

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Exmouth Town Hall, St. Andrews Road, Exmouth on Monday 18 September, 2023 at 6.30pm.

Present:

Councillors

O Davey	(Chairman)	C Nicholas
A Bailey		M Rosser
B Bailey		P Stott
F Caygill		A Toye
M Chapman		L Venables
G Deasy		J Whibley
T Dumper		J Whipps
S Gazzard		M Williamson
M Hall		D Wilson
I Kirvan		

Officers:

Lisa Bowman, Town Clerk

Apologies:

Apologies were noted from Councillors Angela Boatwright, Andrew Colman, Nick Hookway, David Poor, Alex Sadiq and Andrew Woodward.

The Chairman then welcomed all to the meeting.

Public Forum:

No members of the public had registered to speak.

C23/168. Council meeting minutes

Councillor Brian Bailey proposed, Councillor Pauline Stott seconded, and it was agreed by all that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted as a true record.

C23/169. Matters arising from previous minutes.

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

C23/170. Declarations of pecuniary interests and dispensations

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

C23/171. Exclusion of the Press and public

There was one item on the agenda relating to the Town Council Premises Working Party that necessitated the exclusion of the press and public. It was therefore

proposed by Councillor Steve Gazzard, seconded by Councillor Graham Deasy, and resolved that the press and public would be asked to leave at the appropriate point on the agenda.

C23/172. Reports and minutes from Committees, Working Parties, other local bodies, the Town Clerk/Deputy Town Clerk, District and County Councillors as appropriate (Standing Order 6.2)

Councillor Joe Whibley proposed, Councillor Tim Dumper seconded, and it was agreed that the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 14th August and 29th August 2023 be accepted as a true record.

Councillor Olly Davey proposed, Councillor Steve Gazzard seconded, and it was agreed that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 17th August 2023 be accepted as a true record.

The following were also noted:

Notes of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party held on 5th September 2023.

Notes of the Community Organisation Liaison Panel Working Party held on 21st August 2023.

Verbal update from Councillor Joy Whipps of the Festival and Events Working Party Working Party held on 14th September 2023.

Verbal update of the Public Rights of Way Working Party held on 13th September 2023 by Councillor Mark Williamson, with particular reference to the forthcoming site visit for the proposed access improvements to Bapton Valley.

Notes of the Town Maintenance Overview Working Party held on 7th September 2023. In respect of two recommendations emanating from the Town Maintenance Working Party, Councillor Kirvan provided some context and then Councillor Steve Gazzard proposed, seconded by Councillor Joy Whipps and it was agreed that both recommendations should be adopted.

RESOLVED that the Town Council

- 1. proceeds with inviting quotes for the grass cutting contract to commence April 2024 and that it prepares to take the work in-house within the next five years.**
- 2. reviews the work to be carried out by the Town Maintenance Team and whether it wants to take on more of the work no longer carried out by DCC and EDDC to ensure the town remains clean and tidy.**

Reports from members who represent the Council on Outside Bodies

- **Fairtrade Exmouth:** Councillor Tim Dumper provided a verbal update and confirmed that the Town's Fairtrade status has been renewed.

- **Exe Estuary Management Partnership Stakeholders Forum:** Councillor Graham Deasy provided a written report in respect of the recent forum event which was circulated to Councillors before the meeting (see appendix).
- **Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group:** The notes of the meeting held on 12th September 2023 were presented by Councillor Graham Deasy, who highlighted that the process is now at a critical stage. Members sought clarification on the scope for a park and ride scheme within the Placemaking vision and also a status report on any progress with proposals for the NCI Coastwatch Tower, Harbour View Café and the dinosaur play area (which, it was confirmed, are still pending for future consideration).
- **Twining Association:** Councillor Tim Dumper provided a written report before the meeting (see appendix).
- **WEB Community Health and Wellbeing Board:** Councillor Tim Dumper confirmed that he had attended as a substitute for Angela Boatright and that draft notes would be circulated imminently.

District Councillors' Reports: Several District Councillors had circulated reports prior to the meeting (see Appendix) but additionally Councillor M Chapman and Councillor Olly Davey highlighted recent reports at the District Council relating to S106/ CIL and the proposed appointment of new staff to deal with a significant backlog of S106 recoveries.

County Councillors' Reports: There were no County Councillors present.

C23/173. To receive an update from Inspector Antonia Weeks regarding local policing matters.

The Chairman welcomed Inspector Antonia Weeks and Sergeant Richard Stonecliffe to the meeting. Inspector Weeks then explained that due to a new crime recording system in place, she was unable to provide detailed crime statistics, however circumstantially, crime levels are similar to pre-Covid. Most crimes are domestic in nature but there are also some recorded assaults attributable to the nighttime economy. There have been improvements to the 999 and 101 phone services, but the public are being signposted to use online reporting where possible.

In terms of local priorities, there has been some focus recently on anti-social behaviour, mostly associated with street drinkers in the town centre but most culprits have complex needs. Inspector Weeks is looking at the scope to use civil powers to address these issues in conjunction with EDDC. e.g. via community protection notices or ASB escalation processes.

On a positive note, there have been fewer youth issues this summer and the neighbourhood team has had a good year in terms of drug seizures with approximately £400,000 worth of drugs confiscated, mostly cocaine and cannabis from residential properties. There is ongoing work to look at the organisational crime behind drug dealing.

Unfortunately, there is also a disproportionate number of resources being used to deal with neighbourhood disputes. This is not a good use of police resources and escalation to the police inevitably limits the scope for issues to be addressed outside the criminal justice system and informally.

Numbers in the force have increased by 600 across the local force area but this has not resulted in a massive increase locally as the additional staff are deployed across all operational shifts and geographies. Locally, there has been an increase of 3-5 officers so that the local team now comprises 4 neighbourhood officers and 3 PCSO's.

The new police station is on course to be open by late 2025 and a planning application will be forthcoming soon.

The Chair then invited questions from the floor and Members sought clarification on several issues, including highlights from a recent youth survey, online reporting response times and potential links between anti-social behaviour and lack of visible on-street policing. Concerns were also raised about enforcement of cars parked on pavements, risks to lone females at nighttime and unlicensed taxis.

C23/174. To appoint an additional Councillor(s) to the Gorfin Hall Management Working Party.

Councillor Fred Caygill proposed, Councillor Brian Bailey seconded, and it was agreed that Councillors Tim Dumper and Cherry Nicholas would be appointed to the Gorfin Hall Management Committee with immediate effect.

C23/175. To confirm the appointment of one voting representative and one non-voting representative to attend, speak (and vote) on Exmouth Town Council's behalf at the Annual General Meeting of the Devon Association of Local Councils Ltd to be held on Wednesday 27 September 2023 at 10.00am at Exeter Racecourse.

Councillor Olly Davey proposed, Councillor Brian Bailey seconded, and it was agreed that Councillor Tim Dumper would attend the AGM as the Council's voting representative.

Part B

C23/176. To receive the notes of the Town Premises Working Party and agree next actions.

Councillor Fred Caygill provided an update regarding two separate potential opportunities for the Town Council to pursue in respect of its aspiration to acquire freehold premises for the Town Council and when put to the vote, there was majority support for both opportunities to be pursued to the next stage.

The meeting concluded at 9.03pm.

Signed..... Date.....(Chairman)

Appendix – Exmouth Town Councillors' Reports

Exmouth Town Councillor Tim Dumper

Exmouth Twinning Association

A group of 19 from ETA visited our German twin Town, Langerwehe, in August, travelling, as usual, by coach (a journey of some 14 or 15 hours depending on the vagaries of the M25 and the corresponding Brussels Ring!). We were particularly looking forward to the visit as being the first for 4 years- a time to renew old friendships and remind ourselves of the beautiful countryside, the Eifel Forest national park with its hills and lakes, despite being in a coal mining area within striking distance of big cities such as Cologne and Aachen.

As always, we were welcomed formally at a Civic Reception at the local Pottery Museum by the local Deputy Buergermeister (Mayor) Herr Schroeder, who read the welcome words of Peter Muentermann, the Buergermeister, which I will send separately. Thanks to our Mayor Olly Davey for his words in response. Also, to the Town Council for continuing support for Twinning. The Council contributes to the charity financial gift when we visit our twin towns. This time we supported the volunteer group now running the Pottery Museum (the UK is not the only country suffering public service cuts!)

The visit was marked by spectacular weather, even a bit too hot at times, making our day out with lake boat trip, and finishing with dinner at a picturesque lakeside hotel. Journeys were without problems, and all agreed it had been a very successful trip.

Fairtrade Steering Group

The renewal of Exmouth's Fairtrade Town status for the next 3 years has taken place, thanks to hard work by the group and especially Carolyn Hallett, the Group's Secretary - this was announced at the recent Group meeting, attended by both Cllr Steve Gazzard and me, as Town Council representatives. Arrangements are being made to copy the letter of accreditation from the national Fairtrade Foundation to the Council for display to public and visitors.

The group had a stall at the recent Transplant Awareness Fair in the Strand giving people fun and a nice drink making their smoothies with Fair trade ingredients. For the first time we used the Group's own "smoothie bike ", rather than relying on borrowing.

The task of building back after corona iris will be tough, many shops, cafes and other businesses have closed or changed hands - the group has agreed an outline programme of visits to raise awareness of, and encourage use of, Fairtrade products.

Exmouth Town Councillor Graham Deasy

Exe Estuary Management Partnership Stakeholders Forum

The Summer Stakeholder Forum - 6th September 2023 - Powderham Castle, Exeter.

The Exe Estuary Officer began the Forum outlining the priorities of the Exe Estuary Management Partnership (EEMP)

1.**Communication:** awareness, interpretation, and education

2.**Nature recovery** - How to recover nature and increase the benefits it provides to people and economy: Defra has provided guidance under the Environment Act, which states that all Counties are required to create Local Nature Recovery Strategies

3.**Water quality** – work has been undertaken to investigate water quality issues within the Exe Estuary, focusing on Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs)

- Aim to complete initial investigatory work by the next Winter Forum in February 2024

4.**Pacific oyster management** - Invasive Non-Native Species / Rapid increase in number over past decade

5.**Promote wider equality & accessibility on the Exe Estuary** - Creation of 3 new accessible route cards for the Exe Estuary Trail

6.**Flood and Coastal Risk Management** - Maintenance works: Courtlands Boardwalk (Between Lympstone and Exmouth) Mid / late September until January 2024 and Planned Closure: Repair to Flood Defences (Between Turf Locks and Powderham) From 6th Sept until end September

7.**Sedimentation** - Long-term project
Sediment Analysis / Seasonal variation / Inconsistency in survey extent

* **The Officer for the South Devon AONB** (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) Estuaries then offered a comparative look at the priorities over the five estuaries in his area.

* **The Harbour Master** presented important safety advice for the estuary, river and canal on behalf of the Exeter Port Authority, outlining the

- Statutory duties
- Byelaws/HRO
- Partnership working

Dawlish Warren Beach Management Scheme 2017

- Post-scheme beach level change happened at a rate earlier than predicted
- Investigation to review existing management in light of change
- To identify changes and propose any update to site management going forward

The Salmon Run

A community relay run along the River Exe on Sunday 24th September will celebrate the Atlantic Salmon and highlight its journey to reach the spawning grounds on Exmoor.

Participants can choose whether to run the whole 50 miles, take part in a relay or just do a 5k fun run starting in Exeter's Riverside Valley Park.

Exe Estuary Management Partnership Committee to take place on 26th September.

Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group

Workshop 11/9. Vision setting

Run by WSP

20+ invited attendees / engaged stakeholders Cllrs, Community groups, business reps.

Follow up to 31st July meeting - consolidating the views put forward at that forum

Key objectives

- to analyse baseline information on existing site conditions, opportunities, and constraints to inform the emerging vision and place-making opportunities.

Exploring the emerging intervention proposals that will shape the Place-making strategy and development sites.

Identified distinct 'Character Areas':

GATEWAY /ESTUARY APPROACHES - railway, car parks, Leisure Centre

MARINA - inc Imperial Rec., Camperdown, Imperial Rd/Victoria Road/Morton Crescent (holiday accommodation)

TOWN inc. Magnolia Centre, Strand.

SEAFRONT - Orcombe, The Maer, Outdoor facilities/open spaces, Sideshore, The Esplanade

OTHER: Exeter Road, Phear Park, Windsor Square

Discussion / suggestions

Most impact / Most difficult to achieve.

- (i) the re-development of the Magnolia Centre (village shopping area (Clark's Village / green recreational area [clock tower / old PO
- (ii) cleaning up the seas

Least impact/simplest to achieve - e.g., signposting & way-marking.

MACRO ISSUES

Re-assured that macro issues Pollution, Traffic management/flow, Sustainability, Demographics, Leisure trends were core to the thinking.

Next step: Stage 3 - Turn concepts into ideas / opportunities. Missing for me:
Strategic vision for Exmouth - what does the town want to be.
Value of having strategy for Exmouth and where the Placemaking / Local Plan fits in such a vision

12th September 2023

The meeting was in-quorate, as can happen at this time of year; it was agreed that as there were no decisions to be made, it would be acceptable for the meeting to continue on an informal basis.

Key message:

Going forward is a critical time for this project.

About to enter Phase 3 of the study which should determine the character of Exmouth for years to come

This is rapidly moving up the priority list, so expect more engagement going forward.

When:

Report to be written up which interprets the vision and translate it into a strategy that makes the best use of the land and emphasises place-making, infrastructure delivery and economic growth.

To be taken to the Delivery Group before next Members meeting (7th Nov.2023)

Stage 4 – Outline business case

Stage 5 – Investment strategy

Stage 6 - Development briefs

Presentations:

- National Trust
- Rowing Club
- Youth Survey - Pip & Debbie Piper - Particular thanks to Town Council for support -

Key issues: Policing & Safety: vaping: Employment & housing (desire to build their lives in Exmouth)

Wants – To be listened to: music shop in Exmouth

Esplanade

Traders - June - good but poor season followed.

Highlighted the need for more all-weather facilities.

LED area under-utilised

Appendix – East Devon District Councillors’ Reports

District Councillor’s Report – Olly Davey

Strategic Planning

The committee has considered reports on various topics, including an increase in staffing for CIL and S106 funding, which we hope will improve the situation for Town and Parish councils. We also had an update on the joint project to improve phosphate levels in the River Axe. I was recently interviewed for Spotlight on the effect of Michael Gove’s proposal to change the status of the advice to councils on housebuilding in affected catchments, though I note that it has now been defeated in Parliament.

We have begun to return to work on the Local Plan with a number of reports and proposals to come through, and a timetable for this has been presented to the committee. We recently held an informal meeting, in a seminar style, to consider a redraft of the Vision Statement at the start of the Plan, which the committee and officers considered to be lacking in some respects. We considered Government advice on what it should contain and looked at various examples from other councils. We did not come up with a form of words, since this would have taken much longer, but I hope we gave officers enough of a steer to enable them to come up with a redrafted version. The overall feedback from committee was that it had been a very successful experience. However, since it was not recorded, or any notes taken, it was not held under public scrutiny, and we need to consider carefully which types of meeting are best held in this manner. As it did not make or alter policy in any way, we felt it was a justified format for this exercise. The next meeting will focus on the annual report on the future Housing Supply figure, which is currently less than 5 years, and a proposed methodology on Green Wedges in the next Local Plan.

Two appeals are currently being heard at Blackdown House, one for a solar farm near Marsh Green, and the other for the Jewson’s site in Fore Street. I shall await the outcome of these with interest, as they may inform future policy in the Local Plan.

Exmouth Placemaking Group

I have attended both workshops held in the Ocean by Gerry Mills and WSP, the consultants, which I found interesting and stimulating, and which I hope gave useful feedback to WSP on the areas and themes which stakeholders feel are important. The committee has only received brief updates on the current season, and we really now have to await the consultant’s report and proposals.

Allotment Committee

I have missed a few meetings, due to other commitments, but the allotments continue to be well run and efficiently maintained. There is always a risk of theft of produce at this time of year, and ploholders are being urged to be vigilant and ensure that gates are locked. A recent seed sale was very successful, and catalogues are now available for collection to enable ploholders to order seeds and plants for next year at discounted prices.

In Other News

I continue to get correspondence on the effect of the residents' parking scheme in the Colony and elsewhere, with some people outside the scheme reporting an increase in parking in their roads, though having travelled along some of those roads I have not seen any dramatic change in parking levels. As the scheme beds in, I hope the worst fears will not be realised, and any issues can be dealt with by the review.

District Councillor's Report – Tim Dumper

It has been a quiet 4 weeks for me at EDDC with the end of the holiday season. I had to apologise for an Overview Committee meeting because of a meeting clash, unfortunately missing an important discussion about management of grassy areas, roads etc. Another meeting is scheduled for October 12th.

I attended a briefing meeting on a Government offer of devolution to what has been described as a Devon Combined Authority (NOT a Unitary. we are assured). The Government seems to have relaxed insistence on elected Mayors, a no-no in Devon, and the current thinking seems to be that the partnership approach between County and Districts being practised through Team for Devon could be extended with some additional Government finance available. This was addressed by a DCC officer closely involved with the negotiations with Government.

District Councillor's Report – Joe Whibley

A short report as council business has only just resumed after a quiet summer.

Licensing - the taxi policy review has now been completed, and attention has turned to the council's response to the government consultation on an updated Gambling Act. This includes not only in person but also online gambling, something which, though we have no jurisdiction over, we are at least asked about. Our responses, which are very much geared towards protecting the public, will be available soon.

I have had much correspondence on both the Exmouth Gateway project and the residents parking schemes. I continue to redirect them to the relevant representatives at County Hall.

I have recently submitted a freedom of information request to the local care commissioning board as I have had numerous conversations with residents over NHS dental services in the region. My interest in this was piqued when I was unable myself to get any answers when requiring dental care. It's a national scandal.