EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Town Maintenance Overview Working Party

Notes of the meeting held on Thursday 16th October 2025 at 10am via Zoom.

Present

Councillor Ian Kirvan	IK	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor Dianne Conduit	DC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Graham Deasy (ex officio)	GD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Chetna Jones	CJ	Exmouth Town Council

Apologies

Councillor Maddy Chapman	MC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council

1. **Welcome and apologies**

IK welcomed members to the meeting. Apologies were noted as above.

2. **To approve the notes of the meeting held on 11th September 2025 and any matters arising therein**

The notes of the previous meeting held on 11th September 2025 were proposed for approval by SG, seconded by DC, and agreed by all.

Matters arising:

Town Centre Pavements – At the previous meeting, members discussed the possibility of jet washing the town centre pavements. MC had been in contact with a potential contractor who offered to carry out the work; however, no updates have been received since. CJ raised a concern regarding payment arrangements – if the work requires payment, proper procurement procedures (i.e. obtaining three quotes) must be followed in accordance with financial regulations.

Members also discussed organising regular litter-picking and weeding sessions in the town centre. High-visibility vests from previous "tidy group" activities remain available for use. CJ suggested liaising with Liz Oram, who had previously coordinated a successful "Spring Clean" involving local businesses and council services. IK was keen to make these clean-up sessions recurring events, potentially monthly, and hoped fellow councillors would join him to help maintain the town's appearance.

Several ongoing issues were noted in the town centre, including:

- Blocked drains causing pavement flooding, with no current maintenance plan in place.

- Persistent litter and overgrown weeds, particularly in shop doorways.
- Overflowing bins behind certain businesses (e.g. Spoken). DC has sent photographs of these issues to Cllr. Dan Wilson, who was scheduled to meet Cllr. Jeff Trail to address the matter.
- Bins and clutter on pavements near the Beacon School, posing safety concerns.

Additional concerns were raised about graffiti behind businesses and visual clutter from outdated signs and posters on vacant shop windows. DC has been removing old materials, including those on the former NatWest Bank premises.

Members also highlighted an increase in unauthorised signs and barriers. These are normally removed by the Highways Officer, but a noticeable rise in such items has been observed recently.

Bus Shelter list - The working party are still awaiting an updated bus shelter list from Fernbank. SD will follow up on this once she returns from annual leave.

ACTION(s)

- IK – to email all Town Councillors to gauge interest in participating in clean-up activities.
- SD – to follow up with Fernbank regarding the updated bus shelter list.

3. **To receive a proposal from Exmouth Rotary for seating in the Magnolia Centre in recognition of their 100th anniversary.**

Exmouth Rotary would like to install a circular bench around the central plinth in the Magnolia Centre to mark their 100th anniversary. The bench would be backless, allowing access to the centre, and this proposal would be fully funded and installed by the Rotary. They may also contribute to a planter or floral display in the middle.

CJ suggested incorporating a tiered planter, which could be decorated as a Christmas tree during the festive season, utilising the existing (but currently capped) electrical supply in the area. This would create a year-round feature and improve the appearance of the centre.

The proposal was well received and supported in principle by members. They agreed it would enhance the space and welcomed the Rotary's involvement.

CJ will await the final designs and detailed proposal from Exmouth Rotary. Once received, she will confirm the working party's support with Devon County Council and report back.

ACTION(s): CJ to follow up with Exmouth Rotary regarding final designs and explore planter options.

4. **To receive an update on the graffiti within Exmouth**

Recent graffiti activity has been quieter than usual overall.

- Maer Toilets (Seaside): A large blue graffiti tag reading *"Slingers and Slingers UK"* was observed. Local cleaning staff were informed and confirmed they would report the incident; however, no confirmation of removal has yet been received.
- Path from the Beacon Hotel to Madeira Walk: Graffiti featuring the text *"www.slingers.uk"* was identified. While DC had initial concerns about potential gang links, no supporting evidence has been found.
- Manor Gardens (Toilet Area): Previously covered graffiti has been overpainted with bright orange tags, making the area more visually prominent.
- Bus Shelters and Signage: These remain free from tagging at present.

Members noted concerns that graffiti activity may increase as the darker evenings approach. The reported graffiti is on East Devon District Council (EDDC) property, and members were reminded to report incidents directly to EDDC for prompt removal.

5. **To receive an update on grass cutting.**

Idverde carried out grass cutting during the week commencing 6th October. The work appeared to cover all usual areas including Marine Way and Dinan Way. Overall, the feedback was that the quality of the cut was good.

There was frustration about delays — the September cut didn't happen despite reminders, meaning the grass was left too long before October. Idverde' s visit came just a week after Devon County Council (DCC) contractors had done their visibility verge cuts, leading to some overlap.

Specific Problem Area – Bunn Road: One section of verge (between the resident's house and a chalet bungalow near Gorse Lane) was missed by both DCC and Idverde. CJ will photograph the missed section and email Idverde to ensure it is cut.

IK reported that the issues with the resident on Bunn Road appears to have calmed down since a letter was sent; no further confrontation reported.

A final cut in November is proposed before frost sets in, as grass is continuing to grow.

Members plan to review the verge areas on Dinan Way before next year's schedule due to changing verge ownership/maintenance, particularly at the Hulham Road end.

Next year's cycle should start again with an early spring cut (around March**)**, which worked well this year.

6. **To receive an update on general Town Maintenance work**

The Town Maintenance team has been carrying out road weed clearance along Prince of Wales Drive, Dukes Crescent, Masey Road, Newlands Avenue, and Holland Road. Additional clearance work has also been completed around Moorfield Road, Colleton Way, and Green Close. Grounds maintenance and grass cutting have continued as planned with road sweeping ongoing in the Withycombe area.

Due to poor growth of winter annuals in previous years, the team is focusing on maintaining existing plants for as long as possible and refreshing the perennial beds to ensure they remain attractive throughout the winter months. Bulbs will be purchased to ensure early spring colour, particularly in the Magnolia Centre.

CJ reported that the recently purchased extendable hedge cutter was recently used to trim the hedge at the Salterton Road/Hamilton Lane junction following a resident complaint.

The flower towers have been emptied in preparation for new planting next week.

Members discussed a number of local maintenance concerns, particularly regarding Cranford Avenue and Douglas Avenue. DC highlighted the poor condition of Douglas Avenue, especially near the Deaf Academy. While the focus remains on residential areas, members agreed to consider addressing issues on a few major roads such as Hospital Corner and top of Bradham Lane, both noted to be in poor condition.

DC also raised concerns about tree regrowth following pollarding along the pavements of Douglas Avenue, suggesting a management plan. IK noted similar issues in Foxholes. GD, as Ward Councillor, offered to write to Devon County Council regarding these tree maintenance issues.

CJ reported that the road sweeper brushes have worn down and will be reordered.

Members discussed budget considerations and agreed to ensure involvement in pre-budget setting discussions to be held in November and December.

IK noted that the rose bed in the Magnolia Centre has again become overgrown with weeds and litter. CJ will arrange for the Town Maintenance Team to include this area in their schedule.

7. Any other business

No other business.

8. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 13th November 2025 at 10:00am via Zoom.