

Some months it is hard to know where to start with this report and whether to restrict my comments to purely local matters or to look at wider issues. So here is a mixture of both. Click on a heading below to jump to that section.

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Relocation of EDDC Head Quarters

EDDC has now concluded it move to its new ‘Central’ location in Honiton, in addition to its offices in Exmouth. Therefore I was astonished on arriving home today to find a letter sent out from EDDC by First Class Post and printed with full colour coat of arms inviting me to the opening ‘ceremony’ of Blackdown House, the new headquarters site. Given that all councillors are on the EDDC email system, along with all parish and town clerks, and that we are all perfectly well aware of the relocation and that many residents of East Devon are struggling with austerity measures, it beggars belief that EDDC think this is appropriate, both to send out a letter when an email would suffice and that they should spend money on an opening ceremony of a bog standard office block that has already cost the taxpayer dearly. I emailed the Chief Executive asking him who made the decision to write letters, what was the cost, why was that decision taken and further more why was a ‘ceremony’ required. The CE said he took full responsibility for the decision to send the letters, that an opening ceremony was necessary and that surely there was no harm in local school children being invited along for squash and cake. He estimated it cost around £150 to send out the letters. Other cllrs replied that the money for this came from the Chariman’s allowances budget (£7813), as if that made it OK. While I was at it I asked about the tradition of sending a large Christmas card out in the post to all cllrs, signed by the Chairman. Again I suggested perhaps £150 to a local charity would be more in the Christmas spirit.

King Alfred Way – no new Doctors Surgery for Newton Poppleford

Residents may have seen the reports on the BBC on Wednesday 13th February about CDE renegeing on their promise to build the new doctors surgery in Newton Poppleford. A number of local

residents whose only method of travelling to Ottery St Mary is by a long bus journey (of at least one and a half hours costing £13.80 return for one adult and one child) were interviewed by the BBC along with Hazel Jeffery Chairman of Newton Poppleford and Harpford Parish Council.

You may recall those objecting to the whole development and sceptical that a surgery would ever be built asked that a condition be put onto the application stating that the surgery should be built before any houses were started but this was refused by the EDDC. Despite anger, upset and disappointment over the whole charade of this application EDDC Planning officers recommend approval for CDEs latest application to build two Four bedroom 'plus' luxury houses instead of a doctor's surgery on the site. It has been suggested to me that doctors in the area should be contacted and asked if they would like to operate out of a brand new doctors' surgery, the onus now being on residents and cllrs to find a doctor to rent the premises! A bizarre turn of events. The matter is on the agenda for Tuesday 5th March. The matter will be concluded and I suspect it will not be in objectors favour and that CDE will get to build two more eye sores to add to the 40 they are already building. Do turn up at Blackdown House, Heath Park, Honiton and make your views known to the district council planning officers and the Development Management Committee who will be making the final decision. *The full council meeting will be held at East Devon District Council's new Honiton Heathpark HQ on Tuesday 5th March at 10.00 am. The full address is:*
East Devon District Council, Blackdown House, Border Road,
Heathpark Industrial Estate, Honiton, EX14 1EJ

Budleigh Medical Centre

I heard that rumours are being spread that Budleigh Salterton Medical practice is not accepting patients from Newton Poppleford but this is incorrect. The Budleigh Health Centre confirmed again on 15th February that residents from Newton Poppleford CAN register with them by taking along two forms of identification, ideally a passport/driving licence/birth certificate and proof of address eg a utilities bill.

Lease on the public WCs, Car Park, Newton Poppleford

The parish council asked for a sentence to be added to the Heads of Terms for the lease to ensure there was some recompense for the parish council should EDDC decide take back the public toilets after the parish council spend a considerable amount refurbishing it; the wording for this was finally agreed . EDDC said they received that in January but in the last month have not been able to insert the sentence into the Heads of Terms and progress the matter to solicitors... My last email asking for a timescale on this remains unanswered.

Air Quality Tubes cited on the A3052 near to the Toll House, measuring NO₂

The air tube measures one of the main pollutants of concern in East Devon, NO₂. This arises from road traffic around the busier and more congested areas. Readings were high in Newton Poppleford in 2016 when the A3052 was dug up numerous times and there was lots of queuing traffic at the mini roundabout at the western end of the village. Some good news for Newton Poppleford is that the results for 2017 – 2018 show a drop in pollutants at that site. EDDC Environmental Health officers have suggested that another air tube should be sited at the eastern end of the village to compare results in future with the air tube at the western end. It is interesting to note that pollutant figures are lower during the summer months than the winter months. The raw figures for 2018 have yet to go to Defra for adjustment to make sure each tube is measuring like for like no matter where they are based. I will update you in future of the final readings for 2018. High levels of NO₂ are a precursor to raised levels of PM2.5 for which there are no known lower safely levels. PM stands for

Particulate matter which varies in size (i.e. the diameter or width of the particle). PM_{2.5} means the mass per cubic metre of air of particles with a size (diameter) generally less than 2.5 micrometres (µm). PM_{2.5} is also known as fine particulate matter (2.5 micrometres is one 400th of a millimetre). This is more of a concern to health specialists as the very tiny particles can get deep into body organs and tissue causing ill-health.

Four Elms Hill

Did anyone else witness the attempt to re-instate the double white lines at the NP lower end of the hill? I watched for about 15 minutes as I waited to exit Higher Way. I contacted Cllr Stuart Hughes asking him what the plan was for this and what they were actually attempting to do. He said he would make some enquiries. Goosemoor Hill at the western end of the village is even more bizarre. See if you can spot where they have patched the white lines and ask yourself – was it worth it?

Night Landing Site for Devon Air Ambulance – Playing fields, Newton Poppleford

The parish council has now put in for planning permission for emergency lighting on the playing field in Newton Poppleford so that in the event of a medical emergency the Devon Air Ambulance can land there at night. Along with 2 new active Automated External defibrillators (The Cannon pub and the Sports Pavilion) and a possible 3rd one in Harpford, this is a really positive step for the health of residents and visitors to our parish. The parish council also organised a training event which ran on Thursday 22nd February 2019.

Double Yellow lines for Greenbank

It has taken 2 years to chase for the double yellow lines for Greenbank, Newton Poppleford to prevent cars parking in such a way that residents cannot access their own garages. This is to replace former white advisory 'H' marker bars that some drivers ignored or just didn't see as they had become so worn. This is not for the whole of Greenbank, just the turning area so that access to the garages is unrestricted. The last email on 28th January 2019 from DCC's Mike Brown, our Highways Officer stated:

"A proposal to replace the white lines on Greenbank with double yellow lines is currently being progressed".

CIL consultation

This is open for consultation now and closes on Friday 22nd March 2019. Developers have to pay CIL generally on new properties that are over 100SqM. So the suggestion for Newton Poppleford would be £150 per sq Metre. Here are the main points:

Figure 1: Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule - Type of development Rate (£ per square metre)

All development at Cranbrook - £0

General residential development in Sidmouth and Budleigh Salterton - £200

General residential development in the rest of East Devon - £150

Sheltered housing, extra care housing and care homes¹ - £0

Rural Exception Sites - £0

Strategic allocated sites² in East Devon

Type of development Rate (£ per square metre)

Retail (out of town centre)³ - £84

Val Ranger, Ward Cllr, Newton Poppleford and Harpford.

Tel: 07475 201 340, email: vranger@eastdevon.gov.uk

All other non-residential uses - £0

¹ Retirement housing - This is often known as “Sheltered Housing” or “Retirement Living”. Retirement Housing usually provides some facilities that you would not find in completely independent accommodation. These can include (secure main entrance, residents’ lounge, access to an emergency alarm service, a guest room. Extra facilities and services are paid for through a service charge on top of the purchase price or rent. To move into retirement housing, occupants are assumed to be independent enough not to need care staff permanently on site.

Supported housing - This is often known as “Extra Care Housing” or “Assisted Living”. Everyday care and support will be available. Facilities will include those available in retirement housing plus others (such as a restaurant, communal lounges, social space and leisure activities, staff on site 24 hours a day). Service charges are likely to be higher than in retirement housing but this reflects the more extensive range of facilities.

‘Care homes’ are defined as residential care homes or nursing homes where integral 24 hour personal care and/or nursing care are provided together with all meals. A care home is typically a residential setting where a number of older people live, usually in single rooms and people occupy under a licence agreement

² Rate only applies to residential development of 150 dwellings or more on strategic sites allocated in the Local Plan.
£100

³ Applies to qualifying floor space outside of Town Centre Shopping Areas as defined in the East Devon Local Plan 2013 to 2031, and to all retail development within planning use class ‘A’.

In general, the viability study recommends an increase in residential CIL rates compared to the current adopted charging schedule (as indexed), although rates are still comfortably within the viability headroom. The exception is Cranbrook, which is not able to support CIL due to the level of section 106 planning obligations and other costs associated with that development. Outside Cranbrook, the study recommends differing charging zones for general residential development at Sidmouth and Budleigh Salterton (£200 per square metre), and elsewhere (£150 per square metre). This rate reduces for strategic allocated sites, due to additional infrastructure costs provided through section 106 planning obligations. It is recommended that CIL is not charged on rural exception sites, to reduce the level of market housing that may be required to subsidise the provision of affordable housing. CIL is also not viable for sheltered housing, extra care housing and care homes

Government consultation on removing regulation 123 lists and the pooling restriction

2.19 The current CIL regulations require charging authority’s to prepare a list of those projects or types of infrastructure that it intends to fund, or may fund, through the levy (the “regulation 123 list”) – anything on this list cannot be funded through section 106 contributions. However, draft regulations²¹ remove regulation 123 lists, and instead require local authorities to prepare an annual Infrastructure Funding Statement by 31 December each year. This statement will set out how developer contributions have been spent, and anticipated revenue and spend for future years.

2.20 In addition, the draft regulations remove the pooling restriction that prevent local authorities from using more than five section 106 obligations for a single infrastructure project. This will allow local authorities to use both CIL and section 106 to fund the same item of infrastructure, providing greater funding flexibility in relation to infrastructure delivery.

2.21 The council are working on the basis that revised CIL regulations will be published in due course, which will confirm the removal of regulation 123 lists and the section 106 pooling restriction as proposed in the draft regulations. Therefore, we have not proposed a revision of the regulation 123 list for this consultation.

Read the Full consultation here <http://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/2777721/pdcs-consultation-doc.pdf>

Cabinet 6th February 2019

East Devon District Council is controversially set to borrow up to £20,000,000 from the Public Loan Works Board to invest in property. Here are some extracts from the minutes:

Discussions included:

- *Borrow substantial funding to build and refurbish council homes*
- *The Commercial Investment Framework was very important and this was a relatively low amount compared to other local authorities' borrowing*
- *Moving into the area of commercial identity was essential for future investment. It was paramount to be able to move quickly as the window of opportunity was limited.*

RESOLVED: 2. that Cabinet recommends to Council the availability of up to £20,000,000 through existing resources or Public Works Loan Board funding. Monies would be drawn down as and when required.

REASON: To support the Council's Property Investment objective within the Transformation Strategy. to invest in property.

EDDC Full Council Meeting 27th February 2019

The Council Cabinet agreed its Commercial Investment Framework, which would allow it to do so, on 6 February. Investing in commercial property does carry considerable risk. Many EDDC councillors have great concerns about this strategy. Cllr Roger Giles (Independent – Ottery Town) tabled a Notice of Motion to be debated at the EDDC full council meeting on 27 February. However the EDDC Chief Executive Mark Williams struck the Notice of Motion off the agenda, on the grounds that the matter had already been discussed at the Cabinet meeting on 6 February.

This was Cllr Roger Giles's reported view "The EDDC Cabinet consists of just 10 councillors, and is Conservative controlled. The investment strategy would massively increase the council's indebtedness, and is inherently risky. I therefore considered it essential that the whole council should be able to have a full-scale debate, and vote on the strategy. However the Chief Executive has intervened to ban my NoM from being included on the agenda paper. By doing so I believe he has damaged our democratic processes – an action which is deeply regrettable."

Motions to support recycling, to call for a new property ombudsman to streamline complaints against shoddy builders, and for East Devon to get its fair share of the police precept rise will be discussed at next Wednesday 27th February 2019 Full council meeting.

But motions over the full relocation costs of the move from Sidmouth to Honiton, to put electric charging points in all car parks, what to prioritise in a 'No Deal' Brexit and on climate change will not be discussed.

Cllr Cathy Gardner’s motion (Independent EDA Sidmouth Town) seconded by Cllr Val Ranger, (Independent EDA Newton Poppleford and Harpford) put forward a Motion suggesting that EDDC should publish an annual summary of accounts for the relocation of the Knowle project until break even point is reached (allegedly 20 years). The motion would have called for the accounts to **include**

- energy costs for the Knowle for the past 20 years (for comparison);
- energy costs for both Blackdown House and Exmouth Town Hall per year; the capital receipt for the sale of the Knowle;
- a Red Book valuation of Blackdown House as of 1 March 2019;
- the full costs for the relocation project since its inception, including: project management; removal, furnishing and equipment;
- staff retraining and travel expenses;
- new-build costs for Blackdown House; refurbishment costs for Exmouth Town Hall; and any other associated costs.

All the above debates were rejected by the Chief Executive as either entirely unnecessary and premature, poorly worded or too late as they had been discussed elsewhere.

The full council meeting will be held at East Devon District Council’s new Honiton Heathpark HQ on February 27 at 6pm

Auction of Items from the Knowle, Sidmouth

At scrutiny on 7th February I asked Deputy Chief Executive Richard Cohen if he was going to send out a list of all the remaining items which were available for parish and town councils to bid for. Firstly said he already had. All councillors present were able to confirm they had never received such a list. The DCE then said that he would be generating and circulating one. I asked if he would be circulating details of the exact process for bidding after the bidding debacle before xmas when a councillor bid for the large mahogany table in the members room which had come from Exmouth Town Council and which Exmouth Town Council subsequently wanted back. I followed this request up this week but at the moment the DCE is very busy with relocation matters...

EDDC publishes its public health strategic plan 2019 – 2023

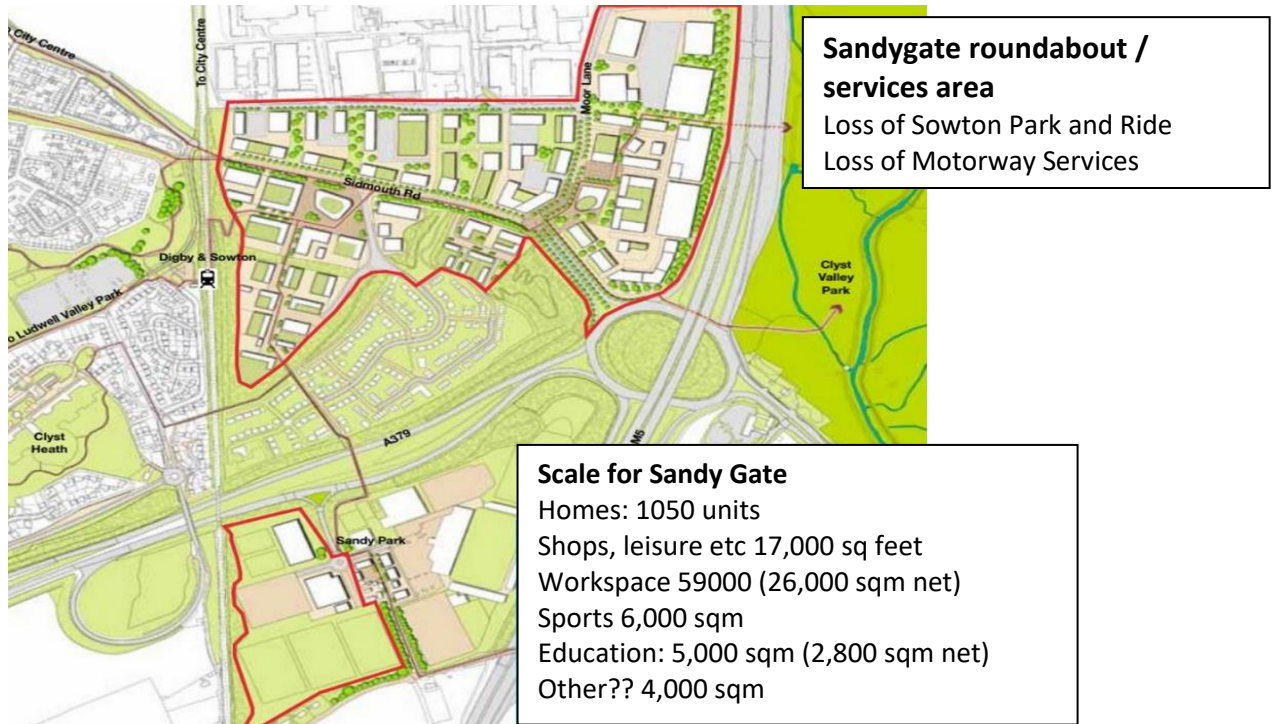
There has been criticism that the focus of the EDDC public health strategic plan is focussed on Exmouth, Honiton and Cranbrook. This was discussed at Scrutiny in February 2019. There is a designated EDDC officer in post but she does not have a budget. She is therefore a facilitator, linking those who need support with a support service. I was concerned that the focus on loneliness was on the stereo-typical very elderly person living alone. However there is a lot of evidence that loneliness is not limited to the elderly and indeed many younger people feel isolated and alone. Also, in my experience, living in a town or city with a larger population is not a guarantee that you will be surrounded by friends and family and I would argue that smaller communities are often more in touch with their residents. EDDC seemed somewhat unaware that there is a lot of evidence that very young people are spending too much time alone in their rooms on their phones/social media rather than being out and about interacting with their peers. This is very bad indeed for their mental health. Just one

Our priority activities	
Where we will focus Exmouth Littleham Exmouth Town Centre Exmouth Withycombe - Raleigh Moorfields Rd Honiton Dowell Street area near High Street Cranbrook	What we will focus on Physical activity Diet and nutrition Smoking Alcohol Mental health Loneliness; social isolation Dementia Long-term conditions Frailty and falls Housing and homelessness Indoor environment factors

reason it is necessary to fight so hard to retain our lovely environment and encourage younger residents to value the space and natural facilities that we have.

Greater Exeter Strategic Plan

The greater Exeter Strategic plan forges ahead without any involvement or consultation with EDDC councillors (let alone residents) except 2 EDDC councillors who are bound by 'confidentiality', (ie shrouded in secrecy). The plan is about development across East Devon, Teignbridge, Exeter and Mid Devon but much of the brunt and wider impact will be taken by East Devon residents. Exeter has released plans for its housing. Exeter has now published its draft plan. A commute to Exeter will involve driving through a housing estate at Sandygate.



Other proposed new housing in Exeter:

- Marsh Barton** – 5,544 homes in a 'new neighbourhood' for Exeter,
- West Gate (Western Way)** - 617 new homes
- Red Cow Village (St David's)** – 664 homes
- Water Lane** (close to Exe Valley Park) – 1,567 homes
- South Gate (Holloway Street/South Street linked via Topsham Road)** – 300 new homes
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NB – we are supposed to use the word 'homes' as the word 'houses' is deemed inflammatory.



A call for sites for the Greater Exeter area ran from February 27 to April 10, 2017. Over 700 submissions from agents, developers and landowners to the Call for Sites were received. The original timetable for the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan and Teignbridge Local Plan Review sought to adopt both plans by June 2020 and July 2021 respectively, but the plan has been delayed.

The timetable into force on February 14. East Devon's Strategic Planning Committee have already approved the new timetable.

June 2019 – Draft Policies and Site Options – This will include draft policies, potential development locations and supporting information and *‘the public will be invited to comment’* on the contents of the Draft Greater Exeter Strategic Plan. **NB As usual the public comments are invited after the decision has been made.**

Nov 2019 – Full Draft Plan – it will be revised in light of the responses from Stage Two and further evidence gathering.

Feb 2021 – Proposed Submission

July 2021 – Submit Plan

September 2021 – Examine Plan

April 2022 – Adopt Plan

What happens to the existing Local Plans?

If approved, then the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan would supersede and sit above the existing Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.

What size of land will the GESP look at?

The GESP will be looking at sites where an allocation of 500 houses (per site, or 100 houses per site in Exeter) upwards can be delivered. Allocations that are smaller than this will be looked at in the Local Plans that are being reviewed at the same time.

But extra large-scale infrastructure that the area needs is likely to cost more than £1billion, the vision says, and will be determined to a large extent by future development sites in the plan that have not been determined. It *may* (note the use of this word) include:

- new primary and secondary schools
- relief to major junctions on the M5
- improvements to the A30/A303
- new park-and-ride sites
- improvements to walking and cycling routes
- improvements to rail and bus routes (*a remarkable claim given the decline in bus routes and shocking rise in fares*)
- healthcare facilities – (*we have seen how well that works here in Newton Poppleford and even in the so called healthy new town of Cranbrook adequate healthcare has not been put in place*)

Cranbrook

A plan for where the next 4,170 homes in Cranbrook will be built will see homes built south of the old A30. Planners have already given the go-ahead for a total of 3,580 new homes to be built in the new town of Cranbrook, with a total of 7,850 eventually set to be built.

East Devon District Council’s Strategic Planning Committee backed the Cranbrook Plan Development Plan Document (DPD) which outlines the land where a further 4,170 new homes will be built, and that it is expected that at least 100 new homes will be built in the town centre.

Four expansion areas, two of which are south of the A30, are allocated for development of the 4,170 new homes, as well as a neighbourhood centres, community buildings, open space, allotments, two primary schools, sports pitches, and land suitable for a place of worship and a cemetery. ...

Development would take place at Bluehayes, to the west of the existing development, and include 960, Treasbeare, south of the existing development and south of the old A30, and include 915 new

homes, Cobdens, to the east of the existing development, and include 1,495 new homes, and Grange, to the south of Cobden and south of the old A30, and include 800 new homes ...

The plan also safeguards land for a second railway station in Cranbrook, but only 15 per cent of the residential developments within the built-up area boundary of Cranbrook will be affordable houses, compared to the 30 per cent for the first phase of development, in order to make the plan viable to developers.

They also get to pay a special element of council tax called a new town tax. Residents are already tied into one supplier – E.on – for 80 years!“Local authorities and developers are charging for supplying services in new towns that are free to other homeowners. *“Residents of a new town in Devon are being charged an extra £370 a year in council tax in a practice — already being called “the new town tax” — that could spread across the country.*