

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Confidential Report of a Meeting of the Exmouth Regeneration Programme Board held at Royal Beacon Hotel, Exmouth, on Thursday 2 June 2011

Present:

EDDC Councillors: Andrew Moulding (Chairman)
Graham Godbeer
Timothy Wood
Jill Elson

DCC Councillors: Bernard Hughes

Exmouth Town Council: Pauline Stott, Exmouth Town Council
John Wokersien, Clerk to Exmouth Town Council

DCC Officers: Ian Harrison - DCC
Alan Stone – DCC

Other Board Members: Ian MacQueen – Exmouth Chamber of Commerce
Richard Jacobs, EIC Group
Stephanie Clark – Exe Estuary Management Partnership

EDDC Officers: Ed Freeman – Principal Planning Officer
Donna Best – Principal Estates Surveyor
Richard Cohen – Deputy Chief Executive
Chris Lane – Democratic Services Officer
Nick Stephen - Communications Manager
Kate Little – Head of Economy

Apologies: Neil Downes, Exe Estuary Management Partnership
Councillor Eileen Wragg

The meeting started at 2.00pm and finished at 4.50pm.

1 Richard Cohen- an introduction

Richard Cohen, Deputy Chief Executive – Development, Regeneration & Partnership introduced himself to members of the Regeneration Board. Members noted that his recent background was working for the Land & London Development Agency in London. He had also worked in the West Country in Plymouth and Torbay/Bristol. His role at EDDC was to progress the development, regeneration and partnership agenda in East Devon.

2 Report of the meeting of the Programme Board held on 3 February 2011

The report of the meeting of the Programme Board held on 3 February 2011 was confirmed and signed as a true record, subject to the minutes being amended to show the meeting was held at the Royal Beacon Hotel and also that Councillor Eileen Wragg had attended at the start of the meeting.

*3 **The role of the Board**

Donna Best, Principal Estates Surveyor reminded Members of the role of the Board:

- a) Establish a regeneration programme;
- b) Provide a coordination vehicle;
- c) Monitor progress on achieving delivery;
- d) Coordinate and oversee major development projects;
- e) Unlock barriers to delivery of the regeneration programme;
- f) Inform the work of East Devon's Local Development Framework;
- g) Identify funding opportunities.

4 **Masterplanning and Development Brief Work**

a) Town and Seafront Masterplan public consultation

Donna Best, Principal Estates Surveyor reported that the Draft Masterplan had now been produced. There had not been a great deal of change made to its content, but it had been made slightly less prescriptive. The plan suggested a number of projects and the three priority projects were: Estuarieside site, London Inn, and Elizabeth Hall site. It was proposed that when the document was finalised the Masterplan would be attached as a Supplementary Planning Document to the Local Plan. Therefore, the Development Management Committee would need to endorse the proposals for the consultation process and this would be considered at its meeting on 14 June 2011.

The consultation process was proposed to be launched at Elizabeth Hall on 27 June to be followed by a two day public exhibition. The exhibition boards would then be moved to the former Thomas Tucker premises in Exmouth to form a window display and it would direct residents to a questionnaire which could be filled out on the Exmouth Masterplan website from 27 June. LDA Design were currently preparing a summary document which would be circulated as soon as it was available. Flyers and posters would also be available and there would also be a session in the Magnolia Centre. Jamie Buckley, would also undertake some consultation sessions in local schools.

Members discussed the need to get public support for the Masterplan and felt that a proper consultation period of 8 – 10 weeks was required ending on 12 September. Consultation with the business community was important and Richard Cohen and Donna Best would attend a future meeting of the Exmouth Chamber of Commerce to discuss the Masterplan with members of the Chamber.

The first priority site was the Royal Avenue Estuarieside and Members noted that work had continued to help deliver a project in the future.

RESOLVED

1. that the consultation period for the Draft Master Plan run from 27 June until 12 September 2011;
2. that Richard Cohen and Donna Best attend a future meeting of the Exmouth Chamber of Commerce to discuss the Masterplan with members of the Chamber.

b) Rugby Club relocation feasibility work

Consultants Savills and Sports Solutions were now working with EDDC and the Rugby Club on the options and practicalities of relocation. The work into investigating the sort of facilities that the Rugby Club needed and potential the sites for that will enable a relocation. This work was well advanced and it was hoped to identify various potential sites shortly. Devon County Council Highways were currently working up details of improvements to the transport interchange. Concern was expressed regarding the improvements needed to the overall movement of traffic throughout the town and also the possibilities of pedestrianisation.

a) Rugby Club relocation feasibility work (Cont)

Members noted that discussions were being held regarding the possible relocation of the sea scouts and sea cadets as their current premises were not fit for purpose. EDDC also preparing a planning application for ground works at the Imperial Recreation Ground to repair revetments that were holding in the landfill. The work would also include some additional topsoil on the grass area and some beach cleaning.

b) Slipway appraisal – phase 2

Members discussed the slipway appraisal, which was designed to improve access to the water for boat users. Donna Best, Principal Estates Surveyor reported on the significant disadvantages of the Imperial Recreation Ground slipway, which was not practical as the water could not be accessed for large periods of the day. The more practical option was the Mamhead Slipway from which the water which could be accessed for a large part of the day. The disadvantages to greater use of this slipway was its steep gradient, blunt end and the fact it was accessed directly off the road, which caused delays to passing traffic.

Engineers from Teignbridge District Council had looked at rearranging the Mamhead Slipway to improve it and allow access to the water at nearly all states of the tide. It was noted that Eagle One had proposals to develop adjacent to the site. Members emphasised the importance of consultation with Exmouth Town Council and community groups on spending public money on possible improvements to Mamhead Slipway.

RECOMMENDED

1. that the District Council be requested to investigate the proposed changes to the Mamhead Slipway.;
2. that Donna Best, Principal Estates Surveyor be requested to speak to potential partners regarding their investing in improvements to Mamhead Slipway.

5 The Strand

Members welcomed the recent successful festival held on the Strand, which was exactly the sort of event that it was hoped would be held on the enhanced space. However, there were outstanding issues regarding the enhancements works that had been carried out, particularly regarding maintenance and the proposed new building.

The Chairman welcomed Paul Humphries from ARA Architects, who led members through the revised planning application scheme for the building element of the enhancement works. Following comments made by local businesses to the original planning application, Members noted that the new building was 2 metres lower and now had 50 covers and not 70. There would be limited kitchen facilities and it was important that local businesses were informed of the limited capability for cooking full meals.

The work was coming in under budget and there was currently an under spend of just over £1m, so there was a committed budget which would enable works to proceed on the building. The retail element of the Strand enhancement works would enable a small amount of revenue to be obtained to assist with the maintenance costs. There was a higher standard of materials and street furniture in the enhancement which meant a higher level of maintenance costs. The level of maintenance costs which was currently falling on EDDC's Street scene services was greater than originally anticipated. The seats had become bleached and discoloured and the paved areas had shown dirt and stains.

It was anticipated that in due course Exmouth Town Council, would take over the maintenance responsibilities for the Strand, the cost of part of which it was hoped would be paid for from rental achieved from the café area. Members noted that more planting of trees, shrubs and tubs was planned for the Strand. This help achieve quality landscaping in the area.

5 The Strand (Cont)

Nick Stephens, Communications Officer reported that there seemed to be a lot of misinformation in the Exmouth area about the enhancement works carried out to the Strand. It should be made clear to the public that the building was designed to help pay for the maintenance of the area and the kitchen was only capable of providing teas and coffees and small snacks. Furthermore, the building will have a multifunctional purpose of which the retail aspect as only a part alongside a performance space, shelter and maintenance storage facility.

Jill Elson, Communities Portfolio Holder, asked whether part of the shortfall could pay for a steam cleaning machine. It was felt that the new café in the building would encourage more business in the area and help adjacent businesses. Members asked whether it would be possible to undertake an analysis of footfall on the Strand and whether the enhancement works had produced more visitors. There was the need to take the offensive with regard to objections received for the planning application for the building in the Strand.

RECOMMENDED

1. that the District Council be requested to proceed with the revised planning application for the new building;
2. that the District and/or Town Council look into providing information about changes in footfall around the Strand;
3. that there was the need to find sufficient funding to pay for future maintenance of the enhanced Strand area, with its higher standard of materials and street furniture.

6 Orcombe Point Jurassic Interpretation Scheme

Consideration was given to the report from Alan Stone, DCC on progress made on the Orcombe Point Jurassic Point Interpretation scheme. Members noted that 3d bright had been appointed as consultants for this scheme and the following had been agreed as the aims of the scheme:

- a) To ensure that this part of Queens Drive is a destination in its own right;
- b) To create a fitting start/end to the Jurassic Coast;
- c) To motivate the visitor to explore further afield both to Exmouth and further along the coast;
- d) Top design interpretation to capture the imagination of the widest possible audience;
- e) To create an environment that can develop over time.

The Board welcomed the Jurassic Interpretation Scheme that 3d bright had created for Orcombe Point and the Geoneedle and it was confirmed that the designs were now being finalised with a view to making a planning application during which time there would be scope for further consultation. Subject to obtaining planning permission, it was hoped that the works would be implemented in the Autumn and the scheme completed by March 2012.

Members noted that a cafe on this site had the support of the public and it was hoped that ultimately a private operator could be encouraged to pay for the cafe development. The need for the use of rugged materials on the site was acknowledged, due to the amount of sand being blown by the wind. It was acknowledged that signing in the area needed to be improved. It was hoped that work could be finished by March 2012.

The next steps were:

- a) Detailed review of the design paper against the agreed budget;
- b) Meet with various partners and stakeholders to confirm the requirements of the proposals;
- c) Agree a detailed implementation plan;

6 **Orcombe Point Jurassic Interpretation Scheme (Cont)**

- d) Submit the final design for planning consent;
- e) Period of offsite construction;
- f) On site work was commenced.

RESOLVED that the Jurassic Interpretation Scheme prepared by 3d bright for Orcombe Point and the Geoneedle be welcomed;

RECOMMENDED that a planning application be made for the proposed Jurassic Interpretation Scheme for Orcombe Point and the Geoneedle.

*7 **Communications**

Nick Stephen, Communication Manager, reported that the main communication issues were regarding the Strand building and when the revised planning application would be submitted; also consultation regarding the Masterplan and how this would be tackled. It was emphasised that there was the need to give Exmouth the best possible version of what regeneration was proposed in the town.

*8 **Dates of future meetings**

- 9 September 2011 – 9.15am
- 1 December 2011 – 9.15am

9 **Any other business**

Faster Broadband for Devon & Somerset

Nick Stephen, Communication Officer reported on the successful bid for faster Broadband for Devon & Somerset and how businesses in Exmouth could potentially benefit.

Bowling Alley

Ed Freeman, Principal Planning Officer reported that the legal case regarding the bowling alley, which had been holding up its development, had now been resolved in favour of the developer. A new planning application had been received and it was hoped that the building could be open by the end of the year.

Chairman

Date.....