

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, EXMOUTH ON MONDAY 31ST MARCH 2014 AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors: J Humphreys (Mayor) B Nash (Deputy Mayor)
 M Chapman D Chapman B Cole
 T Cope T Dumper L Elson
 S Gazzard P Graham A Greenhalgh
 S MacQueen M Mitchell C Nicholas
 I Stewart P Stott B Toye
 R Turner M Williamson E Wragg
 S Wragg

And 9 electors of the Town of Exmouth

APOLOGIES: Councillors I Brownbill, V Duval-Steer, B Taylor, J Taylor, and R Bourgein, Town Crier.

1. Opening and Welcome by the Mayor

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for coming.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Monday 22nd April 2013 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 and highlighted the many things achieved by the Council throughout the last year.

An expression of thanks was given to Members for their committee work and staff for their commitment as a team.

On behalf of the Council, the Mayor presented a cheque for £2,077.72p to Mrs Frances Longhurst, Chairperson of Exmouth and Lypstone Hospiscare. The money had been raised through the Mayor's Grand Draw and throughout the year to support the local Hospice as the Mayor's nominated charity. Mrs Longhurst thanked the Mayor for his hard work on their behalf and attendance at fundraising events; the Town Council for their support of Hospiscare and how delighted she was that it had been nominated as it had given the Hospice a heightened profile and public awareness. The Hospice is for local people and has to fund raise £220,000 every year, 95p of every £1, going directly on patient care. Many people who work to support patients are voluntary. Lesley, a specialist Hospiscare nurse, stated the money that had been raised on behalf of the

Mayor's chosen charity would go towards providing specialist care for patients with life threatening illnesses.

The Mayor thanked both for attending.

4. Other Matters raised by members and the public

Mr Ron Roberts told the meeting that in his opinion the Council was not working with the general public and that his speech had only made reference to how important it was to work with Devon County Council and East Devon District Council when the general public should be top of the list. *The Mayor highlighted the many working parties and meetings where the general public were directly involved as members of the meeting.*

Mr John Hunt asked what was happening about the Strand shelter. *The Mayor answered that the Town Council had given the go ahead for a combined shelter/performance area on the Strand and Devon County Council were awaiting permission of a Ward Councillor before this could go ahead.*

Mr Hunt also wished to know whether action could be taken against skateboarders, particularly adults, using the Strand as a skateboard park. *The Town Clerk explained that there was no rule against skateboarding within the Strand and it was how they behaved whilst skateboarding that mattered. The space was a space for everybody. Skateboarding sensibly was not a problem, but mounting the war memorial, that was a problem.*

A further question was asked as to the progress of reinstating a Tourist Information Centre. *The Mayor advised that a report was in the process of being prepared by the former Mayor, Daryl Nicholas, and would be presented for consideration by the Town Council at the end of April.*

Councillor Eileen Wragg, in response to the Mayor's reply in respect of the Strand shelter, gave assurance that Devon County Council were not just awaiting her response as the shelter would not be suitable as it had no sides. With that in mind the design would be revisited and she as divisional member would need to give approval once she was satisfied with the design. Ron Roberts asked if planning permission would be needed for the shelter to which the Town Clerk responded yes as it was not just a shelter.

Mr Alec Huett had been visiting Exmouth since he was 15 years of age and had chosen to retire here. He felt Exmouth could have some improvements without spending too much money. The seafront was visited by thousands throughout the year but there were not enough public toilets even though local public notice boards made reference to them being available when they had in fact been demolished or were closed. Refreshments were also stated to be available at Orcombe Point when this was no longer the case. People who visit Exmouth and spend money on parking expect to have facilities provided. Reference was made to the parking issue down Marine Drive where parking meters are supplied by two different authorities for different sides of the road causing visiting motorists to be confused. *The Mayor said that the Splash area would be built for children who had to currently travel out of town for facilities.*

Mr Huett praised the improved Strand area and the nicely lit Cafe Quarter but felt it was let down by the Thomas Tucker building, built in the 1790's, but now falling into disrepair.

Could the council help with a possible solution? Buildings on the seafront may in 70 years time have been eroded by climate change. *The Mayor focused on how important it was to encourage people to visit Exmouth as it was at the end of a road and not a town which people drive through on their way elsewhere and discover.*

Councillor Sandy MacQueen stated that Exmouth Town Council had on several occasions tried to resolve the issue of two different councils operating parking ticket machines on different sides of the road but to no avail.

Mr Dave Apperley asked why the seafront lights had not been working for a while and when they had been working seemed to go out at regular intervals along the festoon strings. *The Town Clerk had agreed to the contractor's proposal that during the recent storms it was not cost effective to try and keep the lights in working order. Now the weather had calmed down, the contractor was working to get everything up and running again.*

Councillor Alison Greenhalgh asked if there was a method the public could use to report LED bulb failures. *The Town Clerk requested that the lamp column number nearest the failed bulbs was noted and reported in it would help to provide a quicker response than having to wait until it was dark to rediscover the fault.*

Mr Jeff Trail thanked the Town Council members for their support of the Adoption of Royal Marines Day held last June. He also thanked the Town Clerk for his assistance with the flag poles along the seafront and his hard work in preparing the application for the road closures needed for the speed march of the Royal Marines through Exmouth at the end of May.

The Town Clerk asked if members of the public who had spoken during the meeting were happy for the recording of the meeting to be published on the Bay FM website and, with no objections made, agreement was given for this to be done.

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

The meeting concluded at 7.52 pm

Signed
(Chairman)

Date