

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, EXMOUTH ON MONDAY 16th MARCH 2009 AT 7.30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Approximately 42 Exmouth electors including:

Councillors: J Whipps (Mayor)
D Nicolas (Deputy Mayor)
M Ackland J Mitchell
D Chapman M Mitchell
M Chapman I Stewart
V Duval-Steer S Sutton
L Elson B Taylor
S Gazzard J Taylor
P Graham R Turner
M Hardy M Williamson
K Harper E Wragg
J Humphreys S Wragg

APOLOGIES:

Councillors: T Cope, J Mitchell, and B Walker.

1. Opening and Welcome by the Mayor

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and spoke about some of the events last year.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the Town Meeting held on Monday 17th March 2008 were received and signed as a correct record.

3. Annual Report of the Town Council

The Town Clerk presented the Annual Report of the Town Council to the meeting. Achievements were highlighted for renewal of Quality Council Status, the effectiveness of Town Management within the Town and the excellent programme that was being prepared by the Festival Organiser. The Town Council's precept for 2009/10 would be kept at the same rate as the previous year.

It was noted that Mr R Roberts wished to raise points at a later stage of the meeting under Item 5 of the Agenda and it was confirmed that time would be made available for any questions electors wished to raise.

4. Exmouth Regeneration

The meeting received a presentation by the Deputy Mayor on the current situation in Exmouth and the importance of Exmouth Town Council consulting effectively with community groups and residents.

A copy of a report prepared by the Town Plan Working Group was circulated at the meeting. Cllr. R Turner, chairman of the working group, requested input from everyone in the Town to come forward with ideas towards future development of an Exmouth Town Plan.

Cllr. M Williamson spoke on how the Town Council's Regeneration and General Purposes Committee had established links into other local community groups and he put forward a proposal to establish a Communities Organisations Liaison Panel that would meet regularly with local forums, societies & groups such as Exmouth Citizens Forum, Exmouth community Association and Exmouth Residents Association. The idea would be to ensure that a mechanism existed to communicate effectively with community groups. Following a vote this was supported and would be referred to the next Regeneration and General Purposes Committee for consideration. Note: Mr R Roberts asked that it be noted that he had abstained from voting as he did not have the details of the proposal in his possession.

Consideration was given to key topics affecting Exmouth which would form the main areas for forming a Town Plan:-

Economy
Environment
Transport
Leisure
Community Safety

The Mayor sought assurance from the meeting that they were happy for the meeting to be conducted in this way and this was generally accepted.

Notes were taken by means of a flip chart and response forms which are attached to these minutes as Appendix A.

5. Other Matters

Other matters were raised as follows:-

- An assurance was sought that future Town Council reports, minutes etc be copied back to back and not on single sided sheets.
- Mr R Roberts commended the Annual Report. He asked why the Town Council's newsletter printed in the Exmouth Journal was signed by John Wokersien, Town Clerk, had a disclaimer expressing that the content did not reflect the views of the Town Council. He also commented that following receipt of financial information there had been an increase in Town Council's salary budget of £25,000.
- Congratulations were given to the Town Council on the proposal to strengthen arrangements for working with local organisations and community groups with the hope that this would be followed through.
- A thank you for inviting Transition Towns to meet and look at sustainable living.
- A request that residents come together with the Town Council to work with the principal Councils.
- What power does Exmouth Town Council have and what more powers could it have?
- Exmouth would need to address the competition from internet sales.
- The old lifeboat station should be retained and not demolished to make way for a parking area for the new bowling alley.

The meeting concluded at 9.03 p.m.

Signed.....

Dated.....

Exmouth Town Meeting – 16th March 2009

Points made at the meeting arising on specific topic headings.

(These are general comments made and these notes do not imply that they are either accepted or rejected but provide information on different thoughts and opinions held by different people and groups within the town).

ECONOMY

Business Rates – far too high – request for them to be lowered

Removal of sea front Covenants should not happen as sea front was left to people of Exmouth

Criticism of

Removal of old station

New Lifeboat station

New Bowling Centre

What budget does the Town Council have to boost the economy

Design of the Magnolia Centre and the loss of the original buildings

Regeneration in general

Cost of Regeneration too high

Questioning of the results of Regeneration Work and what has Exmouth got to show for it?

Is the Town economy as bad as people say? Other towns are under the same downturn.

Evidence that supermarkets remove jobs from the local economy – should we be looking at attracting office jobs by means of a major employer?

Rolle College is an opportunity for business relocation but no-one has bid

EDDC take of Local Development Framework not realistic

Liverton is now a Retail Park as opposed to a Business Park

Need to look elsewhere for business opportunities

Real jobs are needed not shelf stacking type jobs

Trades for life are needed for the Town's young people

Encourage people to spend money in the Town

Businesses need to attract customers and provide service – not the responsibility of the Town council

Job issues are long standing – 40 years on

Exploit the natural environment but not concrete over what people come to see

Town should have improved facilities for sailors and boaters – retailers would have followed

ENVIRONMENT

Main asset to the Town

Sea & Estuary is a big draw – vital to protect dunes - sand dunes are being eroded because the

Marrongrass is being destroyed resulting in sand being blown over the road – need to be managed and replanted

Proud of the Town's green spaces. Maer – important family area

Planning was not enhancing estuary – do not need buildings – need environmental improvements such as estuary landscaping

The bus/train station area has been allowed to run down although the toilets are excellent but no-one knows about them – a perfect site for a public transport interchange but a need to enhance it – add bicycle parking and taxi rank

7 storey development on the docks is overbearing

Bowling Centre bigger than expected and spoils the views

Applaud the new Lifeboat station but question if it is the pre-course of more development on the seafront

Value natural environment, access to water and estuary

Imperial Recreation Ground – Town Green Status – ask for it to be protected for future generations for open space activities

Concern about the possible removal of public toilets at Elizabeth Hall site – already lost one block in Town

LEISURE

Poor facilities for visiting boats – opportunity to provide these was lost in docks development – why?

Development of the estuary side for leisure activities and exercise route to link in with cycleway

Need another new Sports Centre not a replacement with no car parking charges to encourage users

A new swimming pool available at all times not restricted by club usage and located so it is accessible by

foot to where people live

Public toilets need to be open longer

Lack of playing fields for Exmouth Community College – consideration to use Rolle College facilities

which has 2 pitches and tennis courts

TRANSPORT

Exmouth PTP Blueprint to overcome existing shortcomings

ASM/ASDA didn't answer these questions

Rail Utilization Strategy which covers the next 20 years will be released soon for discussion and made useable by the public

Old station was the transport hub of Exmouth – bus company banned local taxis

Rail link is vital to Exmouth

Transition Town Exmouth – have to reduce oil dependency

Must look at sustainable transport – need a plan

Lorry park is an eyesore and a blot on the landscape – need to make it attractive

Artic lorries need to be kept out of town 10.00am until 3pm?

Exmouth Community Association Transportation Group are meeting on 24th March at Exmouth

Community College to discuss a paper on the A376

COMMUNITY SAFETY

PACT groups to include Police, Town Councillors, business traders, District Councillors, Vicars, Youth leaders etc are being formed in all Town Wards to look at local issues such as dog bins, graffiti, anti social behaviour, parking and speeding

Improve quality of life by applying a multi agency approach

Community Projects Fund – made available for local residents to come up with ideas for community projects

