

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party

Notes of the meeting held at 10am on Tuesday 4th April 2023 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
Councillor Andrew Toyne	AT	Exmouth Town Council
Lisa Bowman	LB	Exmouth Town Council
Zoey Cooper	ZC	Exmouth Town Council
Sam Dorman	SD	Exmouth Town Council (note taker)
Catherine Causley	CC	East Devon District Council (left 11.31)
Nicky Nicholls	NN	Transition Exmouth Chair

Apologies

Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Chetna Jones	CJ	Exmouth Town Council

1. Welcome and apologies

TD welcomed members to the meeting, thanked everyone for their assistance and hard work over the last few years and apologies were noted.

2. Approval of previous meeting notes held on 7th February 2023

The notes of the previous meeting were proposed for approval by Councillor Olly Davey, seconded by Nicky Nicholls, and agreed by all.

3. Matters Arising

MR queried why the notes of the previous meeting had taken so long to be distributed and requested they be produced within two weeks. LB explained that due to other pressures there had been a delay in reviewing the notes and signing them off. The model is to try and get meeting notes published in four weeks which is the Quality Council standard. TD added that sometimes there were delays on his behalf due to other pressures.

LB explained that Motion for the Ocean still needed work by ZC and herself. They need to do some work on its relevance to our town and our scope of influence.

It was understood that Tom Wood was scheduled to attend this meeting but as he is not in attendance ZC will follow up.

OD gave an update that Active Travel Day looks as if it will go ahead around the 16th July at Sideshore. It is in the early stages but is progressing.

ACTION: ZC to invite Tom Wood to the next meeting.

4. To receive a Plastics update

NN updated members that the Plastic Free Festival is on 9th July 2023.

5. To receive an update on the Exmouth Sea Serpent project

ZC provided an update to members on how the project is progressing. She has contacted all primary schools in Exmouth and has had zoom meetings with five out of eight schools with interest from the other three schools keen to come on board. ZC explained that she had only budgeted to do two days of workshops but as she has received interest from the other schools, she is going to see if she can find more budget to do another day with the outstanding schools and will be talking to Simon at Sideshore about this next week. The workshops will be two days in May where they will go into schools, help children produce designs for the sea serpent and do a scrapheap challenge for children to make things and encourage them to think about waste in general. Once the workshops have finished, the designs will be looked at and a couple of draft designs will be chosen for the final sea serpent. ZC is hoping the launch of the sea serpent will be the week before the festival. ZC added that she was pleasantly surprised with the interest from the schools.

OD spoke about plastic waste and in particular single use plastic and asked about getting the message across to the schools. ZC said that the message to schools was going to include reusing as well as recycling. ZC said the messages she got back from schools was that children are great at bringing water bottles to school. She explained she will be giving a message when visiting the schools to remember to take a water bottle when going to the beach, going on holiday or on a day out.

6. To receive an update on the Visioning session 15th April 2023

The visioning talk will take place in the Chamber, Town Hall on 15th April from 2pm – 5pm. There is an Eventbrite page to book free tickets, and this can continue to be promoted up to a couple of days before the talk.

ZC explained the talk has been put on social media but was unsure how the talk had got into the Exmouth Journal and that she has asked for it to be edited that this is not a public consultation. LB added that the way the article appeared in the Journal suggested people can just turn up and this is not the case. LB asked for volunteers to help ZC. TD and NN volunteered to help.

EDDC were unhappy as they thought we were launching something about the future of Exmouth seafront but LB has clarified the context of the talk.

7. 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.

LB gave an update around the Eco Hub after a discussion with Tim Child and where we were in our commitment to taking the toilets over. East Devon District Council have agreed to continue funding the toilets until 31st March 2024 however if the town council decide not to take over the toilets East Devon District Council would need to market them from late summer, so he would need a definite steer from the Town Council. Tim Child will email LB with date of the deadline.

Members discussed CIL funding and LB explained that CIL is not going to be an option to fund this project. If we went down the route of a public works loan board loan, LB said we would have to demonstrate that we have carried out adequate consultation with the community to meet the criteria. More work needs to be done on potential funding sources.

ZC updated members that they are progressing with the business plan and the research is thorough.

NN added that in terms of funding, the National Lottery Climate Action fund are looking for projects that have good partnerships. LB said that it would be worth having opening conversations with the Lottery fund.

ACTION: ZC to have a discussion with the National Lottery Climate Action fund.

8. To receive an update from EDDC

CC updated members that the Biodiversity starts on your Doorstep campaign was launched yesterday. There are three main aims to the campaign –

- Get us all in the community to start having conversations around biodiversity and the ecological crisis.
- Share some tips, advice, and links to places where you can find some more information. One way of sharing this is to have a Friday action post which will run through April, fun things to do with the family.
- Promote and share the work that Streetscene are doing with their nature recovery work.

The idea is to build some engagement. There will be three social media posts a week through April, a Friday action post, a Streetscene post and a general information post. During May, No Mow May will be covered and there is a dedicated webpage on East Devon District Council website with links to information for composting. Devon Wildlife Trust do a nature friendly gardening plaque you can apply for if you can tick off and send photos to them.

Ten bike racks are being installed in Phear Park at Bumble and Tee and in between the tennis courts and children's play area.

OD expressed how he was really pleased about the bike racks going in Phear Park.

East Devon District Council held their first green team meeting last week, and they pledged to reduce their carbon footprint by 50% by 2030. A huge amount of work has been ongoing, and they are going to start measuring and capturing data to reduce their carbon footprint going forward.

OD said he that he noticed in EDDC planning meetings that some councillors had printed versions of the agenda which he felt was unnecessary and hoped the green team could take some action on. CC thanked OD for raising this and said she would look into this.

LB confirmed that it has been agreed by the Town Council that every Town councillor will have a tablet for Exmouth Town Council business to enable councillors to be paperless.

MR asked if there were any specific actions for Exmouth within the plan or any ideas what the Town Council could contribute. ZC said our own Climate action plan was agreed at the Full Council meeting last night.

9. To receive a Trees and Tree Forum update

ZC sent out emails to ask about interest in a tree forum. ZC has received interest from our tree wardens, Kate Stanley of the Tiny Forests Group, Paul Fealey, Heath Nickels, Jonathan Fisher from National Trust, Devon Hedge Group, Woodland Trust, and Devon Wildlife Trust. She explained that there is lots of interest locally. There was support for a tree forum in May or early June.

TD said that he has been trying to get AONB on board but has not received a positive commitment from them yet but will try again.

MR updated members about a Tiny Forests group who is engaging with Earth Watch to create a Tiny Forest and how he wasn't very impressed because they dig a meter down and he believes this is not necessary. OD added that Earth Watch promote in this country, and they are very expensive but it's hard to be done without the help of Earth Watch. A couple of sites are being looked at.

10. To receive an update from Transition Exmouth

NN updated members on the following -

- Green drinks meeting will be the first Tuesday of the month at Sundowners. Everyone welcome.
- Exe Cargo is moving into its new phase where they are not charging anybody to borrow it. If anyone would like to borrow a bike they can. A booking system is being set up.

- Friends of River Exe will be launching at three events all the way down the river. These are called river conversations to talk to people in the community to see what they would like to focus on. Launch events are on 24th April, 25th April in Exmouth and 26th April 2023.
- Mushroom research has had lots of research and discussion and when it is all written up NN will share as soon as she has it.
- Working alongside ZC on Call of Nature and the Exmouth reusable cup.
- Seasonal once a quarter members meet up around idea sharing and food sharing starting on 24th June 2023 at Pointing View Meadow.

11. An update on the festival sustainability goals and measurement. Proposal for a “Green Team”

ZC updated members that she is working alongside Jess Magill Arts manager, and they have adapted EDDC Green Team document for the Summer festival. After the festival data will be measured to show what the carbon footprint is from the festival so we can aim to reduce the carbon footprint next year. FC asked how the data would be captured and ZC explained that they are working on a survey app that can be circulated to the community to complete.

ZC said they would like to have a Green Team at the festival who will wear green “Ask Me” hi-vis vests and make sure people throw their rubbish in the correct bins, and answer questions about the festival’s green credentials. ZC asked for volunteers and NN said members from Transition Exmouth would help. ZC said the sustainability message at the festival has to be loud and clear.

MR asked are we confident that whoever is contracted to remove the waste from the festival will be recycled. ZC said that she would let members know who the contractors are.

ACTION: ZC to email members with the name of the contractors to be used at the festival.

12. An update on the Chamber of Commerce’s Sustainability Award

There was a discussion about the name change of the award, working with businesses about what their carbon footprint is and to make sure the award and what it’s meant to achieve is in line with the Town Council’s objectives. ZC said she has put in a request to speak to the chairman to have discussions about new criteria and how businesses can be more sustainable. The way forward would be to work with businesses to measure their footprint and help with a plan to help reduce it.

CC added that Southwest Manufacturing Advisory service have their road to NetZero programme which is fully funded environmental support for businesses, and she would like to see that they can provide a roadmap for businesses showing how they can look at their carbon footprint. It would be worth having a discussion with Paul Gilbert from SWMAS who can advise what support they have available. Also, the economic development department at East Devon District Council will soon have some funding available through their shared prosperity fund, part of it will have an environmental element bit for community groups and businesses to make energy efficient adaptations such as solar panels.

13. To propose a Hedgehog Highway social media campaign and competition to support Hedgehogs R Us

ZC explained about the Hedgehog Highway campaign she would like to run and how she would like to buy a box of hedgehog highways. There are fifty in a box and this costs £150 plus vat and are little tunnels that go from one side of the fence to the other. This will hopefully raise awareness in Exmouth about why creating highways for hedgehogs is so important. ZC would like to offer this as part of a competition on social media.

TD proposed, seconded by FC and all in favour of ZC purchasing a box of hedgehog highways.

14. To propose a reusable cup solution for Exmouth, along the lines of the Shrewsbury Cup

ZC spoke about the idea of a reusable cup to help reduce the number of single use cups in Exmouth. The scheme would be to buy in reusable cups, give to participating cafes. Customers then pay a deposit and can return cup back to any participating café and get their deposit back. NN gave a brief overview of the Shrewsbury Cup that this idea is based on. She said that the Bumble & Bee chain is very enthusiastic, as well as a number of other cafes and restaurants selling hot drinks. Members had a discussion and there were mixed reactions to this idea.

It was decided that ZC do further research and put some information and data together to bring back to members at the next meeting.

ACTION: Further research to be made by ZC to report to members at the next meeting.

15. To discuss the trial of a few water butts in Exmouth

ZC gave an overview about her idea to buy three water butts to trial outside three businesses in Exmouth and the water collected would be used by Exmouth in Bloom to water the flowers in town. Each water butt will cost £70 to buy however it was suggested that Southwest Water may provide free water butts.

If Southwest Water will not provide free water butts TD proposed that a proposal for ETC to buy the water butts is done over email.

ACTION: ZC to contact Southwest Water to enquire about free water butts.

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

No updates.

17.Any other business

No other business.

18.Dates of future meetings

13th June 2023

8th August 2023

3rd October 2023

5th December 2023

The meeting ended at 12.01pm