EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Town Maintenance Overview Working Party

Notes of the meeting held on Thursday 12th September 2024 at 10am via Zoom.

Present

Councillor Ian Kirvan	IK	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Maddy Chapman	MC	Exmouth Town Council
Chetna Jones	CJ	Exmouth Town Council
Sam Dorman (note taker)	SD	Exmouth Town Council

Apologies

Councillor David Poor	DP	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Joy Whipps	JW	Exmouth Town Council

1. **Welcome and apologies**

IK welcomed members to the meeting. Apologies were noted as above.

2. **To approve the notes of the meeting held on 11th July 2024 and any matters arising therein**

The notes of the previous meeting held on 11th July 2024 were proposed for approval by MC, seconded by OD, and agreed by all.

Matters arising –

Item 6 – To receive an update on general Town Maintenance work

- For members information, IK reported he had been contacted from a member of the public about a cut through at the bottom end of Priddis Close that runs along to Bankside and this being very overgrown with overgrowth and undergrowth. It has been reported to Devon County Council who have contacted the landowner who he assumes is the Housing Association.

- IK asked CJ about the Town Maintenance team job description and if it had been circulated to members. CJ will send it out.

3. **To receive an update on the use of the Probation Service for Town Maintenance projects**

CJ's conclusion to using the probation service for projects was that there are many drawbacks such as heavy admin, the probation service unable to take away and dispose of hedge and strimming waste and the restriction of the project needing to be in the town centre because of toilets.

Members discussed the possible projects that they could help with and agreed to re-visit this if and when a one-off project comes up.

Hiring seasonal workers and work experience students to help the Town Maintenance team was discussed. Currently ETC do not have the budget for seasonal workers, but members thought it would be a good idea to contact Bicton College to see if any students were interested in doing some work experience with the maintenance team.

4. To receive an update on graffiti within Exmouth

The town and surrounding areas have taken a bit of a hit with the tag “this is not a bin”. No sooner are the tags removed; the tag appears again.

OD reported that a bench on footpath 11 that runs along the estuary has been covered in graffiti.

IK will email CJ with details of graffiti.

IK questioned if there would be a meeting with the new inspector to discuss low level matters such as criminal damage. CJ added that Lisa Bowman is still pursuing in trying to set something up.

ACTION: IK to email CJ with details of graffiti.

5. To receive an update on grass cutting

CJ emailed Steven from Idverde to ask when they were due to do the next cut. Steven confirmed it was booked in however due to the weather they were unable to complete work. The next cut is now due to take place next week.

Members discussed grass cutting and how many cuts are still due. It was felt that when it gets to the end of the final cut the contract with Idverde needs to be reviewed.

6. To discuss the grass bank on Dinan Way between Shakespeare Way and Byron Way and to consider adding to the existing grass cutting contract in view of DCC’s response

The overgrown grass bank owned by DCC was discussed after CJ updated members about the email received from a resident in the area and her dog receiving vet treatment due to a grass seed. The grass bank in question was confirmed as the bank between the back gardens and footpath.

The resident had approached DCC but hadn’t made any progress and therefore wrote to ETC again. It was agreed that the item would be discussed with members of this working party.

CJ asked for members views about this section being added to the Idverde contract. It was discussed and mentioned that an area outside of Goodmoores housing and on the contract for Idverde may be duplicated and this will need looking at. Members were reminded that much of this work is on DCC land and with our limited resources we need to be mindful about how much more we take on.

Members added that we need to be careful that we do not make a precedent to residents expecting ETC to take on other areas.

It was concluded with members agreeing that Idverde include the flat grass area but not the bank (slopes down to back gardens). CJ will go back to the resident and explain our intentions and provide the resident with DCC councillors email addresses to report to them. CJ will also arrange to meet Steven from Idverde to show him the area to be added.

ACTION: CJ to arrange a meeting with Steven from Idverde and to go back to the resident with outcome.

7. To receive an update on work at Gorfin Hall

The Town Maintenance team have been busy working at Gorfin Hall while it is being refurbished. Gorfin Hall was in quite a state and the team have been focussing on the outside, painting the fence, cleaning the guttering, cutting the grass, cutting back overgrown hedges and painting sheds. They have also undertaken some work inside the hall.

This work has highlighted that Gorfin Hall needs regular outside maintenance which CJ thinks going forward outside work such as grass cutting and cutting hedges needs to be built into the team's schedule. Members felt this was a good idea and MC suggested that some of the income from Gorfin Hall can be added into the Town Maintenance budget.

The nursery has been told that at the end of each day they need to leave the hall in a clean state with everything put away.

An inspection for Gorfin Hall has been set for 19th September for members of the Gorfin Hall committee.

8. To receive an update on general Town Maintenance work

Tony returned to work on light duties and is now helping at Gorfin Hall with the rest of the team.

Prior to Gorfin Hall the team have been road weed clearing, completing some grounds maintenance work where they have cleared the rose bed near the Magnolia Centre. Flowerbeds are being kept going as long as we can with the lovely perennials providing colour as Winter flowers will not be purchased this year.

Going forward the team will be having a tidy up and working on the flower towers towards the end of October. Members added how the flower towers and the hanging baskets in the Magnolia Centre are looking really good.

The bowser trailer has been in for a service. The weed ripper trailer is to be serviced and it will have a new strengthened aluminium base fitted so the weed ripper can be clipped in place.

Tony will be retaking his chapter 8 training as this has now expired and the refresher training is booked in for the second week of October.
Coming into the Winter the team will do more road weed clearing and CJ added we need to start thinking about working smarter and bring the work forward.
Members discussed the issue with the weed ripper and although its effective it doesn't solve the problem of the live roots.

A multi hog was discussed where this piece of equipment has interchangeable parts on it so it also sweeps footpaths and could make the process a lot quicker. The multi hog is quite expensive but other options were that the team continue with the weed ripper and hire a mini scarab to sweep or spray a couple weeks after weed ripping.

It was suggested that this was discussed at the next meeting in October as an item on the agenda.

In the meantime, CJ will do some research into the options of a Multi Hog and a Scarab.

9. Any other business

IK provided an update to members that he met with CJ in August for a walkabout off of Dinan Way. They looked at overgrown hedges on properties that were growing over footpaths. They also looked at drainage ditches that are not being maintained by DCC, where overgrowth not being cut back is causing the drain ditches to block. IK will speak to Richard Scott regarding the drain ditches.

OD invited MC, Councillor Cherry Nicholas and Councillor Aurora Bailey to look at the Tiny Forest in Carter Avenue to see the size and shape it is for the proposal at Brixington Park.

CJ gave advance notice that she would not be able to make the Town Maintenance Overview meeting planned for December. Members discussed and decided the December meeting should be cancelled.

10. To note the date of the next meeting.

10th October 2024 – 10am.