



Exmouth Town Council –Newsletter

Newsletter 6

January 2011

Local Development Framework – Core Strategy

Thank you to all who participated in making responses to East Devon District Council to give a clear view that the future of Exmouth should not be dominated by more and more housing built beyond the existing development boundaries of the town. EDDC have received a clear response to their original proposals in the first draft of the Core Strategy and it is expected that a revised version will emerge quite different from the first. Dry and boring documents are nevertheless important as the detail within them shapes how our town will look over the next few decades and our clear response will make sure that we improve on the town and the great sense of community which exists here.

Budget for 2011/12

The Town Council has set out its budget policy for next year which is to maintain the precept at £30 per band d payer per year. The final decisions will be made in January. The Council hopes that Exmouth council tax payers will see that they are obtaining good value for money at Town Council level. It is going to be tight as the town council is looking to take on planting of flower beds and provision of hanging baskets along the highways this year from East Devon District Council. Tenders have already been invited for this work which will include planting and maintaining throughout the season. The Festoon lights along the seafront are gradually being replaced with more reliable and brighter led lights. You can already see some of them outside the Pavilion and they survive the tough weather better and are already looking good. The Clock Tower on the Seafront will soon be transferred to Exmouth Town Council and a budget of £2,000 has been included to build up a maintenance fund to deal with any structural issues as they occur and to refurbish the inscribed stone work. A new Community Plan will be commenced to make sure that the town has its own plan for how things should be so that it can start taking more responsibility for things which happen here. This should eventually make the Town Council even more responsive and able to help make things happen in the town. No one likes paying taxes but the Town Council works hard to make sure that it gets the most out of every pound it spends on your behalf.

Grant Funding

The usual grants have been paid to local organisations to help them with their amazing work in the town whether it be the Citizens Advice Bureau, The Volunteer Centre, Exmouth Community Cadets, Centre Stage or Exmouth Music Society. Grants are paid to a whole range of organisations which helps them to keep going especially in tough financial times. These organisations and others not mentioned are at the heart of our community providing positive activity, guidance and entertainment for many many people. Our 'Big Society' is already alive and well in Exmouth with so many groups and societies – it is hard to comprehend how much good work is going on already in Exmouth. We should acknowledge with thanks to all those people who put in so much time to organise and make things happen – the talent in Exmouth is a deep pool – and an active one.

Keeping things Going

The Town Council continues the Festival, Town Management and many initiatives which are giving the town a profile never seen before. Exmouth used to be looked at with some humour for its divisions and bickering. That is not the case anymore. Exmouth is now regarded with a great deal of respect as a town of substance and one that is defining its own future and able to do things for itself. There is still a long way to go and next year is going to be one of the most challenging for the town in a long while but also very exciting in that things are moving forward now in a way that hasn't happened for a long time.

Local Authorities - Easy Targets

It is easy to be cynical about local authorities in this day and age. They do everything in the open and debates often exaggerate problems which exist. There are many things they do well and some they don't and there is always room for improvement. Quite why Local Authorities are paying the price of the financial crises brought about through unrealistic lending by the banks remains a mystery to many in the public service. Maybe the media has something to do with it. Just turn on the news and immediate judgements are being made day in and day out by reporters and commentators critical of this and critical of that and seeking to cast blame. It snows and someone seems to have to be responsible.

Put yourself in the position of the decision makers. If you had spent millions of pounds on snow clearing equipment a few years ago you would have been ridiculed for getting your priorities all wrong. If you ask anyone today if millions of pounds should be spent on snow clearing then the answer would very likely be a resounding yes.

Perhaps we all need to accept that we cannot control everything and as individuals we have to take more responsibility for our own actions than we have become used. Often Local Authorities are there to help those who for varying reasons are not so lucky and really do need help. With the severity of budget cuts, in the future, Councils will not be there to try and solve every problem thrown at them. More individual responsibility is being required of everybody. Maybe we should ask that same sense of responsibility to apply to the media and bankers. Bad news sells and gambling pays are not messages that we should encourage.

Christmas Cracker 2010

The Christmas Cracker 2010 certainly was bigger and better than the year before. The open Strand area with traffic removed gave us a huge space to use. Next year we will do even better

with improved layouts to create a more open feel to take the large number of people. We hope that most of you who came along enjoyed a fun evening. Of course we have noticed a number of rather rude and critical letters in the Journal. We accept the need to prevent the less thinking people from standing on the steps of the war memorial and will take suitable precautions whenever we can. Again individual responsibility clearly has a part to play as we do not, thankfully, live in a police state thanks to the sacrifices of our military. We hope most people noticed the superb Christmas tree this year with its lovely lights, the great effort made by the World of Country Life, the superb stilt walkers and all the stall holders who spent hours in the cold to create a lovely market feel for the event – not to mention the nativity and carols provided by our primary schools and the entertainment by our fine Exmouth Community College. There was a lot to be proud of and we will not be held back by those who can only see the down side..

The Snow

The snow has put us back in touch with nature for a little while. Whatever plans we have made have suddenly been affected by the weather and there is nothing we can do about it. Isn't it great to walk down into town and to smile at people and say hello to each other, the silence broken only by the occasional 4x4. The town is filled with people who cannot drive out of town. Suddenly Exmouth is a place again where we all belong and can communicate with each other. No road rage, the pace of life slowed down beyond our control, a chance to help each other where there is need. The arrogance of our modern life style knocked back for a while with the realisation that we cannot control everything.

New Year 2011

Who would have believed it 11 years since the millennium – how time flies. Whilst it is clear the New Year will bring with it difficulties for everyone, it is important for us all to move forward in a positive frame of mind and to do what human beings do best and that is to adapt. Let us all seek to speak well of each other and work together in the New Year to bring about a strong future and prosperity for our great town of Exmouth.

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.

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