EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Community Resilience Working Party

Notes of the virtual meeting held at 2pm on Wednesday 17th September 2025 via Zoom

Present

Councillor Dianne Conduit (Chair)	DC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Graham Deasy (Ex Officio)	GD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor David Poor (arrived 14:43)	DP	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Louise Venables	LV	Exmouth Town Council
Chetna Jones	CJ	Exmouth Town Council
Sam Dorman	SD	Exmouth Town Council
Pete Boorn	PB	Member of the LERT team

Apologies

No apologies noted.

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1. To elect a chairman

TD proposed, seconded by SG, that Councillor Dianne Conduit be elected as Chair of the Community Resilience Working Party. No other nominations were received, and all members agreed that Councillor Dianne Conduit be elected as Chair.

2. Welcome and Apologies

DC welcomed attendees to the meeting and noted apologies. All present members introduced themselves to PB - member of LERT (Local Emergency Response Team).

It was clarified that GD is attending in an ex officio capacity and is not a voting member.

3. To approve the notes of the meeting held on 6th November 2024

DC proposed, seconded by TD and it was agreed by members that the notes be accepted as a true record of the meeting held on the 6th November 2024.

4. Matters arising from the previous meeting.

Message in a Bottle

DC asked about the status and promotion of the "Message in a Bottle" scheme.

CJ said it was well received at last year's Jingle and Mingle event, with many unaware of it previously. Supplies of bottles are still available, and CJ will investigate distribution options. A new Exmouth Lions Club has been formed and possibly able to assist with bottles. GD to share contact details with CJ for follow-up with Exmouth Lions Club.

Sandbags

DC received an email about sandbags and sought clarity on who needs them and how distribution works.

CJ provided an update that East Devon District Council no longer provides filled sandbags—only empty ones which are distributed via parish councils. The sandbags were previously stored at AJ Taxis; now some are at the Town Hall and with volunteer councillors. Residents are responsible for filling them (garden soil, etc.); guidance is on ETC's website. In extreme weather, StreetScene may pre-fill and leave sandbags outside the depot, but this should not be relied upon.

TD holds sandbags in the Colony (flood-prone area). PB offered to store sandbags in his garage in the colonies and assist with delivery.

SD confirmed the website has an up-to-date list of holders and will verify with the football club if they still wish to participate.

5. To receive details of upcoming DCRF event on 9th October 2025 at the Beehive in Honiton

CJ promoted the upcoming Devon Community Resilience Forum event on 9th October 2025 at the Beehive in Honiton, highlighting its value and recommending attendance.

The event is funded partly by Devon County Council. It supports the creation of community emergency plans across Devon and offers advice, talks, and useful resources. Attendees interested in going should register via the link SD will circulate.

Action: **SD to circulate event information**.

6. To agree a date for another EP exercise with volunteers

CJ is planning to organise further volunteer training sessions. The previous session was many volunteers first real look at the emergency plan**.**

The training sessions will be more relevant and localised scenario focused on a low-lying area in Exmouth vulnerable to tidal access issues. The new scenario will help participants better relate and apply the plan.

The Environment Agency may not be involved this time due to staffing constraints. The training will be delivered internally**,** using lessons learned from the Devon

Community Resilience Forum (DCRF). The plan is to split the session into three stages (initial incident, response, recovery) to avoid rushing.

CJ hopes this will improve familiarity with the emergency plan and build relationships among volunteers. The sessions proposed are to start in October, with sessions every two weeks in the evenings from 6.30pm – 8.30pm to suit volunteers who work during the day.

ACTION: SD to email CRWP, volunteers and LERT team with proposed dates for training sessions.

7. To review the Emergency Plan and agree any amendments.

The Emergency Plan is being reviewed and updated as part of the annual review.

CJ provided an update that the new Environment Agency flood maps have been incorporated and contact details for two individuals have been updated. The grit bin information included is to be rechecked for accuracy.

There are two versions maintained:

- **Confidential** (for LERT members – includes contacts).
- **Public** (available online and in emergency boxes).

DC raised concerns about mobile signal black spots in areas like Littleham and Brixington and how these issues may impact emergency response and hub communication. Ward members agreed they will test network coverage in their areas, especially near community hubs. Members acknowledged that in major incidents, mobile networks may fail entirely and agreed on the need for analogue methods: Pen-and-paper updates displayed in hubs so that volunteers can then relay information door-to-door if needed.

PB inquired whether the Council has walkie-talkies available for use during an incident. CJ confirmed that the Council does not currently own any but noted that some may be available if needed. CJ will explore the cost and practicality of acquiring them.

8. To discuss updates on grit bins – members to identify and report grit bins which need replenishing in their ward.

Councillors are tasked with checking the status of the grit bins in their wards and feedback their findings to SD so she can report this to DCC.

TD reported that a few of the grit bins he recently inspected are in poor condition. The contents are low, contaminated with general waste, and the remaining salt has solidified.

SG added that most of the grit bins in his ward are solidified and a new bin has appeared at the Moorfield Road/Withycombe Village Road junction.

It was noted that the DCC interactive map is outdated and inconsistent with local knowledge.

Actions: Councillors to inspect local grit bins in their ward and report the conditions and locations. SD to email all councillors for updates and share the working grit bin list with councillors.

9. To confirm status of emergency boxes and agree to purchase any replacements.

Emergency boxes haven't yet been checked this year. Boxes will be checked to ensure all contents are in working order, in date and accounted for. Funds were allocated in last year's budget for box maintenance. Some items may need to be replaced or replenished.

New ID badges will be created for LERT members. General volunteers will receive temporary IDs on the day of an incident; this is to prevent misuse (e.g. accessing properties under false pretences). A plan is already in place for tracking who is where during emergencies.

10. Any other business

DC and TD raised the need for a public list of defibrillator locations across town as residents have asked councillors about where the nearest defibrillators are.

CJ provided the response from SW Ambulance Service after contacting them, and that they deliberately do not publish a public list of defibrillator locations due to:

- Risk of theft, damage, or misuse.
- Some defibrillator's may be unavailable during maintenance or repair.
- To avoid public relying on out-of-date information.
- NHS advice: Always call 999, and the operator will direct you to the nearest working defibrillator and provide the access code if necessary.

CJ added that there is an online tool: Defib Finder on the SW Ambulance Service website. Users can enter their postcode to view up-to-date defibrillator locations, availability, and access hours.

Members agreed that a list will not be provided.

11. To agree date of next meeting

The date for the next meeting to be confirmed.

The meeting finished at approximately 15:09pm.