

# EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL REGENERATION & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, EXMOUTH ON MONDAY 17th MARCH 2014 AT 7.00pm

**Present:**

Councillors: P Stott (Chairman)  
M Chapman (Vice-Chairman)

I Brownbill	D Chapman	B Cole	T Dumper
V Duval-Steer	L Elson	S Gazzard	P Graham
J Humphreys	S MacQueen	C Nicholas	I Stewart
R Turner	M Williamson	E Wragg	S Wragg

**Invited Councillors:** Councillor J Elson, EDDC Portfolio Holder and Councillor B Hughes, Chairman of Devon County Council.

Councillor P Stott, Chairman of the meeting, welcomed everyone to the special meeting and asked for agreement for Standing Orders 8.3 & 16 be suspended, to allow for the Public Forum to be extended and to allow elected Members to take part in the discussion, but only Town Councillors may take part in any vote.

**Proposed Cllr E Wragg**

**Seconded Cllr L Elson**

**RESOLVED**

The Chairman advised public speaking would be taken alongside each agenda item.

**G14/030 Apologies**

The following apologies were noted: Cllrs. A Greenhalgh, M Mitchell, B Nash, B & J Taylor & B Toye.

**G14/031 Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and Dispensations**

The following Councillors declared interests:

Item	Councillor	Declaration type		Reason
		Pecuniary	Personal	
G14/032.b	I. Brownbill		x	Works for a company retained by DCC to advise on buildings involved in the consultation
	C. Nicholas		x	Family member received care from these services
	M. Williamson		x	Family member received care from these services
G14/032.c	I. Brownbill		x	Works for a company retained by DCC to advise on buildings involved in the consultation
	M Chapman		x	Used to work at Davey Court & knows employees there
	P. Stott		x	Used to work at Davey Court & knows employees there

	E Wragg		x	DCC Councillor and relative worked at Davey Court in the past.
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**Public Forum** The Chairman adjourned the meeting for public speaking on the Youth Service (see Appendix A).

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

**G14/032 Exmouth Town Council response to Devon County Council Consultation for the Youth Service Review**

Consideration was given by members to the impact of proposals to close The Hive Youth Centre in September should no-one come forward from the voluntary sector or a solution be found.

**Councillor M Williamson proposed, seconded by Councillor I Stewart, the following motion:**

“Acting in the interests of all Exmouth residents and in the spirit of participation, Exmouth Town Council resolves that Devon County Council should rescind its decision to close The Hive in view of the essential contribution it makes to the well-being of all young people in Exmouth, the largest town in Devon, and Exmouth Town Council asks for urgent talks with the DCC Cabinet Member on this matter”.

**RESOLVED:** The Committee were unanimous in support of the motion.

**Public Forum** The Chairman adjourned the meeting for public speaking on Day Services (there were no members of the public wishing to speak on this item).

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

**G14/033 Exmouth Town Council response to Devon County Council consultation for Day Services**

Some members gave a personal account of the valued service they had received for members of their family at Davey Day Centre. Services were delivered by highly skilled Day Care staff with dignity to a vulnerable client group alongside a much needed day’s respite for carers of people with dementia.

Copperfields Day Services had also been earmarked for closure which would mean the loss of a much needed day service for people with Learning Difficulties who attended for social interaction and to give carers respite some of which had been attending for many years.

A request was made for DCC to supply a figure of how much money was needed to be saved within Exmouth and a list of all statutory services that were provided and then Exmouth Town Council could give consideration to make an informed choice as to which services they felt could be scaled down.

**Councillor S Macqueen proposed, seconded by Councillor I Stewart, a motion**

“It is shortsighted to withdraw Davey Court Day Centre and Copperfields Day Centres as not only do they benefit the client but the carer as well”.

**RESOLVED:** The Committee were unanimous in support of the motion.

**Public Forum** The Chairman adjourned the meeting for public speaking on Davey Court Residential Home (See Appendix A).

The Chairman thanked Ms Cheshire for her contribution and reconvened the meeting.

#### **G14/034 Exmouth Town Council response to Devon County Council consultation for Davey Court Residential Care Home**

The committee were in receipt of a report (previously circulated) which outlined the principles behind the proposal to close Davey Court Residential Home. It was difficult to establish how the costs identified for the current provision of residential care had been calculated and members asked for further clarification of the weekly cost and the budget needed to run Davey Court. There was currently no specialised dementia care provision within 30 miles radius of Exmouth in the independent sector. St John's Court, a dementia assessment centre, had been closed in 2012 which had followed the closure of Danby House, Exebank and the Doyle Centre, all of which were DCC establishments. Exmouth had a very large elderly population and the loss of specialist dementia services within the town would be a great loss.

It was felt that DCC should have lobbied Central Government as the £117 million budget cut was felt excessive and prevented vital services being provided.

**Councillor M Williamson proposed, seconded by Councillor S Gazzard, the following motion:**

“Exmouth Town Council urgently requests Devon County Council to provide an evidence base to support the cost figures quoted in the Davey Court Residential report, particularly the cost of care in independent care homes, and the costings both already incurred and planned to support Davey Court's recognition as a Centre of Excellence”.

**RESOLVED:** The Committee were unanimous in support of the motion.

**Public Forum** The Chairman adjourned the meeting for public speaking on Bystock Court Residential Home (See Appendix A).

The Chairman thanked Ms Knight for her contribution and reconvened the meeting.

#### **G14/035 Exmouth Town Council response to Devon County Council consultation for Bystock Court Residential Care Home**

The Chairman asked that this item be considered as a matter of urgency.

**Councillor I Stewart proposed, seconded by Councillor D Chapman, the following motion:**

“That Exmouth Town Council write a strong letter to the Trustees of Bystock Court to register the Town Council's disapproval of what was being proposed. A copy of the letter together with a further letter to be sent to Devon County Council to ask why client referrals were no longer being made to Bystock Court and why this decision had been taken without local members being made aware of that action.”

**RESOLVED:** The Committee were unanimous in support of the motion.

**G14/036 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting was to be held on 28th April 2014.

The Meeting ended at 21:21 pm.

Signed ..... Dated .....  
**Chairman**

**Appendix A**

**a) Youth Service Review**

George Downs, elected member of the Youth Parliament and representing Devon Youth Council, gave a presentation on Youth Service provision in Exmouth. Members had been provided with a report which gave a profile on Exmouth’s Young People Centre, The Hive, (previously circulated). Devon Youth Council had launched a campaign which highlighted the impact on Devon’s youth which would be a result of the closing of youth centres and the loss of skilled Youth Workers throughout Devon. They felt there was no evidence of outside organisations or voluntary bodies already providing youth services and by moving services to the voluntary sector could result in possible breakdown in youth provision. They also felt that initial savings forecast by Devon County Council would be less than anticipated and were concerned that to their knowledge no Devon County Councillor had visited a youth provision within East Devon. In response to the proposed cuts a ‘Save the Youth Service’ group had demonstrated at County Hall and presented a 4,500 signature petition to Councillor John Hart who had previously been made aware by local councillors, at the end of 2013, the value placed on the local Youth Service. A request was made by George Downs to members of Exmouth Town Council for support and if supported he asked for a letter to be sent to Devon County Council to state that.

Points were raised by members that focused on services currently provided by the DCC Youth Service which included outreach work and specialist group sessions for youngsters with disabilities and those who were difficult to engage. DCC Youth Workers were well trained and highly skilled particularly in provision of some curriculum based subjects and it should not be expected that volunteers took on the challenge of working with young people. Reference was made to Principle 6 which was contained in the report where it was stated that DCC would continue to listen to young people although that had not been the case at a recent meeting held at Devon County Hall. Members of the Devon Youth Panel were very aware of youth provision within the voluntary sector as they carried out Quality Assurance visits either prior or post grant application requests. Provision within voluntary groups was mainly targeted at an earlier age range, 11 to 12 year olds, not the older vulnerable age groups. There had been no provision by DCC of the cost of staff provision or numbers of staff needed to support the youth centre and the proposal to close the centre had been taken by DCC Cabinet Members without consulting local council members. A question was raised as to whether the Equalities Act 2010 had been used to carry out

an Impact Assessment on Youth Services taking into account the provision of services to groups with disabilities.

DCC Chairman Councillor B Hughes wished to retain a position of neutrality and stated that the proposal was not a position that DCC had wished to be in. A cut in funding of 117 million from central government had meant that there was not enough money to provide all Devon County Services and it had been acknowledged that only 20% of Devon's youth was reached by the current provision. He asked if there was a less expensive way of delivering Youth Services, perhaps discussion could take place to seek a solution.

**b) Davey Court**

Christine Cheshire, former manager of Davey Court, Exmouth asked to speak from the public gallery. In 2012 DCC and the Health Authority identified Davey Court Residential Home as the provider of a much needed service and it had been promoted as becoming a centre of Excellence for Dementia. Steps were to be put in place for this to happen and a reduction in residents was agreed to allow the necessary building works to take place to facilitate the transformation to a centre of Excellence. There has been a recent loss of two Dementia Homes in Exmouth, Magnolia House and Park House and specialist care within the town and surrounding areas was not available. The staff group at Davey Court were committed and trained to work with residents with complex needs and had pledged to reduce staffing cost by losing enhancements should the home remain open. She asked members if they would respond individually as well as collectively.

**c) Bystock Court**

Emma Knight, sister of James, a resident of Bystock Court for 29 years, asked to speak from the public gallery. The Guinness Care and Support, trustees of Devon sheltered Homes Trust, had recently announced that provision of residential care at Bystock Court no longer met Government Policy and had stated that it was an outdated institution so Bystock Court would have to close.

There had however been 100% occupancy when Commission of Quality Care had carried out their reviews over recent years but now the lack of referrals by Devon County Council had resulted in vacancies. There had been no fundraising requests made to help underpin the cost of provision of residents' costs. Bystock Court, a Grade 2 Listed Building, had a working farm, woodland and grew plants for sale. The residents were most vulnerable people and were secure and happy at Bystock whilst using facilities within Exmouth so as to integrate into society. The loss of Bystock would destroy a community. A request was made to members to help save the home from closure.