EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Town Maintenance Overview Working Party

Notes of the meeting held on Thursday 15th May 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 David Poor	DP	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Chetna Jones	CJ	Exmouth Town Council
Sam Dorman (note taker)	SD	Exmouth Town Council

Apologies

Councillor Olly Davey	OD	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 17th April 2025 and any matters arising therein**

The notes of the previous meeting held on 17th April 2025 were proposed for approval by SG, seconded by MC, and agreed by all.

Matters arising:

Item 2 – Damaged verges

IK reported that the damaged verges are as they were with the worst area being at the end of Gorse Lane where it meets Dinan Way. The grass seed that was put down hasn't taken although an attempt to flatten the surface has been made.

CJ visited the damaged verges in Green Close and Colloton Way and reported the verges have dried out, but lorries and cars are still parking on them.

SG raised an issue with unsafe parking in Moorfield Road: residents are using a grassy area as an unofficial car park. This area is a busy footpath, creating serious safety concerns, especially for children.

Members suggested installing wooden or concrete bollards (as done successfully at Imperial Recreation Ground). District Councillors sitting on the working party were urged to escalate the issue.

Item 3 – List of Fernbank bus shelters

An update was provided regarding an updated list of bus shelters from Fernbank. An email was sent and a reply received from Fernbank was that the agreement with Lisa Bowman hadn't yet been formalised. Once that is done, the information will be provided. The matter is currently pending.

3. To receive an update on graffiti within Exmouth

Members reported persistent graffiti in shelters and seating across areas of Exmouth including Madeira Walk, Queens Drive, Victoria Road, and around the Pavilion. Despite repeated reporting, no clean-up has occurred. East Devon District Council state they will only remove graffiti if it is deemed obscene or offensive, frustrating members due to the visual impact on high-footfall and tourist-heavy areas.

Members discussed reviving a partnership with the probation service to use offenders for community clean-up tasks (e.g., graffiti removal). This has worked effectively in Exeter and could be replicated in Exmouth. A previous attempt was abandoned due to logistical issues (e.g., access to public toilets), but town-centre work may avoid these problems. Collaboration with Inspector Matt Helm, who has shown willingness to tackle low-level antisocial behaviour was also discussed.

Members felt this needed escalating to the Scrutiny committee at EDDC and SG will contact the Portfolio holder for Tourism to apply formal pressure and raise the possibility of using Probation Service (community service) for graffiti removal.

ACTION(S): SG to contact Geoff Jung to report the graffiti and raise the possibility of using the probation service for graffiti removal.

4. To receive an update on grass cutting

CJ reported that the latest round of grass cutting has been completed. However, several issues were identified. In response, CJ sent photos of the problem areas to Idverde, who subsequently returned to address and rectify the concerns.

There were instances where areas that should not have been cut were cut, while some sections were missed entirely. IK noted that the triangle section along Parkside Drive had been cut, but a clump—possibly a type of wild flower - was left untouched. Additionally, an area along Dinan Way near the junction with Jubilee Drive was cut, but not to a satisfactory standard.

IK also spoke with an Idverde worker and discovered confusion regarding the contract requirement to strim the edges three times per year. The workers were apparently unaware of this.

CJ reported that some residents have complained about cutting during no mow May, leading to some work uncompleted.

Members discussed the grass cutting in their respective areas and were generally satisfied, although a few concerns were raised. SG expressed disappointment that the cut grass was not blown off the pavements.

MC shared that there were ongoing issues with the fibre installation in the Brixington area, which may have caused problems with grass cutting

5. To receive an update on general Town Maintenance work

CJ provided an update on road weed clearance and issues surrounding waste disposal from road sweeping. According to Environment Agency regulations, waste collected by mechanical road sweepers is classified differently from manually swept waste and must be disposed of under specific conditions, requiring either a permit or an exemption. Inconsistent advice was given when the team were trained on using the machine.

CJ met with officers from EDDC, where it was agreed to formalise an arrangement to use the facilities at the Camperdown Depot. This will allow the Town Maintenance team to operate under the depot's waste disposal permit and use the site for road sweeper washdowns. A formal agreement is being drafted and will be sent to CJ for review, with ratification to follow at Full Council.

At the meeting, concerns about duplicated work were also addressed. It was agreed that EDDC will coordinate efforts with the Town Maintenance team to avoid overlap. Although the current waste disposal process can continue, Julia Woodbridge has requested that the Town Maintenance team receive appropriate training.

Members discussed the skip at Camperdown Depot, with some believing it belonged to ETC. CJ has contacted DCC for clarification, referencing the original arrangement, but is still awaiting a response. MC will follow up with Councillor Jeff Trail to see if he can reach out to DCC highways officers for further clarification.

The Town Maintenance team has been clearing out flowerbeds and flower towers in preparation for the delivery of plants next week. Road sweeping will continue across designated zones, with attention given to how long each area takes. Grass cutting in various locations has been completed.

Joe is scheduled to attend Chapter 8 training on 2nd June.

Judging for Exmouth in Bloom will take place on 22nd July 2025. Ann Hall is the new Chair of Exmouth in Bloom. ETC recently received a thank you card from the group for the grant awarded. Exmouth in Bloom has entered the "Champion of Champions" competition, facing stiff competition from Truro, Torquay and Sidmouth.

The new information tent, funded through the VE Day budget, was successfully used at the recent VE Day event.

IK raised concerns about the untidy state of the yard, describing it as a "dumping ground." CJ confirmed she has raised the matter previously, noting that the area is currently being used to store various items, including a robot that has been there for

two years but was due to be picked up soon. They discussed the need for improved organisation and proposed solutions such as heavy-duty plastic storage containers. CJ also highlighted the need for a fireproof, lockable container for chemical storage.

IK suggested that the festival team should be responsible for clearing their rubbish, as the space is encroaching on Town Maintenance operations. CJ agreed to continue following up with the festival team on this matter.

Footpath strimming was discussed and CJ confirmed that once the flower beds and flower towers were completed this would be scheduled in.

6. **Any other business**

IK raised concerns about a local play area, citing overgrown grass and general lack of maintenance. He contacted Streetscene at East Devon District Council, which prompted some action — the grass was cut, and the play equipment was cleaned. However, IK remains frustrated by the ongoing absence of a litter bin in the area.

SG requested that the grass be cut in Ivydale. CJ confirmed that she will arrange for this to be done.

DC reported that the benches outside the kebab shop in town are broken. The shop owner has acknowledged the issue and assured that they will be removed soon.

Date of Next Meeting:

The date of the next meeting is 12th June 2025 at 10am.