65 for the purchase of seven trees from the Woodland Trust and £190 for tree protectors for Phear Park and Moorfield Road. It was proposed by TD, seconded by OD and the request was unanimously agreed.

It was also noted that ETC would be assisting with DBS checks for the volunteers and that there would be a modest cost associated with this process, which LB would confirm by email.

10. Outside Bodies / Plastic Free Exmouth

TD reported that there had recently been a successful plastic free festival at Sideshore with stalls. The event had resulted in several new applications to Transition Exmouth. TD had also spoken to Nick Sherman at the event regarding the status of Plastic Free Exmouth - PFE is organising beach clearing events and informal meetings are being at The Point, which TD will be attending as the ETC representative. Emma Carnell is the new convenor/ Chair of the Group and is focussed on re-booting Exmouth as a Plastic free community.

11. AOB

OD reported that he is trying to discourage the Allotment Association from selling peat compost and other environmentally harmful products in its onsite shops.

COP 26 – CJ reported that Extinction Rebellion are hosting a beach picnic on 23rd October (open to all) to support a positive outcome from COP 26. Further details to follow for ETC to help promote.

Members discussed the recent announcement that a major music festival has been granted permission for Sept 2022 on the Imperial Recreation Ground. Various concerns were raised regarding the environmental and ecological impact of such an event and it was agreed that LB will circulate details of the event consultation to members so that they can make their views known to the EDDC events team.

Next meeting is scheduled for 7th December, 2021 @ 3pm.