

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, EXMOUTH ON MONDAY 22ND APRIL 2013 AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors:	J Humphreys (Mayor)	B Nash (Deputy Mayor)	
	I Brownbill	B Cole	T Cope
	M Chapman	D Chapman	T Dumper
	V Duval-Steer	L Elson	S Gazzard
	P Graham	A Greenhalgh	M Mitchell
	C Nicholas	P Stott	B Taylor
	R Turner	E Wragg	S Wragg

And 12 electors of the Town of Exmouth

APOLOGIES: Councillors S MacQueen, J Mitchell, I Stewart, J Taylor & M Williamson

1. Opening and Welcome by the Mayor

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for coming. He asked Councillors Brenda Taylor and Malcolm Mitchell to pass on the Meeting's good wishes and thoughts to Councillors John Taylor and Jean Mitchell at this time.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Monday 19th March 2012 were received and signed as a correct record.

3. Annual Report of the Town Council

The Mayor presented the Annual Report of the Town Council to the meeting (a copy of the Annual Report was distributed to all who attended and is attached to these minutes) which gave an overview of the year in brief. There had been many achievements throughout the year and mention was made of the new bowling alley, Coast, the £150,000 skateboard centre in Phear Park, two free-to-use outdoor gyms, the 'insect' play area on the Maer and the additional play park in Littleham.

Praise was given to Laura Freeman, Christmas Lights campaign, who with her fellow volunteers raised £6,000 towards the festive lights and Councillor Pat Graham and her volunteers for overseeing Exmouth in Bloom and securing a gold medal for the second year running.

The Mayor had attended some 210 events and made mention of the Town Crier's success in winning the Hatherleigh Town Crier's competition. Many events had taken place in the Town over the previous year and the newly refurbished Strand had come into its own attracting tourists and local people to the town. Forthcoming events would be the Armed Forces Day and the re-adoption of the Royal Marines by Exmouth. A Service of Celebration would be held on June 30th at 3pm at Holy Trinity Church when Exmouth

would have the opportunity to celebrate the individuals, groups and organisations whose efforts make the rich tapestry of life in the town.

An expression of thanks was given to Members for their committee work and staff for their commitment as a team. A new appointment had been made to the staff team, Derek Parsons, who works alongside the Exmouth Tidy Group as a Supplementary Street Cleaner. The Mayor thanked William McConnell for his contribution to Exmouth, having resigned his seat as Councillor in the Town Ward at the end of 2012 and welcomed Councillor Ian Brownbill who had been elected in his place.

An overview was given as to the duties carried out by the three main Committees; Finance, Planning and Regeneration and General Purposes. Agendas and minutes from those meetings were available on the Town Council's website. The Council Tax precept would remain the same as the last three years.

On behalf of the Council, the Mayor presented a cheque for £2522 to Mr Roy Pryke, which had been raised throughout the year to support Rolle Exmouth Ltd as one of the Mayor's nominated charities. Mr Pryke thanked the Mayor and the Town Council for their support of the Rolle Project and a newsletter would soon be released with a progress report on its progress.

The Mayor invited Exmouth Town Crier, Roger Bourgein, to take the stand.

4. Town Crier's Report

Roger Bourgein, Exmouth's Town Crier, gave his annual report (a copy of the Annual Report was distributed to all who attended and is attached to these minutes). He had journeyed around the Town and beach on 40 weekends and had attended '101 events' throughout the year. The annual Garth Gibson Town Crier competition would take place during Exmouth Festival week on the 25th May and 22 Criers and Escorts would parade.

A special thank you was given to Mandy Westlake, the Mayor's secretary, whose efficient professionalism had supported his role and to the Town Clerk, Colin Poole, for his encouragement and a thank you for the support of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and Councillor Steve Gazzard.

5. Other Matters raised by members and the public

Mr Jeff Trail thanked the Town Council for their support of Armed Forces Day the previous year and for their help and assistance with the Adoption of Royal Marines Day to be held in June. The event would feature a Beat the Retreat on the estuary car park.

Mr Alec Huett had been drawn to Exmouth for its lovely coastline, atmosphere and openness. He was concerned at the amount of commercial rubbish bins at the back of properties within the town and the amount of takeaways that added to the litter problem. He thanked Exmouth Tidy Group and the Councillors who supported the group. Particular buildings such as the Bowling Alley, Regatta Court, the approved Spinnakers and Pier Head flats and the proposed Premier Inn along the frontage of Exmouth would lead to a closed in feel to the Exmouth front and a request was made for no more developments along the coast.

Mr Ron Roberts criticised the Mayor for electioneering and what Mr Roberts felt could have been seen as a breach of purdah with the presentation of the Rolle cheque which had taken place during the Annual Town meeting. *The Town Clerk informed the meeting that there was no restriction within periods of heightened sensitivity (purdah) against presentations as the Mayor of Exmouth Town Council was entitled to carry out his duties. [Post meeting note – The County Solicitor confirmed that there was no breach of purdah]*

Mr Roberts complained that the Town Council failed to enact the resolution that was made last year in respect of Elizabeth Hall and that the report from the discussion that the Town Council had with East Devon District Council as a result of that resolution be published. He also complained that the public were excluded for an agenda item at which this matter was discussed. *[Post meeting note – the Town Clerk explained to Mr Roberts that the Council had acted on the resolution passed Monday 1st October item C12/0071 and this had been reported on 15th October 2012 item C12/079 – the full minutes of which were on our website]*

Mr Geoff Morris raised his concern at the possible realignment of the seafront road plus a car park within the Splash Zone proposal. He had written to EDDC but had not received a justification as to why the road was to be moved. He felt the proposal to site the road within the complex would be a danger to pedestrians, particular children, moving within the leisure area and to walkers exiting the Maer. He asked that Exmouth Town Councillors listen to his concern and talk to EDDC on the issue before it incurred the expense of a new road. *The Town Clerk confirmed that a road safety audit would take place prior to confirmation of where the road would be sited. Exmouth Town Council were working with Devon County Council and East Devon District Council on the Splash proposal and the Town Clerk would ask EDDC for a response. Councillor Tim Wood added that the present seafront road was in need of investment and that the provision of a new road would be of similar expense.*

Jan Pawson wished the Town Council to note that she was sad that Elizabeth Hall and its land would no longer be available for public use. She was unclear as to whether the land had been leased or sold. Due to her deafness she was unable to enter into discussion on the matter. *[Post meeting Note – the Elizabeth Hall site freehold had been sold by East Devon District Council to Whitbread PLC]*

There being no more questions, the Mayor thanked all for attending and closed the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 7.57 pm

Signed

(Chairman)

Date