EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
HELD AT EXMOUTH TOWN HALL ON
MONDAY 20TH MARCH 2023 AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors:	S Gazzard (Mayor)	A Sadiq
	B Bailey	A Toye
	L Elson	F Caygill
	A Boatwright	E Beech
	P Stott	M Chapman
	T Dumper	J Whibley
	M Rosser	O Davey

Lisa Bowman, Town Clerk and approximately 15 electors of the Town of Exmouth.

APOLOGIES: Councillors A Bailey, J Whipps, A Whipps, F Cullis, I Kirvan, B De Saram

1. **Opening and Welcome by the Mayor**
   The Mayor, Councillor Gazzard, welcomed everyone to the meeting and signposted attendees to the Council's printed annual report which was available to take away from the meeting. A moment of reflection was held in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the war in Iraq.

   Councillor Gazzard then explained that during his tenure as Chairman of Exmouth Town Council, he had attended over 400 events and each had been an absolute pleasure to attend.

   He had also been able to raise funds for local charities, including Open Door, The Quiet Mind Centre, Exmouth Foodbank and Littleham Community Fridge. Councillor Gazzard expressed his thanks to the Mayor's secretary, Mollie Carey for her support during the year.

   Highlights of the year included the welcoming of Afghan evacuees and participation in the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations when Councillor Gazzard led the lighting of the beacon at Orcombe Point.

   Councillor Gazzard also expressed his thanks to the staff of Exmouth Town Council and serving Town, District and County Councillors and acknowledged the good working relationships which exist with the other local authorities.

2. **Minutes**
   The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Monday 11th March 2019 were proposed as a true record by Councillor T Dumper, seconded by Councillor P Stott, and approved by all.

3. **Annual Report of the Town Council**

   A printed version of the annual report was available for attendees to take away.

4. **Presentations from local organisations in receipt of grants and support from Exmouth Town Council**

The following organisations each gave a presentation explaining how the grants received from Exmouth Town Council had been used to support their organisation.

Allotment Association: Cheryl Chessum provided a report on the new, wheelchair accessible, adapted beds which have been constructed at the Hamilton Lane allotment site. The Council's grant helped with the build costs.

East Devon Parkinson's Support Group: Liz Potter and Elaine Wilson explained how approximately 500 people locally benefit from the support group, including patients and carers, through the provision of a range of activities which include exercise classes, coffee mornings and day trips. The Council's grant helps support the cost of exercise classes at the Cranford Club.

Open Door: Lisa Pike provided a report on the vital work of Open Door and its range of services, including the community café, one-to-one support, a community craft room, parent hub, support for students at the Community College and the popular men's shed. The Council awarded a capital grant towards the cost of a replacement boiler and has recently agreed further financial support for 2023/24 via a service level agreement.

Exmouth Museum: Peter Cowper gave an update on the history of the Museum and its recent initiatives, including the digitisation of valuable records which have been facilitated by the purchase of a printer / scanner supported by a Council grant.

Exmouth Town Concert Band: Geoff Smith attended on behalf of the Exmouth Town Concert band and explained that the Councils grant helps with the cost of renting a rehearsal space for the band. The band supports a wide range of events in the Town and performs in Manor Gardens on Monday evening during the summer.

6. Public Forum

A member of public asked if Exmouth Town Council would consider setting up a 'Citizens Parliament' or similar to capture public opinion in Exmouth? This was in the context of trying to galvanise support for the Town Council and the passion that people have for the Town.

At the request of the Chairman, the Clerk explained that the Council has a responsibility to manage public expectations. The idea of a Citizens Parliament is interesting but if it seeks to solicit opinion on matters which are beyond the jurisdiction of the Town Council, it could give a false impression of the Council's statutory powers and scope of influence.

The question was debated with input from a number of serving Councillors. It was noted that there is a lot of confusion in the community relating to the role of the different tiers of Councils; however the residents of Exmouth do engage on maters which are relevant to them and this has been particularly evident in Brixington and Littleham recently in relation to proposed development sites.

It was agreed that the idea of a Citizens Parliament could be explored after the forthcoming elections in the context of the Town Council's aspiration to gain Quality Council gold status and the associated onus on community engagement.

The Chairman thanked all members for the attending as well as the local organisations for providing interesting presentations for the varied work that they do to benefit the community of Exmouth.

The meeting concluded at 20.25 pm.

Signed …… Date …….
(Chairman)