

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, EXMOUTH ON MONDAY 14TH APRIL 2014 AT 7.00 P.M.

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

Officers: Colin Poole, Town Clerk & Sue Cody, Minute Taker.

C14/035. APOLOGIES

Councillors I Brownbill, T Cope, J Taylor & M Williamson

The meeting was adjourned for the Public Forum. Please see Appendix for details.

The meeting was then reconvened.

C14/036. COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

The minutes of the Town Council held on 17th February 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C14/025a Request to re-open a Job Centre in Exmouth. Councillor S Gazzard thanked David Beasley, Exmouth Journal, for running a front page article on the hardship caused to jobseekers when they had to travel to Exeter in order to access a Job Centre. The Freedom of Information request submitted by the Town Clerk had provided information on the rationale behind the closure of the Exmouth Job Centre Plus. However, other requests for details of towns of a similar size to Exmouth and their provision for job centres had been met with a diversionary response. Councillor S Gazzard had also written to Hugo Swire MP but to date had had no reply. The Town Clerk was asked to write to Hugo Swire asking for his support for the Town Council's request for reinstatement of a provision within the Town.

C14/025b The second matter arising was whether a response had been received from The Samaritans following the Town Clerk's request for permission to erect a sign at Orcombe Point. No response had been received and a suggestion was made that the Town Crier be asked to approach the local branch of The Samaritans so as to speed things up.

C14/037. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

The following Councillors declared interests:

Item	Councillor	Declaration type		Reason
		Pecuniary	Personal	
14/039	S Wragg		x	Allotment holder
	E Wragg		x	Husband is an allotment holder.
	P Graham		x	Allotment holder
	B Taylor		x	Allotment holder

C14/038. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Exclusion of the press and public under the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 – publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted – staff matters, publication of minutes of a closed meeting and discussion of the financial affairs of a third party organisations: Agenda item 15.5 HR Group due to personnel matters being discussed; item 16 To confirm the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of 24th March, due to being minutes of a closed meeting & item 17 Gorfin Hall, discussion of third party contractual matters.

C14/039. URGENT BUSINESS UNDER STANDING ORDER 6.2

There were two items to be dealt with under urgent business.

i) Jarvis Close Car Park

Members had before them a précised report prepared by the Town Clerk which gave an outline of a request received from EDDC for Exmouth Town Council to consider take over the Jarvis Close car park and the public toilets sited there. It was noted there was no opportunity to generate an income to pay for their upkeep.

Exmouth Town Council is content to work with both EDDC and DCC in respect of transfer of assets but this appeared to be offloading a millstone EDDC wanted shot of, rather than any sort of sensible proposal. The Town Clerk advised that the Council should expect that genuine asset transfer involved an income generating asset to be offered alongside one that did not to give the Town Council a fighting chance of providing value for money to the taxpayer.

Councillor D Chapman proposed seconded by Councillor B Nash that a response be sent emphasising to EDDC the Town Council's criteria for negotiating any transfer of assets.

RESOLVED that a response be sent to EDDC setting out the Town Council's criteria for negotiating and transfer of assets.

ii) Allotment Inspection Report

Members had before them a report prepared by the Town Clerk which followed an inspection visit by members of the inspection panel to Hamilton Lane allotments on the 8th April 2014. As a result of the visit proposed changes to current rules as shown below have been submitted for consideration by committee members.

Current Rules state:

2. Purpose: The main purpose of an allotment garden must be to grow produce that are vegetables, fruit or flowers. Fruit trees, bushes, canes and shrubs are all allowed. No other trees can be grown. An area of grass or mulch for rest and relaxation can form part of the allotment.

3. Maintenance: Allotments and surrounding paths must be kept tidy and generally weed-free at all times. The whole plot should be cultivated. The Tenant shall keep the internal face of every boundary hedge properly trimmed and keep all ditches clear.

Proposal to change Rules to say:

2. Cultivation: The main purpose of an allotment garden is to grow produce that include vegetables, fruit and flowers. Fruit trees, fruit bushes and fruiting shrubs are all allowed. No other trees can be grown and maximum height allowed for a fruit tree is 15ft (4.5 metres). A proportion of the land may lie fallow for a few weeks. An area of grass or mulch for rest and relaxation can form part of the allotment. The whole plot should be under some form of cultivation. (see guidelines April 2014)

3. Boundaries: The Tenant shall keep the internal face of every boundary hedge properly trimmed and keep all ditches clear. Allotment plots and surrounding paths must be kept tidy and generally weed-free and free of rubbish at all times. (April 2014)

Current Guidelines say nothing about what is meant by cultivation. Proposed changes to the guidelines are:

Cultivation: Allotment plots should be in continuous use to grow produce that is vegetables, fruit or flowers. Fruit trees of less than 15ft (4.5 metres), fruit bushes and fruiting shrubs may all be grown.

All plots should be largely weed free to prevent weeds from seeding on to other plots. All boundary paths should be trimmed regularly to facilitate access.

For the avoidance of dispute, the decision as to whether an allotment meets the condition of being “under some form of cultivation” is reserved for the Committee.

Plot holders will normally be given a warning letter and allowed up to six weeks to bring a weedy plot under control where these guidelines have not been followed. After six weeks if there is insufficient improvement, a notice of termination will be discussed by the Committee and appropriate action taken, which may involve asking the Town Clerk to support termination of the Tenancy agreement. (April 2014)

Members unanimously supported the proposed changes.

Note: Councillors P Graham, B Taylor and S Wragg as allotment holders left the room whilst this item of urgent business was debated.

C14/040. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 10

There were no questions under Standing Order 10.

C14/041. SUSTRANS ROUTE 2

See also John Petty's address during the Public Forum session (see Appendix). Questions raised by members were and answered where applicable by John Petty (shown in italics):-

- The Strand roadway was one-way, how would cyclists go against the traffic?
A green stripe could be added to the road to show a contra-cycle lane. Having a cycle lane in the opposite direction to a slow one-way section of road was not unusual and in any case local cyclists already cut through against the traffic.
- If cyclists were to cycle down Manchester Road there would be a danger to pedestrians and people sitting at cafes. Exit via Manchester Street could be considered.
A 'Cyclists Dismount' sign would be erected in Manchester Road and bad cycling behaviour would be monitored.
- Concern about cyclists cycling through events that took place in the Strand and dangers to pedestrians. Cyclists should be prevented from entering the Strand when events took place.
Tourists following Route 2 are unlikely to behave like this during events. Local cyclists are not following the route anyway. Perhaps a trial period would make sense.
- Bath Road into Chapel Hill would be a particular danger near the roundabout. Concern when cyclists needed to turn right against traffic flow.
A big warning sign would be erected where ever a cyclepath joined a dedicated highway.
- Councillors expressed support for contributing funding towards the signage.
- Devon County Council in the near future would be altering the kerbside on the area used as a taxi rank on the Strand.

At the end of the session members made a request that the agenda item be referred to the next Regeneration and General Purposes meeting for further discussion.

C14/042. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT

At the COLP meeting held on the 28th February 2014 a paper prepared by Noel Harrower, a member of Transition Town Exmouth, had been considered. The paper proposed that large supermarkets should pay a 5% levy to support smaller businesses. The EDDC Residents Panel but had declined to endorse this for putting to the government. COLP members asked that members of the Town Council, apart from members who served on the Overview and Scrutiny Panel, support the proposal so that it could be presented to that Panel. All members not on the Overview and Scrutiny Panel supported the proposal.

C14/043. EXMOUTH YOUTH COUNCIL

Councillor A Greenhalgh reminded the meeting of minute C12/096 dated 19th November 2012 which agreed that a delegated budget be given to a Youth Council. Funds had been put aside for one of three projects the Youth Council were to debate; an extension to the

graffiti wall in Phear Park, an addition to the gym trail in Phear Park or an additional inflatable for the Leisure Centre swimming pool.

Councillor A Greenhalgh proposed seconded by Councillor S Gazzard and fully supported by all Members that delegated powers be given to the group who would consider the grants allocation for the 3 projects.

RESOLVED delegated powers to spend up to £3000 be given to the Youth Council on one of the three projects above.

C14/044. BROADBAND SUPPLIER

The Council were asked to consider the replacement of the two current broadband providers, one of which was a domestic broadband supplier, with a single high speed fibre optic business broadband at a monthly cost of £28.87p provided by Zen Internet which had been recommended by the Town Council's IT consultant.

Councillor M Mitchell proposed, seconded by Councillor P Stott replacement of the two current broadband providers with one broadband provider Zen Internet.

RESOLVED that the contract with the two current broadband providers be replaced with one broadband provider Zen Internet.

C14/045. PLANNING COMMITTEE

Councillor L Elson proposed, seconded by Councillor P Stott that the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 17th February and 3rd, 17th & 31st March 2014 (as previously circulated) be received.

Councillor L Elson advised that the advertisement application for Premier Inn that had been reconsidered at the Planning Committee meeting held that night. Members had continued to oppose the application for the 'totem' sign sited outside the building on the seafront.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on the 17th February and 3rd, 17th & 31st March 2014 (as previously circulated) be received.

C14/046. REGENERATION AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Councillor P Stott proposed, seconded by Councillor C Nicholas moved that the minutes of the Regeneration and General Purposes Committee meetings held on 3rd and 17th March 2014 (as previously circulated) be received.

Councillor P Stott informed members that following the meeting held on the 17th March 2014 that letters had been sent from Exmouth Town Council to Devon County Council stating our opposition to the closure of Davey court, Youth Services and Bystock Court. No response had been received to date.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Regeneration and General Purposes Committee meetings held on 3rd and 17th March 2014 be accepted.

Note: Councillor C Nicholas was absent from the Chamber during this item.

C14/047. FINANCE COMMITTEE

Councillor D Chapman proposed, seconded by Councillor R Turner moved that the minutes of the meeting held on the 24th March 2014 (as previously circulated) be received and the recommendation F14/017 and all resolutions contained between F14/018 and F14/023 inclusive be adopted, in particular matters relating to internal audit.

Note: An amendment was required to Minute F14/018 as the seconder recorded, Councillor B Toye, was not present at that meeting.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 24th March 2014 (as previously circulated) be received and the recommendation F14/017 and all resolutions contained between F14/018 and F14/023 inclusive be adopted, in particular matters relating to internal audit.

The next meeting to be held on Monday 27th May would be held at the Telfer Centre, Exmouth Community College, as the Council Chamber and Committee Room would be used by the Exmouth Festival.

Note: Councillor E Wragg was absent from the Chamber for this item

C14/048. CIVIC SERVICE

The Civic Service was held on 30th June last year but a date of the 28th September was put forward for this year. Councillor M Mitchell proposed seconded by Councillor B Nash. Members supported this date.

RESOLVED that the Civic Service be held on 28th September

Note: Councillor E Wragg was absent from the Chamber for this item

C14/049. REPORTS FROM OTHER LOCAL BODIES AND THE TOWN CLERK as appropriate (Standing Order 6.2)

- 1. Town Clerk** – A briefing document compiled by Daryl Nicholas had been distributed to enable Councillors to have information prior to the Tourism meeting which would be held on the 28th April 2014 at 7.00 pm.

Note: Councillor E Wragg was absent from the Chamber for this item.

- 2. Arts Manager** – The content of the report were noted and accepted. Festival programmes had been delivered to the Town Hall and any offers from Councillors to help with distribution would be welcomed.
- 3. Town Management Project Officer** - The content of the report were noted and accepted. An invitation for all councillors was given out for the Jurassic Coast event to be held on May 8th.

4. Councillors –

- At a recent Community Partnership Safety Conference, Exmouth's CCTV staff were presented with an award in appreciation of their service to the community.
- The Local Action Group would raise the issue of car parked in Tower Street and issues which had resulted from the new public house. The Town Clerk had written to DCC Highways to highlight that if the Traffic Orders that covered Tower St and Bath Road were defective they should be included in the next possible Traffic Order. Councillor E Wragg offered to take this matter back to DCC. A Traffic Order had been made to remove the coach parking in Imperial Road so as to reinstate short stay parking.
- A request was made for a substitute to be nominated who could attend Licensing meetings at EDDC should Councillor E Wragg be unable to attend. Councillor I Stewart was confirmed as substitute.
- DCC were looking to other organisations to take over the running of some libraries. Roger Groad had given assurance that no library would close under DCC cut backs.

Note: Councillor S Gazzard was absent from the Chamber for this item.

- A youth protest against cuts to the Youth Service organised by George Downs would take place in Exmouth on Saturday at 10.00am. and in Exeter on 26th April.

Note: Councillor S Gazzard was absent from the Chamber for this item.

- The consultation on closure of DCC Residential Homes had now closed.
- Pothole repairs were being addressed.
- A meeting would be held in Bodmin on the 24th April which would discuss issues that had arisen from the recent winter storms.
- All members plus any local residents were welcome at the next Flooding and Drainage Working Party.
- DCC budget cuts could end up with the Town being looked at as losing too many services which is what has happened in South Moulton's case.
- EDDC Councillor Jill Elson at a recent DCC Youth Services meeting asked when and where the Youth Services evaluation had been carried out and why there had been no consultation with EDDC or ETC.
- A request for names to be put forward for membership of the Community Resilience Group.
- The Festival Programme was of a wonderful quality and praise was given to Carla Hiley, Arts Manager, for all her hard work.

The Press and Public were asked to leave the room whilst agenda items 15.5, 16 and 17 were discussed and the recording stopped.

- #### 5. HR Group - The minute for this item is held by the Chairman of the HR Group.

C14/050. MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF 24TH MARCH 2014

The Town Clerk advised the meeting that the details of this meeting need no longer remain confidential. Councillor S Gazzard proposed seconded by Councillor D Chapman that the minutes of the meeting be agreed and made public.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of 24th March 2014 be agreed and made public.

C14/051. GORFIN HALL

Discussion took place in respect of one of the Gorfin Hall Hirers and their request to the Town Council. Councillor S Gazzard proposed, seconded by Councillor E Wragg to approve the extended hours requested for the operation of a nursery, dependent upon the other users either being accommodated elsewhere. The Council would look favourably on a grant application to facilitate relocation.

RESOLVED that the extended operating hours of the nursery be approved, subject to the other users being accommodated elsewhere.

C14/052. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Town Council will be that of the Annual Meeting to be held on Monday 19th May 2014.

The meeting concluded at 9.00 pm.

Signed..... Date.....
(Chairman)

APPENDIX

PUBLIC FORUM

Mr J Petty spoke on agenda item 7.

Patrick Kalaugher and himself, as Sustrans Volunteer Rangers had been working with Paul Hawkins, the Sustrans Area Manager, to see if Route 2 could be rerouted along the seafront and through Exmouth Town Centre. This would improve the tourism opportunities especially now that the Petit Tour de Manche follows Route 2 from Weymouth to Plymouth and it would be a shame if all the continental visitors see of Exmouth was Phear Park.

Sustrans had approved the following route coming from Exeter:-

Mudbank Lane (Where the old Phear Park Route will divide) to Carter Avenue and through the King George V playing field to Marine Way. Past the station and the Leisure Centre to the Manchester Road crossing. Along Manchester Road and through the Strand to the Chapel Hill roundabout and Bath Road. Cross Bath Road and follow the Esplanade and Queens Drive cyclepath to Maer Road, then Douglas Avenue, turning almost immediately into Cranford Avenue to reach the junction with the Phear Park Route at Jarvis Close. The reverse route would be the same except that it would turn immediately into Douglas Avenue; this "one way" system avoids awkward traffic crossings at each end.

Mr Petty hoped the proposal would have Exmouth Town Council's approval. There would be comprehensive signing at the Mudbank Lane and Jarvis Close junctions directing users to the sea front, Town Centre etc plus other signing near the centre to the local Starcross ferry (to encourage links with the Powderham trail), sea front, Estuary Trail etc.

Sustrans could source suitable signs but would like the Town Council to contribute towards this cost and expect between £200 up to £300 would be sufficient. Paul Hawkins had discussed this with DCC and they do not appear to see any problems but we would have to get final approval for the signs to be fixed on DCC lamp-posts.