

# EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

## Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party

Notes of the meeting held at 10am on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022 held remotely via Zoom

### Present

Councillor Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor Mike Rosser	MR	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Frank Cullis	FC	Exmouth Town Council
Lisa Bowman	LB	Exmouth Town Council
Chetna Jones	CJ	Exmouth Town Council
Zoey Cooper	ZC	Exmouth Town Council
Catherine Causley	CC	East Devon District Council
Carl Harrison	CH	East Devon District Council
Alex Mitchell	AM	East Devon District Council
Nicky Nicholls	NN	Transition Exmouth Chair

### Apologies

No apologies noted

### 1. Welcome and apologies

TD welcomed members to the meeting. ZC introduced herself. CH introduced himself and explained that he is taking on the role of coordinating the tree wardens across the district. A list of tree wardens is being updated and currently there is no tree warden for Withycombe Raleigh.

### 2. Approval of previous meeting notes held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022

The notes of the previous meeting were proposed for approval by NN, seconded by FC, and agreed by all.

### 3. Matters Arising

No update from DALC climate change group due to staff illness at DALC.

A discussion was had about the Cargo bikes being utilised by Streetscene, a GP and the idea of the Town Maintenance team making use of one. CJ informed members that she had spoken with the team, and it was felt that it would not be fully utilised by the team. NN gave an update that both Streetscene and the GP have decided to

have the bikes in the Spring when the weather is warmer. At present the Stride is with CC but if anyone comes across a use for the bike to let CC or NN know.

TD informed members that the Devon Carbon plan has now been published.

**4. To note that the plastic reduction working party has been dissolved following the successful completion of the water refill station project and the accreditation of Plastic Free Exmouth**

Plastic Free Exmouth has achieved Plastic Free status for the Town so Plastic Reduction working party has been dissolved. TD thanked CJ for the work she did on it and to Counsellor Alex Sadiq and other councillors for the work they contributed. Criteria has been set by Surfers Against Sewage and future criteria will be determined. LB noted that Exmouth Community College has Plastic Free school status. A discussion was had about scope to gain income from advertising revenue for water refill stations based on FC findings in Bridport. CJ said that SWW are keen to sponsor another water refill station and have £1k available to support the installation of one in Phear Park.

**5. To consider an idea to engage schools and a local artist to design & build a sea creature to educate, inform and encourage recycling and to agree a budget**

ZC spoke about a possible new initiative to promote recycling when out and about. An idea to ask local schools to enter a competition to design a sea creature that would house one or two bins for recycling, potentially with an award ceremony as part of Exmouth Festival. This would not only be about involving the community but would be about educating people around recycling when not at home and making sure people get it right to avoid contamination. It would cost approx. £10k to create this sea creature. Streetscene have been approached for their views and they were not against the idea providing they can get the bin out. It was mentioned that the project "In the Loop" has funding of £25k, an application would need to be completed by 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022. Simon Findel Hawkins of Sideshore is also supportive and may be able to support with funding.

OD said that Sidmouth seafront had something similar a few years ago. There was a broad enthusiasm for the idea. CC said that contamination is a challenge, and that Teignbridge did something similar and it would be interesting to see how it went. There were concerns about whether one would be enough, whether the fund would support the project and how members of the public use bins.

Members were reminded of the waste audit which the Town's Councils Plastic Free working party had conducted in the Magnolia Centre.

ZC also highlighted the opportunity to purchase a ready-made whale at £10k which didn't seem fit for purpose. Further investigations would need to be done with Weymouth and Teignbridge regarding success of similar projects.

Recycling options across the county are limited in terms of plastics. Coastal Waste is not set up in the same way as Greendale. There is a different way that street/kerbside recycling is handled compared to waste for seafront bins. NN has done some background work on this, and the main culprits are Ibiza nights. People need to be re-educated and work with local businesses who sell the alcohol etc. Streetscene have produced events guide for 2023 – 2024; sustainability guide, shop local.

LB suggested to members that site visits be organised to Coastal Waste and Greendale to understand different recycling methods. There was a broad support for a site visit.

FC cited example of McDonalds printing car registration on packaging. MR asked for a motion to go forward to Full Council to request that EDDC do not use Coastal services, but it was agreed that more background research should be done on the issue with EDDC.

CJ provided background information for Coastal Waste and reiterated the need for site visits and further research to enable us to make an informal decision.

ZC suggested that we park the idea of the sea creature until the next meeting to research this more. CC said that Coastal Waste do not have capacity to take on anything extra and don't have an MRF. A greater education is needed around recycling. Members were in support of a site visit. TD stressed he had learnt a lot when he visited 4 years ago, and strongly supported a visit.

## **6. To consider a first draft of an Exmouth Motion for the Ocean**

There was broad support but concerns about the size of the issue and enormous move of the motion. Is it too long? It was suggested that further work needs to be done before it goes to Full Council for adoption. ZC and LB to follow up and bring it back to the meeting in the new year. LB reminded members about the Exe Estuary Management Partnership officer Steph who does a lot of work around marine water and estuary education work and that once this is picked apart, we are possibly supporting already. CC reported on the Sea Kelp project relating to marine management and how there is lots of work going on and this needs a coordinated response. TD asked for this to be included on the umbrella agenda at Transition Exmouth.

## **7. To consider and agree in principle a visioning session in the new year to inspire ETC's climate action plan for 2023**

ZC outlined scope for a vision for Exmouth. Members debated and were supportive. ZC to follow up. This vision links into the ten-point plan and work done by Transition Exmouth for the Our Place Our Planet website.

## **8. To receive an update on the acquisition of the public convenience at Imperial Recreation Ground and work to develop an ECO and general community hub in this space; and to agree follow up actions**

CJ reported that the Heads of Terms were very much in favour of EDDC offering part of the building on a 99-year lease basis, where for the first 10 years we would have to offer a public toilet on a par with EDDC's current provision. There are various other restrictions around use etc. Advice was sought from a solicitor at Mitchelmore's. Mitchelmore's have highlighted the lack of scope to terminate the lease before 99 years. There is asbestos in the building. EDDC have said they will remedy defects that are not up to scratch, but ETC will be responsible for full repairing lease as soon as we sign up to lease. Scope for dilapidation clause. EDDC insist on ETC seeking their consent for anything we do in relation to the property. It is therefore best to incorporate uses to avoid extra charges. EDDC want overall lease for any enhancements, sub-letting arrangements etc. Planning permission may be required. EDDC has full control for the first 10 years. There would be no scope to close or downsize during conversion without permission from EDDC, and requirement for toilets to be operational from day one. There would be a great cost to ETC. Mitchelmore's have advised that it could put us in breach of S123 of the Local Government Act as not getting best practice. Mitchelmore's asked would EDDC consider ETC taking on whole lease including water sports tenant to gain some control? Mitchelmore's happy to oversee a sit-down meeting to see if it's workable if ETC wanted to proceed.

TD said it does not look as if we can proceed in any reasonable timeframe and this is very disappointing.

ZC commented further to say we needed to think about the following questions: What it is for? Who is it for? Is it the right space? ZC would like a brainstorm/visioning exercise to see if it would work in another way/format. We need to be clear about those questions and then work out what is best for Exmouth. CJ added EDDC's countryside teams' trailer might be worth looking at and bringing to this visioning exercise. FC said he thinks we should keep going forward with the Eco Hub but does not have to be in this toilet block. OD commented that we have started with infrastructure and then thought about what we could use it for, this is the wrong way round. We need a scoping exercise as ZC has said. A meeting for 19<sup>th</sup> December with ZC, NN, TD, CJ will take place, and this can be widened in the new year. NN added the need for permanence of an Eco HUB.

## **9. To receive a Trees update**

TD reported back on the formal launch of the Woodlands Trust Yonder Oak wood (former Coombe farm) that he and FC attended. They are looking at tree planting in an environmental, plastic free, ethical manner. Project officially opened by Lady

Arran and this was a very successful day. Tom Wood alerted ETC that there is some funding for tree planting, and he has put forward a proposal of where the proportion of the budget that has been allocated to Exmouth where trees could be planted. There is some soft consultation being done with us to see if we agree with the locations that have been proposed. A huge thanks to Jane Habermehl who is moving away, for her tree planting activities involving schools in Exmouth.

CH updating database records for wardens. There is scope to engage with tree wardens and an offer to coordinate support for planting among warden volunteers. Tree team interested in engaging with private landowners as well. MR added that Tiny Forests is being discussed by a small, interested group imminently. There needs to be a professional input with reference to tree planting. The tree forum was raised. Members to email with feedback regarding the proposal from EDDC Tom Wood. MR in agreement with locations but think approach to plant 2000 trees is unambitious.

#### **10. To receive an update from EDDC**

CC gave an update that EDDC are about to enter phase 2 of the Climate change work as part of Devon Climate plan. EDDC looking to refresh Climate change action plan and strategy. The in-house Climate Team will be focussing on in house emissions and sustainability, getting their house in order. East Devon Together will reopen in June. The new service lead is Matthew Blythe, who takes over from Andrew Ennis who has retired.

#### **11. To receive an update from Transition Exmouth**

- Mushroom (formally called Food Network) launch date is 23/01/23 at the Town Hall.
- Won a funding grant from the Transition network to work in partnership with two other Transition groups in Exeter and Tiverton to create a River Exe Transition partnership. To focus on 3 things in 2023 working with others as well as Exe Estuary Management, Tidelines and Escape and try to pull together a Friends of the Exe (source to sea), a citizen science project around water quality and monitoring and Festival of the Exe on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2023 (World Rivers Day).

There are two places on the umbrella group to bring on board. If anyone is interested, please let NN know.

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

There were no updates.

**13. Any other business**

There was no other business.

**14. Dates of future meetings**

7 February 2023

4 April 2023

13 June 2023

The meeting ended at 12:22