

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Community Resilience Working Party

Notes of the virtual meeting held at 2pm on Wednesday 20th September 2023 via Zoom

Present

Councillor David Poor (Chair)	DP	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Maddy Chapman	MC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Matt Hall	MH	Exmouth Town Council
Chetna Jones	CJ	Exmouth Town Council
Sam Dorman	SD	Exmouth Town Council

Apologies

Councillor Andrew Colman	AC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council

1. To elect a chairman

TD proposed, seconded by MC, that Councillor David Poor be elected as Chair of the Community Resilience Working Party. No other nominations were received, and all members agreed that Councillor David Poor elected as Chair.

2. Welcome and Apologies

DP welcomed attendees to the meeting and noted apologies.

3. To approve the notes of the meeting held on 12 October 2022

MC proposed, seconded by TD and it was agreed by members that the notes be accepted as a true record of the meeting held on the 12th October 2022.

4. Matters arising from the previous meeting

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

5. To review the Emergency Plan and agree any amendments

Members discussed the latest version of the Emergency Plan and CJ added that a couple of amendments to the confidential version had been made to amend name and telephone numbers of people that have moved on from their posts.

Excessive heat and fires were discussed and CJ explained that this has been covered a little in the Emergency plan. She added that apart from sharing information from Devon County Council, the NHS and other government bodies there isn't much else ETC can do within its powers.

TD asked if we could look at cooling areas in the community shelters and warm spaces.

CJ gave some background information around the community shelters for the new members and explained that these shelters were set up for smaller incidents and that they were in every ward and out of the flood zone. The Town Hall was included but the idea was that it would be more of a hub for the control point rather than an emergency shelter.

MC suggested it might be a good idea to contact the fire brigade to inform them of our emergency plan and our community shelters, in case there is an incident and they needed to vacate residents from a particular area.

Devon Community Together through their Resilience Forum were originally supporting the work of developing Emergency Plans, and ETC were told at the time that the emergency plan would be published to a secure website where the emergency services could obtain this information at a local level. CJ said that she would need to check if this is still the setup before contacting the fire brigade.

Members discussed who had input into the Exmouth Emergency plan. CJ that EDDC and DCC were involved in the initial discussions.

DP asked if CJ could contact County Councillors Jeff Trail and Richard Scott to ask what the County are doing, and TD confirmed he will contact East Devon District Council to ask them what they are doing.

TD asked if any information from Devon Communities Together received at the Town Council could be shared with Councillors.

ACTION(s):

- **CJ/SD to email a copy of the latest confidential version of the Emergency Plan to all members.**
- **CJ to contact County Councillors and ask for information in terms of an emergency plan.**
- **TD to contact East Devon District Council to ask for information in terms of an emergency plan.**

6. To discuss updates on grit bins – members to identify and report grit bins which need replenishing in their ward

DP informed members that all grit bins in the Littleham ward have been checked. TD will check Halsdon ward in the next week.

An update from Councillor Mark Williamson was received that he had checked the bin on Foxholes Hill and the grit was soft, useable and three quarters full. MH said that most of the bins in the Withycombe ward have been used as a rubbish bin, this needs to be reported. MC added she has not checked the grit bins in Brixington ward.

In addition, an email was also sent to all councillors asking if they required any sandbags. CJ updated members that an email from EDDC had been received to ask if ETC had an adequate supply of bags.

ACTION: SD to send a reminder to councillors to ask if they require any sandbags and create a list of who has them.

7. To confirm status of emergency boxes and agree to purchase any replacements.

The emergency boxes have been in place for a couple of years and the contents need checking to ensure everything is working and has the correct contents.

Appointments have been made with the community shelters to visit and check each emergency box.

The boxes will be checked annually, and a reminder created to ensure this happens.

8. To review draft memorandum of understanding relating to Exmouth Flood Gate Volunteers

CJ provided a brief explanation of the Memorandum Of Understanding between the Environment Agency, East Devon District Council and Exmouth Town Council to the new members and explained the proposal for operating and maintaining the flood gates. EDDC is ultimately responsible for the flood gates, with ETC providing support with volunteers to assist with the closing and opening of the non-highway gates at Morton Crescent and the Sailing Club. A tri-party agreement was set up which puts down on paper ETC's responsibilities and what is expected from us.

The gates ETC are primarily responsible for are Morton Crescent and the Sailing Club and we have a list of Floodgate volunteers, who have all signed up for flood alerts and warnings, are all trained, and all have equipment needed to close the gates.

The draft memorandum of understanding states that EDDC cannot guarantee it will close the main gates outside of Streetscene working hours and there was concern that would not be closed should an emergency arise. Members did not feel happy with ETC signing the draft MOU without this being raised at Full Council.

CJ said she would contact EDDC and Kris Inch with the working parties' concerns about the operating of gates outside of working hours to ask if they could provide reassurance.

TD proposed, seconded by MC and it was agreed that the working party informs the Town Council that it is shocking that £12M of public money has been spent on a tidal defence scheme that cannot guarantee closure of the flood gates outside of Streetscene's operating hours and that at the moment, members cannot condone the signing of the MOU as it has deviated from the original requirement of operating the flood gates. It requires further investigation with Streetscene and a letter from the town council to EDDC to highlight the concern of the operating hours during the winter months and that gate closures cannot be guaranteed. Furthermore, ETC may wish to consult its own solicitor regarding the matter.

ACTION:

- **District councillors on this working party to make EDDC aware of members concerns.**
- **CJ to contact Kris Inch at Environmental Agency and EDDC to inform them of the members concerns.**

9. Any other business

TD asked if the LERT team and flood gate volunteers could have some refresher training.

DP asked if CJ could formally thank Tony Woodward, the former chair of this working party to say a thank you for all the work he did as chair of the community resilience working party and volunteer during the difficult covid and post covid period.

10. To agree date of next meeting

The date for the next meeting to be agreed.

The meeting finished at approximately 15:44 pm.