

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Exmouth Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, St Andrews Road, Exmouth on Monday 4 April 2022 at 6:30pm

Present:

Councillors:	S Gazzard (Chairman)	
	A Sadiq (Deputy Chairman)	
	A Bailey	B Bailey
	J Whibley	A Toye
	T Dumper	A Boatright
	F Cullis	O Davey
	I Kirvan	B De Saram
	C Nicholas	P Stott
	M Chapman	T Woodward
	F Caygill	

Officers:

Lisa Bowman, Town Clerk

Apologies:

Councillors: E Beech, A Colman, L Elson, D Poor, M Rosser, B Toye, A Whipps, J Whipps

The Chairman started by reading a statement regarding Ukraine. He explained that the Home Office is in touch with Devon County Council about sponsoring refugees, and East Devon District Council is undertaking checks on host families in East Devon. He stated that Exmouth Town Council stands with the people of Ukraine and will undertake whatever help it can give refugees and awaits to hear from DCC and EDDC what practical and humanitarian help can be provided. The residents of Exmouth have already given help by donating money and medical supplies, and the Chairman urged anyone who wishes to help to use the official fundraising organisations: the Ukraine Emergency Appeal and The British Red Cross. The Chairman encouraged everyone to attend a fundraising evening at 7pm on Thursday 7th April at Holy Trinity Church. He finished by thanking everyone in Exmouth for all they have done to date to help Ukraine.

The Chairman then welcomed all to the meeting.

Public Forum: There were no members of the public in attendance.

C22/010. Council meeting minutes

Councillor Alex Sadiq proposed, seconded by Councillor Pauline Stott, and it was agreed that the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Monday 10 January 2022 be approved.

The minutes of the meeting (previously circulated) were received and signed as a correct record.

C22/011. Matters arising from the Council meeting minutes (for information only)

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

C22/012. To receive any declarations of interest from Members and agree dispensations.

There were no declarations of interest.

C22/013. To resolve that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of item(s) in Part II of the agenda as it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

There were no items on the agenda that would be discussed in Part II of the meeting that involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

C22/014. To receive and consider reports and minutes of committees, Working Parties, other local bodies and the Town Clerk/Deputy Town Clerk, District and County Councillors as appropriate.

It was proposed by Councillor Tim Dumper, seconded by Councillor Brian Bailey and unanimously agreed that the notes, minutes and reports detailed below should be received and approved en bloc, with any recommendations dealt with on a case-by-case basis:

Planning Committee

Notes of the informal consultative meetings held on 4 January, 17 January, 31 January, 14 February, 28 February and 14 March 2022.

Finance Committee

Notes of the consultative meeting held on 24 February 2022.

Town Clerk's Report

Councillor Alex Sadiq proposed, seconded by Councillor Tim Dumper and it was agreed that the Town Clerk should respond in writing to a request from a member of the public regarding the need for dedicated worship premises for the Town's growing Muslim community.

Members noted that the Town Council is not in a position itself to offer any premises but agreed that the Town Council should offer every assistance by contacting the District and County Councils to see if they can help identify any premises.

Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party

The notes of the meeting held on 8th February 2022.

Community Organisations Liaison Panel

The notes of the meetings held on 24 January and 21 February 2022.

Community Resilience Working Party

The notes of the meeting held on 12th January 2022. Councillor Tony Woodward proposed, seconded by Councillor Maddy Chapman and it was unanimously agreed that Councillor Tim Dumper is appointed as a member of the CRWP, representing Town ward.

It was also noted that the community engagement event planned for the 26th March 2022 in the Magnolia Centre had been postponed at the eleventh hour due to unforeseen circumstances and Members hoped to rearrange the event in the future.

Exmouth Transport Partnership

The notes of the meeting held on 15 March 2022.

Festival and Events Working Party

The notes of the meetings held on 6 January, 20 January and 17 February 2022.

Flooding and Land Drainage Working Party

The notes of the meeting held on 25 January 2022.

By way of additional information, Councillor Chapman reported that South West Water had recently been asked to attend a Scrutiny Meeting of East Devon District Council and was being held to account over recent effluent discharges in the Town.

Councillor Brian Bailey also expressed disappointment that the County Council only clears urban gullies once every three years and requested that the matter be raised again with Devon County Council at the next meeting.

Public Rights of Way

The notes of the meeting held on 9 February 2022.

S106 & CIL Working Party

Notes of the meeting held on 7th February 2022.

Councillor Pauline Stott proposed, seconded by Councillor Maddy Chapman and it was unanimously agreed to ratify a recommendation that the Town Council supports and funds the proposal to upgrade the existing footpath through Bapton Valley Park to a multi-user path (in line with the Neighbourhood Plan) and to expend up to £200,000 out of CIL receipts to do so.

Councillor Brian Bailey expressed concern about the cost and sought reassurance that the prerequisite procurement procedures would be followed. The Town Clerk explained that the cost was based on projections provided by EDDC engineers and that the appropriate due diligence and procurement processes would now be pursued, based on the Council's agreement in principle that the project could proceed using accrued CIL funds. Progress will be reported at future meetings of the S106/CIL working party and in turn, to Full Council.

Town Maintenance Overview Working Party

The notes of the meetings held on 20 January, 24 February and 17 March 2022.

Councillor Brian Bailey requested an update on the progress of negotiations with East Devon District Council for the use of the Phear Park compound for the Town Maintenance team (as previously agreed by Full Council) and expressed concerns over the associated delays and the suitability of the site. He further suggested that the Working Party should look at the scope to lease alternative premises which he had identified in Littleham ward. The Town Clerk reminded members that Council decisions cannot be reversed within six months and recommended that the matter be raised at the next meeting of the Working Party, when the Deputy Clerk would be able to provide a status report.

Town Team

The notes of the meetings held on 26 January and 23 March 2022.

Councillors Maddy Chapman and Bruce De Saram drew Members' attention to the recent decision to suspend the Town Team for the foreseeable future. This would allow the Town Council to review its Terms of Reference and future membership.

Members asked that the volunteers who have been helping to repair the dinosaurs in The Strand should be thanked, along with Liz Oram for her efforts with The Big Spring Clean.

Trust Fund Working Party

The notes of the meeting held on 21 March 2022.

Councillor Steve Gazzard proposed, seconded by Councillor Tony Woodward, and it was unanimously agreed to ratify a recommendation that the RBS (Natwest Group), Mondelez and Kraft & Dr Pepper shareholdings associated with the William Adams Westwood Trust are sold down into cash, with the sale proceeds reinvested into a new 7IM investment account on behalf of the Trust.

Waterfront Working Party

The notes of the meeting held on 15 February 2022.

Reports from members who represent the Council on Outside Bodies

- **Exmouth Queen's Drive Delivery Group**

The notes of the meetings held on 17 February and 8 March 2022, which had been previously circulated, were noted. Members were reminded of a forthcoming meeting with Gerry Mills, the new Project Manager for Place and Prosperity (Exmouth) at East Devon District Council.

- **WEB Community Health and Wellbeing Board**

The notes of the meeting held on 3 March 2022, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

- **Exmouth Twinning Association**

A report from Councillor T Dumper, which was circulated in advance of the meeting, was noted. The report has been attached as an appendix to these minutes.

- **DALC**

A report from Councillor T Dumper, which was circulated in advance of the meeting, was noted. The report has been attached as an appendix to these minutes.

- **Fairtrade**

A report from Councillor T Dumper, which was circulated in advance of the meeting, was noted. The report has been attached as an appendix to these minutes.

District Councillors' Reports

Reports from Councillors Olly Davey, Joe Whibley and Bruce De Saram (circulated in advance of the meeting) were noted and are attached as an appendix to these minutes.

Councillor Maddy Chapman verbally updated Members on the recent meeting of Exmouth Community Safety partnership / Local Action Group, including crime trends in the Town and recent efforts of the local policing team to address anti-social behaviour.

County Councillors' Reports

There were no County Councillors present at the meeting.

C22/015. To receive and approve the Council's Risk Management Policy and Risk Assessment for 2021/22.

Councillor Frank Cullis proposed, seconded by Councillor Brian Bailey and it was **RESOLVED to approve the Council's Risk Management Policy and Risk Assessment for 2021/22.**

C22/016. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Town Council will be held on Monday 16 May at 6:30pm. This will be the Annual Town Council Meeting.

The meeting concluded at 7.46 pm.

Signed..... Date.....
(Chairman)

Appendix – Exmouth Town Councillors' Reports

Exmouth Town Councillor Tim Dumper

Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC)

Exmouth Town Council continues to contribute fully to DALC's activities, as reported in my last report, as befits the largest town in Devon.

Our Policy Officer, Mark Clapham, has made a big impact on how to take key issues forward. In addition to the ongoing groups working on Climate and Ecological matters, the local Economy, and just started group looking at the serious housing crisis, especially in coastal towns, there is now a group looking at issues around social care. The work of DALC on these issues feeds through to what has become known as 'Team Devon,' working with all Districts, the County Council, and Unitary Councils to take a strategic approach to issues. At present, Councils working this way are hoping to get positive response from Central Government with devolved powers and it is hoped more finance to tackle these expensive and difficult issues. Devon has generally taken the stance that the current arrangement of Councils should stay, and with the single experiment with an Elected Mayor having been reversed a few years ago, also that there should not be an elected 'Metro Mayor' either. Both these developments have formed part of the Government's strategy for Unitary local government.

The Board of DALC under the new company structure seems to have bedded in well – Councillor Brian Bailey is a member of that Board.

Thanks to Lisa, who also takes an active role with DALC, and for her regular feeds of both DALC and NALC (the national association) information, which I can recommend to all Councillors to read as they come through.

Exmouth Twinning Association

As I write this, ETA is about to hold its 2022 AGM – any relevant decisions to Council can be reported verbally. Arrangements for our visit to Dinan in June, and the visit of Langerwehe to Exmouth in July are going ahead, with all twinningers eagerly awaiting meeting friends again after 3 years since our last visits. Councillor Eileen Beech is leading the team organising the Dinan visit, and I do for Langerwehe. A new social event recently occurred – a masked Karneval get together, with local food (and beer etc) to emulate the carnival season in and around Cologne in February. This was very successful, thanks to the organisers/hosts! Visit the Exmouth Twinning Association website to view pictures.

Exmouth Fairtrade Group

The Fairtrade Fortnight this year was without the overseas visiting producers, because of coronavirus issues, but it still went ahead with a swing. The normal Primary Schools Conference was hosted by Beacon School – many thanks to them, and had good attendance. The Pancake Tea was held at All Saints Church Hall, and this year there were two themes – coffee production, and the relationship of climate change, and a just transition for communities around the world (what has been called Climate Justice).

One of our members was able to tell us about coffee production in Rwanda, and EDDC's Climate Officer, Catherine Causley, gave a talk on climate change and justice.

Later this year we will be making our application to renew Exmouth's Fairtrade Town status – your representatives will contact the Council if there are any requests to make.

Appendix – East Devon District Councillors’ Reports

District Councillor’s Report – Olly Davey

Since our last meeting, these are updates on the committees I sit on.

Strategic Planning: Since the first discussions of the local plan, this committee has moved on to other matters, including the serious issue of pollution of the Rive Axe by phosphates, which has resulted in a ban on any further development in the catchment area. There has been some slippage of the timetable for the draft plan, with consultation expected in the autumn. I will continue to express my concern that simply designating Exmouth as a sustainable location due to its transport links and level of local services does not justify large housing allocations, if these are then sited an unsustainable distance from those same services.

Planning: There have been a few Exmouth applications of note. We were notified recently that the application for a care home next to Tesco had been approved by an inspector on appeal, who felt that enough had been done to meet the requirement for the current designation as employment land. I was also disappointed to note that an application for a 1-bed annexe above a garage in a service lane in Victoria Road had also been passed on appeal. The committee recently refused an application to demolish a house on Salterton Road, and replace it with 9 apartments, feeling that its size was out of character with the area, and had a harmful effect on the neighbouring property. We shall await the outcome of any appeal.

Queens Drive Delivery Group: This met on the 17th February and 8th March. Planning for temporary attractions is proceeding well, with rents and pitches agreed. New furniture has been installed in the Queen’s Drive Space, and it should now be open for business. LED will run a series of activities in the fitness space. The new Project Manager is convening a workshop at Ocean on 6th April, to which only committee members have been invited, and it is hoped that this will develop an initial way forward for the seafront and Exmouth as a whole. It will focus on the following three questions:

- What will successful Place and Prosperity in Exmouth look/feel like?
- What do local people want to see – what will attract them?
- What do visitors want to see – what will attract them?

If any councillors wish to add their views, they can do so by contacting me or any other member of the committee.

Exmouth Beach Management Plan Steering Group: This has mainly looked at changes in the beach and channel due to sand movement, and discussed how best to work within these.

Scrutiny: This has been concerned with discussion on the appointment of Aldermen, and how and whether this should continue. We also had a presentation from SW Water, who made much of their ongoing work and achievements, but rather dodged the issue of discharges during storm events, and future capacity and its ability to cope with the number of new developments.

Outside Bodies:

Allotment Committee: I have been successful in pressing for all compost products sold in the shop, including Growbags, to be peat-free. Some hedging maintenance work is planned over a 3-year period, and there is also much ongoing maintenance. The new community room, which is part of the main allotment shed, is to be named the Jesse Collings room, in honour of the Exmouth man, who as a Birmingham MP, was instrumental in securing land reform to protect and ensure the development of allotment sites. It will be officially opened on 30th April, and will be used for meetings, talks, education and as a membership social space.

District Councillor's Report – Councillor Joe Whibley

The Strand

I have spent the last few weeks working with officers and businesses to seek a resolution to the issue of traders using EDDC's grassed areas on The Strand. The issue has now, it seems, been settled. It is difficult to put into a short paragraph everything that this involves and the complexities of the situation, but it's fair to say that the situation is never as cut and dried as it seems. The initial fees quoted by the traders were very high (it described them as ridiculous), and the process by which they were arrived at (employing the Torbay Development Agency) was seriously flawed, with clear communication between the three parties involved almost impossible at times, and I will make sure that these points are at the forefront in any discussions regarding the area that remain ongoing. I also feel that some of the inflammatory tactics employed by the traders were really unhelpful, and have told them as much. With these points in mind, there is an intention to set up a steering group involving Gerry Mills, EDDC's new Development Officer for Exmouth, which will hopefully come up with a wider vision of what we want the Strand to be, and I will make sure that the Town Council is represented in those discussions. The deal for the traders lasts for two years, so, notwithstanding any unforeseen issues, we have plenty of time to complete these talks. I'd also like to express my thanks to Cllr Davey for his help, much of it moral support, on this matter.

Licensing and Enforcement

At February's licensing and enforcement committee, we discussed the following points.

- A) NR3 Database – this is a national register of, effectively, disqualified taxi drivers. At present it is often difficult for Licensing departments to track licence applicants' previous histories of disqualification. This national database has been set up to plug this gap. We voted for the authority to adapt its processes to join the database as soon as is possible. This will allow us to ensure our new driver applicants are safe, and any drivers from East Devon who have been disqualified are subject to the correct checks if applying elsewhere. The taxi trade is onside with this action as it helps them preserve their good reputation.
- B) Taxi Fare Review – given rising fuel costs, the trade (which has held up in terms of number of drivers surprisingly well – contrary to the national trends) have requested we review their pricing structure again. We have agreed a schedule of

fees taking into account their requests and which place us roughly in the middle of the published fares across Devon. These will be advertised for comment in local newspapers before being discussed again and, ultimately I hope, agreed to once that process is complete.

Other Work

I have been carrying out the usual array of casework for ward members including an increasing number of enquiries regarding the residents' parking scheme – the next stage of which finally gets to the HATOC committee at DCC in June.

I have been working with employees of Stallcombe House who live in my ward about some issues with management and staffing there, and made representatives to their board of trustees. (Declaration of interest – I used to be an employee there). I worry about the future of this once proud establishment.

I have also engaged with parts of the community living and working in and spending their wages the town, but abiding in alternative properties such as vans etc, and asking EDDC if we can make this any easier for them. They are a very, very distinct group from the travellers we see yearly, and given the housing crisis the country as a whole, but especially coastal resorts, face, it is a problem which will only grow. Pressure on our MP to address the issue of second homes and excessive Air B'n'B's with the relevant government minister would be useful and I'd be happy to help organise a joint council communication.

Finally, I have been consulting with a local group who works with Autistic and neurodivergent people, Esteem, about introducing posters for shops who are 'Neurodivergent friendly' to display, and I hope that these will be distributed within the next few weeks.

District Councillor's Report – Councillor Bruce de Saram

Since January I have along with many EDDC Cllrs present attended Planning, IRF Grants panel, Arts and Culture, LED Monitoring Forum, Personnel, Poverty working Panel and the Queens Drive Delivery Group. So all in all it's been a busy and active couple of months on zoom. However we did meet in person as a Council to agree the budget at the Ocean in February and I asked this question the Leader "Cllr De Saram also wished to ask the Leader a question, as follows: Given the rise in car parking charges as recommended by tonight's budget across the District what areas in the Service Plans which will be produced for 2023/24 has the Leader identified as suitable for cost savings to be made? As he is aware that we must do all we can when setting the budget to avoid Council Tax rises and other associated increases in charges. Can he please reassure me tonight that by setting this budget our residents will not have to face yet further rises as we approach 2023/24? In response, the Leader expressed his hope that once increased this year, the charges could stay as they were for a while without further significant change."

However I note that car parking still remains a contentious issue and we will have to see what happens this year once the increases are implemented especially as Members are aware that the next item to be considered by EDDC is the future of

some of the toilets which are not going to be continued to be looked after by EDDC going forward into 2023.

My NUB column this month focused on the Salvation Army.

https://exmouth.nub.news/n/exmouth-the-salvation-army39s-humanitarian-approach-is-just-what-is-needed-in-these-challenging-times--opinion?fbclid=IwAR1KRc9qmUIhcqYZUIIKUX1xzUarzBL0R7r93Ir9LS4wLuEg2-_hosmmlQU