EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Exmouth Queen's Drive Delivery Group held at Online via the Zoom app on 8 March 2022

Attendance list at end of document
The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.02 am

25 Public speaking

There were no members of the public registered to speak.

26 Minutes from previous meeting held on 17 February 2022

The Chair invited comments on the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17th February 2022.

A Member asked that the minutes be amended to include reference to a question and answer concerning connecting the seafront and the town, and traffic management. The Chair confirmed that the Democratic Services Officer would make the revisions and the minutes would be re-presented to the next Delivery Group meeting.

27 Declarations of interest

Cllr N Hookway: Minutes 28 – 29; Personal Interest: Former Chair of the Save Exmouth Seafront group.
Cllr A Colman: Minutes 28 – 29; Personal Interest: Exmouth Town Councillor.
Cllr O Davey: Minutes 28 – 29; Personal Interest: Exmouth Town Councillor.
Cllr B De Saram: Minutes 28 – 29; Personal Interest: Exmouth Town Councillor and member of East Devon District Council's Planning Committee.
Cllr A Bailey: Minutes 28 – 29; Personal Interest: Exmouth Town Councillor.
Cllr S Gazzard: Minutes 28 – 29; Personal Interest: Exmouth Town Council and member of East Devon District Council's Planning Committee.

28 Verbal update on the temporary uses

The Project Manager – Place & Prosperity (Exmouth) delivered a verbal update on the temporary uses, including:

- Following remarketing of the Queen's Drive space, subject to contract, LED will be seeking to provide a range of activities on the fitness space including Water Walkerz, Trampoline Zone, Body Zorbs and Zoom Balls.
- The Legal team have been instructed to issue leases for a number of pitches.
- Remaining food tenders are scheduled for assessment on 14 March 2022.
- The Queen's Drive space is currently closed for three weeks, for maintenance.
- The new furniture is scheduled for the week commencing 28 March 2022.
- It is intended to open the Queen's Drive space for the season from 1 April 2022.
- The Project Manager – Place & Prosperity (Exmouth) has been networking with a number of different interest groups including Exmouth Rowing Club, Coast Watch and Exmouth Community Association.

Comment, questions and clarification included:

- Members were pleased to note the good progress.

- The lease agreement for the fitness space was for two seasons, subject to Heads of Terms being agreed and signed off. A Member asked whether it was therefore assumed that the final usage would not be in place within two seasons. The Service Lead – Place, Assets & Commercialisation responded that allowing for two summers had attracted interest in the site where there had been no interest for one season, and he was confident this would not impact on any longer term proposals for the site.
- In response to a Member's question, the Chair confirmed that the LED use for the fitness space would form part of the Leisure Strategy.
- A Member observed that there was a huge demand for parking in the Queen's Drive area and asked if the team were any closer to improving signage to direct people to quieter car parks, such as Maer Road. It was noted that i) people had complained locally of a lack of parking; ii) it was damaging to the environment to have people driving around looking for a parking space; and iii) there would be a price differential between some car parks and it was important to signpost people to less expensive car parks. The Service Lead – Place, Asset and Commercialisation stated that as an action point, he would explore what was being done concerning signage and bring an update for the next meeting.
- Members commented on a significant demand in Exmouth for safe and secure storage facilities for bicycles, and for security cameras, noting that there had been reports of thefts from cycle racks in the town. It was suggested that officers consider looking at examples in other local authorities, where there are some good schemes with secure cycle lockers. The Project Manager – Place & Prosperity (Exmouth) noted the concerns and stated that this was something officers would look at proactively.

The Chair thanked the Project Manager – Place & Prosperity (Exmouth) for his report and the Streetscene Events Officer for her work with the events space and fitness area.

29 The next steps for Placemaking for Exmouth

The Project Manager – Place & Prosperity (Exmouth) delivered a verbal update on the next steps for Placemaking for Exmouth, including:

- Having referred back to minutes from previous meetings, he observed that there was a general consensus to 'do something' and maybe to 'do something now'.
- It was stressed that officers have no preconceptions concerning the way forward for Placemaking in Exmouth, since this would be driven by the Delivery Group.
- The Project Manager – Place & Prosperity (Exmouth) sought to agree with the Delivery Group an initial way forward, and asked them to consider the following questions:
    - What will successful Place and Prosperity in Exmouth look/feel like?
    - What do local people want to see – what will attract them?
    - What do visitors want to see – what will attract them?
- A workshop-style meeting was proposed for the evening of 6th April 2022, for Delivery Group members only to meet in person with a view to obtaining consensus on a strategic definition for what Placemaking in Exmouth would look like.
- The Project Manager – Place & Prosperity (Exmouth) shared an ambitious draft timeline for the Delivery Group:
    - April 2022: Consensus on what Placemaking in Exmouth will look like – the strategic definition;
    - May 2022: Consultation with the Delivery Group on the themes and characteristics agreed, with recommendations to Cabinet to go to consultation;
    - June 2022: Cabinet approve consultation to the public over the summer. Publish the design and consultation (8 weeks);
    - August 2022: Findings of consultation presented to the Delivery Group and recommend to Cabinet to give a clear recommendation and terms of reference for Exmouth Placemaking, to interpret the findings and come up with a number of options/business cases;
    - September 2022 – Cabinet to approve the terms of reference.
- The Service Lead – Place, Assets & Commercialisation clarified that the objective for the Delivery Group was to shape the themes, characteristics and terms of reference, by

September 2022. The details of what the space was to be, where it was to be and how it was to be delivered would come in a subsequent phase, post-September, to be worked up in detail using external consultancy and informed by the input of the Delivery Group and the consultation.

Comments, questions and clarification included:

- A Member remarked that local people had seen a lot of debate over the years, with consultations having taken place, and asked how officers intended to convince local people that this was not simply a rerun of a previous consultation. Another Member added that the public would want to be presented with two or three intelligent options on the way forward, and to know that their views are listened to. The Project Manager – Place & Prosperity (Exmouth) recognised the concerns and responded that a communication strategy covering a range of channels of distribution would be put together carefully in discussion with the Communications team. It was noted that the new consultation was building on what has already been done, including previous consultations, and would revisit a number of issues in light of the pandemic.
- A Member expressed a view that people from Exeter and around East Devon should be invited to participate in the consultation, given that Exmouth is the seaside destination for many people outside of Exmouth.
- Another Member commented that it was important for East Devon DC to engage with the Town Council throughout the project.
- The Portfolio Holder – Finance was pleased to see the ambitious timescale and commented that it would be important for any budget requirements to come forward by the autumn, when the budget planning exercise would be in progress for the next financial year.
- One member expressed the view that Exmouth Councillors not on the Delivery Group membership should be invited to attend the 6th April workshop, to help shape ideas. The Project Manager – Place & Prosperity (Exmouth) responded that the intention was to start with Delivery Group members only before rolling out a series of meetings with other interest groups. The Chair confirmed that the workshop would be for the Delivery Group only, to keep it focused and manageable,
- In clarification, it was confirmed that the purpose of the workshop and the consultation would be to consider Placemaking for the whole of Exmouth and not only for Queen's Drive. The Service Lead – Place, Assets & Commercialisation stated that following the April workshop, it would be appropriate for the Delivery Group to consider, at its May 2022 meeting, making a formal recommendation to Cabinet to widen the Delivery Group's terms of reference, to this effect.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

P Arnott (Vice-Chair)
M Armstrong
O Davey
N Hookway (Chair)
A Colman
B Taylor
B De Saram
J Rowland
S Gazzard (Exmouth Town Council)
A Bailey (Exmouth Town Council)

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

P Faithfull
G Jung

P Millar
E Wragg

Officers in attendance:
Tim Child, Service Lead - Place, Assets & Commercialisation
Caitlin Davey, Streetscene Events Officer
Simon Davey, Strategic Lead Finance
Sarah Helman, Democratic Services Officer
Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer
Gerry Mills, Project Manager for Place & Prosperity (Exmouth)
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (and Deputy Monitoring Officer)

Councillor apologies:
D Ledger
C Wright

Other apologies:
Peter Gilpin, LED CEO

Chair ..... Date: .....