

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Exmouth Transport Partnership

Notes of the Zoom meeting held at 10am on Tuesday 12th October 2021

Present

Tim Dumper	TD	ETC councillor, Chair
Lisa Bowman	LB	ETC Town Clerk
Pauline Stott	PS	ETC councillor
David Poor	DP	ETC councillor
Eileen Beech	EB	ETC councillor
Brian Bailey	BB	ETC Councillor
Olly Davey	OD	ETC Councillor
Dave Ovenden	DO	DCC Public Transport
Stuart Coles	SC	DCC Highways
Tony Jackson	TJ	ALRUG (Avocet Line Rail Users' Group)
Jan Gannaway	JG	Active Travel Exmouth, & Sustrans
John Petty	JP	Active Travel Exmouth, & Exmouth Community Association
Tim Clatworthy	TC	ETC Receptionist/Administrator, notetaker

Apologies

George Shorters	GS	Exmouth Taxis Association
John Colby		ALRUG
Lewis Ward	LW	GWR
Wendy Slater	WS	Operations Manager, Stagecoach South West
David Whiteway		GWR

1. Welcome, introduction and apologies

2. To approve the notes of previous meeting of 22nd June 2021

EB proposed and PS seconded the accuracy of these notes.

3. Matters arising from previous meeting

- BB reported seeing three buses at a time parked in the LED bus-stop, unmanned for longer than legally allowed.
- PS noted a reduction in the number of buses taking short cuts along Featherbed Lane.

4. To note the minutes of the East Devon Highways and Traffic Orders Committee – Friday 23rd July 2021 at 10.30am

<https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=179&MId=4221&Ver=4>

- The suitability of the locations selected for the EV charging points – St Andrews Road and Halsdon Road – was discussed. A site by LED/the railway station was suggested for consideration, unfortunately too late for the consultation which is now ended. The point of central locations for public EV charging is that they are in areas with few drives and little off-road parking, where residents would be unable to have their own accessible chargers. There was concern that we should not allow a situation to develop where less well-off people could not afford to take environmentally friendly actions.
- It was pointed out that EVs will become cheaper in time and that with the phasing-out of petrol and diesel engines from 2030, EV charging points will be very much in demand and probably very attractive to B&B customers in St Andrews Road and may be needed along the whole length of the road (and others) in the near future.

- c) Signposting was recommended for EV charging points as many users could be tourists and unfamiliar with Exmouth.
- d) JG asked that the alternative system of charging via existing lamp columns (already in use in London and Germany), be kept in mind for the future, though recognising the problem that many Exmouth lamp columns are at the back of pavements (not on the edge of the roads), which would necessitate cables trailing across pavements.
- **Action: LB to ask DCC's Andy Ware to see if he has had any involvement in assessing the local scope for this alternative.**

5. Update on Bus Shelter Improvements - Fernbank

The two shelters for The Parade are expected to be installed mid-November. The installations will take place over 4 days.

- **Action: LB to check with Mark Phillips that the necessary permissions to rebuild the bus shelters are already in place.**

6. Stakeholder Reports:

a) EDDC Car/Cycle Parks and Electric Charging Points

There was no EDDC representation at this meeting, nor any update.

b) Stagecoach

There was no Stagecoach representation at this meeting, nor any update. However, TD has been in contact with WS, who is rearranging her meetings so as to be able to attend ETP in future.

c) DCC Highways – SC

- a) Recent reports of standing water at the junction of Salterton Road with the newly widened entrance to Liverton Business Park have been noted by DCC's engineering department.
- b) Japanese Knotweed: Not currently treated by DCC due to budget cuts, but this issue is now the responsibility of ETC's Town Maintenance c/o Deputy Town Clerk, Chetna Jones.
- c) Recurrent pooling at junctions with dropped kerbs, particularly in Town Ward, e.g. by the Park Hotel, irritating wheelchair users. SC asked that we provide photos & precise locations for DCC to deal with them on an individual basis. This would preferably be done via the Report It function on their website.

d) DCC Public Transport – Dave Ovenden

- 1) Update on behalf of Stagecoach:
During the current driver shortage, the Exeter-Exmouth 57 bus service is being reduced temporarily to half-hourly, and an updated timetable has been produced.
- 2) Bus Strategy:
The Covid bus services support grant has ended but other funding is available till March 2022. As part of the BSIP the government is giving £3billion nationally to improve bus services & infrastructure. ETC will be included in full public consultation on BSIP. DCC will know how much funding they have been awarded some time this winter.

Additional proposal details:

- a) The 'East of Exeter' proposal is to provide direct commuter-friendly services to Exeter's eastern industrial areas and the Science Park via Clyst St George and possibly Sowton.
- b) The 157 Exmouth-Sidmouth service is to run 7 days a week, all year, starting this year.
- c) See DO's attached Powerpoint slides for fuller information.

Members' comments:

- a) Re-routing services via the rear of the railway station: This has been discussed at many previous meetings within the topic of the long-desired ITI (Integrated Transport Interchange), but the principal challenges for bus operators continue to be the existing traffic layout and the extra costs in fuel and journey times this would entail. It was hoped that with a successful levelling-up bid this issue could be addressed anew.
 - b) Population over 500: How is this defined? Could this include a 'hamlet' strung along a road rather than a compact cluster?
 - c) More advertising of bus apps in bus shelters would be helpful.
 - d) A direct Exmouth-Honiton link, being the two largest towns in East Devon, especially as a lot of Exmouth families get rehoused in Honiton.
 - e) To enhance the 56 service along the whole length of its route, i.e. to include the Woodbury section, which currently has only an hourly service.
 - f) More Exmouth-Sidmouth buses when the Sidmouth Festival is on. Services don't seem to be responsive to increases in need. DO suggested we raise this with Stagecoach at the next ETP meeting.
 - g) DCC to insist that Stagecoach's 6-weekly maintenance schedule includes checking emissions, as these have been noted recently to be particularly foul.
 - h) LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) vehicles – Reading Unitary Council has been running these successfully for 5 years. Cheaper than diesel and the engines last longer.
 - **Action: DO to refer suggestions (f) and (g) to DCC colleagues.**
 - i) Automatic shut-off and start-up; the worst emissions occur when the motor is idling. Upgraded starter motors and higher capacity batteries may be needed, but these can be fitted now, no need to wait years for hydrogen motors to be ready. DO: Newer buses in Exeter have this technology already, but they are not used on Exmouth services.
 - **Action: DO to enquire whether it is feasible to retrofit this technology into older buses.**
- e) **GWR – LW**
LW was unable to attend this meeting but has provided the update attached.
- f) **ALRUG – TJ**
Reliability has improved but there have been too many cases of short-formed trains, a result of the slow cascade, and it will still be some months before we see progress here.
 - **Action: TJ to get an update on the fleet from LW and share it with ETP members.** Some members expressed their concern over (a) how few passengers wore masks even on trains overcrowded due to cancellations and (b) the high cost of fares.
- g) **Active Travel – JG JP OD**
 - **Action: JG to contact Andrew Ennis for an update on cycle parking**, as it is increasingly difficult to find places, which are greatly needed, especially near Ocean. PS wondered if funding for bike stands might be available from:
<https://www.devon.gov.uk/communities/what-can-be-applied-for>
- a) Withycombe Village Road has become a short cut for HGVs, perhaps on SatNav's recommendation due to road works on Salterton Road. However there are two schools on this road and there was serious concern over (a) diesel air pollution and (b) pupils' safety.
 - b) Greater consideration is urgently needed for the safety of cyclists along Dinan Way, particularly where motorists rush to get in front of cyclists in advance of traffic islands.

Planning for the extension should take into account the current problems with the existing Dinan Way, which could be addressed now and with relatively little outlay.

- c) The current lack of informal, helpful dialogue with appropriate DCC officers to progress sustainable transport was regretted. TD thought this was likely a result of reduced funding, and the loss of a DCC technical representative on ETP. SC suggested Active Travel contact Jamie Hulland, Sustainable Travel Manager.
- **Action: ETC/LB to contact Jamie Hulland to help share constructive ideas.**
- d) Possible safer cycling routes were discussed for the Hulham Road – Bapton Valley – Withycombe Village Road area. A precise proposal may be accepted by DCC once it has been worked out.
- e) Signs may be needed to remind cyclists to dismount before crossing the Strand.

h) Taxi Operators - GS

GS was unable to attend this meeting but provided the update below:

- a) Taxis are now busy round Exmouth in a pattern very similar to pre-pandemic levels.
- b) There is however a huge shortage of drivers. This is probably related to the current employment situation in the UK but there are specific issues for taxis. Firstly, the wages are generally low and the hours are long (and of course often anti-social). Secondly, it is pricey and time consuming to get your 'taxi badge' from both EDDC and DCC so it is quite a commitment to make. Thirdly, with fuel prices on the rise there is less potential profit and therefore it is less attractive as a possible job.
- c) The zebra crossing by M&S causes big tailbacks both ways at busy times. A pelican crossing would be a better option - and a safer one. (At the time of construction this was refused by DCC on cost grounds; the crossing was controversial, with strong views on both sides of the argument.)

Members suggested closing the crossing and using the underpass, as formerly.

However, the proposal that has been passed to the Levelling-Up Fund is to fill in the underpass.

7. AOB

No further issues were raised.

8. Dates of 2021 meetings: 14th December

The meeting closed at 12 noon.