EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Waterfront Working Party

Notes of the meeting held at 10am on Tuesday 17th June 2025 via Zoom.

Present

Councillor Pauline Stott	ST	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor Dianne Conduit	DC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor David Poor	DP	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Mark Williamson	MW	Exmouth Town Council
Chetna Jones	CJ	Exmouth Town Council
Sam Dorman (note taker)	SD	Exmouth Town Council
Pete Blyth	PB	East Devon District Council

Apologies

Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Graham Deasy	GD	Exmouth Town Council
Dave Radford	DR	Exmouth Sea Scouts

1. **To elect a chairperson**

DP proposed, seconded by MW that PS be re-elected as Chair of the Waterfront Working Party. No other nominations were received, and all members present agreed that PS be re-elected as Chair.

2. **Welcome and Apologies**

PS welcomed members to the meeting and apologies were noted.

3. **To approve the notes of the last meeting dated 7th January 2025 and the inspection form dated 18th March 2025, and matters arising from therein**

The notes of the previous meeting and the inspection form were proposed for approval by TD, seconded by MW and agreed.

Updates from Inspection Form dated 18th March 2025

DP and JW to be added to Inspection Form as attending the Waterfront WP walkabout on 18th March 2025.

Graffiti on signs - Graffiti remains an issue along the seafront. Offensive graffiti is removed within 24 – 48 hours, other graffiti is handled when resources allow. The use of the probation service for cleanup of signs was proposed but deemed unviable as not a suitable resource. Members felt that the graffiti was very off putting for tourists.

Bitumen at Beach Gardens - Engineers say it's a minor issue due to heat expansion/contraction and not a structural concern. It's not a priority.

Water box – The existing water box might be replaced with a refill unit, but there is currently no funding. It was suggested that the Climate and Ecological Emergency WP might help with funding. CJ added that any changes must go through EDDC as this is on their land. PB said if someone did want to fund a water refill unit, he could see what he could do about facilitating this in a much more straightforward manner.

Missing Benches - Some benches between Harbour View and the Lifeboat station and Pavilion and the Premier Inn are still missing.
The ones that were structurally okay have been repaired and put back in place. Four benches – 2 wooden ones missing from Beach Gardens and 2 wooden ones that got burnt, had been delayed because the officer is on maternity leave. The new officer is contacting original donors, and where they cannot be reached, new donors are being approached. Some locations may only get one replacement bench to avoid overcrowding.

Cleaning of Shelters and Windows - Shelters have been cleaned but graffiti returns quickly. The graffiti cleaner causes clouding on polycarbonate windows which is not reversible.

Sand - Sand has been cleared from the Pavilion car park.

Beach gates - Gates (sand boards) have been removed.

Water Quality signage – The water quality sign has now been updated.

Lifebuoy – Rope has been replaced.

Missing finger post – Still missing, cannot be found.

Premier Inn – Building repairs are delayed due to an ongoing court case with developers.

Potholes – Some have been filled, others are pending.

Action points from notes of the last meeting dated 7th January 2025

Beach Management Plan - CJ reported that the Town Council did respond to the consultation.

Public toilets and showers at Sideshore – It was noted that SideShore is proposing to put in a planning application for additional toilet facilities, possibly relocating closer to the car park.

4. **To receive and note the report on the initial findings following the consultation on the Exmouth Beach Management Plan.**

A brief summary from the recent public consultation on the Exmouth Beach Management Plan was shared. The preferred option among respondents focused on protecting both the beach and the sea wall, with a strong preference for timber

groynes. These preferences align with the town's earlier submission to the consultation.

A more detailed analysis of the responses is expected in Autumn. The next formal meeting on the beach management plan is scheduled for September.

Members discussed the spending review and how the government are putting aside over the next 2 years, 4.2 billion pounds towards flooding schemes and the beach management protection. They are expanding it so that they look at economic impact as well, rather than just residential impact, which implies we are more likely to see funding.

5. **To receive the notes of newly established EDDC Blue Flag Compliance Group and to recommend to the Town Council that the Chair of the Waterfront working party attends these meetings as the Exmouth Town Council representative.**

A new Blue Flag Compliance Group has been formally set up, required by the Blue Flag award body to meet their criteria.

PS was nominated to represent the Town Council at the Compliance Group meeting. This was formally proposed by TD, seconded by MW and agreed by all.

A meeting scheduled for July is expected to be brief and for progress updates. Main meetings will be held around March/April and October/November each year.

The compliance group does not replace existing town or working groups. Concerns and updates can still be brought though usual council or working parties. The chair may call extra meetings if urgent matters arise between meetings.

The working party members agreed to recommend to the Town Council that the Chair of the Waterfront working party attends these meetings as the Exmouth Town Council representative.

6. **To discuss Water Quality signs.**

PB provided an update that the electronic water quality sign (previously at the Lifeboat station, now near the Blue Flag pole) is not working. It breaks annually, with repeated repairs and replacements. The sign is currently non- functional despite new battery. The main problem is that the electronic components are exposed to seawater spray, making them not weatherproof or fit for purpose. Other towns (e.g. Sidmouth) face similar issues, many local authorities have stopped using them.

PB explained that the signs are used to display Pollution Risk Forecasts (PRF's) from the Environment Agency. They do not show data about permitted sewage

discharges, as those are not classed as pollution. In case of an incident and sign failure, laminated notices are used at beach entrances as a fall back.

Members raised concerns about having only one sign for 2.5-mile beach. PB said that if there is a pollution incident declared by the Environment Agency, signs are put up at every entrance to the beach, so they are not relying on the one electronic sign. It was confirmed that only one set of data is used, covering the whole area, as required by the Environment Agency. While more signs could be installed, they would display the same data and cost more. QR codes already exist on signage, linking to sites like Swimfo, Waterfit and Safer Seas for up-to-date water quality information.

7. **To receive an update from EDDC Streetscene on seafront, bins, toilets, and beach signs**

Beach Showers – Property is dealing with the showers. There are plans to replace the broken shower at the Octagon with a new unit similar to the one at Foxholes toilets. The shower at Imperial Recreation ground will be kept, if possible, although concerns were raised about water access after nearby toilets are recommissioned. There is no fixed timeline, but works are likely to be in the Autumn at the earliest.

Toilets – The new seafront toilets are reported to open on 18th July 2025 though no official confirmation was available at the meeting. No anti-graffiti measure in place beyond standard cleaning and repainting. Members raised concerns that the toilets are a likely target for vandalism and graffiti. CCTV coverage is limited, and existing cameras may not clearly monitor the toilet area.

Bins – One bin that was burnt is due to be replaced but no date has been provided. No other updates were available regarding bin status or plans.

Beach signs – No further updates. (This was covered earlier under a different item agenda)

Harbour View area maintenance concern – The area around Harbour view benches still has significant weed growth, despite some initial cleanup. It appears to be the responsibility of the leaseholder, not Streetscene. Enforcement lies with EDDC Property Team but weed control in leased areas is seen as a low priority. A request was made to PB to report the issue to the property surveyor to urge action for tidiness and public appearance.

8. **Any other business**

No other business.

9. **Date of next meeting: 16th September 2025 – Walkabout meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled for 16th September 2025 at 10am, as a walkabout meeting, starting at Orcombe Point.