



Exmouth Town Council –Newsletter

Newsletter 4

October 2010

Rolle College Site

We know now that the University of Plymouth is working with a contractor as conditional purchaser of the Rolle Site. This has given Rolle Exmouth Ltd the opportunity to explore further its model for part use of the site and to test ideas out with the contractor. It is hoped that a relationship can be developed whereby our community can influence or become directly involved in ensuring creative uses for part of the site which will benefit the whole town. A balance between residential and community gain would, Rolle Exmouth Ltd thinks, provide a solution where the community is strongly involved. Rolle Exmouth Ltd has produced a pamphlet which identifies how this would be an example of a ‘Big Society Project’. See a copy attached to the home page of www.exmouth.gov.uk under the heading of Rolle College.

The Strand Scheme

Great progress is now being made with the Strand scheme. Thanks must go to everyone for their patience over the summer whilst the place has been turned into a building site. It has seemed like a long time to wait but now it is possible to see the plan emerging from the debris. The hard surfacing will be finished in the next few weeks with tree planting occurring soon. Landscaping will be completed in the Spring. The new building of a bus shelter, stage area and retail unit will start in the late Spring. The scheme has been significant to deliver relative to the size of Exmouth and therefore has had a major impact on the town. You could say it has been the talk of the town as people wonder what is going to happen next. Listening to the comments on buses, and in pubs and shops has been interesting. A bit like people in an art gallery all putting a different interpretation on what they are seeing – not always polite! Its completion will result in a whole different feel to the Strand without the relentless circuit of traffic. New private sector investment is already being attracted to the town with new businesses being set up ready to benefit from the Strand Scheme. Thanks go to Devon County Council and East Devon District Council for delivering on this scheme and working in partnership to do so.

Orcombe Point

Bright 3d have been appointed by Devon County Council to turn Orcombe Point and High Orcombe with the Geoneedle into a gateway to the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site that we can all be proud of. First ideas have been produced and these have been tested in consultation

with a wide range of people including councillors, community interest groups and Exmouth Visitor Centre Trust. There is County money available (even now) and it is hoped that this can be allocated to the scheme. The question being asked is how to celebrate the beauty of Orcombe Point with interpretation which will make it an important destination in its own right for residents and visitors to Exmouth. Work continues to deliver another improvement of high quality for the town.

Public Funding Budget Crises

The Government will be reporting its Public Sector Spending Review on 20th October. The Treasury website identifies the conduct of the review as follows:-

'The Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne and Chief Secretary to the Treasury Danny Alexander today announced details of how the next Spending Review (SR) will be conducted. The SR, due to conclude in the Autumn, will set spending limits for every Government department for the period 2011-12 to 2014-15.

The timetable for the review, the process and guiding principles that will underpin the Government's approach to setting spending limits are set out in the Spending Review Framework presented to Parliament today.

The Spending Review Framework sets out how the SR will:

- *require departments to submit their initial plans to deliver their priorities before the Summer Recess and demonstrate that they meet a tough new set of criteria to deliver value for money. The criteria cover questions such as: is the activity being funded essential to the Government's priorities, does the Government need to fund the activity, and can it be provided more efficiently?*
- *start a period of external engagement between the Government and all parts of society including; the private sector, the general public, voluntary/charitable organisations and experts, in order to obtain the best ideas from those most involved in and affected by public services*
- *establish a new Star Chamber chaired by the Chancellor and Chief Secretary and drawing on the expertise of other senior Cabinet Ministers to ensure that the Government challenges every department's spending plans to ensure that they deliver more for less. Other Cabinet Ministers will be considered to join the group, once they have settled their department's budget.*
- *seek input from the brightest and best individuals in this SR by establishing a Spending Review Challenge Group of experts – both from within Government and outside – to act as independent challengers and champions for departments throughout the process. Their remit will be to think innovatively about the options for reducing public expenditure while balancing priorities.*
- *require each Secretary of State to appoint a Minister with specific responsibility for driving value for money across their department, identifying savings opportunities and playing an important role in challenging spending in all areas, including on contracts and programmes.*
- *comprehensively examine areas such as: social security, tax credits and public service pensions as part of the process*

- *end the previous administration's complex system of Public Service Agreements that relied too heavily on rigid targets and instead ask departments to publish business plans that show the resources they need to put in place in order to protect key frontline services and deliver on their objectives.*

Tough decisions need to be taken in order to reduce the unprecedented deficit. The Government is committed to achieving the bulk of this through reductions in Government spending, rather than tax increases, while protecting the quality of key frontline services.

This SR is not just about cutting spending and setting budgets. It will be a complete re-evaluation of the Government's role in providing public services. The SR will look at what services the Government should be providing and how to get more for less'.

This is very significant to all Local Authorities because it is within those organisations that a great deal of cuts will be made. Although Principal Authorities have already been reviewing services drastically there is uncertainty as to how deep the cuts will be until the 20th October announcements are made. Significant budget reductions are expected both at East Devon District and Devon County Councils.

The Town Council for its part is already considering freezing the level of Council Tax next year at its current level but is also looking to ensure that it can continue services which support the town and its local economy. The Council will do all it can to support Exmouth and to keep business as usual despite the promise of austere times ahead.

Some Things to Look Forward to

The Council continues to work hard through Exmouth Town Management promoting the town, encouraging business and promoting the town.

The Christmas Cracker will be better than ever boosting Exmouth as a town to visit at Christmas and the Exmouth stand at Devon County Show will be organised again in 2011 creating a big splash for Exmouth exhibiting to the thousands who attend the show.

The Exmouth Festival will continue next year building on the successes of previous years and the sense of community which it generates for the town. A chance for people to enjoy events without having to pay a fortune is going to be even more important with the money in people's pockets getting tighter.

The Seafront lights are being converted to Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs) and this will take a year or two to complete as money becomes available. The new lights will be brighter and cost less to run, saving costs in the long term. A sponsorship scheme to invite businesses to sponsor strands of lights is about to be launched.

Exmouth Town Council remains optimistic that it is able to look at areas of service which will help to plan for the future. The good news is that Exmouth is a vibrant and busy town and is well placed to cope with an economic winter.

The Exmouth Community Cadets

The Council has agreed to a grant of £1,000 to support the Exmouth Community Cadets being run by the Exmouth Community College in partnership with the Police and Fire and Rescue Service. This scheme was piloted last year and has been a great success. So impressed was the Council with this scheme that it has decided to enter into an agreement to commit funding for a further two years to keep the scheme going and to build on the excellent work already achieved.

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

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