

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, ST ANDREWS ROAD, EXMOUTH, ON MONDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER 2019 AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillors: S Gazzard (Chairman)
B Bailey (Vice Chairman)
J Humphreys C Nicholas
M Rosser T Woodward
F Cullis A Bailey
T Dumper D Poor
B De Saram A Sadiq
M Chapman F Caygill
A Toye I Kirvan

Devon County Councillor: R Scott

OFFICERS: Lisa Bowman, Town Clerk

APOLOGIES: Councillors A Colman, O Davey, L Elson, J Whipps, B Toye, P Stott

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and invited Alderman D Scott to speak for the allotted time of 3 minutes.

PUBLIC FORUM: Alderman D Scott informed the Town Council that whilst he acknowledged the need for the Fire Authority to make savings, he could not support any reduction in cover at Exmouth Fire Station. Alderman Scott wished to propose an alternative option: to examine the cost of the Fire Service HQ (including staff costs) and to ask the Fire Authority to set up a working party to investigate this in more detail.

The Chairman thanked Alderman Scott and confirmed that his comments were noted.

C19/087. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

C19/088. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no planned items on the agenda that would be discussed in Part II of the meeting that involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

C19/089. PROPOSED CHANGES TO DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Councillors debated the proposed changes to the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service in the context of a motion put forward by Councillor David Poor and seconded by Councillor Tim Dumper, that all options are flawed.

It was subsequently **RESOLVED** that:

Exmouth Town Council acknowledges work of the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service in issuing their document Safer Together to put forward proposals to produce a responsive service in line with current trends.

However, this Council notes that the trend for fire related casualties seems upwards over the last three years.

The figures shown give a false picture of the work the service does in that they exclude the large number of non-residential calls, such as fires on Woodbury Common, false alarms (which have to be treated as real until shown otherwise) and calls out of the area.

This Council also notes that the report does not seem to take into account the likely large expansion of housing and other facilities as a result of the forthcoming Greater Exeter review and that the report does not take into account the large seasonal increase in people visiting the area and the large increase in people over 50 moving to the area.

In the current climate emergency, the Council considers it more than likely that the numbers of countryside fires during heatwaves and the number of flood incidents, needing rescues, arising from severe rainstorms will increase.

This Council is also deeply concerned that the proposed changes will lead to insufficient manning and equipment levels and so put the lives of residents and visitors at higher risk of injury and death than now.

This Council also notes that although deemed not to be the overriding issue, all the options involve both staff redundancies and capital savings and that if the changes have to be reversed in the near future then this will take over a year and money to do so.

This Council therefore wishes to record that it resolves:

- 1) to oppose all 7 suggested options; and
- 2) to formally request that the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service produces a new consultation which takes fully into account the concern of this and other councils, community organisations and local residents in the area; and
- 3) this Council also expresses an urgent need to actively collaborate with other councils and groups in the area to oppose the proposed changes.

C19/090. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Town Council will be held on Monday 16th September 2019 at 7.15pm at the Town Hall Council Chamber.

The meeting concluded at 7.50pm.

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