

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, EXMOUTH ON MONDAY 15th MARCH 2010 AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

18 Exmouth electors excluding:

Councillors: D Nicholas(Mayor)
S Sutton (Deputy Mayor)
D Chapman J Mitchell
M Chapman M Mitchell
T Cope I Stewart
V Duval-Steer P Stott
S Gazzard J Taylor
P Graham R Turner
M Hardy M Williamson
K Harper E Wragg
J Humphreys S Wragg

APOLOGIES:

Councillors: M Ackland, L Elson, B Taylor, B Walker & J Whipps.

SPEAKERS:

Nigel Wilkinson, Chairman of Exmouth Chamber of Trade and Commerce, Michael Greenland, local businessman, Paul Adkins & Christine Seddon-Kaye, representatives of Devon Cliffs, Manya McMahon, Marketing Agent, and Tony Collins, Exmouth Town Manager.

3. Opening and Welcome by the Mayor

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting.

4. Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Monday 16th March 2009 and the Town meeting held on the 11th January 2010 were received and signed as a correct record.

Reference was made to a point made under item 2 contained in the minutes dated 11th January 2010 in respect of the necessity for EDDC to employ a Communication Officer.

5. 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 distributed to all who attended). An overview was given on the busiest year that Exmouth Town Council had undertaken since its inception. Pressures experienced by the recession would have implications on Public Services and direct implications for our Town. The mayor gave a sample of some of the cuts that would affect service provision in Exmouth:-

- Rolle College funding from Learning and Skills Council withdrawn and Devon County Council was not prepared to step into the breach;
- University of Plymouth would sell off all its assets in Exmouth to fund a 'World Class

- University' in Plymouth and help with its own funding crises;
- RDA withdrew pledged funding for Visitor Centre Scheme;
- District Council withdrawing funding for casual grounds maintenance staff;
- District Council bus shelters of which there were 17 would be left unmaintained;
- Esplanade decorative festoon lights potentially would be allowed to fall into disrepair until they were removed;
- Littleham Toilets closure;
- Stress on street scene services and no money for improvements.

The Town Council had raised its precept to ensure that it could cover funding for lost services that were important to Exmouth.

Focus on achievements highlighted the commencement of the Strand Enhancement Scheme and the Exmouth Masterplanning that would encourage investment into the Town Centre by redevelopment of the London Inn Car Park and Royal Avenue sites. The formation of COLP (Communities Organisations Liaison Panel) had created a greater cohesion between the Town Council and local representative groups. Other achievements had been:-

- Making £20,000 worth of grants with the project fund to help local groups and clubs achieve new initiatives and projects;
- Exmouth Festival;
- Promotion of Town Management and its many successes which included The Christmas Cracker and New Year Events;
- Largest funder of Christmas Lights;
- Support for the Jurassic Coast Team;
- Support Exe Estuary Partnership;
- Work on community safety with local organisations and the police;
- Graffiti and fly posting kept under control;
- Flower towers provided and strong support to Exmouth in Bloom;
- Support for the Gateway Visitor Centre;
- Formation of the Rolle College Group to secure buildings for the community;
- The reinvention of the Chamber of Trade and Commerce who had encouraged businesses by networking and expanding the skills by the recruitment of new members.

The uncertainty that surrounded the Local Government Review still existed as the recent decision that Exeter City Council should become a Unitary Council within it's own boundaries would be challenged in April by Devon County Council.

6. Supporting Local Services

The cuts in local services for the Town were discussed in particular the effect on the Town's parks and gardens, no provision of seasonal gardeners, lack of maintenance to EDDC town bus shelters, town clocks and the festoon lights on the seafront.

Members of the public showed concern at whether Exmouth could maintain its Britain in Bloom success in the future. A suggestion was made that members of the public could donate surplus seedlings and plants. Also could local businesses sponsor some of these service items?

Other topics were discussed by members and the public:-

- The Strand Improvement Scheme;
- Land disposal on the seafront;
- All year round parking charges on the seafront;
- The purchase of part of Rolle College;
- Power of the Town Council;
- Community Project Funds;

7. Exmouth Town Management – Business Community in 2010

Tony Collins, Exmouth Town Manager, gave a talk about the stand which Exmouth Town Management with the Chamber and local businesses would have at this year's Devon County Show. It would be the first time that a Town had taken part in the show and Exmouth's highlights would appear in the show's own guide. A presentation document was distributed to attendees of the meeting which focused on 'The Changing Role of Business in Exmouth'.

Members of the Exmouth Chamber of Trade and Commerce spoke at length at their engagement with the Town. The new brand for Exmouth would be 'Get Inspired'. A new visitors' guide had been published and publicity for Exmouth would be articulated in 'Devon Life', the local newspapers and on TV.

The Chairman of Exmouth Chamber of Trade and Commerce identified the recent growth in the Chamber and how it had given opportunities to local businesses to attend networking lunches and business events. A business plan to relocate and re-launch the TIC in the new Strand development as a commercial venture had been drawn up.

8. Other Matters

A request was made for support to be given to Exmouth Rowing Club to assist them to relocate to more suitable premises and a request was made for accommodation at the Old Lifeboat Station. This item would be dealt with as an agenda item at the next Regeneration and General Purposes Committee.

A further request was made which asked if owners of dogs who left dog mess could be fined. EDDC were the enforcement authority and specific information should be provided to the Dog Warden Service.

Would the public footpath at the rear of the new bowling alley be reopened on completion of the building work? This item would be discussed as an agenda item at the Rights of Way Committee who would meet next week.

Confirmation was given that DCC had agreed the sum of £500,000 for the provision of the Gateway Visitor Centre adjacent to the Mamhead slipway.

Publicity for the Annual Town meeting should be reviewed to encourage better attendance.

The meeting concluded at 9.17 p.m.

Signed.....

Dated.....