EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Exmouth Transport Partnership
Notes of the Zoom meeting held at 10am on Tuesday 9th December 2025

Present

Cllr Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Cllr Pauline Stott	PS	Exmouth Town Council
Cllr Ian Kirvan	IK	Exmouth Town Council
Cllr Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Cllr Fred Caygill	FC	Exmouth Town Council
Richard Easthope	RE	EDDC Parking Services Manager
Luke Freathy	LF	DCC Public Transport
John Petty	JP	Active Travel Exmouth & Exmouth Community Association
Chris Comer	CC	Stagecoach Commercial Manager
Stuart Coles	SC	DCC Highways
Tony Jackson	TJ	ALRUG (Avocet Line Rail Users Group)
Lisa Bowman	LB	Exmouth Town Council
Lisa Greenway	LG	Exmouth town Council

Apologies

Cllr Graham Deasy	GD	Exmouth Town Council
Stuart Coles	SC	DCC Highways
Simon Porter	SP	Stagecoach Assistant Operations Manager

---

1. Welcome, introduction and apologies

TD welcomed members to the meeting and noted apologies.

TD was recently informed that Mike Tucker the DCC public Transport representative sadly passed away in April 2025. TD passed on his belated condolences to all colleagues that knew him. TD also praised Mike for his positive contributions over the years, both to ETP, the BUS Forum and other groups attended by Exmouth councillors.

2. To approve the previous meeting notes from the 7th of October 2025

PS proposed and OD seconded the accuracy of the notes from the meeting on the 7th of October 2025. The meeting notes were approved.

3. Matters arising from the previous meeting

JP queried if the full cabinet report link regarding Dinan Way was circulated as promised in the previous meeting, LB confirmed it was circulated to all members on the 7th of October.

FC reported that residents who had previously raised concerns about the bus shelter on Rolle Street outside the cinema are now pleased with the new seating that has been installed.

Reflecting on the taxi issues discussed at the last meeting, TD suggested inviting the EDDC Licensing Officer to the next working party meeting in February, members supported this.

4. To note the minutes of the recent meeting of the East Devon Highways and Traffic Orders Committee

A link to the minutes from the 25th of November was included on the agenda.

5. To discuss the DCC supported bus services that have been awarded new operators from the 4th of January 2026

LF confirmed that the 96 bus service between Exmouth and Lympstone will move to Dartline for all daytime journeys from Monday to Saturday. Stagecoach will continue operating the service during evenings, on Sundays and public holidays, ensuring continuity across the week. Importantly, tickets bought on Dartline during the day will still be accepted on Stagecoach services in the evening. It was noted that only very minor adjustments have been made to the timetable, and these are not expected to significantly affect users.

LF outlined that the 97 service, running from Masey Road through the town and up to the Marles, will now be operated by Dartline and unlike the 96 service, this route will follow exactly the same timetable as before. The operator changes for both services resulted from Stagecoach giving notice on their contracts, which required DCC to undertake a tendering process in which Dartline was the successful bidder.

OD added historical context, recalling that Dartline had previously operated the 97 service and that it benefitted from strong driver continuity. Regular passengers often saw the same drivers, who became familiar with individuals and their needs, including where people lived and the support they required. He described it as a particularly positive period for the service, characterised by reliability and a sense of community.

LF drew attention to a DCC survey aimed at understanding how bus users obtain service information. With timetable and route changes happening more frequently, DCC is reviewing its strategy for printed materials to ensure accuracy and relevance. The survey link will be sent to LG for circulation after the meeting, LF added that completing it should take no more than five minutes and would be helpful in shaping future information provision.

CC reported on the latest DCC funding announcement, explaining that although the settlement shows a modest percentage increase once Torbay's inclusion is factored in, the move to a three-year package should improve stability and planning. TD added that previous bids had resulted in only a small proportion of requested funding being granted, underlining that the overall scale of new funding remains limited.

6. Stakeholder reports:

a) Stagecoach

CC provided an update on network performance, explaining that recent months had been heavily affected by roadworks, particularly the Dinan Way scheme and the extended Heavitree Road project in Exeter that has now concluded. CC noted that congestion remains the biggest cause of lost time, especially on the 57 service into Exmouth. Stagecoach will cease operating the 96 service and part of the 97 service in January 2026, with operations transferring to Dartline. Looking ahead to service changes scheduled for April 2026, CC confirmed that no major alterations are anticipated, though assessing punctuality remains difficult because extensive roadworks make it hard to get a true picture of underlying service performance.

FC queried if the bus stop at Littleham Cross was a request stop after he recently experienced a bus not stopping, he explained that the shelter is rear-facing and may have prevented the driver from seeing passengers inside. FC queried if Stagecoach owns the stop or whether responsibility lies with the Town Council. In response, CC explained that all bus

stops are classed as request stops in Stagecoach service registrations, drivers are instructed to stop whenever someone is visibly waiting. He acknowledged that rear-facing shelters can reduce visibility and confirmed that none of the shelters are owned by Stagecoach; all infrastructure is provided by local authorities such as the Town Council or Devon County Council.

TD added that many shelters are Town Council-owned and maintained through an arrangement with Devon County Council and the advertising company Fernbank. He further suggested that sometimes drivers do not stop because passengers may not be clearly visible, or because stops serve multiple routes and drivers may not realise passengers are waiting for their service. CC emphasised that drivers are expected to err on the side of caution and encouraged reporting any missed stops so the company can investigate.

FC suggested reviewing the age and design of the shelter to see whether it could be upgraded, especially to help people with visual impairments. TD confirmed that Devon County Council is responsible for replacing worn or unserviceable flags and signage.

FC raised a concern about coaches stopping in Rolle Street just before the bus stop outside the cinema, making it difficult for buses to pull in. He reiterated the need for a broader transport management approach for Exmouth. He proposed that the Town Council place the development of a transport management scheme on the next Full Council agenda, arguing that improvements to transport—including coaches, buses, cars, cyclists, and pedestrians—are essential to improving the town overall. CC confirmed that Stagecoach would be willing to contribute to such a plan.

LB agreed that the scheme would be useful but advised that the Town Council should first seek written confirmation from Devon County Council that they are willing to participate, given the likely cost, estimated at around £10,000 or more based on comparable studies. LB supported the proposal but stressed the importance of securing commitment from higher tier authorities before spending any money. Members agreed unanimously to move this forward. LB proposed speaking with Marie Ainsworth, who liaises with DCC on the placemaking plan, to begin discussions and identify appropriate officers. LB suggested that once DCC's backing is secured, costings could then be prepared and presented to Full Council along with a proposal for funding, avoiding multiple referrals back to the council.

PS asked whether the 95 service along the seafront would be reinstated next summer, explaining that businesses at the far end of the seafront are losing trade because the bus currently drops passengers at the Pavilion rather than travelling the full length of the seafront. LF clarified that the 95 is a commercial service planned solely by Stagecoach rather than by Devon County Council. TD reminded the group that Stagecoach had previously stated that no changes were currently anticipated. CC expanded on this, explaining that reinstating the old route would require extra resources and that, as a commercial service, Stagecoach must prioritise financial viability. He confirmed that planning for April 2026 is just beginning and although nothing will be completely ruled out, he does not expect changes given the route's stable performance over recent years.

LB raised the possibility that Exmouth Town Council could subsidise a seafront service, noting that the council already contributes financially to the 99E service. LB queried whether there might be scope for the council to support a service that operated fully along the seafront. CC agreed that Stagecoach would consider this and noted that other operators might also be interested. PS asked for costings for reinstating the full service, and CC explained that this would depend on the hours and days of operation, as well as who would

carry the revenue risk. He said that once the Town Council provides an outline of the service required Stagecoach can offer indicative costs.

Vehicle types were then addressed, with TD questioning the increasing reliance on single-deckers on the 57 service and asking whether double-deckers would return. CC explained that fleet allocation has recently been affected by new college transport contracts. However, he said that an influx of new electric vehicles is expected over the coming months, starting with a complete replacement of the Torbay fleet in early January 2026, followed by North Devon and Exeter in April 2026, pending the rollout of charging infrastructure. Although Exmouth services, including the 57, will not receive these vehicles immediately, the new EV deployments will free up other vehicles, potentially enabling the return of larger or double-deck buses. Members expressed hope that Exmouth could be considered for EV buses in the future, and CC responded that if routes were to be prioritised for EV conversion, the 57 would likely be near the top of the list.

b) DCC Public Transport

OD queried how long the £3 fare cap would remain in place. LF responded that it is planned to continue until March 2027, adding that the scheme has received less publicity than the previous £2 cap because many local fares were already around £3, making the change less noticeable to regular passengers.

LF and CC left the meeting.

c) EDDC Car/Cycle, Coach & Lorry Parks & Electric Vehicle Charging

RE outlined planned improvements to overnight motorhome parking along Queens Drive Echelon and Maer Road, which were approved by Cabinet in July and are now being implemented. These include new motorhome-specific signage, marked overnight bays on Queens Drive Echelon spaced to meet fire safety regulations, which will be enforceable once signage and ground markings are in place this will provide 30 overnight spaces. The overnight motorhome parking fee has increased from £11 to £20 per night with a maximum stay of 48 hours and a three-day return restriction. Waste and water facilities are planned for Maer Road car park, alongside a reconfiguration intended to increase standard car parking spaces while retaining existing coach and motorhome bays. The fee increase took effect on the 1st of November as part of winter parking changes across Exmouth, with £5 from each session ring-fenced for parking enforcement.

RE updated members on EV charging, noting that EDDC is still considering joining the LEVI scheme to install additional public chargers in Exmouth car parks, although legal matters are still being resolved. Forthcoming Environment Agency works were highlighted in Lympstone, which will result in the temporary loss of about half of Underhill car park. To mitigate this, EDDC will commission a nearby private car park for permit holders during the works to maintain parking availability.

In response members questions about EV charging canopies with solar panels, RE explained that such options have been explored, particularly at Imperial Road. However, the energy demands of rapid chargers, storage requirements, visual impact, and potential light pollution made full car park canopies unsuitable at that location. While not ruled out entirely, he suggested that solar installations on leisure centre roofs would be more acceptable and could support both the centres and EV chargers. He also clarified that EDDC receives a quarterly

revenue share of between 3 and 6 percent from EV charging sessions in exchange for leasing land for the chargers.

RE addressed pedestrian safety at Foxholes car park, confirming that changes will be considered as part of a planned resurfacing scheme. This is expected to include a redesigned entrance, improved signage, and clearer pedestrian routes, likely to be progressed in the new year.

RE left the meeting.

d) Active Travel

JP has reviewed the detailed drawings for the Dinan Way scheme and noted that they primarily focused on road widening and new crossings, rather than meaningful improvements for active travel. He expressed concern that existing walking and cycling paths had not been widened and argued that, since the scheme was added to the Dinan Way extension using funds originally allocated for the now-abandoned Exmouth Gateway scheme, it should deliver more substantial benefits for pedestrians and cyclists.

LB explained that the funding conditions required the money to be spent on active travel measures, which is why the scheme focused on pedestrian crossings, bus space and improved connectivity to the town centre. LB suggested that time pressures likely influenced the approach taken. It was noted that detailed drawings had been shared by email and that consultation had taken place through the traffic regulation order process, with proposals advertised via official notices, weekly bulletins and newspapers rather than a drop-in consultation.

OD referred to the Cabinet report, explaining that choosing to do nothing would have required the council to return the funding because active travel improvements would not have been delivered. While alternative schemes were theoretically possible, he said there was insufficient time within the funding programme to redesign them without risking the loss of funding. He confirmed that statutory consultation would still be required through traffic regulation orders and agreed that improvements to walking and cycling capacity, and better continuity along Dinan Way, would have been welcome.

PS expressed concern about the planned removal of the roundabout near Featherbed Lane, highlighting that it had originally been installed following a fatal accident and questioned how traffic speeds would be controlled on Hulham Road once it was removed. TD challenged the justification for removing the roundabout near Featherbed Lane, saying that although speed surveys suggested vehicle speeds were not excessive, he had personally witnessed vehicles travelling at high speed on Hulham Road.

e) Taxis

No taxi representatives were present at the meeting, and no report was received.

TD will reach out to the EDDC Licensing Officer to attend a future meeting to provide an update on local taxi provision and licensing policy.

f) GWR

There was no representative at the meeting, and no report was received.

g) ALRUG

TJ discussed the imminent withdrawal of the short form four-car high-speed trains operating between Penzance and Plymouth following a Department for Transport ruling, which will place short-term pressure on the overall fleet. Although Class 175 trains previously used by Transport for Wales are intended to replace them, delays due to incomplete readiness and training mean they will not all be available immediately. As a result, some Class 150 trains may need to be used temporarily in Cornwall. TD noted that a previous estimate from GWR suggested the Class 175s were expected to arrive in the early part of next year.

h) DCC Highways

No DCC Highways representatives were present at the meeting, and no report was received.

7. Any other business

No other business.

8. Dates of 2026 meetings:

The next meeting of the Exmouth Transport Partnership will be held on Tuesday the 24th of February 2026.

The meeting closed at 11:55 am.