EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party

Notes of the meeting held at 10am on Wednesday 23rd October via Zoom

Present

Councillor Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor Louise Venables	LV	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Mike Rosser	MR	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Andrew Colman	AC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Andrew Toye	AT	Exmouth Town Council
Catherine Causley	CC	East Devon District Council
Zoey Cooper	ZC	Exmouth Town Council
Adrian Toole	AT	Transition Exmouth

Apologies

Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Graham Deasy	GD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Andrew Woodward	AW	Exmouth Town Council

1. **Welcome and apologies**

TD welcomed members to the meeting and apologies were noted.

2. **Approval of previous meeting notes held on 12th September 2024 and any matters arising therein**

The notes of the previous meeting were proposed for approval by MR, seconded by TD, and agreed by all.

Matters arising: -

East Devon District Council Tree Strategy:

TD updated members that he couldn't attend the meetings on the strategy. It is currently under review at EDDC, with an overview meeting scheduled for later that evening.

ZC mentioned that Ben Coles from Treeconomics will provide an update on the strategy at the upcoming Tree Forum.

Greenest Town Initiative:

TD asked about updates from Councillor Dan Wilson, but no new information was available.

NALC Star Awards:

LB shared that finalists will be announced in November, with the awards ceremony taking place in February.

3. **To receive an update from EDDC**

Carbon Literacy Training:

Dates confirmed for training sessions. CC thanked everyone for their participation.

Decarbonising Festival Project (Exmouth Festival):

ZC and JM received praise for its success, with valuable insights for future events.

Team Expansion:

There are plans to recruit a new Support Officer and a Climate Change Manager in the next financial year to strengthen the team.

Upcoming Scrutiny Report:

A report will be presented on November 7th, highlighting progress on the current climate action plan and lessons learned.

Strategic Planning:

The new Climate Change Manager will focus on strategic project management and integrating climate goals into long-term plans, addressing both internal and external emissions.

Green Team Status:

The Green Team is active but facing engagement challenges. A new operational group may be formed to enhance inter-departmental collaboration.

Future Goals:

Aiming for a 50% emissions reduction by 2030, with a focus on realistic and achievable targets based on past experiences.

CC expressed optimism about future initiatives while emphasizing the need for realistic goal-setting to ensure success.

4. **To receive an update from Transition Exmouth**

AT thanked ETC for the £1,000 grant.

Transition is reassessing its membership to clarify roles and ensure GDPR compliance ahead of the AGM.

There’s a discussion on how to effectively allocate funds to support subsidiary groups while aligning with the carbon descent plan.

TD emphasised the need for Transition to integrate its efforts with ETC’s climate action plan.

ZC noted the monthly Round Table meetings for climate and community groups, fostering collaboration and transparency to avoid duplication of efforts.

ZC commented that Transition could serve as a central resource for climate-related activities in Exmouth, providing a one-stop-shop for information and events.

AT mentioned Transition is considering hiring someone energetic and outgoing to enhance outreach and connect with community groups more effectively.

5. **To receive a brief update from ZC on:**

- **EDDC Carbon Literacy Training**

The first carbon literacy training consists of two parts: a 4-hour in-person session followed by a 4-hour Zoom session. The initial group includes Councillors Tim Dumper, Louise Venables, Ollie Davey, Dianne Conduit, Lisa Bowman, and Nicky Nicholls, with ZC participating for insight.

Additional training groups will be formed, aiming to include a mix of staff and community members. The goal is for all councillors to achieve carbon literacy within six months.

Training Objectives:

- Establish a consistent knowledge base on climate issues, ensuring clear communication among councillors.
- Encourage behaviour change and significant carbon reduction pledges, potentially leading to a 10-15% reduction in emissions.
- Empower councillors to use their influence to promote sustainable actions within the community.
- CC said previous attendees have found the training valuable, noting it as one of the best training experiences.

- **Active Travel Exmouth**

In a recent meeting, ZC discussed revitalizing the Active Travel Exmouth Group following a successful screening of *Chasing the Sun*, which sparked community interest in biking, walking, and using public transport. To enhance this effort, and owing to time pressures on Jan Gannaway, it had already been decided to transfer the management of the "Getting Around Exmouth" website to Transition, supported by funding for a year from John Petty.

An initial gathering in the Town Hall on October 7th attracted eight participants who expressed enthusiasm for organising events that promote cycling and safe riding practices. Plans include another meeting on 6th November and a screening of *Chasing the Sun* on 19th November, which will feature local active travel experts and opportunities for community input on future initiatives.

There were discussions about potential overlaps with other groups focused on rights of way and cycling infrastructure. Emphasis was placed on the need for safe cycling routes, especially for children, to encourage a cycling culture in Exmouth. Overall, the goal is to energise the community and build momentum for active travel improvements while collaborating with existing efforts.

- **Cigarette butt ballot bins**

The ballot bin at the railway club is filling up quickly and will be emptied and updated with a new question soon (by the GWR).

Interest in placing additional bins at the Bath House and the Pavilion has been expressed, with the Beach Pub also considering it pending approval from its owner.

There is a proposal to purchase two additional ballot bins for £650 total, one for the Pavilion and one for the Bath House. Each bin costs £325, and there will be no ongoing costs for emptying them, as this will be managed by the venues.

Exmouth in Bloom does not want to support a bin at the Wings Club. Plastic Free Exmouth prefers bins to be located close to the seafront.

The council unanimously approved the recommendation to spend £650 on two new cigarette ballot bins for designated sites on the seafront.

- **Real nappies and reusable period products**

The real nappy scheme launched with Bosom Buddies is running monthly drop-in sessions at the Sideshore Community Hub, which are well-attended. Plans to enhance promotion and attract more participants are underway.

Collaborations with Recycle Devon and (potentially) City to Sea aim to promote reusable period products in Exmouth primary schools. A City to Sea training programme for teachers costs around £3,000. Conversations with primary schools are underway to establish levels of interest and participation.

A table at Tesco to promote cloth nappies and reusable period products is planned, with potential staff training to educate employees on these products.

Issues were highlighted regarding students' access to leave class during periods, particularly at the Community College, where previous requests have been denied. It was agreed that this issue is beyond the scope of the CEE WP.

ZC has talked with the Exmouth Ecos (at Exmouth Community College) about reusable period products, but further engagement has not taken place yet beyond this group.

- **Green cuisine expo**

The Green Cuisine Expo, originally set for October 16 (World Food Day), has been postponed to early next year. This was due to concerns about inadequate preparation time and the need for a venue equipped with kitchen facilities for cooking demonstrations and activities.

There are plans to make the event larger and more impactful, aiming to inspire attendees to explore plant-based foods. A new date and venue will be communicated later this year.

Members agreed that postponing was a wise decision, recognising the ambitious nature of the event with the limited timeframe for execution. Excitement remains high for the revised event.

- **Exmouth Festival**

The Exmouth Festival reported a 10% reduction in travel footprint and a 5% overall reduction in carbon footprint compared to the previous year. Survey results indicated that 42% of attendees engaged with sustainability topics during the festival.

The 2023 carbon footprint served as a benchmark, and the team used a detailed spreadsheet to calculate these metrics.

The team received funding from EDDC's Green Team and Arts and Culture East Devon

ZC and Jess Magill (JM) are creating a toolkit for event organisers in East Devon, which will include the carbon footprint measurement spreadsheet, presentation materials, case studies, and resources for sustainable event planning.

Initial presentations to Sustainable South Hams, the Green Team and Arts and Culture East Devon have received positive feedback.

ZC and JM aim for a 10% reduction in carbon footprint for next year and are focused on consistent messaging about sustainability throughout the event.

MR expressed gratitude to ZC and the team for their hard work on the festival's sustainability initiatives.

- **"Chasing the sun" film night**

The event is to be held on 19th November at 6.30pm in the Town Hall.

This will be a free screening of the uplifting film "Chasing the Sun." and will include discussions on cycling and transportation in Exmouth, followed by a Q&A session.

Information is available on the Facebook page; an email will be sent to provide further details.

- **Christmas activities**

ZC informed members of some pre-Christmas activities which will involve promoting eco-friendly Christmas practices through social media with tips and advice, as well as some craft activities (November 30th) and a stall at the Winter Festival from 3pm.

On the 30th November, ideas for activities so far are:

- Art and crafts
- Christmas jumper swap
- Bread making with the Mushroom Food Network (10 AM - 2 PM)
- Wreath and/or crown making for the Lantern Festival
- In collaboration with A La Ronde, Christmas shell/craft activity

There will be an Eco Christmas Stall in the Strand from 3pm offering sustainable wrapping ideas, present and card ideas, advent calendars etc.

CC expressed an interest in participating and offered to host a workshop on fabric wrapping, with materials provided by team members. Members discussed sourcing scarves from charity shops for the workshop.

6. To discuss a potential MET office AMOC event in the town hall.

The Met Office, through Anne Marie Culhane, is seeking to host a discussion on AMOC (Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation) at the Town Hall.

The expected attendance is approximately 30 people. The focus would be to discuss the risks associated with AMOC and its potential impacts on climate.

Members raised some concerns and asked who the audience will be and added that the goals of the event needed clarification. Members also raised concerns about effectively communicating the science without causing public alarm or confusion.

There was a discussion around potential costs for using the Town Hall facilities, with an emphasis on ensuring that public funds are not used for private events without justification.

ZC will attend a planning meeting on November 8th to gather more information and members agreed to wait for ZC’s insights before making a final decision on using the Town Hall

Overall, there is a willingness to support the event, pending further details.

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

The Dinan Way extension project is moving forward, with concerns about the environmental impact, particularly the loss of hedgerows. Plans are in place to replace these as required by planning consent.

Discussions included evaluating the carbon footprint of the new road, considering both potential reductions in heavy traffic and the risk of increased vehicle demand.

The winter 95 bus service along the seafront has been cancelled, likely leading to more car use in the area.

Concerns were raised about rerouting and reduced bus service frequency, which could negatively impact transportation options and emissions.

Public Rights of Way: The need for clearer signage and guidelines regarding path usage for cyclists and other users was highlighted.

It was suggested to consolidate discussions about public rights of way within the dedicated working party to streamline efforts and avoid overlap.

There was agreement on the importance of collaboration between the active travel group, public rights of way, and transport forums to improve pathways and public transport services.

Continued discussions are needed on shared path definitions and maintenance responsibilities with Devon County Council. Ongoing communication with the public rights of way working party will help address these issues effectively.

8. **Any other business**

Installation of bike repair stands, initiated by Nicky from Sideshore, with a suggestion for locating them at the railway station and at Sideshore. ZC suggested trialling one at Sideshore. Each stand costs approx. £1,000. Nicky is looking to ETC for some funding support. The stand would provide a secure place to raise the bike, use some basic repair tools and/or pump-up tyres. At Sideshore, the pump could also be used for inflatable boards etc.

Previous funding attempts through the Community Improvement Fund (CIF) for improvements to the area around the railway station were delayed due to COVID. These plans had included such a bike stand. A new application could be explored if the Sideshore stand is well-received.

Some members expressed doubts about the stands being used effectively or becoming vandalised. Suggestions included making the stands robust. The active

travel group will be consulted for feedback on potential usage, with further discussions planned for future CEE WP meetings.

9. Date of next meeting

20th November 2024 (10am – 12pm) in person at the Town Hall.

The meeting ended at 11.46.