EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Town Council Premises and Assets Working Party

Notes of the meeting held on Monday 14th July 2025 at 10am in the Council Chamber.

Present

Councillor Fred Caygill	FC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Pauline Stott	PS	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Maddie Chapman	MCH	Exmouth Town Council
Lisa Bowman	LB	Town Clerk/Officer
Mollie Carey	MC	Executive Assistant

Apologies

Councillor Cherry Nicholas	CN	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Graham Deasy	GD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor David Poor	DP	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Alex Sadiq	AS	Exmouth Town Council

1. **To elect the Chair.**

PS proposed FC as Chair, MC seconded and all members agreed

2. **Welcome and Apologies.**

The Chair, FC, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received and noted.

3. **To receive an update on CCTV.**

FC provided an update on CCTV and informed members that a request has been received from the police asking the Council to consider installing a CCTV camera in Manor Gardens to help address issues such as anti-social behaviour and substance use. The Council currently has a redeployable camera that is underutilised at St Andrews Road. The police have suggested that this camera be relocated to Manor Gardens to improve monitoring in the area.

LB recalled that a previous attempt to install CCTV in Manor Gardens had encountered significant technical challenges, particularly with securing a reliable power supply. At that time, the camera was powered through existing lighting circuits which switched off overnight. This meant that each time the power cut out, the camera would shut down completely, and a cherry picker was required to restore it. Despite extensive investigations by LB and contracted electricians, no uninterrupted

power supply could be identified, and the issue consumed substantial staff time over a period of several months.

FC raised whether this power supply problem could now be revisited, suggesting that newer or different electricians might be able to find a solution. It was agreed that FC would first need to examine all existing records, surveys, and correspondence to fully understand what had previously been attempted and where the difficulties lay.

Alternative locations for the camera within Manor Gardens were also discussed. Suggestions included placing the camera near the bandstand or installing a new dedicated post to achieve a broad coverage area of approximately 325°, while being mindful of blind spots behind trees. Concerns were raised about the risk of vandalism if the camera was installed at a lower height, which would need to be addressed in any new design. This would be subject to land owner permission.

Funding was another key consideration. Members recognised that any new installation would require a detailed cost analysis to assess feasibility. Potential funding sources, such as grant funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), were identified as possible ways to help cover the cost of equipment and installation.

It was agreed that LB will review and share all previous correspondence and survey findings relating to the Manor Gardens CCTV power supply issues. A fresh feasibility assessment will be undertaken to identify potential power sources, suitable camera locations, and installation options. Once this review is complete, a cost analysis will be prepared and potential funding opportunities will be explored. The Committee will receive a further update once these steps have been completed to help inform any final decision about moving forward with the installation.

4. **To receive an update on the status of the S106 asset transfers associated with Plumb Park [allotments, orchard and play park].**

LB provided an update on ongoing discussions between Taylor Wimpey and East Devon District Council regarding the asset transfer of the allotments and orchard to the Town Council. Taylor Wimpey has indicated that they are ready to complete the transfer, but East Devon District Council has requested further steps, including an external audit, before formally signing it off. At this stage, Taylor Wimpey has started preparing legal documents for the transfer of the allotments and orchard, but the Town Council will not incur any costs or move forward until East Devon District Council confirms that the works meet the required standards and formally signs them off.

Members also noted that the play park on the site is currently in need of improvement, with issues such as limited equipment, drainage concerns, and temporary fencing in place. It was confirmed that the Council intends to review the play park's design and condition before taking on its future management.

5. **To receive an update on the CCTV system, the proposed course of action when the current data SIM contracts expire in 2026 and approve**

the cost of supply and fit for RCBO's to the existing CCTV poles at a cost of £1150.00.

Members received an update on the technical aspects of the CCTV system. It was explained that small power surges can trip existing circuit breakers, requiring a manual reset, which is not always convenient for remote equipment such as cameras. On the advice of electricians, it was proposed to upgrade these breakers to models better suited to our infrastructure, with an estimated cost of £1,150. It was noted there is no dedicated budget for this work at present, so funding would need to be identified from within service budgets or other available resources. FC proposed the recommendation to carry out the work, PS seconded it and it was agreed by all.

Members also discussed planning for the expiry of the current data SIM contracts in 2026, which enable remote access to the CCTV system. It was noted that technology has evolved considerably since the system was first installed, and that the council has an opportunity to review its long-term needs and options to ensure the system remains fit for purpose.

While the current cameras were selected for their re-deployable design, they are often used in relatively fixed locations in practice. The system's use of data SIMs has worked well for many day-to-day needs, but Members discussed some challenges encountered in handling large volumes of footage during more complex investigations, which can place demands on mobile data capacity.

It was suggested that the Council should use the period before the contract expiry to evaluate all available options, including both re-deployable and fixed models, and alternative connectivity solutions such as fibre or broadband, to see what might deliver the best value and performance for Exmouth's needs. It was acknowledged that other local authorities use a variety of systems, depending on local infrastructure and operational requirements.

Members agreed on the importance of taking a strategic, evidence-based approach, including reviewing lessons learned from the current system, to ensure any future investment delivers genuine benefit and represents good value for money. There was also discussion of exploring possible grant funding opportunities in partnership with the police and ensuring that any future system is well aligned with operational requirements.

It was further noted that any significant new investment would exceed procurement thresholds and would therefore be subject to a full competitive tender process, in line with public sector rules. LB confirmed they have had discussions with the Torbay Control Room about potential support in preparing tender documentation. It was agreed that once detailed research and costings have been gathered, any proposal for major expenditure will be brought back with a recommendation to Full Council for approval.

6. **To receive an update on the status of public toilets and to recommend that Full Council approves the decision—made under delegated authority by the Town Clerk and the Chairman of this Working Party—to underwrite the cost of re-opening the Maer toilets from mid-July to mid-September 2025.**

LB provided an update on the issues with public toilet provision in the Maer area. LB explained that the site has seen increased use due to new public barbecues but currently has no open toilets, leading to repeated fouling problems, particularly around the Beach Wheelchair Hut. The Station toilets, which were previously at risk of closure, have received a temporary reprieve until at least April next year following East Devon District Council's purchase of the adjoining mess room.

LB noted that £60,000 is already allocated in this year's budget under Asset Acquisitions for potential toilet facilities. LB reported that East Devon District Council has offered to reopen the Maer toilets over the summer if the Town Council contributes to operating costs, estimated at approximately £8,000 from mid-July to mid-September. Due to the urgency of the public health concerns, LB confirmed that she had used delegated authority to approve the expenditure so that reopening could proceed without delay.

Members agreed and supported LB's use of delegated authority to approve the expenditure for this project. Under the delegation within the Working Party's terms of reference, it was agreed to redirect the existing budget allocation originally intended for toilet facilities at the Station to cover the costs of reopening and operating the Maer toilet block for the summer period. This was proposed by FC, seconded by PS and agreed by all.

7. **To discuss a request from Holy Trinity Church for financial support to replace a steel flagpole support structure.**

LB provided an update on a request received from Holy Trinity Church, which is seeking financial support to replace the steel structure that supports its flagpole. The Church had previously raised the funds to install a new flagpole, but it has since been discovered that the existing steel support is no longer fit for purpose. As a result, the new flagpole has had to be taken down until a new support structure, estimated to cost around £30,000, can be installed.

The Church has approached the Town Council to ask whether it would consider making a financial contribution toward this work. LB confirmed that the legal restriction preventing councils from funding church building costs was lifted in December last year, so there is no legal barrier to providing support if the Council wishes.

Members suggested that the appropriate way to consider this request would be for Holy Trinity Church to submit a formal grant application for review by the Finance Committee. Members agreed that any decision on awarding financial support should

be made by the Finance Committee under the Council's established grants process, rather than at this meeting. It was also noted that, under the current grant guidelines, the maximum award would typically be up to £1,500.

It was agreed to ask Holy Trinity Church to submit a grant application for formal consideration by the Finance Committee.

8. **To receive an update on upgrade proposals for the Christmas lights display 2025.**

LB provided an update on the condition of the town's Christmas lights display. She explained that several elements of the existing decorations are now at the end of their life, including the spider lights on lamp columns, the small Christmas trees in pole brackets around the Strand, and some of the cross-street frames, all of which are faded or damaged. LB noted that last year, only like-for-like replacements were made for safety reasons, but this year a more significant refresh will be needed.

LB explained that there is funding available within the Town Management budget, although exact reserves will need to be confirmed, and that replacements will need to work with the existing infrastructure. She also described the challenges presented by the town's older catenary wires and fixtures, which are subject to wear in the seaside environment. She suggested that, alongside a plan for this year's necessary replacements, there is value in reviewing all catenery wires, brackets, and connection points to plan for longer-term maintenance and improvement.

Members agreed on the importance of maintaining an attractive Christmas lights display for the town centre to support local businesses and encourage footfall. It was acknowledged that past efforts had included business involvement, incluidng support from the Chamber of Commerce, but this has fallen away, leaving the Town Council to take on the responsibility.

Members proposed the production of a report for the Working Party, setting out:

- Short-term recommendations for this year's replacement and refresh needs.
- A longer-term review of the infrastructure condition and requirements for maintaining and upgrading the display in future years.

After some discussion, it was agreed that LB would prepare a detailed report, including costed proposals for this year's essential replacements and options for future planning, to be considered at a future meeting.

9. **To receive an update on the Town Hall (confidential part b item).**

LB provided a confidential update relating to the Town Council's occupation of the Town Hall.

10. **Date of next meeting –** to be determined by LB