EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Town Maintenance Overview Working Party

Notes of the meeting held on Thursday 13th March 2025 at 10am via Zoom.

Present

Councillor Ian Kirvan	IK	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor Maddy Chapman	MC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Dianne Conduit	DC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Chetna Jones	CJ	Exmouth Town Council

Apologies

Councillor David Poor	DP	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Joy Whipps	JW	Exmouth Town Council
Sam Dorman (note taker)	SD	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 13th February 2025 and any matters arising therein**

The notes of the previous meeting held on 13th February 2025 were proposed for approval by MC, seconded by DC, and agreed by all.

Matters arising:

Item 2 – Damaged verges

IK met with Councillor Richard Scott for a walkaround, and they discussed the state of damaged verges, caused by National Grid and Wales & West. Despite previous assurances that the issue would be addressed, the verges had not improved, and in some cases, the damage had worsened. CJ's efforts to contact local authorities are ongoing.

Item 3 – Graffiti

IK asked DC if she had sent the photos of the graffiti to the street scene team for further action, but DC had not actioned this as yet. DC mentioned that some of the graffiti had been cleaned but had noticed more which she will report. Members discussed using the East Devon District Council app to report graffiti, which allows users to submit photos and pinpoint locations for faster resolution.

CJ reminded members that a Waterfront WP walkabout meeting is to be held next week where a EDDC representative will be in attendance and these issues can be raised at this meeting.

Item 5 – Cannabis smell in Magnolia Centre

The issue of a cannabis-like smell in the Magnolia Centre was raised, with speculation that it might be caused by a plant with a similar odour rather than illegal activity. The topic had sparked discussion on social media but was not seen as a major concern as it was from a plant.

3. **To receive an update on graffiti within Exmouth**

There is an ongoing problem with graffiti, particularly the pink/purple tag, found on traffic islands, public toilets (including those at Manor Gardens, the rugby club, and railway station), and areas like Madeira Walk. Some locations, such as the Imperial Rec toilets, have been heavily tagged, and concerns were raised about the lack of reporting or action from cleaning staff. The graffiti is not offensive but is widespread and unsightly. Some of these areas are scheduled for refurbishment or closure, but the Imperial Rec toilet, which is in poor condition, will eventually be removed.

Graffiti remains a significant issue around the town centre, especially in dark, less-visited areas, but there is little action being taken.

4. **To receive an update on grass cutting**

The grass cutting was delayed due to wet conditions after heavy rain. A meeting with Stephen Ball from Idverde is scheduled for Tuesday afternoon to discuss any issues.

Members discussed some of the areas to be raised with Idverde –

- Marpool Hill: This is a small area with minimal grass to cut.
- Withycombe area: SG informed members that there are several areas from Moorfield Road, Green Close, Moorfield Close where vehicles are parking on the grass verges causing damage, turning the area to mud and making it difficult to maintain the grass.
- Dinan Way: Large holes caused by utility company vehicles need attention.

IK raised an issue with overgrown hedges along Dinan Way, especially on St. John's Road and Parkside Drive, which are obstructing the grass cutting. This need’s trimming to allow proper maintenance. CJ will schedule this in for the Town Maintenance team.

OD mentioned his conversation with Marion from Exmouth in Bloom with regards to some of the daffodils not blooming along Marine Way. CJ added that the cutting should happen earlier in the year, around October, to avoid affecting the flowers. A contractor will be arranged for this timing.

5. **Update on recruitment of a new Town Maintenance member**

CJ updated members that they are hoping to fill the position by April and are currently in the process of conducting background checks.

6. To receive an update on general Town Maintenance work

The team have cleared weeds on Hamilton Lane, Ashleigh Road, Chichester Road, and nearby side roads.

Flagpole maintenance, grass cutting, and general grounds upkeep were also completed.

The compound area at Phear Park flooded due to poor drainage. The team attempted to unblock the drain, but the issue persisted after more rain. East Devon District Council claimed it was the town council's responsibility to unblock the drain, but didn't address the runoff water problem. The team will continue unblocking the drain and monitor the situation, but the drainage system may be deteriorating within the park, with unclear responsibilities.

The Berlingo van passed its MOT with no issues.

The Ford Ranger is scheduled for MOT and service in May.

CJ has no further updates on the road sweeper's arrival. An email has been sent for clarification.

The flower beds around the Magnolia area were discussed. Members felt that the areas look scruffy, with weeds growing in the brickwork and areas needing tidying up. CJ mentioned that she attempted to contact Coffee One about sponsoring the flower bed but has not received a response yet.

CJ has received an update from Marion at Exmouth in Bloom to say they have elected a new chairperson and are moving forward with their activities. A thank you card from EIB was received for the financial support from ETC.

IK raised that the bus shelter near McDonald's on Salterton Road needs vegetation cutting back as ivy and brambles are growing into it. CJ will schedule this for the Town Maintenance team to do.

7. Any other business

Members discussed the development of a roundabout near the new proposed Aldi and traffic problems it could bring. This may affect traffic flow and the verge on that side of the road. There are concerns regarding access to the new development on Bystock Road, particularly on the dangerous blind bend.

CJ mentioned there may be opportunities for the town council to meet with Aldi representatives to discuss concerns about traffic and access.

Date of Next Meeting:

The date of the next meeting is 17th April 2025 at 10am.