

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group held at Online via the Zoom app on 31 July 2024

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 11.02 am and ended at 12.18 pm

1 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 January 2024

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 January 2024 were noted as a true and accurate record.

2 Declarations of interest

Cllr N Hookway – Minutes 4 – 6; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Cllr A Bailey – Minutes 4 – 6; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Cllr T Dumper – Minutes 4 – 6; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Cllr M Hall – Minutes 4 – 6; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Cllr J Whibley – Minutes 4 – 6; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of East Devon District Council.

3 Public speaking

One member of the public, Mr Digby Morrison had provided a statement to be read out by an officer, on his behalf.

Mr Morrison was of the view that for a number of reasons, the findings and recommendation set out in the Exmouth Placemaking Plan reports were flawed. He stated that the obvious conclusion to draw from the reports was a recommendation to rerun the consultation for a longer duration and with a number of suggested changes, in order to achieve a better response and credible understanding of resident and visitor views. Mr Morrison wished for these views to be considered by Councillors before they decided on accepting the recommendation.

The Chair expressed thanks for Mr Morrison's contribution, which would be taken into consideration.

4 Exmouth Placemaking Plan - Next Steps

The Interim Director of Place presented this report which set out the current position in regard to the Exmouth Placemaking Plan together with a summary of next steps and the outcomes which the Council is seeking to achieve by the end of 2024.

It was acknowledged that the draft Placemaking Plan requires further work, particularly around deliverability of proposals by EDDC, other public sector stakeholders and by the private sector.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- Whilst the Placemaking Plan is for the wider town, it would be appropriate to focus on what the Council can deliver for Queen's Drive by way of 'quick wins', to maintain the credibility of the process.
- Members were concerned that questions in the recent public consultation were somewhat ambiguous, and one member expressed that there should have been some face-to-face consultation. It was recognised however that this was the third consultation exercise, and the draft Placemaking Plan itself was based on extensive, wider consultation.
- Members asked direct questions and expressed views around specific projects including the dinosaur park, Harbour View Café, the Coast Watch tower, the proposed reuse of the Pavilion and proposals for multi-storey parking provision. There was also discussion around the need to respect Blue Badge disability parking provision.
- It was noted that the Exmouth Gateway part of the Levelling Up Bid had been dropped by Devon County Council (DCC) and it was therefore suggested to re-evaluate the connection with the train station including signage and road crossings. It was felt that transport considerations are fundamental to the Placemaking process, including cycle lanes and proposals for a park and ride facility, and early engagement with DCC in this respect will be vital.
- Meaningful engagement with DCC and Exmouth Town Council is fundamental to the Placemaking process and it is intended to hold a joint meeting between these councils and EDDC, with a view to reaching agreement and securing endorsement for the Placemaking Plan. The Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Sub-Group agreed by Cabinet in February 2024 is a good example of partnership working and all three councils coming together.
- Members asked that, going forward, developments in relation to the Placemaking Plan are clearly explained in a press release containing important contextual information.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet:

1. To note that further work is required to refine the draft Exmouth Placemaking Plan prior to being adopted alongside an Implementation Plan.
 2. Support the appointment of WSP to complete the work necessary for adopting the Placemaking Plan. This will include some workshops in a similar format as we used previously; a revised Placemaking Plan and an Implementation Plan.
 3. Activate the PETS Sub-Group previously agreed by Cabinet in February of 2024 which is to be 'politically led' supported by Senior Officers to look initially at the 'common ground' matters and opportunities that all three Councils have which have been identified in the Draft EPP.
 4. Support the introduction and formalising of programme management arrangements consistent with that already in place for other EDDC place based projects.
 5. Seek endorsement across EDDC Service areas, DCC and ETC before a Placemaking Plan is adopted alongside an Implementation Plan.
 6. Invite Stakeholders to join relevant future PETS meetings where it is relevant to do so (also agreed by Cabinet in February via the revised ToR for PETS).
 7. Agree that the currently approved UKSPF budget be used to develop feasibility options for Queen's Drive and Beach Gardens – the total budget being ~£45k (initial design briefs are shown at Appendix A. This is already provided for within an approved budget.
1. Form a working group to oversee the recommendation in respect of UKSPF.

RECOMMENDED to Council:

That a budget of £30-40,000 be made available to appoint WSP to complete the work necessary for adopting the Placemaking Plan. This will include some workshops in a similar format as we used previously; a revised Placemaking Plan and an Implementation Plan and will be taken from a General Fund Supplementary Budget.

5 **Exmouth Placemaking Plan - Consultation**

The Project Manager – Place & Prosperity (Exmouth) introduced this report which set out the results of the recent consultation exercise on the draft Placemaking Plan, undertaken at the request of the Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group members in January 2024. Members were reminded that the draft Placemaking Plan had itself been informed by extensive stakeholder and public consultations undertaken in 2022 and 2023.

Members of the PETS Group noted the consultation findings which were provided in the report, noting and respecting that there were positive and negative views expressed as there were previously at the workshops held in the 2022 consultation. The next steps set out in the report entitled 'Exmouth Placemaking Plan – Next Steps' allowed for refinement of the Placemaking Plan and would enable these latest consultation responses to help inform, alongside other factors.

6 **Exmouth General Update**

The Project Manager – Place & Prosperity (Exmouth) introduced this report which provided a general summary on progress with on-the-ground placemaking projects currently being delivered in Exmouth, and other placemaking-related projects and events across the town.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- Members expressed thanks to Exmouth Town Council and Exmouth Pride for the recent festivals which were widely enjoyed.
- Design briefs are being considered for the Queen's Drive fitness space; the use of the space is subject to planning and site constraints but officers are confident that the Council would get a reasonable return on letting it out.

Members noted the update report and the successes achieved.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

P Arnott (Vice-Chair)
A Bailey
T Dumper
A Hall
M Hall
P Hayward
N Hookway (Chair)
T Olive
G Deasy (Exmouth Town Council)

J Whibley (Exmouth Town Council)

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

I Barlow
M Chapman
P Faithfull
G Jung
C Nicholas
A Toye
E Wragg

Officers in attendance:

Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer
Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer
Marie Ainsworth, Place & Prosperity Officer
Tracy Hendren, Chief Executive
Gerry Mills, Project Manager Place & Prosperity (Exmouth)
Katie Webb, Property Lawyer
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Andrew Wood, Director of Place (interim)

Also in attendance:

Lisa Bowman, Exmouth Town Clerk

Councillor apologies:

O Davey

Chair

Date: