EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party

Notes of the meeting held at 6pm on Tuesday 16th December 2025 in the Town Hall Chamber

Present

Councillor Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor Nicky Nicholls	NN	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Mike Rosser	MR	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Louise Venables	LV	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Dan Wilson	DW	Exmouth
Zoey Cooper	ZC	Exmouth Town Council
Catherine Causley	CC	East Devon District Council
Lou Doliczny	LD	Transition Exmouth
Sarah Kersey	SK	Transition Exmouth

Apologies

Lisa Bowman	LB	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Andrew Colman	AC	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Andrew Woodward	AW	Exmouth Town Council

1. **Welcome and apologies**

TD welcomed members to the meeting. Apologies were noted.

2. **To approve the notes of the meeting on 4th November 2025 and any matters arising**

The notes of the previous meeting were proposed for approval by NN, seconded by LV and agreed by all.

3. **To receive an update from EDDC**

CC provided the following update -

The Council's Climate Strategy and Action Plan are still in progress and not yet adopted. Sessions with councillors are planned for the new year to review the plans and gather input. Scrutiny is scheduled for February.

CC and Brendan Carnall are now fully accredited Carbon Literacy trainers, strengthening internal training capacity. Further climate training has been delivered across the organisation.

There has been significant work with the Assets team replacing external security lighting, delivering major financial savings. Carbon savings are currently being calculated. A new prioritisation tool is being developed to assess lighting refurbishment based on cost, carbon savings, and payback periods.

Funding approved for two local projects: the Broadclyst Nursery Project and a coastal/education-focused project (with Dorset County Council and Jurassic Coast trust) addressing coastal change, erosion, and marine impacts. These projects provide strong external public engagement.

Working closely with Devon Climate Emergency (DCE). Six priority areas have been identified for the coming year, including three on which CC and LC will be focused:

- **Retrofit**
- **Electric Vehicles (EVs)**
- **Nature-based work**

CC will project-manage the Retrofit sprint, with Lewis supporting the Nature sprint. Retrofit work will focus on domestic housing and the aim is to include identifying barriers, key partners, and delivery models.

Funding for CAG East Devon (Climate Action Groups) has been extended. There is a continued collaboration with Countryside colleagues. The Tree and Hedgerow Strategy has been adopted and there are plans to explore how the Council can better support community groups who are keen to plant trees/hedgerows.

Work to support town and parish councils with their climate and nature strategies is underway, with an intention to align with Democratic Services and also the resilience work being done by David Whelan (EDDC) and Devon Communities Together (DCT). CC aims to build on this by co-designing support based on what councils actually need, recognising the wide variation in capacity between councils. Further engagement is planned to shape this offer.

4. **To receive an update from Transition Exmouth, including a short presentation from Sarah Kersey about the community door knocking project**

The Exmouth CAN Pilot Project is a pilot community engagement project**,** funded by an anonymous donation to Transition Exmouth, running now until June 2026**.** The aim is to test new ways of engaging residents**,** particularly those not already involved in climate or sustainability groups.

The focus will be on door-to-door engagement to listen to residents' experiences, barriers, and ideas around sustainable living. With the intention to increase awareness of local climate action, connect residents to existing groups and activities, and recruit volunteers**.** There is a strong commitment to equity**,** diversity, and

inclusion, reaching people who do not usually engage. Conversations will be supported by a short survey**,** recorded digitally to allow analysis.

Residents will be signposted to:

- Local groups and social activities
- Events and volunteering opportunities
- Practical support (e.g. retrofit advice such as the Devon Retrofit Guide)

Advance notice (with leaflets) will be given before door-knocking and follow-up information provided if residents are not home.

LD provided the following update: -

Together for Tomorrow is a partnership project involving libraries and Resource Futures. Transition Exmouth is one of the partner organisations supporting the project and will be delivering a series of pop-up Eco Hubs at Exmouth Library.

Transition Exmouth has received additional funding to support youth engagement, working specifically with young people.

LD raised concerns that a major barrier to engagement is limited public awareness of available information, project locations, and timings. The need for a managed website was identified as essential, but this would require funding to ensure it is properly maintained.

5. **To discuss this article from the World Resources Institute (WRI) regarding 19 ways to help the planet**

MR highlighted a World Resources Institute paper identifying 19 actions to reduce climate impact, with the most significant impacts linked to transport - particularly reducing car use and increasing walking and cycling. Other areas included dietary change and household energy use.

Members agreed that reducing car dependency and improving active travel should be a key local priority (and also noted that Active Travel is one of the five key areas of engagement in ETC's climate strategy). However, it was noted that these conversations are challenging where public transport and active travel infrastructure are inadequate, and that some actions (such as home energy upgrades) are financially inaccessible for many residents.

Concerns were raised that transport and development planning remains car-focused, limiting safe walking and cycling, including routes to schools. Some barriers were attributed to County Council transport policies.

A recent cycling event helped revitalise the Active Travel Exmouth group, which has since reorganised around four focus areas: infrastructure, speed limits, research into barriers to reducing car use, and community engagement. While the group has

limited influence over infrastructure, the Transport Partnership was identified as the key forum for lobbying transport authorities.

Members agreed that going “car-free” is currently unrealistic for many residents. The Active Travel Exmouth group will therefore focus on achievable behaviour change, awareness-raising, community engagement, and evidence-gathering. There will be a series of community bike rides and walks in 2026, and dates of future meetings will be widely circulated.

Requests/proposals for infrastructure improvement and/or concerns regarding active travel planning for new developments would be escalated to the Transport Partnership meetings.

6. **To receive an update from ZC regarding:**

- **Visit Exmouth initiative**

A workshop was held with Visit Exmouth to explore the idea of an “Exmouth Way” – a shared approach to living and visiting Exmouth that encourages people to tread lightly and support sustainability.

15 participants attended, including representatives from local organisations and businesses. The session generated positive and practical ideas**,** with several groups leaving with actions they could take to reduce their environmental impact. No final name was agreed for the initiative. Members agreed the name should reflect Exmouth’s green credentials and a sustainable way of living or visiting. Further sessions with additional Visit Exmouth businesses and organisations are planned for the New Year to continue developing the concept and agree a name.

- **Craft Your Christmas**

The event was widely regarded as a strong success, attracting high footfall and very positive feedback. Hosting activities across multiple venues (Library, Glenorchy Church, Salvation Army) proved effective in reaching more people, despite added logistical complexity. The library was noted as particularly busy.

Hands-on, practical activities (especially cookery sessions) had lasting impact, with participants continuing to use what they learned. The format encouraged genuine community engagement**,** with a depth of connection that may exceed that of larger festivals. Volunteer support was greatly appreciated and contributed to the event’s success.

The purpose of the event and its sustainability message were not always clear to attendees on the day. Relying on volunteers alone to communicate messaging was insufficient. Future events would benefit from clear, visible messaging at tables and venues.

Suggested Improvements:

- Use branded paper bags, signage, or printed materials with simple messages and QR codes linking to further information.
- Balance sustainability messaging so it is present but accessible**,** avoiding language that could deter wider audiences.
- Improve coordination with other local events to avoid clashes and manage noise levels.
- Where possible, secure exclusive use of venues or consider outdoor elements.

As the event continues to grow, there was support for sharing delivery responsibilities or partnering with other organisers. Ideas included integrating the event more closely with existing festivals or programmes.

- **Schools and sustainability**

LD and ZC will be meeting early next year with Nicki Schantz **(**Climate Ambassador Southwest Hub Manager) to discuss organising a sustainability-focused event for Exmouth schools**.**

The proposed event would bring schools together to explore who is doing what locally on sustainability**,** similar in concept to the larger event held at Sandy Park, but on a smaller, Exmouth-based scale**.**

Nicki has indicated she may be able to support the initiative by assisting with funding, resources, and identifying a suitable venue**.** This is an early-stage initiative**,** with further details to be developed following the meeting.

- **Rotary centenary tree planting**

The Rotary Club has offered to plant 100 trees in Exmouth. This supports the Trees and Hedgerows Strategy**,** particularly the Community Champions approach to community-led planting. A major constraint is that Street Scene will not be able to support planting or maintenance from 2026**,** meaning all planting groups must be fully self-sufficient in planting, watering, and ongoing care. Potential sites are being explored, including land near St John's / Hillcrest Nature Reserve, with possible support from James Chubb's Countryside team and the Tiny Forest team, subject to feasibility. Progress depends on identifying a suitable site and confirming that Rotary (with volunteers) can maintain the trees long term. There is interest from other groups, including the Deaf Academy**,** to help with planting and maintenance. The option of linking Rotary's proposal to a third Tiny Forest was discussed, but location, capacity, and support arrangements remain unresolved.

7. To receive an update on other relevant matters from Town Council working parties and outside body representatives.

TD provided an update from the recent Transport Partnership meeting, that highlighted ongoing issues with the seafront bus route, which now only covers a portion of the seafront. Stagecoach currently prioritises the route for Sandy

Bay/Haven Cliffs and is unwilling to restore the full seafront service due to scheduling constraints. The Transport Partnership is exploring options to reintroduce a more complete seafront bus route, similar to the existing subsidised 99E Sunday and evening service**,** potentially enhancing sustainable transport along the seafront. The proposal is being developed within the Transport Partnership and will be brought to the Council for approval when decisions are required. Members emphasised the value of a full seafront route for day-trippers and local residents, reducing car dependency and supporting sustainable travel options.

Members discussed the National Emergency Briefing featuring Chris Packham and various industry experts. The briefing covers urgent issues including nature conservation, energy transition, extreme weather, food security, and public health**.** While the full briefing is lengthy (3 hours), the website provides clear summaries and expert briefings with key facts. It is targeted at MPs and specially invited audiences but is considered a valuable resource for raising awareness. Some content overlaps with material from recent university conferences**.**

The briefing will be raised at EDDC's next Green Team meeting for further discussion.

8. **Any other business**

No other business

9. **Date of next meeting:** February 3rd 6pm – 7.30pm, in the Town Hall Chamber.