

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP

Notes of 11th meeting held on Wednesday 20th July 2016 at 9.30 pm in Exmouth Town Hall.

PRESENT

Roy Pryke	RP	NPSG Chairman
Ian Cann	IC	NPSG Vice-Chairman
Rob Masding	RM	Transition Town Exmouth, & Exmouth Town Ward Councillor
John Thorogood	JT	Town Team & Chamber of Commerce
Pauline Stott	PS	Exmouth Halsdon Ward Councillor
Brian Bailey	BB	Exmouth Withycombe Ward Councillor
Bruce de Saram	BDS	Exmouth Littleham Ward Councillor
Martin Parkes	MP	Senior Projects Officer, Devon Communities Together
Tom Butt	TB	Assistant Projects Officer, Devon Communities Together
Rev. James Hutchings	JH	Churches Together
Keith Bungay	KB	Exmouth Community Association
Tim Clatworthy	TC	Exmouth NP Project Administrator

1. APOLOGIES

Lisa Bowman	LB	Exmouth Town Clerk
Pat Graham	PG	Exmouth Town Ward Councillor
Cherry Nicholas	CN	Exmouth Brixington Ward Councillor
Mark Williamson	MW	Champion of Neighbourhood Planning for East Devon, & Exmouth Littleham Ward Councillor

2. DISCUSSION WITH MARTIN PARKES ON HIS REPORT, "SHAPE THE FUTURE OF EXMOUTH"

MP summarised the main findings of his report, which he emphasised was based purely on his analysis of our surveys, as he himself was unfamiliar with Exmouth.

He noted that many residents appeared disappointed that housing and seafront issues had not been allotted special sections in the survey. It was explained that at the time the Survey went out, there had been a real possibility that the NP process could have been overtaken by single-issue focus groups, which would have distorted the purpose and findings of the survey; these issues would be examined subsequently.

MP added that there were very many comments related to retail, asking for more specialist outlets and local produce/products. KB thought the report very encouraging as the main points of the report coincided remarkably closely with the EDDC Local Plan, only the seafront being problematic.

After this meeting MP would make any amendments, as suggested below, publishing the final report on our website and providing a small number of hard copies for key locations.

MP's report was then discussed in more detail. Comments below refer to page numbers and paragraph sections in this document.

a) P9, S3.16: VISION STATEMENT:

This was regarded as accurately representing what people thought. JH suggested that employment considerations should be mentioned, and that the final clause would be better as "live, work and visit". He added that groups generally thought of themselves as friendly, and suggested the addition of "welcoming" after "friendly". IC suggested starting a new sentence after "forward thinking." These amendments were all agreed on.

b) P5, S3.7: WITHYCOMBE RESPONSE RATE:

In answer to the question as to whether the 3.8% response rate from Withycombe ward was acceptable, MP replied that the analysis had been performed for the town as a whole, not on a ward-by-ward basis. He did say that the age profile was not representative (of the town as a whole), adding that in his experience this was always the case with paper questionnaires. BB pointed out that the Withycombe ward demographic was of mostly old and young people, with comparatively little in between. In response to PS, MP agreed a small 'on the spot' survey for younger residents would be perfect, adding that Axminster's NP had benefitted from this procedure. IC commented that we were trying to encourage at least one person from the 16 – 40 age range to be part of each ward working party.

c) P1, S1.2: DELIVERY ISSUES:

- (i) In the event it appeared that not every household had received a copy of the Survey, according to complaints by residents.
- (ii) (ii) The word "parish" after "Exmouth" should be removed.

d) P3, S2.7: SEAFRONT & HOUSING ISSUES:

After “at this early stage” insert new sentence: “This judgement was made to avoid the dominance of single issues. It was recognised that these are very important issues and agreed from the beginning that they would be included in the draft Neighbourhood Plan. Inclusion would be initiated with a subsequent survey.”

e) P3, S2.11: ADVERTISING THE NP:

Replace “The questionnaire was delivered by post” with “Arrangements were made for the survey to be delivered”. Insert a new sentence after “within the parish”: “Adverts were placed in the Exmouth Journal and Exmouth Herald for four successive weeks, on Facebook and at key locations around the town. In view of reported non-deliveries, the original deadline was also extended by six weeks, and Councillors and other NPSG members hand-delivered surveys to problem addresses.

f) P6, S3.9: AGE BIAS IN RESPONDENTS:

MP commented that the 60 – 75 age group had responded better than all other age groups in every survey he had processed, accounting for up to 56% of all responses, but that nevertheless we would need to convince the independent examiner that we had done all we could to get through to all sections of the community, including those harder to reach. Suggestions to remedy this imbalance were offered:

- i. A short questionnaire to be devised for use with students at the Exmouth College event in September.
- ii. Similar for venues where young people tend to congregate – The Range, McDonalds and Aldi were suggested.
- iii. Similar for church congregations, asking families for what is relevant to them.
- iv. Similar for upcoming events, e.g. Mussel Festival, Christmas Cracker.
- v. MP added that it was not necessarily the length of the survey that might be off-putting for younger people, but the method by which it is accessed, and that a QR code scannable by smart phones had been shown (at St Peter’s School in Budleigh Salterton) had made the process more appealing for younger people.
- vi. (See Section 11 below) It was also agreed to make use of the upcoming Councillors’ Roadshow to reach out to Exmouth’s younger generations, again using a short questionnaire which RM offered to design.

g) P8: COLOURED WORD INFOGRAPHIC:

MP pointed out that the size of each word reflected the number of times that word had been written in the completed surveys, and agreed to add that information as an explanatory footer.

h) P9, S3.18: MOST VALUED EXMOUTH QUALITIES (i):

MP commented that 20% of respondents using the paper version seemed to find the ranking process troublesome, but that did not invalidate the overall findings.

i) P10, S3.19 & Figure 7: MOST VALUED EXMOUTH QUALITIES (ii):

It was commented that there may have been an age-bias at work to produce the particular two most-valued qualities that came top (Natural Environment and Feeling of Safety), as older people probably value these more highly than younger. MP replied that in fact there was no significant difference between older and younger respondents on this question.

(JT left the meeting at this point.)

j) P11, Bar Chart, & P12, S3.21: SHOPPING PATTERNS (i):

It was agreed the finding of what residents bought in Exeter instead of Exmouth should be brought to the attention of JT and The Chamber of Commerce, and Suzanne Birkett, ETC Town Manager, and that Exmouth should expand its provision in these areas.

k) P12, S3.22: SHOPPING PATTERNS (ii):

It was feared that Exmouth’s retail provision would further shrink due to online shopping. However, businesses which had moved from Exeter Rd to The Strand had reported much improved trade. IC commented that the policy in the LDP protecting officially designated “Prime shopping frontages” should be rigorously applied when vacant shops are likely to be taken by non-shopping outlets, e.g. charity shops, estate agents, bookmakers etc. Furthermore, Liverton Business Park was thriving and also providing new employment, though it tended not to be visited by tourists. BB suggested that Exmouth consider a retail future in specialist shops, i.e. goods generally unavailable online.

(JH left the meeting at this point.)

l) P15, S3.32: PUBLIC CONVENIENCES:

It was mooted that this finding may reflect the age bias of the respondents, and that however favourably some visitors compared Exmouth with other holiday destinations, the situation should not be allowed to get worse.

m) P15, S3.33: REFUSE AND RECYCLING:

BB informed the meeting that cardboard recycling would begin early 2017, the experiment in the Colony having been successful.

n) P15, S3.34: EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS IN EXMOUTH

RP and BB hoped that the Rolle site would be secured for Exmouth as a training hub for reskilling and vocational courses, with creative and digital courses particularly in mind. KB commented that transport links between Exmouth and Exeter will need to be improved for there to be a significant expansion in employment choice in Exmouth. MP added that, due to the demographic skew of responses, the majority of respondents were not looking for work, and that when we reconsult we should focus on this. IC pointed out that the local catchment area was not big enough to support a wide range of employment opportunities, but that we should try to raise the level of opportunities in any case, or continue to lose young people.

o) P16, S3.38: PUBLIC TRANSPORT:

There was discussion as to whether the “surprising” response to this question was possibly due to it being commonly misunderstood. It was suggested that the finding might be rephrased to say that public transport was “adequate, but could be improved.”

p) P18, S4.9: SOCIAL & HEALTH SERVICES:

PS informed the meeting that ETC was working on a relevant plan, which she would forward to NPSG when appropriate. One item at issue was Exmouth Hospital, some of whose services were under threat, with the concomitant loss of land. IC asked MP if, during the period of this plan, we could raise this issue; MP replied we would have to provide evidence to the Clinical Commissioning Group that what we wanted needed to be done, and could be if using this land. PS pointed out that within Strategy 22 of the Local Plan, enhanced medical services were allowed for. KB replied that the words were there, but evidence for the necessity would still need to be provided, and if there were a groundswell of opinion, we should use it. RP warned that we had to be careful not to be partisan to single issues.

(MP, TB and BB left the meeting at this point.)

3. NOTES OF LAST MEETING

The notes of the 10th meeting held on Wednesday 29th June were received as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM/SINCE LAST MEETING

- Contact with Churches Together
 - JH, back from sabbatical, was able to join this meeting
- PS: report from Cllr Jill Elson re Community College consultation plans
 - PS was planning to meet Cllr Jill Elson early September
- RP: report from Sarah Bennett, Chair of Exmouth Learning Communities
 - RP has emailed Sarah Bennett but was not expecting an early reply as summer holidays have started
- Date of Stakeholder meeting rescheduled to 7.30pm Wed. 14th September
 - Invitation letters to go out 3rd week in August. It was agreed that Friends of Exmouth Hospital should be included.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

RM shared details of all expenditure incurred since the April, which was when NP first incurred expenses. RP pointed out that LB would need to assess these figures against our various income streams, and that ideally we should have our half-year financial review in September/October with input from LB and TS (Tim Spurway) of ETC and EDDC respectively.

6. ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM DISCUSSION WITH MARTIN PARKES

It was agreed that this had been covered under item 2, but members were invited to comment on this coverage when the notes of this meeting were circulated.

7. REPORT ON MEETING WITH TIM SPURWAY AND MARK WILLIAMSON ON 13TH JULY

Everyone had read and was happy with the report from this meeting. A follow-up meeting to be arranged in October.

8. DEVELOPING THE DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (IC's draft list of issues attached, with thanks to RM)

- **Town and Ward Issues, including Councillors' feedback on meetings of July 12th and July 18th/19th**
 - a) **HALSDON:**
PS has booked an evening consultation, 6.30 – 8.00pm for Tues 2nd August in ETC Council Chamber. IC offered to attend, and suggested that PS invite a good mix of local residents as well as interested Councillors. 15 invitations to go

out in the hope of 10 – 12 people being able to attend. RP suggested PS ask Cllr Jill Elson to stand in for PS's planned absence at the next NPSG meeting of 17th August.

b) **BRIXINGTON**

RP reported briefly on his Ward Action meeting with Cllr Cherry Nicholas and IC on 19th July, in which CN planned to build on her connection with BIG (Brixington Action Group), Marley Planning Group, and Bystock Court Conservation Group and with others including Cllr Brian Cole, Ian Kirbyn, Cllr Maddy Chapman, Norman Southwood, Chris Ball and Darryl Nicholas.

c) **TOWN**

It was recognised that many Town Ward issues were relevant to the whole town, e.g. counter-flooding measures, playing fields, and Windsor Square. Other sites that merited closer analysis were the Jewsons site, the Magnolia Centre, and the Q-Club area.

d) **WITHYCOMBE**

BB hoped to involve Withycombe Primary School headmaster Steve Polly; Mr Josh Pidgeon, landlord of The Country House Inn; and particularly some younger people (who were under-represented in the NP Survey results) as well as other ward councillors. Other issues to be looked at included possibilities for new medical services and any other land uses that have not yet been put on the ward plan, e.g. Veiges Farm and Liverton Solar Farm.

e) **LITTLEHAM**

BDS, RP and Roma Patten have met to discuss an environmental plan for the Maer Valley and are meeting again on 24th August to move forwards on the Maer Valley Strategy. This will also include issues currently covered by TARA. RP and IC are also due to talk at the TARA AGM re NP on 23rd September.

RP added that it would be very helpful to produce a large-scale map of Exmouth's cycle- and path-ways linking paths and green open spaces, as Exminster has done.

IC pointed out that it is imperative we update our ward plans and maps – which are currently missing Liverton Business Park Phase 2, the solar farms, and the Plumb Park housing scheme. **Councillors were asked to send to TC/RM all relevant updates (preferably as .jpg files) as RM has offered to update the maps using Pear Mapping technology.**

• **Process for Second Round Consultations**

The Second Round Consultation will be modelled on the first, beginning with a Town Open Day, but in the hope of attracting at least double the number of visitors. Displays will show the Survey results and ask visitors for their thoughts on the analysis and their suggestions.

9. ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY: UPDATES, SOCIAL MEDIA (RM TO REPORT), AND NEWSLETTERS

A draft newsletter should be ready in the second half of August, to flag up that MP's report would be available early September.

10. REVISED OUTLINE TIMETABLE

RP had previously circulated the attached revised outline timetable, the result of discussions with TS. Members were all agreed on the revised schedule.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) There is to be a Councillors' Roadshow on The Strand and the Beach Gardens, 9.30am – 5.30pm on 30 - 31st July. It was suggested that 100 NP flyers (perhaps A5 size) be produced according to Tim Mann's recent NP letterhead design to invite interest and comments on the NP, with the younger demographic (up to 40 y.o.) particularly in mind. BDS offered to check with Cllr Bill Nash (Roadshow organiser) that a NP presence at the Roadshow would not be inappropriate. RM offered to produce the revised questionnaire by Monday 25th July and forward it to TC for production. **All suggestions for this to RM/TC as soon as possible please.**

b) IC has offered a gazebo for NP use in the Spirit of the Exe/Mussel Festival on 24th September, which someone could if required splash with our corporate yellow. NP presence at the event will have to be organised without IC's help as he will be away mid-August to mid-September.

12. FUTURE MEETINGS

1. Wednesday 17th August, 10.30, ETC Council Chamber.
2. Wednesday 21st September, 10.30 – venue tbc.
3. Wednesday 19th October, 10.30 – venue tbc.
4. Wednesday 16th November, 10.30 – venue tbc.
5. Wednesday 14th December, 10.30 – venue tbc.

The meeting concluded at 12.40pm.