EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party

Notes of the meeting held at 6pm on Tuesday 8th September 2026 in the Town Hall Chamber

Present

Councillor Nicky Nicholls	NN	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor Mike Rosser	MR	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Louise Venables	LV	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Mike Rosser	MR	Exmouth Town Council
Zoey Cooper	ZC	Exmouth Town Council
Mark Devin	MD	Exmouth Town Council
Catherine Causley	CC	East Devon District Council
Adrian Toole	AT	Transition Exmouth
Florence Lock	FL	Transition Exmouth
Sarah Kersey	SK	Transition Exmouth

Apologies

Councillor Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Andrew Woodward	AW	Exmouth Town Council
Lisa Bowman	LB	Exmouth Town Council

1. **Welcome and apologies**

NN welcomed members to the meeting and noted that the main purpose was to consider the draft Climate & Nature Strategy 2026-2030. Apologies were noted.

2. **To approve the notes of the meeting on 28th July 2026 and any matters arising**

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

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

CC proposed providing a quarterly update in future, while continuing to attend monthly meetings where possible if an urgent or relevant issue arose. Members supported this approach.

Green Team funded projects

CC reported that several projects supported by the East Devon District Council Green Team had recently been completed or were progressing. These included a successful project at Sideshore, for which a second round of funding may be sought; the purchase of a biochar maker to allow hedge-laying waste at sites

including Seaton Wetlands to be converted into biochar rather than openly burned; and work to improve active-travel links in Broadclyst and the Clyst Valley.

A further funding proposal was being considered for additional charging units to support East Devon District Council's growing electric StreetScene fleet. CC also advised that the Overview Committee would consider the EDDC strategy and action plan on 24 September before progressing to Cabinet for adoption later in the year.

Members were advised that authorisation was being sought to recruit permanently to the graduate-intern role currently held by Lewis, whose fixed-term contract would end in December.

Action: CC to provide quarterly updates, attending additional meetings where an urgent or relevant matter arises.

4. To receive an update from Transition Exmouth

Governance and AGM
AT reported that Transition Exmouth was entering a period of change as Lou Doliczny (LD) prepared to retire as a trustee. The organisation's AGM would take place at Open Door at 6.30pm on 1 October, and new participants would be welcomed. AT confirmed that he was happy to continue providing monthly updates to the Working Party.

Public engagement project
AT reported that Transition Exmouth's public-engagement project was nearing completion. Sarah had spoken with several hundred people about environmental priorities, including through engagement on the seafront. Food had emerged as one of the strongest areas of interest.

Sarah advised that residents had identified a need for clear information, support to build confidence, connection with other people and better knowledge of local options. Members agreed that these findings would be particularly valuable in refining objective four of the draft strategy. Sarah's full findings would be presented at the Transition Exmouth AGM.

Action: NN, ZC and Sarah to meet before the next CEE Working Party meeting to incorporate the public-engagement findings into the draft strategy.

Community food activity
AT reported that Transition Exmouth was strengthening its work on food. Craig Jolly had secured funding for three food-related events over the coming months, beginning with a harvest event, and Craig and the Mushroom Food Network would work more closely with Transition Exmouth.

Members recognised food as an effective way to reconnect people with nature and with the sources of what they eat. Transition Exmouth was also working with the library service on the Together for Tomorrow programme, with further dates and details to be circulated when available.

Young people's engagement
Members received an update on an August event at Open Door supported by an anonymous donor. The programme, led by Katie, attracted 98 attendees aged between four and 52 and included an exhibition, discussion and creative activities.

Young people identified barriers including limited awareness of local groups and a lack of free spaces for climate-related conversations. Suggestions included more youth-focused events, an eco-youth group and stronger youth representation in local decision-making. A debrief with Katie would consider next steps and the possibility of further donor support.

People's Emergency Briefing

Members heard that a People's Emergency Briefing co-hosted by the Sailing Club and Rowing Club had attracted a strong turnout and generated useful small-group discussion. Further showings had been arranged locally, and members welcomed the continued growth in public interest. It was noted that a Holy Trinity screening had attracted more than 150 people and that an additional showing was planned for the Exmouth Film Festival in November.

The Working Party agreed that more councillors should be encouraged to see the film. A dedicated councillor screening at the Town Hall, accompanied by vegan food and discussion, was preferred to showing it immediately before a Full Council meeting.

Transition stated a preference to continue to join the CEE WP meetings and provide regular updates.

Action: ZC to identify a suitable Monday evening, invite councillors individually and arrange a Town Hall screening of the People's Emergency Briefing.

ZC also reported meeting the owner of an electrically powered sailing boat and suggested a possible event at the Sailing Club on more sustainable sailing.

Action: ZC to discuss the potential sustainable-sailing event with LD and make the relevant introduction.

5 To receive an update from ZC

Reusable period products research
ZC reported that the research project on reusable period products with the University of Exeter had commenced, with the first steering meeting expected the following week. Members also welcomed the positive response to an interview with

Andrew Kay from Greatest Hits Radio, which included photography and video as well as an audio interview.

Mobile Eco Hub tuk-tuk
Members discussed the formal launch of the Mobile Eco Hub. Sideshore was identified as a practical and attractive public location, with a Saturday shortly after Parkrun suggested to maximise visibility. Maddie, the artis who painted the container, would be invited, together with all councillors, members of the public and the press.

The launch display should demonstrate the tuk-tuk's flexibility, potentially including an Exmouth Cup and waste-reduction theme alongside other current projects. ZC explained that the vehicle could respond both to a planned programme of Council activity and to invitations from schools, the library, community groups and other organisations promoting suitable sustainability initiatives.

It was noted that the internal fit-out had not been completed to the agreed T-shaped specification and would need to be returned to Tukxi in Axminster during the quieter winter months or early in 2027.

Action: ZC to identify a suitable Saturday launch date at Sideshore, confirm attendance and press arrangements, and develop an initial programme of displays and activities.

Action: ZC to arrange completion of the tuk-tuk's internal fit-out during the quieter winter period or early in 2027.

Exmouth Cup reusable cup scheme

ZC reported that approximately 1,000 Exmouth Cups remained available or in circulation. Cups continued to be loaned successfully to events; 350 had recently been supplied to an RNLI event and returned. The external return points were working well, and an additional return point outside the Town Hall was suggested to improve visibility and encourage returns.

Members discussed purchasing more cups for participating cafés. A further 5,000 cups would cost approximately £6,300 at £1.26 each. Members also considered clear, legally marked half-pint and pint cups for cold and alcoholic drinks, priced at approximately 39p and 43p respectively. It was agreed that venue demand and operational requirements should be tested before committing to the cold-drink scheme.

Discussion highlighted that many Exmouth Cups were likely being retained and reused in residents' homes rather than returned to the shared pool. Members agreed that the message should be clearer: the Exmouth Cup is a community cup to borrow and return, rather than an individual cup to keep.

The Working Party considered alternative deposit models but noted the additional financial and administrative complexity for the Council and participating businesses. Members agreed to continue with the existing simple model while strengthening promotion and event lending.

Agreed outcomes
3,000 additional Exmouth Cups will be ordered, subject to ZC securing the best available unit price.

A town-wide cup amnesty and renewed publicity campaign will be organised, using the tuk-tuk to encourage returns.

The potential for clear reusable cold-drink cups will be explored separately with venues before any order is placed.

Action: ZC to order 3,000 Exmouth Cups, organise the cup amnesty and publicity campaign, and investigate venue demand and samples for clear half-pint and pint cups.

6 Review of achievements under the current strategy

Members considered ZC's summary of achievements delivered over the previous three years and agreed that it provided a strong and accurate account of the Council's work. The document would support the transition into the next strategy and provide a valuable public record of progress.

Members suggested sharing the report with DALC, NALC, the Devon Climate Emergency Network and other councils. It would also be placed on the Council website alongside the new strategy, supported by a press release and a series of social-media posts.

The Working Party supported developing an illustrated infographic or series of posters using the Council's existing climate branding. These could be displayed in the Town Hall and tuk-tuk as well as used online. Rosie Johnson, Lewis Connor, CAG and Resource Futures were suggested as possible sources of design or illustration support.

Action: ZC to prepare a press release, publish it on the Council website and share it with relevant local-government and climate networks.

Action: ZC to explore an illustrated, co-benefit-led version of the achievements report for social media, the Town Hall and the tuk-tuk.

Carbon baseline and co-benefits
Members discussed the absence of a robust, current organisational carbon baseline. It was agreed that the acquisition of the Town Hall, together with Council assets, fleet and staff travel, created a stronger case for calculating a new baseline and measuring future progress against it.

CC described EDDC's approach of combining detailed carbon reporting with accessible public communication focused on co-benefits, such as cleaner air, warmer homes and lower bills. Members supported showing the tangible benefits of the Council's work rather than relying only on carbon figures. It was suggested that co-benefits could be incorporated into the proposed illustrations rather than adding substantial text to the report.

CC and ZC noted that some historic energy and refurbishment data for the Town Hall may exist, although it had been difficult to obtain a complete dataset.

Action: ZC and CC to explore available Town Hall energy and refurbishment data and the feasibility of establishing an updated Council carbon baseline.

7 Climate & Nature Strategy 2026-2030

NN introduced the draft strategic framework, explaining that it had been developed from a review of the Council's achievements and experience over the previous three years. The document was intended as a high-level four-year strategy, with detailed delivery to be set out through annual action plans.

Members broadly supported the five-objective framework:

- Lead by example.
- Enable and broaden community action.
- Use Exmouth's collective influence.
- Make sustainable choices easier in everyday Exmouth life.
- Prepare Exmouth for a changing climate.

Objective 1 - Lead by example
Members agreed that climate and nature should be embedded across all Council decisions rather than remaining the responsibility of a small number of councillors and officers. The current requirement (in Terms of Reference) for committees and working parties to consult the Climate Action Plan was not considered sufficient on its own.

Suggestions included climate and nature training, a proportionate environmental-impact checklist or decision tool, and a named climate and nature champion on each committee and working party. It was agreed that Full Council should be asked to support a Council-wide approach when adopting the strategy.

Members discussed how this would apply in practice. Planning already considered environmental matters within planning law, policy and the Neighbourhood Plan, while other areas such as Premises and Assets and Town Maintenance might require more consistent prompts. It was suggested that an audit could identify where climate and nature were not routinely considered.

The need to update the Neighbourhood Plan and incorporate current climate and nature priorities into its next review was also noted. Members supported describing the Town Council as an anchor institution and considering how its assets, employment, procurement and influence could support local sustainability and wellbeing.

Action: ZC and NN to develop proposals for climate and nature champions, proportionate impact assessment and Council-wide adoption as part of the next draft.

Action: The need to incorporate current climate and nature priorities should be considered during the next Neighbourhood Plan review.

Objective 2 - Enable and broaden community action
Members agreed that the Council should recognise, support and connect environmental activity already taking place in the community rather than seek to deliver every project itself. This could include stronger promotion, practical support and links between individual residents and established community organisations.

The Working Party discussed a simple green community fund, similar to the Council's sports grant, to provide small amounts of start-up funding to constituted groups. Individuals with good ideas could be connected to an appropriate group through which funding could be administered. Participatory budgeting and a community event or assembly at which local people could help select projects were identified as possible longer-term developments.

Members also discussed the value of a dedicated community engagement or mobilisation role and a volunteering information point in the Town Hall foyer to connect residents with the Green Team, Transition Exmouth and other local organisations.

Action: ZC to include the potential green community fund, volunteering information point and stronger community connections within the developing annual action plan.

Objective 3 - Use Exmouth's collective influence
Members supported the objective but agreed that its distinction from objective two should be sharpened. Objective two should focus primarily on community organisations and residents, while objective three should focus on businesses, influential local institutions, strategic partners and decision-makers including EDDC and DCC.

The Chamber of Commerce, Propeller, Active Travel Exmouth, schools, faith groups and other anchor institutions were identified as potential partners. The Council should set out its aspirations for Exmouth and ask higher tiers of government and other bodies to help deliver them, irrespective of the future of Local Government Reorganisation.

Action: ZC and NN to revise objectives two and three to remove overlap and make their respective audiences and purposes clearer.

Objective 4 - Make sustainable choices easier
Sarah's engagement findings indicated that residents needed accessible information, confidence, local connections and knowledge of practical options. Members agreed that events remained valuable but should not be the only route into action because they were resource-intensive and reached a limited audience. Online information should be complemented by a clear, approachable contact point.

Members asked that walking and the needs of pedestrians be made sufficiently clear within the active-travel wording. Personal finance, including banking, insurance, pensions and investments, was also added as an area in which residents could make more sustainable choices.

Action: ZC and NN to meet with SK to revise objective four using SK's evidence.

Objective 5 - Prepare Exmouth for a changing climate

Members agreed that adaptation and resilience were increasingly important but that the objective required further work. Community resilience, the emergency plan, flood response, land drainage, water quality, beach management and the climate resilience of Council assets currently sat across several Council teams and working parties.

The Working Party did not wish to duplicate the role of the emergency-resilience team or allow emergency-response demands to overwhelm its climate and nature work. Members supported creating clear links between the relevant groups, ensuring climate and nature awareness within them and considering champions in working parties responsible for related matters.

It was noted that emergency response and longer-term adaptation were distinct. Preparing Council assets for climate change, for example, went beyond the emergency team's current remit. A separate discussion with relevant officers and working-party leads, was required to clarify responsibility and refine the objective.

Action: ZC and NN to convene a further discussion with relevant officers and working-party leads to clarify ownership of resilience, adaptation and emergency-planning actions and revise objective five.

Cross-cutting principles
Members supported the principles of building on what works, being inclusive, positive, practical and collaborative, and focusing on delivery. It was suggested that these principles should also inform the Council's wider strategic plan.

The draft should be strengthened by explicitly including a just transition, equality and fairness, the more-than-human community, and the need to rebuild people's

understanding that humans are part of nature. Members also supported using seasonal themes to provide a natural rhythm for engagement activity throughout the year.

Action: ZC and NN to incorporate just transition, equality, fairness, nature connection and the more-than-human community into the revised draft, and consider the use of seasonal themes in annual planning.

Strategy process and timetable
Members agreed that the draft should return to the Working Party once more before being recommended to Full Council. A short presentation should accompany its consideration by Full Council, followed by an annual action plan.

Before adoption, the strategy should be shared with relevant community organisations, young people and the School Forum for comment. An April 2027 start date was preferred, allowing sufficient time for engagement and refinement. The revised draft would return to the Working Party on 6 October, with wider engagement expected during November. The strategy thus becoming 2027-2030.

LV agreed to review her accompanying document of possible actions before it was circulated to members. Members were reminded to propose ambitious ideas while recognising the limits of the Town Council's direct powers and delivery capacity.

Action: ZC and NN to revise the strategy for the 6 October meeting and develop a proportionate engagement programme with relevant groups during autumn 2026.

Action: LV to review her suggested-actions document before circulation to members.

Action: All members to submit any further comments and suggested actions before the next meeting.

8 Any other business

Joy Ride
Members were reminded that a community bike ride to A la Ronde and back would take place on Sunday, leaving Sideshore at 10.30am. Places needed to be booked and free tea and vegan cake would be provided.

Date of next meeting:

The next meeting of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party will take place on Tuesday 6th October 2026.