

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group held at Online via the Zoom app on 7 November 2023

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 12.08 pm

14 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 September 2023

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 September 2023 were noted as a true and accurate record.

15 Declarations of interest

Cllr M Chapman – Minute 17; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Cllr T Dumper – Minute 17; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Cllr N Hookway – Minute 17; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Cllr A Toye - – Minute 17; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Cllr J Whibley – Minute 17; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Cllr D Wilson – Minute 17; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Cllr Davey wished it to be recorded that he is on the membership of the PETS Group in his capacity as Portfolio Holder Strategic Planning, Exmouth Ward Member and as Chair of Exmouth Town Council.

16 Public speaking

No members of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

17 The Draft Placemaking Strategy

The Project Manager – Place and Prosperity (Exmouth) introduced the draft Placemaking Strategy which sets out a vision for the future for Exmouth Town and Seafront.

Ms Gayatri Suryawanshi, WSP's Placemaking Consultant, then delivered a presentation outlining at length the emerging placemaking plan framework, and the proposed actions to deliver the following strategic objectives:

- Harness availability of land for development and tourism opportunities
- Connected and continuous public realm to strengthen the relationship between the town centre and the seafront

- Activation and meanwhile activities and events to create year-round interest
- Active lifestyle offer in the town centre and the seafront for all age groups
- Encouraging active and sustainable transport in the town centre and the seafront
- Enhance and celebrate the rich biodiversity and natural assets of Exmouth

Members were asked to consider the draft Strategy, and to recommend to Cabinet to support the approach set out therein.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- One Member questioned whether Foxholes was an appropriate location for an Arts Hub and suggested the Pavilion would be more suitable, and closer to the town.
- The beach needs to be family-friendly; some Members were concerned that families should be able to paddle in areas free from boats and jet skis, and questioned whether the Plan includes enough attractions for families.
- Concern was expressed that there is no provision in the Plan for secure storage for electric bikes.
- In trying to build Exmouth as a destination, the Council needs to work with South West Water to get the seas clean.
- Careful thought will need to be given to any development along the seafront and shoreline, given the climate emergency, and money needs to first be found to shore up the sea wall.
- There needs to be a focus on the town's heritage, and particularly its maritime history.
- The baseline review at stage one of the Placemaking process took account of a raft of existing studies and strategies together with associated documents. The baseline study arising from the review is a comprehensive document from which progress is measured and a copy will be circulated to PETS Group Members, for reference.
- The Pebblebed Heaths and the Exe Estuary are special nature conservatory locations and concern was raised that there is a focus in the Plan on promoting watersports, but that wildlife and watersports do not generally go together.
- Whilst the Plan seeks to reduce the dominance of cars, car parking space on the seafront will need to be available for people with limited mobility and for those transporting equipment for watersports. It was noted that there is provision in the Plan for some car parks to be expanded.
- A number of the proposals in the Plan will require co-operation from Devon County Council (DCC) and consideration will need to be given to how this is achieved.
- It was proposed to establish a steering group with representatives from DCC and Exmouth Town Council, to take the Placemaking Plan forward. It was suggested the steering group could include representatives from Stagecoach, with a view to ensuring a good local bus service.
- The Placemaking Consultant advised that the proposed strategy links to and is compatible with the Levelling Up project for Dinan Way and the Exmouth Gateway.
- Consideration should be given to a Park and Ride facility for lorries, coaches and motorhomes on the outskirts of town. One Member was of the view, however, that consideration should be given to possibilities more generally, since lorries are likely to need parking facilities only, and users of motorhomes might not want to use Park and Ride.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet:

1. That the draft Exmouth Placemaking Plan be fully supported.
2. That a steering group be formed consisting of Exmouth Town Council, East Devon District Council and Devon County Council, to oversee and co-ordinate the Placemaking Plan.
1. That a Park and Ride facility be considered on the outskirts of Exmouth which provides necessary space for motorhomes, coaches and lorries.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

P Arnott (Vice-Chair)
M Chapman
A Hall
P Hayward
N Hookway (Chair)
J Whibley
D Wilson
O Davey (Exmouth Town Council)
G Deasy (Exmouth Town Council)

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

I Barlow
G Jung
M Rixson
T Dumper
P Fernley
C Nicholas
E Rylance
A Toye
C Fitzgerald
E Wragg
M Howe

Officers in attendance:

Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer
Gerry Mills, Project Manager Place & Prosperity (Exmouth)
Alethea Thompson, Democratic Services Officer
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Tim Child, Assistant Director Place, Assets & Commercialisation

Councillor apologies:

M Hall

Chair:

Date: