

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Community Organisation Liaison Panel (COLP)

Notes of the meeting held at 10am on 5th February 2024 in the Town Hall Chamber

Present

Councillor David Poor	DP	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor Pauline Stott	PS	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Brain Bailey	BB	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Aurora Bailey	AB	Exmouth Town Council
Lisa Bowman	LB	Exmouth Town Council (Officer)
Adrian Toole	AT	Transition Exmouth
Geoff Skinner	GS	Exmouth Community Association
Dave Radford	DR	Exmouth Civic Society
Tony Siddall	TS	Churches Together

Apologies

Keith Bungay	KB	Exmouth Community Association
Councillor Graham Deasy	GD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Andrew Woodward	AW	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Mark Williamson	MW	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Louise Venables	LV	Exmouth Town Council
Ian Cann	IC	Exmouth Civic Society
Andrew Gordon-Raby	AGR	East Devon District Council (Streetscene)

1. Welcome and apologies

DP welcomed members to the meeting and apologies were noted.

It was agreed that Peter Croft would speak at the beginning of the meeting.

2. To agree the notes of the previous meeting held on the 8th January 2024

The notes of the meeting held on the 8th of January 2024 were agreed as a true record.

3. Streetscene Update - Peter Croft

PC provided an update on the removal of sand from Queen's Drive and reported that the road is now clear.

There is an ongoing issue with graffiti and vandalism in the Phear Park toilets, especially the ladies toilets. The matter has been reported to the Police but there is insufficient staffing for the Police to monitor the site 24/7 and there is no CCTV in the area.

PC expressed concerns that there are potential safeguarding concerns relating to some of the recurring graffiti, which has been reported to the Community College.

PS asked about the prospect of using a mobile CCTV camera to address the issue. LB agreed to investigate the scope to use the Town Council's old mobile camera but expressed reservations that the camera is still functioning.

LB also suggested reaching out to DYS Space to engage with the youth workers.

Members debated the scope for the Town Council to write to the College about the reports of bullying and/or for East Devon District Council to discuss the matter at Scrutiny and Overview. Both suggestions were discussed but deemed inappropriate for the respective authorities at this time.

DR referenced recent vandalism on the Imperial Recreation Ground.

AB offered to raise the matter in her capacity as a Police Advocate and to make an appointment to see the Principal of the Community College to raise concerns as a grandmother.

TS commented that the respective COLP members could raise awareness of the issue within their own organisations, e.g. Churches Together and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

AT corroborated the suggestion of trying to deploy a CCTV camera in the area.

The historic role of the Community Safety Partnership in addressing anti-social behaviour in the community was also discussed and the need to reinstate the Partnership as soon as possible. It was agreed that Councillor Brian Bailey could potentially speak at a District Council meeting in his capacity as a District Councillor to raise the urgent need for the Community Safety Partnership to be reinstated.

Peter Croft left the meeting at 10:45am.

4. Matters arising from the previous meeting

In the context of the Christmas Village event held in The Strand, GS raised concerns about the residual state of the grass in The Strand and the potential need for a hard substrate which will be more durable. However, the potential for tree root damage was highlighted by AT.

PS requested again that the glass in the beach front shelters is replaced.

It was noted that carparking had been discussed at East Devon District Council's recent Cabinet meeting in the context of overnight parking provision for motorhomes and the associated recommendations from the Exmouth Campervan TAFF. The proposals for extra facilities at Maer Road Carpark were subsequently deferred but it was agreed that 86 extra long-stay car parking spaces would be provided at the Estuary carpark to help mitigate the extra pressures on car parking in the town, especially since the introduction of the residents parking scheme by Devon County Council in August 2023.

5. To receive any relevant updates on the developing Local Plan. The latest reports from EDDC's Strategic Planning Committee can be found here:

Links to the minutes of the recent Strategic Planning meeting were shared with the agenda.

OD highlighted that recent changes to the NPPF had not resulted in any significant changes to housing targets and the burden of proof remains strong. There is now a requirement to show a four-year housing supply.

The issue of green wedges will be discussed at the next meeting. The methodology has been agreed and they will be used solely to prevent coalescence.

BB highlighted that Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty have been renamed as East Devon National Landscape.

A brief discussion took place about the scope to convert underutilised garages in the context of housing need and strategy within East Devon.

5. To receive any relevant updates on the Levelling Up Fund project progress

LB confirmed that the meeting with Devon County Council has been postponed until the 13th of February 2024. AB reported that she cannot attend the postponed meeting but has emailed Stuart Hughes to express her disappointment with the lack of engagement by DCC with the Town and District Councils. Councillors expressed concerns that the County Council is not responding to the Council's concerns or public feedback.

AT queried the phasing of the project in the context of the funding available and concerns about deadlines for spending the money within the time constraints. LB confirmed that Devon County Council is prioritising the part of the project which is being funded by government funding and will use the other contributions to fund the backend of the scheme, even if that extends beyond the original deadline. There is also scope for Devon County Council to renegotiate deadlines with the Department for Transport.

6. To receive any relevant updates on Placemaking in Exmouth

OD reported that there is much social media interest in the recent report from the District Council's Placemaking Committee about potential interventions for the town. The prospective demolition of the Pavilion, for example, has dubious rationale. Other ideas have been put forward by the consultant, WSP, as part of a longer-term vision for the town.

GS was also intrigued by the proposals and how they relate to existing leisure provision in the town. ECA looks forward to further consultation on the matter.

LB highlighted that reference by WSP for the need for a shopfront design guide is disingenuous as there is already an adopted supplementary planning document in place. The scope to create public realm areas behind Tower Street Methodist Church and on Pier Head Carpark was also highlighted as unrealistic.

LB reported that GD had also expressed concerns about the need for a signage strategy as this seems to cross over with work being done by Devon County Council for the Gateway and Dinan Way projects.

The absence of any reference to Queens Drive was also flagged up as bizarre.

7. Update from Town Council working parties and outside body representatives

LB reported that there is a mini thrifting festival being organised by Exmouth Town Council at the beginning of March on the subject of reuse and repair. Further details will be circulated when available.

The Flooding and Land Drainage WP has met recently and is still trying to hold SWW accountable for its shortcomings and the associated impact on water quality.

There is a clean-up project being planned by the Town Maintenance WP in the Colony through a partnership project with DCC and EDDC. OD reported that the grass cutting contract has been re-tendered and awarded to a new company, effective April 1st 2024.

LB reported that the council has agreed its budget and precept for 2024/25 and that the indicative Band D figure will increase to £61.17. This is a slight increase on the previous year but reflects the Council's aspiration to forward plan.

Zoey Cooper is reinstating the Tree Forum imminently.

LB also provided an update on the progress of the Housing Needs Assessment for Exmouth – a draft copy has been completed and will be shared in due course.

8. Any other business

PS expressed concerns about the proposals for the new toilets at Foxholes carpark and queried why the existing toilets could not be adapted. LB confirmed that the Changing Places component is being funded by the Changing Places toilet funding scheme with the rest of the refurbishment being covered by capital funding from EDDC. Exmouth Town Council's Planning Committee had objected to the demolition of the toilet block, but the District Council had approved the application at its recent Planning Committee meeting. AB expressed concern about the proposed charging structure for the use of the toilets.

9. Next meeting 4th March 2024

AB and BB are unable to attend the next meeting on the 4th of March 2024 due to a meeting clash.

The meeting concluded at 12.04pm.