



Exmouth Town Council –Newsletter

Newsletter 2

March 2009

Annual Report

This newsletter contains extracts from the Town Council's Annual Report which is available in full on line at www.exmouth.gov.uk or from the Town Hall.

From the Mayor Councillor Joy Whipps

As Mayor of Exmouth I am still wondering where the last two years has gone. The time has quite simply flown by and there have been a whirlwind of activities, functions and events to attend. It is not possible to name all the events I have attended as space does not permit, however I am grateful to all who have offered invitations to the various functions over the last two years – I will miss them when I step down and wish all organisations my best wishes for the future.

It has been an immense honour and privilege to be Mayor of Exmouth enabling me to witness the hard work, commitment and enthusiasm that the people of Exmouth freely give to organisations that support and define our community. As so often the case, it is the people that work behind the scenes of organisations that make so many things possible: and they truly are the unsung heroes of our community.

The current economic climate has undoubtedly had an impact on families and traders in Exmouth. This situation has been exacerbated by the decision of Plymouth University to close the doors of Rolle College for the final time in July 2008. Rolle College had a profound influence on Exmouth. Many of the students who were attracted to study in Exmouth remained, settling down in the town, starting families and working in the area. Indeed many teachers in our local schools are the product of Rolle College.

It is important that the community not only feels sadness at the loss of Rolle College but also compassion for every person and family that is struggling financially. As a town we feel the loss of every business and shop that closes and our collective heart goes out to every resident that loses their job.

The last two years have indeed seen some ups and downs for the Town, however we have our new lifeboat station under construction which is set to be a beautiful structure worthy of our Town. Also the new Harlequins leisure facility with ten pin bowling and soft play area for the

younger children will at last provide some facilities worthy of a town which depends increasingly on tourism for its economy.

We must see Exmouth achieve its full potential and now, more than ever before, we need to join together to conquer the big challenges that face our beloved Town.

As I approach my last two months as Mayor I am looking forward to two major events:-

- Firstly the Mayor's Charity Ball on Saturday 18th April; I look forward to good support from the town for this annual and wonderful function which celebrates the civic life of the Town. This year all funds raised will be given to the St. John's Ambulance here in Exmouth for equipping their new ambulance. Tickets are on sale at the Pavilion so don't miss the opportunity to join me for a wonderful evening of entertainment and fun.
- Secondly the Adoption of the Rifles on Saturday 25th April is set to be a wonderful occasion with hundreds of troops marching through the town and a ceremony in the Strand. This promises to be a memorable event and one I will be proud to be part of. I hope the town's people turn out in their thousands to support our brave service personnel in challenging times for our troops.

The Council's Mission

Here is a reminder that the Council, like all organizations has a mission and this is summed up in the following words:-

- To improve the quality of life for Exmouth residents, the experience of visitors and build on the characteristics which make Exmouth special.

To go with the Mission is the Town Council's slogan:-

- 'Exmouth Naturally – Arts, Leisure and Environment'

Achievements of the Town Council over the Year

Our achievements as a Town Council over the year include the following:-

- Retaining Quality Council Status for another 4 years meeting rigorous standards in doing so;
- The main promoter of Town Management which has been especially effective in recent times. It is even more essential in current times when the private and public sector need to work together more closely than ever to ensure that Exmouth survives the economic downturn and is in good shape and able to take advantage of the recovery;
- Taking on new planning functions from EDDC in the form of tree applications and advertisement consents;
- Providing grants to local organisations thus supporting the community in all its huge variety of cultural, sporting and voluntary activities;
- Making £20,000 worth of grants with the project fund to help communities within the town more self sufficient in achieving for themselves;
- Running another brilliant Exmouth Festival;

- Supporting the Jurassic Coast Team in their work to protect and promote the wonderful coast upon which we are the Western Gateway;
- Support Exe Estuary Partnership to reconcile the uses of the Exe Estuary and protect the natural value which it represents;
- Work on community safety with local organisations and the police;
- Keeping graffiti and fly posting under control;
- Providing flower towers and giving strong support to Exmouth in Bloom resulting in winning the Coastal Towns category for Exmouth in Bloom,
- Working as strong and influential partners with EDDC and DCC on regeneration proposals for Exmouth;
- Support for Exmouth Interpretation Centre has remained unwavering and strong;
- A measured response provided to the Local Government Review debate and preparation to work strongly with Principal Councils in whatever shape or form they emerge from the current process.

Organisation and Accountability

The Town Council has 25 elected members returned from 5 wards each with 5 members. The Committees of the Council are Planning, Regeneration and General Purposes and Finance. Working Parties are set up as required. Examples include Public Rights of Way Working Party, Exmouth Public Transport Partnership, Christmas Lights Working Party and Summer Festival Working Party.

The public can raise issues and concerns at public question time at each Ordinary Council meeting. All Committee meetings are open to the press and public subject to exclusion provisions on a few items where the public interest is served by so doing. Details of how to contact Councillors are attached to the Annual Report, can be obtained from the Town Hall or found on our website.

Finance

The precept was set at £283,304 for the year 2007/2008 equating to a precept of £21.75 for band D properties. For 2008/2009 this was increased to £315,637 equating to a precept of £24.05. For 2009/10 the Precept has been frozen at the previous year's level. The Town Precept continues to be amongst the lowest for the larger Town/Parish Councils in the District and indeed in England.

The Council has complied with the Audit Regulations and appoints a professional internal auditor. Accounts for the previous year have been certified by the Audit Commission as required by law.

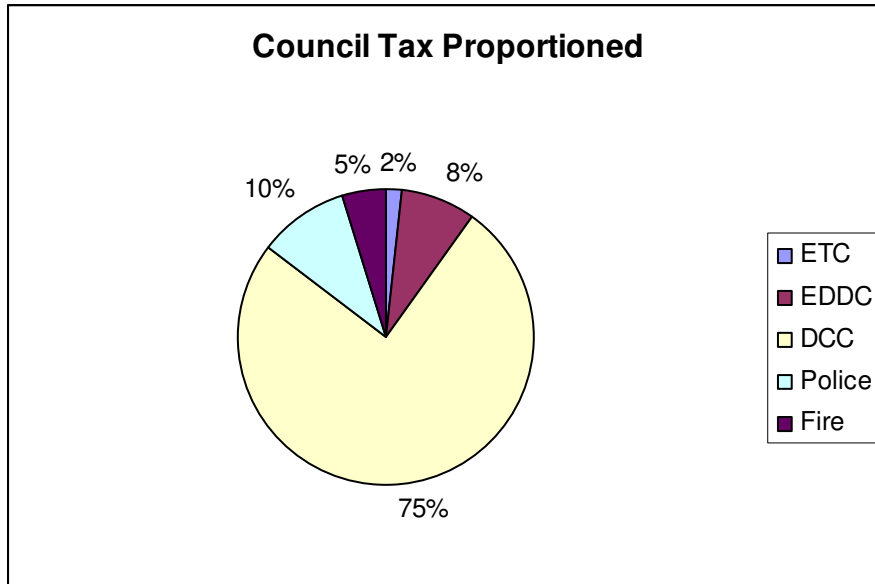
Council Tax

Council Tax for the three Local Authorities responsible for Exmouth were at the following levels in 2008/9:-

- £24.05 for Town Council – (Equates to £315,637)
- £118.24 for East Devon District Council;
- £1,063.89 for Devon County Council;
- £142.19 for Devon and Cornwall Police Authority;
- £66.58 for Devon Fire Authority

- £1,414.95 in total

Council Tax Share based on a band d property per annum



Precept raised in 2008/9 for Exmouth Town Council was £315,637 compared to £283,304 in the previous year.

9. Budget Requirement for 2008/9 compared to 2007/8

2007/8	Services	2008/9		
		Total Spending	Total Income	Net Spending
£000		£000	£000	£000
36	Town Management	51	23	28
28	Town Maintenance	31	4	27
102	Administration	131	14	117
28	Grants	28	0	28
30	Accommodation	35	0	35
58	Other Services	89	9	80
282	Total	365	50	315

For more information – contact the Town Clerk on 01395 276167, visit the Town Hall, contact your Local Councillor or visit www.exmouth.gov.uk

Any comments or views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of Exmouth Town Council. The newsletter is edited by the Town Clerk.