

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL Festival and Events Working Party

Notes of the virtual meeting held at 1400 on Thursday 20 May 2021 via Zoom

Present

Cllr Joy Whipps (Chair)	JW	Exmouth Town Council
Carla Hiley	CH	Exmouth Town Council
Natasha Smart	NS	Exmouth Town Council
Cllr Eileen Beech	EB	Exmouth Town Council
Cllr Frank Cullis	FC	Exmouth Town Council
Cllr Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Cllr Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Trevor Huggons	TH	Festival Volunteer

Apologies

Lisa Bowman	LB	Exmouth Town Council
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1. Welcome and Apologies

- 1.1. JW welcomed attendees to the meeting and noted apologies.

2. Notes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

- 2.1. The notes of the last meeting on 8 April 2021 were approved by all. The only matter arising was raised by FC, who sought an update on CH's temporary maternity leave replacement. CH explained that LB is currently working on a job specification for this. CH hopes that a replacement will be in post by the time she goes on maternity leave in August, in order to give her at least a week's handover.

3. Gary Cook – Queen Street Mural Presentation

- 3.1. JW welcomed Gary to the meeting, who introduced himself as an Exmouth-based artist who enjoys thinking up creative ideas to make the town more attractive. He was previously involved in painting the mural at the 'Abode of Love' project on the seafront. CH explained the background to Gary's current idea regarding Queen Street, which he had recently presented to Exmouth Town Council's (ETC) Town Team. The idea was supported there but it was felt more appropriate that it be financed through ETC's arts budget, hence Gary presenting it now to the Festival and Events WP.
- 3.2. Gary outlined his proposal for painting murals/street art in Queen Street on blank walls which are primarily at the rear of buildings. The aim is to help regenerate an area of town which is not prominent in itself but where people may accidentally find themselves. It both improves an unloved area and creates an attraction or talking point for those who discover it. He presented some slides showing possible artworks relating to Exmouth, including

subjects such as Roger the Town Crier, the Royal Marines, seagulls, Punch and Judy and an environmental image relating to Greta Thunberg.

3.3. Members liked and supported Gary's proposal and spent some time discussing various aspects to consider, including:

- the likely need for planning permission from EDDC;
- the need to obtain appropriate permissions from freeholders (Gary explained that he had already spoken to some of the freeholders, who had granted permission in principle);
- members had concerns about painting murals on the front of buildings facing the Strand and were less keen on this option;
- whether an image of the previous Town Crier Garth Gibson was a fitting memorial, although both Gary and CH felt that it was equally appropriate to celebrate the current Town Crier as a well-known local character;
- in respect of the possible Greta Thunberg image, it may be more appropriate to have a more depersonalised environmental message;
- the possibility of including a blank wall or 'picture frame' space where anyone could add artwork;
- if the project is successful, it could be extended to other areas of town, possibly to create a Street Art Trail;
- budget-wise, CH estimated that this would be around £2,000, to include £500 expenses and 10 days' work by the artist.

3.4. EB proposed, seconded by SG, and members unanimously approved the project, subject to being able to obtain the necessary permissions from EDDC and freeholders. CH accepted an action on her/LB to establish from EDDC the exact situation regarding planning permission, and for Gary to then continue to approach freeholders (with the WP covering any costs incurred by this). JW thanked Gary for attending the meeting.

Gary Cook left the meeting

4. Summer 2021 Programme of Activity - 'Summer Lift Off'

- 4.1. CH updated members on plans for Summer 2021 events in town, scheduled to take place over the school summer holidays from 26 July-5 September. She has already organised several walkabout act performers to cover most of the days during that period, providing general entertainment including juggling, giant 'seagulls' helping with a litter picking message and a 'superhero on roller skates'. She also hopes to include musicians, eg a samba band. The Magnolia Kiosk would be a focal/starting point, used as a visual arts display as well as to advertise the daily acts, and the performers would move around the town to include other areas such as the Strand and by the railway station. The performers are being paid so consideration will not need to be made to busking/licenses etc.
- 4.2. Concept-wise, CH explained that she is thinking of this less as an art event and more about a way of regenerating the town, welcoming people back after the Covid restrictions and showing warmth, life and fun. She shared an idea for a banner/marketing, branded as an 'Exmouth Festival' event and

called 'Summer Lift Off', which was very well-received by members. There was some discussion about the 'Exmouth Festival' branding/ownership, and whether 'ETC' or just Exmouth' should be used instead, but ultimately members agreed that 'Exmouth Festival' was a good choice (with a more fun connotation) and showed that this was part of the Festival's remit (and would appeal to the Festival audience), although ETC's crest could also be included.

- 4.3. CH plans to use 5 or 6 banners around the town in the areas where the performers will be, as well as posters. She also plans to create a short promotional video of the performers to use on social media. Budget-wise, CH estimates that the banners will cost £200 each and the promotional video £350. EB suggested displaying the video on a loop in the Magnolia Kiosk, which all agreed was a good idea. EB further suggested that, since the banners do not include dates, they could usefully be reused. She asked whether bunting could be put up but there remains an issue about how to secure it, especially as ETC's catenary wires are not considered secure.
- 4.4. After discussion, JW clarified that members supported CH's plans for 'Summer Lift Off' events and marketing and that she should proceed as necessary in respect of spending her budget to achieve this.

5. Any Other Business

- 5.1. None raised.

6. Date of Next Meeting

- 6.1. Members agreed to hold the next meeting on **Thursday 1 July 2021 at 1400**, to review progress on planning for the summer activities. The meeting finished at approximately 1450.