

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Town Maintenance Overview Working Party

Notes of the meeting held on Thursday 16th November 2023 at 10am via Zoom

Present

Councillor Ian Kirvan	IK	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor David Poor	DP	Exmouth Town Council
Chetna Jones	CJ	Exmouth Town Council
Sam Dorman (notetaker)	SD	Exmouth Town Council

Apologies

Councillor Maddy Chapman	MC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Joy Whipps	JW	Exmouth Town Council

1. Welcome and apologies

IK welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted as above.

2. To approve the notes of the meeting held on 5th October 2023 and any matters arising therein

The notes of the previous meeting held on 5th October 2023 were proposed for approval by OD, seconded by IK, and agreed by all.

Matters arising from previous meeting notes.

Item 2 – OD to follow up his email regarding staff supervision.

CJ suggested OD put on hold following up his email as a new operations manager has been appointed to replace Tom Wood. Once they were in post OD will contact them.

Item 3 – IK to email CJ with locations of graffiti.

The graffiti IK had reported to CJ has now been removed.

Item 4 – CJ to email Pete Croft after members raised concerns about grass cutting.

CJ confirmed she had emailed Pete Croft. He came back to say that the locations listed on the tick sheet were as reported to him.

Item 5 – IK to review grass cutting areas with JW and OD.

IK met up with JW to review the grass cutting areas. He provided members with an update on the areas that have been removed and why. He asked if the Town Maintenance team can remove a dead bush in Marpool Hill and to cut back some bushes in Ashleigh Road.

Item 7 – IK to email CJ with the name of the environmentally weed killer Councillor Matt Hall had talk about.

IK emailed CJ with the details of the weed killer to be trialled and CJ reported that she had searched for this item and it was not available through the normal commercial outlets and had concerns it may not be suitable for commercial use. Reviews only stated use in gardens for personal use. IK agreed and commented that it was only available in small quantities.

3. To receive an update on the graffiti within Exmouth

The Town Maintenance team have cleaned some graffiti; however, this has come back especially on some of the new bus shelters.

CJ asked members to email her if they have any graffiti to report.

SG reported that a young boy had written to him and Councillor Jeff Trail about some graffiti in Phear park and how he would like to help with litter picking. SG has been to Phear park, but he cannot see the graffiti reported so will arrange with the young boy and his family to meet them in Phear park.

SG has had a conversation with the new anti-social behaviour worker at East Devon District Council about re-instating the LAG meeting, but she said this wasn't in their forward plan to restart them. SG raised this at the Cabinet meeting about reinstating the meetings. After a discussion with Lisa Bowman, it is hoped that it will be re-instated in Exmouth. There are ongoing discussions about this.

ACTION: IK to email CJ with locations of graffiti.

4. To receive an update on EDDC grass cutting contract and agree Winter work for the seasonal worker

CJ circulated the tick sheet from Streetscene prior to the meeting. Members discussed this and IK added that some strimming work had taken place along Dinan Way around the barriers and signs in the last 2 weeks.

The winter work for the seasonal worker was discussed and CJ said that if members wanted anything carried out, ETC would need to go back to Streetscene however work would only be carried out in the Town Centre.

Jobs for the seasonal worker were discussed and members asked if the following roads could be listed for the seasonal worker to clear –

South Street
Fore Street
Bicton Street
Upper Church Street
George Street
Hartley Road
Raleigh Road

DP asked about the budget for grass cutting and CJ explained that there is a budget for EDDC grass cutting and there will be some briefings in December regarding the budget.

ACTION(S): CJ will contact Streetscene to request weed clearing in the roads listed by members.

5. To receive an update on grass cutting for 2024

CJ updated members that after IK and JW had been to review the areas, she amended the maps that highlighted the grassed areas to be cut and added them to the specification document.

An email has been sent out to prospective contractors.

The final date for all quotes to be submitted is 18th December 2023. CJ explained that once she had received all quotes, she will arrange for members to meet and review the quotes before a recommendation is put forward to Full Council in January to approve.

6. To receive an update on general Town Maintenance work

The team have been busy on Marine Way bank grass cutting. After the contractor has completed the grass cutting our team rake and bag up all the grass to take away.

They have completed the bank opposite Lidl and a team of volunteers have raked and bagged up the grass and taken it away. Annual cuts in various locations have been completed.

The team have cleared out all the flower towers and flower beds and have replanted with Winter plants. CJ said that this year she has ordered less plants.

At the Exmouth in Bloom presentation evening the team were thanked for their efforts and all the work they have done. The judges also commented on how well they worked together with EIB.

The team will be moving into road weed clearing. At present they are at Iona Road and Featherbed Lane.

The bank on Pound Lane has been put back because there are slowworms in the bank. They are a protected species so the team are hoping they will go into hibernation soon so they can complete the work during the winter months.

PPE was discussed and CJ said that the team now have long sleeved Hi-Vis waistcoats to protect their arms and the team do have the appropriate PPE needed to carry out work.

The weed ripper was discussed, and CJ updated members that the bearings were replaced, and it was now working again however we should purchase a second one.

CJ reported issues with the Ford Ranger that is used with the bowser and how the engine management light kept coming on. After a couple of visits to the garage the Ranger is back and seems to be working fine.

OD asked about leasing electric vehicles for the team. CJ said that there were not powerful enough to pull the bowser and the lease company did not have anything suitable. However, it is hoped in the future we will be able to have electric vehicles when the technology is better. There is capacity to put a charging unit in the depot in Phear Park if we remain there.

IK asked about the trialling of the environmental weed spray and where we have got with this. CJ said that it is not easily available to purchase from commercial companies and it was queried if it would be suitable. CJ said she would ask the finance officer to purchase the environmental weed spray to give it a trial.

Members discussed a foam spray system and if there was a possibility of trialling this.

Weeding on the traffic islands are needed and CJ said the Town Maintenance team could manage the minor roads, but we would need to look at a contractor to manage the bigger roads. CJ to investigate this.

ACTION(s): CJ to investigate the weeding on the traffic islands.

7. To discuss future use of hanging baskets no longer used on lamp posts in Magnolia Centre

CJ asked members views on selling some hanging baskets as we are no longer able to use them all.

Members would like the hanging baskets to still be displayed in the town. As we are no longer allowed to hang hanging baskets on the lamp columns members discussed about purchasing more poles with arms to be able to hang these baskets. Areas were discussed as possible places to have these installed taking into consideration the access for watering them.

IK mentioned that the raised beds outside the Co-Op in the Magnolia Centre needed weeding.

ACTION(s): CJ to research prices for poles with brackets and feedback to members.

8. Any other business

DP asked who was responsible for the sweeping of pavements i.e., leaves. He was advised that DCC are responsible, and this can be reported on their website as a safety matter.

The day and time for holding the Town Maintenance Overview WP meeting was discussed to allow Councillor Matt Hall to be able to attend as he is unable to attend on Thursday mornings. It was agreed that the meeting could be held on the afternoon of a Thursday if it doesn't clash with the Festival and Events WP meeting.

SG would like to put on record that this working party is extremely proud and grateful for all the hard work that the Town Maintenance team and CJ have achieved.

OD reported that he is going to write to Councillor Richard Scott regarding the road traffic accidents that are happening on the Pound Lane/Hulham Road junction.

ACTION(s): CJ to email Matt Hall to ask if he can attend TMO meetings early afternoon on a Thursday.

9. To note the date of the next meeting

14th December 2023

Meeting finished at 12:05