Exmouth Town Council
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EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party

Notes of the meeting held at 6pm on Tuesday July 1st 2025 in the Town Hall Chamber

Present

Councillor Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Dan Wilson,	DW	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Lisa Bowman		Exmouth Town Council
Zoey Cooper	ZC	Exmouth Town Council
Lou Doliczny	LD	Transition Exmouth

Apologies

Catherine Causley	CC	East Devon District Council
Councillor Louise Venables	LV	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Andrew Woodward	AW	Exmouth Town Council

AGENDA

1. The meeting began with a welcome and a note of apologies received from Andrew Woodward, Louise Venables, and Catherine Causley. It was noted that intern Annabelle Stidwell has secured a Communications Officer role with the Somerset Wildlife Trust, which was celebrated as a positive development. Annie Trenoweth continues working behind the scenes gathering survey data, while David Parslow has concluded his internship. Plans are underway for upcoming work experience placements, including one for a week in mid-July and another July 15th (from the Community College).

2. The minutes from the previous meeting held on May 20th were approved with no objections. A follow-up item concerning eco-friendly disposable BBQs was discussed, with the relevant product link being re-sent due to earlier issues accessing it.

3. ZC read an update on behalf of EDDC. The group noted that the recruitment process for the Climate Change Manager was unsuccessful, and the role will be re-advertised. A lighting replacement project has successfully reduced costs for external security lighting by 81%.

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4. To receive an update from ZC regarding projects and resources for 2025:

    - **Reusable period products**: Annie Trenoweth's survey has been distributed widely, although engaging the 18 to 25-year-old age group has proven challenging. Outreach efforts have included presentations at the local Community College, where over 400 students were engaged, and further school visits are planned. ZC mentioned she had contacted the school head to explore their Climate Action Plan and hoped to expand the initiative. With Lucy Oakes-Ash on maternity leave, a replacement is being sought to continue work with the Exmouth Eco group. There was a discussion about forming a local sustainability forum for Exmouth schools, with mixed views on whether to create a separate local event or encourage participation in a larger, Devon-wide forum. Funding for teacher participation in external events was considered as a potential support mechanism.

    - **Cigarette Butt Ballot bins**: The fourth bin has been installed at Harbour View, which is now being considered for recognition as a plastic-free champion site. However, an ongoing issue remains with the Bath House, where a bin was discarded during renovations. The team at The Bath House is seeking reimbursement from the builders to replace it.

    - **Samudra**: attention then turned to the return of the Samudra sculpture. No longer serving as a bin, Samudra will return as a decorative piece alongside a new storytelling throne created from marine waste. This installation aims to attract public interest during the festival and support ongoing engagement through storytelling events.

    - **Home Retrofit Project**: all assessments and thermal imaging have been completed, and reports have been shared with homeowners. A simpler summary report is being developed for wider community sharing. The group plans to host a public meeting, likely in September, to discuss findings and raise awareness. LB suggested we used somewhere central like All Saints for the meeting. ZC reported that while the bungalow initially showed enthusiasm, its occupants have since expressed hesitation about several recommendations, such as cavity wall insulation and air source heat pumps. This prompted a broader discussion about managing expectations and debunking myths regarding energy upgrades and their impact on property value and mortgages.

    - **Exmouth Festival**: discussion moved to the upcoming festival. The Eco Area will feature prominently, this time with larger gazebos housing various initiatives, including reusable products, water refill points, and plant-based food options. Interactive games and a clothes swap rail will be available, alongside a "plants for pledges" station using a decorated tuk-tuk filled with donated plants. Traders have been briefed to use sustainable packaging, including a newly sourced recyclable and biodegradable container brand (Veri-Green). ZC persuaded one trader to switch to more sustainable materials and add vegan options. A reduced but still visible active travel presence will be maintained at the festival. In terms of volunteers, several councillors have signed up to support the event, including DW, LV, MR and OD. However, more help is still needed. It was noted that while the District Council had previously shown interest in the festival's sustainability toolkit, engagement has since quieted down. However, the event did receive a mention in the Devon Climate Emergency newsletter.

5. **Eco-Tuk**: The group discussed branding for the Eco-Tuk. Two designs were presented. Opinions varied, but the majority favoured the more casual and playful design, which was seen

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as better aligned with the character of the tuk-tuk. Some suggestions were made to enhance the logo's visibility and ensure the QR code was secure and clearly monitored to prevent misuse. Overall, the team agreed on the friendlier design, with small adjustments to typography and messaging to improve clarity and appeal.

6. The meeting continued with a discussion on whether to pursue the **Nature Towns and Cities Accreditation**, inspired by conversations with the Climate Officer from Chippenham. The scheme is well-suited to towns like Exmouth with limited green space, aiming to connect and enhance nature areas by collaborating with landowners and community organisations. The framework includes foundation and advanced levels and helps to set targets, improve community collaboration, and secure external funding. CC supported the idea and intended to share it with key East Devon District Council members, particularly Paul Osbourne. The group discussed how the scheme could address gaps in their Climate Action Plan, especially in the nature and environment sections, by providing structured actions involving residents and residential gardens. It was suggested that it could align with possible changes in local government responsibilities and tie in with the **Neighbourhood Plan**, which already includes environmental aspirations. Members supported exploring the opportunity further, noting potential synergy and community engagement benefits. Concerns about resources and workload were raised, but it was agreed that many current projects were now self-sustaining, and this initiative could rely more on partnerships than heavy event management. A suggestion was made to use the process to better coordinate with East Devon District Council regarding land management, planting, and rewilding strategies, which currently lack transparency.
7. The meeting then moved on to a **proposal to purchase £50 of plant-based food** for outreach during the July festival's bring-and-share event. This was approved unanimously to support engagement and provide options for passersby.
8. An update from Transition Exmouth followed. The group is reaching the end of their first financial period as a CIO and will require an independent examiner. In the September meeting they will discuss what, how and when they are engaging with the community (18th September 6.30pm). They are still recruiting for a freelance contractor role, have received good candidates but the role needs shaping in light of the future of COLP and the type of community engagement work required by Transition. It was noted that one of the **Town Council's formal, elected roles** is community representation. The group agreed on the need for clearly defined roles and mutual support.
9. The meeting continued with a shared disappointment regarding the **Chamber of Commerce Business Awards**' removal of the environmental category. Attempts to engage or influence the awards were unsuccessful, and members voiced frustrations about the Chamber's closed nature and lack of transparency. Ideas were floated to encourage all entrants to briefly outline their environmental credentials as part of every application.
10. Finally, various planning and local land management issues were discussed, including a recent site visit involving concerns about tree felling and inadequate ecological data in a proposed development application. Concerns were raised about transparency, process, and communication from developers, and it was agreed that more robust data and oversight were needed moving forward.
11. The meeting ended with scheduling the next meeting for **August 12th**.