EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party

Notes of the meeting held at 6pm on Tuesday 9th July 2024 in the Community Hub at Sideshore

Present

Councillor Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor Graham Deasy	GD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Andrew Woodward	AW	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Louise Venables	LV	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Daniel Wilson	DW	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Andrew Toye	AT	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Mike Rosser	MR	Exmouth Town Council
Lisa Bowman	LB	Exmouth Town Council
Zoey Cooper	ZC	Exmouth Town Council
Lou Doliczny	LD	Transition Exmouth

Guest

Gareth Bourton	GB	East Devon District Council

Apologies

Councillor Andrew Colman	AC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Fred Caygill	FG	Exmouth Town Council
Catherine Causley	CC	East Devon District Council

1. Welcome and apologies

TD welcomed members to the meeting, apologies were noted and introductions were made for the purposes of guest Gareth Bourton. ZC introduced Gareth Bourton, Recycling and Waste Manager at EDDC.

2. Meeting notes (14th May 2024) were approved and there were no matters arising.

GD proposed to accept the previous notes.
AW seconded.

3. To receive an update from EDDC

There was no update from EDDC and this agenda point was therefore replaced by a talk and Q&A with Gareth Bourton about waste streams in Exmouth. Some highlights from the talk and Q&A:

- We are a consumer-driven, throw-away society with a lot of waste! Behaviour change, including a move towards reusing and recycling, needs to happen in parallel with improved waste management.

- There is a lack of processing capacity and an end-user market for soft plastics/film which is why they are not currently collected in East Devon. In theory, they should be one of the few items that go into the general waste bin (unless they are dropped off at a supermarket that collects and recycles them).

- Residential waste is segregated at source. This works well in East Devon. DEFRA is putting pressure on all LAs to take this approach.

- The EDDC waste reduction strategy is a blend of restricted capacity (smaller bins) and restricted frequency (collection days).

- The AHP trial in Cranbrook is the first trial in the UK. 25% will be recycled into fibre board for construction and / or insulation and / or aggregate for roads. There is currently support for reusable AHPs in Exmouth.

- Pizza boxes CAN go into recycling providing they are not covered in food. EDDC will do more to promote this. **ACTION**: ETC to help promote this.

- StreetScene does a very limited amount of recycling owing to such high levels of contamination in the recycling bins on the street. A discussion followed about the types of cups cafes should offer for takeaway (if not using the Exmouth Cup). GB's advice was to think about the upstream material and process as opposed to the waste stream as most of these cups will go into general waste and will not be recycled. They will most certainly NOT be composted as we do not have this facility in Devon. Biodegradable and/or compostable cups (like VegWare) must go into general waste and should not be put into the food waste bin. GB provided some information on a compulsory cafe cup "take-back" scheme that DEFRA is working on that should launch March 2026 when the infrastructure is ready to accommodate the initiative. **ACTION**: ZC to send GB the Egreen cup details as EDDC may not have the processors to recycle this cup.

- Dog bins - EDDC is not providing more dog bins and should a Town Council provide them, they will not be emptied. Dog waste must now go into the general waste bin. NB: the EFW facility (Energy From Waste) must have mixed dog poo and litter.

- There will be a deposit return scheme for bottles and / or cans in 2027 unless the new government wants to bring this date forward.

- EDDC promotes recycling of food waste and composting through the Recycle Devon team (DCC). Food caddies (for indoors) are provided free of charge and can be ordered through the EDDC website. Green/compostable bags should not be used in the food caddies/food waste bins as they break apart and get wound around the sorting machinery. Reusing plastic bags (eg bread

bags) is preferential as they can be easily removed. **ACTION**: ETC to post about this.

- There was a question about whether the new government will be more interventionist. GB agreed there has been much stalling in this sector and hoped to see more action and momentum from the new government.
- For further questions email the team recyclingwaste@eastdevon.gov.uk OR email Gareth directly: gbourton@eastdevon.gov.uk
- At ZC's request, GB agreed to include a nudge to customers (online and over the phone) to consider cloth/reusable nappies when they request a larger bin for disposable nappies. **ACTION**: ZC to email GB with details.

4. To receive an update from Transition Exmouth

- The Pride event was a success. Transition engaged with the public and resourced the water refill station with Exmouth Cups.
- The Solstice activities in the Sideshore Hub were fun and well attended.
- The e-Cargo bike is being loaned to Parallel 50 for deliveries for a month.
- The Friends of the River Exe (FORE) group is continuing. The Festival of the River Exe in September may become more of a Campaigns Week.
- Transition is actively connecting with other affiliated groups (including the Tiny Forest and Mushroom), and supporting with insurance etc.
- The Transition website is being improved so it's cleaner and easier to use.
- The calendar of eco events/activities is now live and on the site. Transition will promote this widely. Any updates should be sent to: transitionexmouth@gmail.com.
- There is a big focus on gathering volunteers for one-offs and ongoing events.
- LB mentioned an ETC plan to do a show-and-tell for all community groups and clubs in the marquee in the Strand during the Xmas period (December 18th). LD suggested promoting a Zero Waste/Low Impact Xmas message.
- Transition is looking for volunteers for the core team and wants to grow the database of active and engaged members.
- At the Round Table (9th July, 11am)) in the Sideshore Hub there was an update about the Mushroom project from Craig Jolly. Craig is going to coordinate and 'join up' the various groups in Mushroom to avoid duplication

of effort and make more efficient/amplify food distribution. Transition feels there is also a role to play in *reducing* waste.

5. **To receive a proposal from Councillor Dan Wilson for Exmouth to be Britain's Greenest Town by 2027**

According to DW, the goal is to bring the people of Exmouth along with a shared vision, support local businesses and actively engage the community in what we can do together (regardless of politics) to tackle the climate and nature emergency – and put our town on the map.

There was a discussion around the parameters of 'Britain's Greenest Town' - questions regarding the criteria, measurement and data capture for achieving the accreditation. There were some reservations around the credibility of ETC both devising the criteria and then awarding the town with the achievement. There were questions regarding other towns and whether they could also try to attain the award – whether there was already an independent 'greenest town award' and, if not, whether this should/could at least be a county-wide initiative. There were some reservations about the competitive nature of the bid and how the language would need to be carefully shaped to be inclusive. LB expressed concerns regarding ZC's capacity to take on more work. LB also mentioned that ETC is entering the Star Council Awards and has a good chance of winning the Climate Response of the Year award. DW assured Members that he would take up the workload involved with achieving Britain's Greenest Town. GD said he would provide support to DW.

MR explained that the Green Party already has a document that would outline how Exmouth can be a green town.

It was agreed that DW should provide more details on the criteria for the award and provide more specifics on how such an accreditation might work. Getting the community groups around a table to brainstorm some ideas could be a good first step.

6. **To provide a brief update from ZC regarding ongoing projects.**

Owing to a lack of time, it was agreed that ZC would email an update regarding ongoing projects.

However, the proposal for a **Film Series** was discussed. LV proposed that ETC fund a series of regular film nights in the Hub at Sideshore or in the Town Hall, relating to the climate and nature emergency. The films would be free to attend. Costs would be incurred due to licensing fees and ZC estimated approximately £500 for the first six months.

It was agreed that ZC should compile a list of films with costs attached to be discussed in the next meeting as there was some concern regarding the audience reach and whether donations should be requested.

Samudra (and waste stream): Samudra is currently collecting empty plastic

bottles and cups. NB: s*ince meeting, Samudra has been emptied and there was little to no contamination. The plastic will go to Camperdown and be picked up by Coastal for recycling.*

Cigarette ballot bin(s): the ballot bin will be installed outside the Railway Club to celebrate Plastic Free July. Date tbc. The first ballot will be: Devon cream tea – Jam first or cream first? ZC will alert Members regarding a photo opportunity and press release.

Reusuable nappy scheme and period products – the nappy scheme has launched and the group (Bosom Buddies) are meeting on the second Tuesday of every month in the Hub at Sideshore. There will be a Feeding Tent in Manor Gardens during the festival and the Eco Gazebo will be promoting reusable nappies and period products.

The Exmouth Festival – plans are underway for an Active Travel Hub in the Strand and an Eco Gazebo in Manor Gardens, with a roving team of Exmouth Green Team volunteers. The Eco Gazebo will focus on Waste (Exmouth Cup, reusable nappies and period products); nature recovery (and a green pledge tree) and plant-based food. There will be a clothes rail to promote clothes swapping. The Active Travel hub will reward those who walk or wheel or take public transport to the festival with home-made medals. Please see the full Sustainable Festival document for details on all our green festival initiatives.

Plant-based initiatives – ETC is actively promoting the plant-based bring&shares at the Sideshore hub, kindly organised by LV. ZC has been in discussion with the Head of DT at the Community College and ETC has agreed to support them at the open evening in September (26th) and to help organise a plant-based Master Chef competition with Year 7s next year. ZC is working with local food community groups and Mushroom to figure out the best way to offer cost-effective advice/workshops on how to grow food, source local food, eat less meat, cook plant-based meals.

Wildlife Garden scheme (DWT) & water butts: ETC has started posting about the Wildlife Garden Award, rewilding gardens and encouraging biodiversity. There will be a focus on nature connections on the stall in Manor Gardens during the festival. There are x3 water butts installed in Exmouth now.

Fresk training – ZC has completed x2 Fresk training events. All Councillors are urged to attend the next session in September as the Fresk is a great way to understand the science of climate change, talk to others about it and work through solutions.

7. **To receive an update on other relevant matters from Town Council working parties and outside body representatives**.

No updates were made.

8. Any other business

ZC proposed that ETC takes over the content of the Getting Around Exmouth site that has been taken down owing to Jan Gannaway no longer managing the hosting fees (£40 per month). LB said that although the content is not a good fit for the ETC website, Transition might review, update and manage the content in line with the Our Place Our Planet site. ETC will cover the cost of the Getting Around Exmouth hosting fees while the site is under review.

9. Date of the next meeting tbc

The meeting ended at 8pm.

NB: *The next meeting date is tbc as ZC is on leave on the proposed date of 14th August.*