EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
HELD AT EXMOUTH TOWN HALL ON
MONDAY 18TH MARCH 2024 AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors:	O Davey (Mayor)	M Hall
	A Bailey	N Hookway
	B Bailey	C Nicholas
	F Caygill	M Rosser
	M Chapman	A Toye
	A Colman	J Whibley
	G Deasy	M Williamson
	T Dumper	A Woodward

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

APOLOGIES: Councillors S Gazzard and P Stott.

1. **Opening and Welcome by the Mayor**
   The Mayor, Councillor Davey, welcomed everyone to the meeting and signposted attendees to the Council's printed annual report which was available to take away from the meeting.

   Councillor Davey then spoke briefly about his tenure as Chairman of Exmouth Town Council and said that it had been a special privilege to meet so many volunteers during the last 10 months and that it was heartening to see how many people appear to give their time voluntarily to more than one community organisation in the Town. Councillor Davey hopes to continue his association with the various organisations he has visited beyond his mayoral term when it ends in May 2024.

2. **Minutes**
   The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Monday 20th March 2023 were proposed as a true record by Councillor Brian Bailey, seconded by Councillor Joe Whibley, 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. **Presentation from Open Door**

Councillor Davey explained that his chosen charity for the year was Open Door, an Exmouth based charity which does fantastic work in the community, and he subsequently invited Lisa Pike, on behalf of Open Door, to explain more about its work.

Lisa Pike started by showing a brief video which gave an overview of the services provided by Open Door, explained that the charity had had a really challenging year and expressed her thanks to Exmouth Town Council for its financial support and also to Councillor Davey for choosing Open Door as his charity.

Open Door has seen an 18% increase in people accessing its services during the last 12 months, with noticeable increases in demand for its craft hub, parent hub, children and family services, community café and community fridge.

There has also been a 66% increase in people wanting one-on-one help and a 777% increase in homelessness – especially sofa surfing.

The increase in complex needs cases due to the combined impacts of addiction, mental health concerns, family conflict and financial worries was particularly challenging as Open Door does not employ qualified social workers and relies mostly on voluntary capacity.

The charity had also piloted Saturday opening for four months to enable people who work full time to access its services at the weekend and has successfully secured funding to open permanently on Saturdays for the next four years.

The Men's Shed initiative continues to welcome 60-70 regular weekly attendees and hosts regular breakfast meetings. It has successfully delivered over one hundred community projects over the past year and generated over £10,000 in income for the charity.

The Haven project operating from exmouth Community College continues to provide support for young people and an after-school café has been launched on two evenings per week in response to increasing demand.

The charity has three main challenges: space, people, and income but it aspires to do more for the community and would welcome any offers of support.

Councillor Davey presented Lisa Pike with a cheque for the proceeds from his recent charity barn dance and thanked her for attending. Thanks were expressed to the Mayor's secretary, Mollie Carey, for her assistance in organising a successful fund-raising event.

5. Public Forum

John Petty expressed appreciation for Exmouth Town Council staff and Councillors' sense of unity in trying to address ongoing issues in the Town but stated that the current Gateway project appears to be causing frustration. He hoped that a positive outcome for the Town could still be achieved, led by the Town Council with backing of the community.

Peter Cowper from Exmouth Museum spoke about archived records relating to sewage and public health issues in exmouth dating back to 1842. He invited people to inspect the various records the museum has in its possession.

The Chairman thanked the Town Clerk and members of staff for their support and drew the meeting to a close by inviting attendees to stay for tea and coffee.

The meeting concluded at 19.31pm.

Signed …… Date …….
(Chairman)