

## **EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL Waterfront Working Party**

Notes of the meeting held at 10am on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2024 via Zoom.

### **Present**

Councillor Pauline Stott	ST	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor David Poor	DP	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Mark Williamson	MW	Exmouth Town Council
Chetna Jones	CJ	Exmouth Town Council
Peter Blyth	PB	EDDC Streetscene Beach Safety Officer

### **Apologies**

Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Louise Venables	LV	Exmouth Town Council

Sally Webster	SW	EDDC
Andrew Gordon-Raby	AGR	EDDC Streetscene

### **1. To elect a chairperson**

MW proposed, seconded by DP that PS be re-elected as Chair of the Waterfront Working Party. No other nominations were received, and all members present agreed that PS be re-elected as Chair.

### **2. Welcome and apologies**

PS welcomed members to the meeting and apologies were noted.

### **3. To approve the notes of the last meeting dated 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024 and the inspection form dated 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024, and matters arising from therein**

The notes of the previous meeting and the inspection form were proposed for approval by MW, seconded by PS and agreed.

### **4. To receive an update on the repairs to the sea wall and beach management plan**

PB provided updates as follows: -

## **Sea Wall**

The first half of the repairs to the sea wall and the works to the slip way in front of the rowing club is due to be finished on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2024 however this could be a later date.

Works to the second half of the sea wall is under review and EDDC are currently looking at competitive bids. They are hoping that work will start in September/October 2024 but have no further detailed updates.

CJ asked if the works would be complete in time for the Exmouth Festival which starts on the 19<sup>th</sup> July. PB said he had been assured works would be complete by then.

## **Beach Management Plan**

PB said he does not have an update on the Beach Management Plan until after the meeting to be held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

### **5. To receive an update on the SWW investigations and the beach water quality**

PB provided updates as below: -

## **South West Water investigations**

South West Water say their dye testing investigations into the overflow pipe are complete and that it was a successful outcome. However, the dye is not coming out of the end of the pipe into the sea but from a break 65 metres off Maer Rocks, which is not in the permitted area. The Environment Agency are aware of this and are working on finding a solution with SWW.

The investigations into SWW by the Environment Agency are ongoing regarding the spills in the Maer Valley over the Christmas period. There are no updates on the outcome yet.

## **Beach water quality**

There are concerns with the number of overflows and the beach water quality and SWW say they are going to address this through their upgrade proposals but the proposed sewage works have yet to obtain planning permission yet implying it would be at least another 2- 3 years before they do. SWW are talking about possibly extending Maer Lane sewage works but the land needed for the extension has not been acquired yet. Other proposals such as work at Star Point will also have an impact and this is not an ideal solution.

In terms of EDDC's responsibility for beach safety, notices on the big red signs along the seafront have been added which provide a QR code link to safer seas, water fit, and Swimfo information.

There will also be water quality information provided by the Environment Agency near the Blue flag sign.

The criteria for the beach blue flags is being reevaluated. At the moment, it only has to be lowered when the Environment Agency say there has been a pollution incident. It should also consider when CSO (Combined Sewer Overflows) take place. This is under review by Blue Flag due to pressure from people about pollution in the sea.

Members discussed the water quality, how it could be tested in more than one section of the beach and how the public should be able to access real time information rather than several days after an incident.

#### **6. To receive an update on the reopening of Exmouth camp**

John Morgan invited members to Exmouth camp to have a look when it opened but unfortunately the invite from National Trust only went to the Mayor and PS. PS was unaware that other members had not received the invite and gave apologies on behalf of the working party. John Morgan said members are welcome to go along at any time.

PS said the camps looks fantastic. There are four encampments. The camps have tents with camp beds. The eating area has a new kitchen. Lots of schools from all over as well as local schools are enjoying the camp including the cubs and scout's groups. They have a variety of activities including water sports, archery, and tag rugby. The National Trust are looking at ideas to expand.

There is a new area National Trust ranger who has replaced Rob Skinner.

#### **7. To raise concern to EDDC re policing dog ban areas of the beach**

Members discussed the problem with dogs on the beach and PB provided an update that EDDC has one dog warden to serve the whole of East Devon and is responsible for all PSPO spaces including beaches, parks and open spaces. The policing of the area is problematic and enforcement is difficult for a number of reasons. EDDC try to inform and educate before enforcing especially with holiday makers. PB said this issue is ongoing and work continues to resolve the issues.

#### **8. To receive an update from EDDC Streetscene on seafront, bins, toilets, and beach signs**

#### **Bins**

A bin was lost to a bin fire due to a BBQ being put in it. EDDC have replaced the bin with one from further up the beach front and have a new bin on order to replace the one moved.

There was an incident where a child burnt their feet on the remnants of a fire or BBQ buried in the sand and had to go to hospital. In response to this PB is looking at the banning of disposable BBQs on the beach. He is not getting a lot of traction with senior management at the moment but will keep trying. He stated that even if they are banned it is back to how it will be enforced.

### **Toilets**

Renovations to the Foxholes toilets will take place sometime this season.

Orcombe Point toilets are still open and PB said he understands that a local café is still looking at acquiring the toilets.

### **Showers**

The beach showers by the Octagon are inoperable. They are made to an American specification and the company who made them have gone bust. British parts cannot be used to replace the existing parts. PB is looking for funding in the next financial year to replace the showers, but this is subject to budget.

There are beach showers at Sideshore, but they are only operable when Sideshore is open.

### **Sand reported on highways and parking bays**

Sand on the road has been cleared by Highways. Streetscene have started to clear the sand in the parking bays at the Orcombe Point end and are working their way along the seafront. The highway is a DCC asset and their responsibility to manage while we are responsible for the beach area. Informally there has been a consensus in the past that we work with them and split costs 50/50, except that in this year it wasn't necessary since they had central funding for storm clearance. Should this money not be available in future the division of costs and labour will be for negotiation with them at that time

MW wanted to give his thanks to Streetscene for their work on a busy Sunday emptying the full bins.

## **9. Any other business**

PS gave an update that the lifeboat station needs a new roof, and they are hoping to start the works soon as planning permission has now gone through.

## **10. Date of next meeting: 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024 – Walkabout meeting**

To meet at the RNLI lifeboat station at 10am on the 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024.