

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, EXMOUTH ON MONDAY 1ST MARCH 2010 AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors: D Nicholas (Mayor)
S Sutton (Deputy Mayor)
D Chapman J Mitchell
M Chapman M Mitchell
T Cope B Taylor
V Duval-Steer J Taylor
L Elson R Turner
S Gazzard J Whipps
P Graham M Williamson
K Harper E Wragg
J Humphreys S Wragg

APOLOGIES: Councillors: M Ackland, M Hardy, I Stewart, P Stott & B Walker

66. FAIR TRADE PRESENTATION

Peter Brain alongside a group of local young people presented to the Mayor a framed certificate which designated Exmouth as a Fair Trade Town. He added that the Town Council had been supportive throughout the process of attaining the award. Cllr. M Williamson wished to thank Cllr. J Mitchell for the large part she had played in that achievement for Exmouth.

Note: The Mayor then adjourned the meeting to allow public questions.

67. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Mayor then allowed members of the public to speak:-

Norma Southwood, representing the Exmouth Tidy Group, asked that following the announcement of EDDC spending cuts was Exmouth Town Council going to press forward with the aid of extra funds to support the requests made to improve the Town such as the provision of additional litter bins and work to bring bus shelters up to standard?

The Mayor responded by stating that the request would be dealt with in the very near future.

The Mayor then reconvened the Council meeting.

68. EXETER AND DISTRICT CHILDREN'S CENTRE

This item was to be deferred and rescheduled at a future meeting of the Regeneration and General Purposes Committee as the speaker was unable to attend due to sickness.

69. MINUTES OF TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 18th JANUARY 2010

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 18th January 2010 were received and signed as a correct record.

70. URGENT BUSINESS

The Mayor brought forward an item of urgent business to be raised.

A letter from Steve Rippin, Streetscene Manager, dated 23rd February 2010 was distributed to members. The letter contained details of EDDC budget cuts affecting Street Scene services which would affect Exmouth. Options were discussed. In respect of one of the issues there was some urgency and that related to employment of seasonal grounds maintenance staff.

It was considered that more information was needed and that if necessary extra meetings should be convened to deal with this in detail.

Some discussion took place concerning Littleham Toilets and whether there had been a decision to allow their closure and whether the six month rule applied under Standing Orders.

RESOLVED that

- (a) an emergency Task and Finish Forum be set up to consider where the Town Council can help to ameliorate the worst affects of the EDDC Streetscene budget cuts;**
- (b) the Forum to comprise the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillors V Duval-Steer, P Graham, J Humphries, J Mitchell and J Whipps with invitations extended to the Chamber of Trade and Commerce, Exmouth Tidy Group and Exmouth in Bloom;**
- (c) an extraordinary meeting of the Finance Committee be convened on Tuesday 16th March 2010 at 6pm to receive and consider the recommendations of the Task and Finish Forum.**
- (d) The Littleham Toilets position be reviewed.**

Note: Cllr. P Graham declared a personal interest as Chairman of Exmouth in Bloom Committee.

71. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 10

Cllr. S Gazzard asked the following question of the Mayor:-

‘This Conservative administration has increased the Town precept by over 35% since first taking office in May 2007, less than three years ago.

Would the Chairman of the Council explain why Exmouth residents are being burdened with such a sharp increase in tax, despite considerable pre-election promises, when they were in opposition, that a conservative Town Council would cost you less?’

Cllr. S Wragg asked the following question of the Mayor:-

‘This year, the Conservative ruling party on Exmouth Town Council voted unanimously to tax the people of Exmouth excessively to the sum of £83,000.

The increase is the highest rise in the Town’s precept in the history of Exmouth Town Council, despite numerous pledges from Conservative administration that it would reduce taxes.

Will the Chairman of this Council explain which services in the town are to be secured and improved from this £83,000 that the Conservative group have imposed on the people of Exmouth?’

The Mayor responded with percentages of increases in Council Tax during the time of the previous administration. He expressed reluctance in being drawn in to having to respond in this way and hoped that future questions would be less politically motivated and more related to the benefit of the town and the need to maintain and improve services.

72. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items to be dealt with necessitating exclusion of the press and public.

73. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Councillor L Elson seconded by Councillor R Turner moved the acceptance of the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 18th January, 1st and 15th February 2010 (previously circulated) and there were no items to be considered at tonight’s meeting.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 18th January, 1st & 15th February 2010 be accepted and adopted.

74. MINUTES OF THE REGENERATION AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Councillor M Chapman seconded by Councillor L Elson moved the acceptance of the minutes of the meeting of the Regeneration and General Purposes Committee held on 1st February 2010 be received and the recommendation G71/02/10) be accepted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Regeneration and General Purposes Committee held on 1st February 2010 be accepted and the recommendation contained therein be adopted.

75. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Councillor J Whipps seconded by Councillor V Duval-Steer moved the acceptance of the minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 15th February 2010 and the item F49/02/10 be discussed following a copy of the NALC guidance on Power of Well Being previously distributed to members who had previously requested it. A

request was made for an addition to the minutes to be made that Cllr. L Elson and Cllr. T Cope had left the room during discussion of item F48/02/10.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 15th February 2010 be adopted**
- (b) that authority be given to pursue all necessary steps to enable the Council to adopt the Power of Well Being.**

76. REPORTS FROM OTHER LOCAL BODIES AND THE TOWN CLERK AND TOWN MANAGER.

Reports from outside bodies included:-

- The Town Manager had given an excellent presentation to EDDC's Economic Scrutiny Committee.
- Shared services between EDDC and South Somerset was to encourage cross county collaboration.
- DCC had raised its precept by 1.99% in order to put £3million into the county's reserves.
- Parking meters for on street parking were to be introduced by DCC throughout Devon's Towns.
- Residents parking permits would increase by 67% in the forthcoming year.
- A Task Group had been set up by DCC to investigate Learning Disability provision within Devon. Cllr. E Wragg would be chairperson of the group.
- EDDC precept had risen by 2.9%.
- A Housing Strategy had been established to aid the increase in affordable homes, flexible policies and the downsizing incentive.
- EDDC Licensing and Enforcement Committee meet on Tuesday 2nd March to discuss a possible change in guidance in respect of Town and Parish input to licensing applications.
- Exeter College takeover of Bicton College threatened by withdrawal of LSC funding of Bicton deficit.
- DCC's high court hearing in respect of the Boundary Commission decision would be heard on 26th & 27th April 2010.

The meeting concluded at 8.32 pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....