EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Exmouth Transport Partnership

Notes of the Zoom meeting held at 10am on Tuesday 3rd December 2024

Present

Cllr Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Cllr Pauline Stott	PS	Exmouth Town Council
Cllr Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Cllr Ian Kirvan	IK	Exmouth Town Council
Cllr David Poor	DP	Exmouth Town Council
Mike Tucker	MT	DCC Public Transport
John Petty	JP	Active Travel Exmouth, & Exmouth Community Association
Jan Gannaway	JG	Active Travel Exmouth, & Sustrans
Stuart Coles	SC	DCC Highways
Phillip Morgan	PM	DCC Highways
Hannah Clark	HC	DCC Transportation Strategy Manager
Richard Easthope	RE	EDDC Parking Services Manager
Tony Jackson	TJ	ALRUG (Avocet Line Rail Users Group)
Joe Beckley	JB	Stagecoach Operations Manager
Lisa Greenway	LG	Exmouth Town Council (Notetaker)

Apologies

Cllr Fred Caygill	FC	Exmouth Town Council
Lisa Bowman	LB	Exmouth Town Council
George Shorters	GS	Exmouth Taxi Drivers Association
Sam Jeffcoat	SJ	DCC PROW Warden for Exmouth

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1. Welcome, introduction and apologies

TD welcomed members to the meeting and noted apologies.

2. To approve the previous meeting notes from the 15th of October 2024

PS proposed and OD seconded the accuracy of the notes from the meeting on the 15th of October. The meeting notes were approved.

3. Matters arising from the previous meeting

No matters arising however PS wanted to express her sympathy for the owners of the Exmouth ferry that caught fire. TD suggested that ETC send a letter of condolence on behalf of the council, members agreed.

6. Stakeholder reports:

a) Stagecoach

JB mentioned that their main changes to services occur in September and April, with planning already underway for April. Feedback from punctuality and customer satisfaction is being reviewed. Positive feedback was received for both the 57 and 99 routes, and the 157's school issues have settled as the new term progresses. Regarding the 95 route, feedback is being considered for next year, with a meeting planned in a few weeks. It has had a successful year in terms of passengers and revenue.

JB asked about upcoming roadworks in Exmouth, expected to impact routes 57 and 96, particularly in January. TD shared that a report from DCC would be available, though discussions are still ongoing.

OD raised concerns about the bus tracking app, explaining that buses often disappear from the app even though they are still running. JB acknowledged the issue and promised to raise it with the commercial and IT teams for resolution.

PS raised concerns about elderly passengers who struggle with having to change buses and walk long distances due to a lack of immediate connections. JB confirmed that this issue is being reviewed, but any changes would not occur until April. PS also mentioned the two-fare system, which passengers find unfair, especially when they have to pay for two separate journeys. JB confirmed that this issue, along with the need for better connections, is on the agenda. PS also requested that the 99 route extend to the seafront during summer months to reduce crowding and improve pedestrian safety. JB acknowledged that there has been significant feedback about this issue and a decision will be made for next year.

JB will follow up with the commercial team regarding the app issues, potential changes to fares, and better connections between bus routes. Discussions about the 95 and 99 routes, especially in terms of the seafront, will continue in upcoming meetings.

DP raised concerns about the 97 bus service, which now operates every 75 minutes and causes confusion for passengers due to its irregularity. JB confirmed that the issue would be addressed with DCC, as they support the route. TD clarified that while the 97 route is not affected by the weak bridge, the 98 route is.

DP inquired about possible new routes into Exeter, with the Dinan Way extension making it easier to travel from Exmouth and North Exmouth to the A376. JB promised to check with the commercial team to see if any routes are planned once the road extension is completed.

TD provided a detailed update on the roadworks related to the Dinan Way extension. Utility works are set to begin in January 2025, with roundabout works planned from January to mid-July and May to October 2025. He expressed concerns about how the roadworks especially during peak hours, would affect bus schedules, particularly for the 57 and 96 services. The traffic lights at key locations will be manually controlled during peak hours to help manage the flow.

PS raised concerns that traffic congestion was already affecting bus services, especially near the roundabout works, JB acknowledged the disruptions and their impact on the 57 and 96 routes.

To address these concerns, JB promised to discuss the issues with the commercial team and consider solutions for resilience in the timetable. It was agreed to arrange a follow-up call to discuss the situation with MT and Rachel from Stagecoach.

JB left the meeting.

c) EDDC Car/Cycle, Coach & Lorry Parks & Electric Vehicle Charging

RE provided an update on the winter parking offer, which has started with a 4-hour restriction in the three busiest car parks. However, there hasn't been much difference compared to last year, and RE is still gathering data for further analysis. RE mentioned that all the Imperial Road EV charges are now live.

RE stated that there have been no issues with coach or lorry parking despite the changes. The estuary car park has been used as a temporary compound for flood defence work and

the breast screening unit, which is expected to remain for about 8 weeks, though the period may extend.

TD mentioned that there has been positive feedback on social media, particularly regarding the new parking restrictions. People have appreciated the changes, especially short-term parkers who previously struggled to find spaces. He also noted that there has been a consultation on extending the resident parking permit area to Park Road and Carter Avenue, which could lead to additional displacement parking issues. A report will be discussed at the upcoming HATOC meeting.

TD provided an update on Exmouth's coach-friendly status, although the inspection by the Confederation of Passenger Transport was delayed due to weather, the inspector was optimistic about renewing Exmouth's status. If successful, this would help attract more coaches to the area.

OD inquired about the proposals for camper van parking at Foxholes car park. RE confirmed that a public consultation has been drafted and will go live in the New Year. The consultation will focus on improvements such as waste disposal, water provisions, and signage, and will inform any positive changes that are put forward to the EDDC Cabinet Committee for decisions on overnight motorhome parking. Despite some vocal opposition, the process is ongoing, and the consultation will help guide any potential changes.

d) Active Travel

Members discussed concerns about the Dinan Way extension, particularly regarding the routing of cycling paths. Some members suggested a shared path alongside the extension, while others proposed using Summer Lane, which will be closed off to through traffic, to reach Courtlands Cross. There was also debate about the need for a crossing at Courtlands Cross. Some councillors felt there should be a crossing directly to Courtlands Lane, while others believed widening the existing pavement to the pelican crossing might be enough.

A positive development was the plan to meet with Devon County Councillors Richard Scott and Jeff Trail, key figures in the project, to discuss improvements for active travel in Exmouth, particularly regarding cycling and walking infrastructure. Additionally, the group is having a stall at the Jingle and Mingle community event being held on the 18th of December in the Christmas Market marquee in the Strand to promote active travel initiatives, which will likely include activities similar to those held at a Salvation Army event the previous Saturday.

JP emphasised the need for detailed drawings of proposed cycle paths to avoid issues like those faced with the "ill-fated gateway" project. He expressed concerns that the Dinan Way extension path might be too narrow and questioned the feasibility of a multi-user path given the current road situation. There was also confusion about whether the path would be on one side of the road or both, with recent updates suggesting it will be on one side only.

JG raised concerns about discouraging cyclists from using Littlemead Lane, a vital traffic-free route. Some residents might object to cyclists using it, but JG argued that it's an important and safe connection.

Members discussed issues with cycle parking. Many racks outside the old post office had disappeared, and they were supposed to be replaced. OD mentioned that the Claremont Health Centre lacked adequate cycle parking, which was a concern for those promoting active travel. A new map of cycle-friendly paths is being created, focusing on shared paths and areas where cycling is allowed, and removing areas with barriers or insufficient space.

PS noted issues with traffic on Featherbed Lane due to ongoing diversions, and residents not properly informed, which led to heavy traffic in the area.

e) Taxis

There was no representative present and no report was received.

f) GWR

There was no representative present and no report was received

h) DCC highways

TD inquired about the potential new pedestrian crossing at Courtlands Cross. SC stated that the engineering design team are working on this, but there was some debate among elected members about whether it was the right approach. The project is still under review, but it appears to be listed on the traffic network plans. Concerns were raised about visibility at the crossing location, especially with ongoing footway improvements and the hilly terrain.

Featherbed Lane was discussed as a potential route for diversions due to the Dinan Way extension, but there are concerns about the weight restriction on the road. PS raised concerns about large vehicles (buses, transporters) using Featherbed Lane despite restrictions. SC suggested involving the police for enforcement. TD confirmed Stagecoach had advised their bus drivers not to use Featherbed Lane.

Moorfield Road and Green Close were discussed in terms of bus routes and traffic issues. There were concerns about difficulty for buses to navigate Green Close due to parking. SC advised that there are ongoing discussions with Stagecoach and confirmed that buses were running through Moorfield Road to Green Close, but some routes weren't consistent.

PS reported dangerous parking at Iona Avenue's corners, especially after a house was turned into flats which increased car numbers, PS requested double yellow lines to improve safety. PM suggested collecting evidence, such as photos, and submitting it to elected members to potentially implement restrictions.

PS saw a post on social media that there is a large hole on the wooden cycle track near Lympstone Manor, PM suggested reporting it through the DCC's online platform for potholes or trip hazards using the "What 3 Words" app for accurate location reporting. JG will cycle this route and take a photo of the hole.

PM provided an update on the Coast Road, stating it should reopen today after all the storm sand damage, delays in opening occurred as there were environmental issue about returning sand to the beach.

TD mentioned the community resilience working party's efforts to ensure gritting and salt bins are monitored. Councillors will report any issues regarding salt and grit bin refill needs. PM confirmed that issues with salt bins can be reported directly via the DCC platform.

g) ALRUG

TD recently attended a Devon Rail Forum where the main discussions focused on issues with GWR, including stock shortages and service challenges. TD expressed concerns about the quality of service on the Avocet Line, which is well-used but seems under-served by GWR compared to other regions. He compared the service in Devon to East Anglia, where modern bi-mode trains are in use, offering more comfort and a better service.

TJ reported that there has been little progress with GWR; services continue with short-form trains due to a lack of stock. TJ mentioned the transfer of class 175 units from South Wales, which should help alleviate stock shortages, and some might be used on the Tarka or Okehampton Line. He also acknowledged the stock issues with South Western Railway, which operates services to Exeter Central, and their old stock problems affecting the Exeter to

Waterloo line. TJ commented that East Anglia and Wales have replaced their entire stock, and this could serve as a model for other regions. TJ will forward footfall statistics to LG to circulate to members.

b) DCC Public Transport

MT confirmed that last month the Department for Transport (DFT) announced funding of approximately £11 million for the years 2025/2026. This funding is split evenly between revenue and capital, but details on how the funds can be spent are still awaited, leading to uncertainty.

MT noted the resignation of Louise Haigh, the Transport Secretary, last week. TD expressed disappointment, citing her strong performance in the role and the outdated reasons for her resignation.

Regarding future funding, there's speculation that a three-year funding package will be announced in the next financial year. Once details are clear, MT stated that planning for a long-term network can proceed, but for now, plans are on a year-by-year basis.

TD raised a question about the 57 and 99 bus routes, asking whether a single fare system (through ticket) could be introduced for passengers. MT responded that he couldn't fully comment, as both services are commercial (run by Stagecoach), and there are significant restrictions that make implementing a one-ticket system challenging.

MT left the meeting.

7. Any other business

JP shared that there has been some positive news regarding funding for the Exmouth Gateway project, which is still available to DCC. The money is expected to be allocated for active travel improvements, including work on Dinan Way, an area where improvements to pathways, crossings, and traffic calming are needed due to increasing heavy traffic. JP emphasised the importance of ensuring future plans are properly detailed and that they listen to local knowledge when making decisions.

TD agreed that the Exmouth Gateway project should go beyond just active travel and include improvements such as a proper crossing between key areas of the town to facilitate better access for pedestrians and cyclists. He stressed the need for significant investment in making Dinan Way safer for all road users, noting that while discussions around funding are ongoing, nothing concrete has been confirmed yet. PS recalled that the consultation had mentioned funding would be used for the Gateway scheme, and TD confirmed that while the scheme had been dropped, some elements, like the crossing, could still be addressed.

JG raised concerns about speeding on Marpool Hill and Bradham Lane, highlighting the dangers to both pedestrians and wildlife. She reiterated the importance of implementing a more appropriate speed limit to reduce traffic risks in the town. TD acknowledged the support for a 20mph limit in residential areas and near schools but pointed out technical challenges in implementing it across the entire town. JG suggested building community support for such measures, referencing successful campaigns in Wales where such limits had reduced accidents and improved air quality.

JG mentioned seeing maps of planned roadworks along Dinan Way on social media. While these maps showed some details of the active travel routes, they did not include specifics about crossings. TD noted that the plans for Courtland Cross should be explored further and promised to raise the matter with LB.

4. **To receive an update on the Dinan Way Extension Scheme**

This was discussed in item 6.

5. **Update on the Devon Rail Forum**

This was discussed in item 6g.

8. **Dates of 2025 meetings: 25th February, further dates tbc**

The meeting closed at 11:48