

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Town Maintenance Overview Working Party

Notes of the meeting held at 10am on Thursday 20th January 2022 via Zoom.

Present

Councillor Ian Kirvan	IK	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor Brian Bailey	BB	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Maddy Chapman	MC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Frank Cullis	FC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Tony Woodward	TW	Exmouth Town Council
Chetna Jones	CJ	Exmouth Town Council
Anna Jones	AJ	Exmouth Town Council

Apologies

Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
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1. Welcome and apologies

IK welcomed members to the meeting and apologies were received as above.

2. To approve the notes of the last meeting

TW proposed, seconded by FC, and it was agreed that members approved the notes of the meeting held on 11th November 2021.

3. Matters arising

Town Maintenance Team Grass Cutting

IK expressed his thanks to the Town Maintenance Team for cutting the verges at Bystock Road, Marley Road and Pines Road. He noted residents' comments that this is the best the verges have looked.

Item 8 of previous meeting: Concorde

TW requested an update on the reinstatement of the Concorde model in the Magnolia Centre. CJ confirmed that the Concorde is still in Exmouth Town Council's compound area. The RAFA Club are struggling with the manpower to reinstate the Concorde, so it will remain at ETC's compound area until they can collect it.

Japanese Knotweed on Marine Way

BB requested an update on the Japanese Knotweed on Marine Way. CJ confirmed that this has been reported to the Environment Agency, and they had advised to contact the local authority. As the land belongs to Devon County Council, ETC has no power to do any enforcing. CJ confirmed that she has made the County

Councillors, Neighbourhood Highways Officers, and the County Ecologist aware and is trying to make as many people as possible aware of the issue.

It was confirmed that whilst DCC are not obliged to remove the Japanese Knotweed, the legislation states that it is an offence to allow the knotweed to spread in the wild. Councillors raised concerns about the possibility of the knotweed spreading, particularly as the bank only has a railing on one side and the other is open. Councillors noted that if the knotweed spreads into gardens, and the property owner could prove it came from the bank on Marine Way, it is open to legal matters. CJ established again that this is not within ETC's remit.

4. To receive an update on Phear Park compound area

CJ provided an update on the Phear Park compound area. EDDC are currently preparing the paperwork and have taken it to the legal team. Additionally, they have visited the site to create a schedule of condition to attach to the formal lease. CJ has received no other notification.

There was discussion amongst Councillors as to whether CJ would contact Michelmores if there were any changes to the lease, which CJ agreed, and what is intended to be done about the gates. CJ confirmed that, as previously agreed, ETC will carry out minimal work on the compound, but will replace the gates to ensure security. When queried about finding quotes for the gates, CJ explained that she will wait until she has received the paperwork before getting quotes, as they are usually only valid for thirty days.

5. To review the latest bus shelter schedule of condition list and agree any remedial work

CJ referred Councillors to the bus shelter condition list, distributed prior to the meeting. She explained that the Town Maintenance Team conducted work on the bus shelters before Christmas and cleaned the shelters according to the list that was distributed. Some shelters are in particularly bad condition, especially where the paint is peeling, and CJ proposed discussing whether the Town Maintenance Team should build in time to strip, sand and repaint them in the coming months. It was made clear that the sole purpose of this working party is to look at the cleaning of the bus shelters and not other aspects.

CJ explained that IK has collected information on some bus shelters not included on the list, which are DCC provided. If these assets are handed over to us, then we will be looking after them as well.

There was a discussion around bus shelter maintenance and potential replacement, including:

- BB suggested installing advertisement posters in the bus shelters. CJ confirmed that in some bus shelters there are big advertisement boards with

items from the Exmouth Festival, however noted that this was quite expensive, so money would need to be found before proceeding with this. It was later suggested that local businesses could sponsor a bus shelter to use for advertising, which could help pay for maintenance of the shelter.

- TW raised the issue of the damaged bus shelter opposite Morven Drive, which appears to have been hit by a vehicle. CJ confirmed that ETC were aware of the incident. ETC staff have visited the site to ensure the bus shelter was safe and established that the police had been informed of the incident. CJ confirmed that it was her understanding that a crime reference number was needed to proceed with an insurance claim.
- It was suggested that unused shelters in sound structural condition could replace other shelters in bad condition, however it was noted that this would cost thousands of pounds and is too expensive.
- Councillors raised the issue of bus shelters put in Brixington by DCC Councillors, however these were installed with no maintenance package or agreement to go with them.
- It was suggested that the Town Council could approach Stagecoach, the bus operators, for funding to replace the bus shelters, however it was noted that they do not directly fund bus shelter maintenance or replacement. It was also noted that whilst Fernbank do this on a piecemeal basis, the revenue generated and used to help with this was on the decline.
- FC suggested researching sustainable transport grants to help fund refurbishment or replacement of bus shelters. OD further suggested looking into using CIL funding as the bus shelters may be categorised as infrastructure. It was agreed that this will be raised at the next Exmouth Transport Partnership meeting to be investigated.
- IK raised the issue of the electrical supplies in some bus shelters. As the electrical boxes in the shelters are rusting through, there is a potential safety hazard if the electrical supplies are still connected. CJ confirmed that ETC do not pay electricity bills for the bus shelters, but is not certain as to whether this is because there is no connected electricity supply or if someone else pays for the electricity.
- MC suggested approaching the Men's Shed to see if they would like to help with fixing some of the shelters. They have previously repaired a noticeboard in Brixington Parade in exchange for paying for materials.
- CJ identified twelve non-EDDC bus shelters that need refurbishing and four marked up as EDDC bus shelters. There was discussion as to whether Councillors felt the Town Council should refurbish EDDC bus shelters despite

not owning them, and whether ETC should try to get these bus shelters handed over to them. TW proposed, seconded by IK, and agreed by all members that ETC's Town Maintenance Team will start by cleaning the twelve bus shelters identified as needing repainting that are owned by ETC and ask EDDC's Streetscene to clean theirs, to be reviewed later.

ACTION: IK to raise the issue of bus shelter replacement and funding for this at the Exmouth Transport Partnership meeting.

ACTION: Town Maintenance Team to start cleaning, stripping, sanding and repainting the ETC owned bus shelters, and CJ to ask Streetscene to clean the EDDC bus shelters. The issue of EDDC bus shelters will be reviewed later.

6. To review the SLA with EDDC for grass cutting (to follow) following a meeting with Streetscene (proposed at the last Working Party meeting) and agree a recommendation to be approved by the Town Council

IK thanked CJ for all the work that has gone into creating the SLA. CJ noted the change of leadership at Streetscene and gave credit to the new manager, who has invested a lot of time into drawing up the SLA.

CJ explained that the SLA outlines a formal agreement of grass cutting, including listing the roads and frequency of cuts (which can be seen in the SLA spreadsheet). CJ confirmed that the contract is not fixed for any length of term, and although the price has increased from the previous agreement there was more control of the proposed work. She asked Councillors to discuss whether they felt the list of street names is appropriate and whether they are happy with the frequency of cut and strimming.

There was some discussion around the SLA grass cutting contract, including:

- Councillors discussed the breakdown of the cost of the SLA. CJ confirmed the total cost of the SLA included both the grass cutting broken down by square metres and frequency of cut and four months of winter work, but not individually. IK emphasised the fact that now there is a formal SLA, ETC know what is expected from this service as grass cutting is specified to take place a minimum of six times a year depending on weather and includes strimming around road signs and street furniture.
- It was noted that Councillors should take care not to pay for grass cutting where EDDC and DCC should be paying for it. It was agreed that ETC should continue to hold DCC to account regarding the land they should be maintaining.
- FC queried whether we have updated our digital maps to reflect the SLA. CJ confirmed that ETC's mapping system was used to create the list of areas

defined in the SLA, and will be updated once the Town Council have agreed the SLA.

- It was suggested that some additional roads could be included, for example, Pynes Road, Bystock Road and Marley Road, however it was agreed that ETC should continue putting pressure on DCC to conduct grass cutting in these areas as part of their visibility and safety work. ETC's Town Maintenance Team should be used as a last resort.
- CJ updated Councillors on discussions taking place to determine certain verges as special verges. The Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party will be reviewing the criteria of defining a special verge and whether this is something ETC might want to take on. Considering this, there could be one or two small areas that ETC will tell EDDC not to cut as agreed in the SLA, for example the verge on Dinan Way by the Industrial Estate. These verges could be cut in a similar way to Pound Lane, which now encourages rare species of butterflies.

TW proposed, seconded by MC, and everyone agreed to recommend to the Town Council to signing the grass cutting SLA with EDDC.

ACTION: To add the recommendation that Exmouth Town Council agree to signing the grass cutting SLA with EDDC, at the next Full Council meeting.

7. To receive an update on Town Maintenance work

CJ provided an update on Town Maintenance work, including:

- The Town Maintenance Team have been cleaning bus shelters following various episodes of graffiti around the town. They are trialling a different graffiti solution reduce the ghost marks left behind. Additionally, they are working with Western Power and BT, and are getting better responses from them in terms of the issues raised with them.
- The Town Maintenance Team have continued with road weed clearing. As it has been quite wet, conditions have not been ideal, and detritus has been heavy and wet. No watering has been necessary.
- The Town Maintenance Team are currently ordering summer planting. They are hoping to bring in an element of the Jubilee celebrations, using silver, purple and white colour schemes and trying to put in the emblem in recognition of the Jubilee. As one member of the team will be going on parental leave around April/May, some carefully planning will be needed as both summer planting and Exmouth Festival will be taking place at similar times.

- There are other commitments to Festival preparation in May, including putting up signs, putting up gazebos, and clearing the Imperial Rec, alongside other Jubilee plans.

Further, CJ provided an update from EDDC Streetscene's Area Officer. She updated Councillors on the changes in staffing within Streetscene. They are now two thirds of the way through traffic island clearance, and what is left can only be cleared when the traffic is lightest, on Sunday mornings. The road sweepers have cleared all roads listed: Dinan Way, Jubilee Drive, Bradham Lane, Pound Lane and Withycombe Village Road. As Streetscene continue to weed clear, road sweepers will assist in clearing any of the weeds on the pavement and curb edge. Over the next month, Streetscene will continue with this work.

IK raised that traffic islands at Littleham Cross, Rolle Road and Chapel Hill still need to be weeded, however it was agreed to wait to see what gets done in the coming weeks, and to review this at the next meeting.

8. To receive an update on vans

CJ provided an update on when the Town Council can expect to receive the vans. The Ford Transit will arrive imminently, after the supplementary work has been carried out. The Berlingo is due in a couple of weeks, and the Ranger is still expected in April. The two existing vehicles have both gone through their MOTs, so until all three new vehicles are received, the intention is to continue using the current vehicles.

Councillors queried whether we will be buying more weed equipment, however CJ confirmed that the priority is to sort out the compound area before enquiring about purchasing more equipment. CJ further commented that the bottle neck was in picking up the detritus, leaves and weeds and not the lack of another weed ripping machine. Exeter City Council and EDDC Streetscene have both trialled equipment to help with this, but neither have found suitable machinery that will cope. It was agreed by members that a small road sweeper would be best to invest in, however this is for a later stage.

9. Any other business

Welcome Back Fund Gazebos

CJ updated Councillors on the DCC Welcome Back funding from Central Government, intended to encourage people back to the town centre. Instead of focusing on flower troughs and benches, as these are already provided in Exmouth by Exmouth in Bloom, ETC and Streetscene, EDDC have used the funding to purchase eight gazebos for us to hire out to the community. The gazebos have been transferred to ETC, so ETC now own eight gazebos. CJ will draw up an agreement to start hiring gazebos out to the community once ETC have sorted out the Phear Park compound, so that the gazebos can be stored and collected from here. CJ will

publish this information on ETC's website and social media, via a press release, and in any relevant working parties.

MC asked that the condition of the gazebos already owned by ETC are

ACTION: CJ to draw up an agreement to hire out the gazebos and publicise this on ETC's website and social media and in relevant working party meetings.

ACTION: CJ to check the condition of ETC's current gazebos and to note any that need replacing.

10. To note the date of the next meeting

Councillors noted the date of the next meeting at 10am on Thursday 17th February 2022. It was noted that this clashes with a HR Group meeting. After the meeting, the date of the next meeting was moved to 10am on Thursday 24th February 2022.

The meeting ended at approximately 12:10pm.