EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Festival and Events Working Party

Notes of the virtual meeting held at 1400 on Thursday 24th October 2024 via zoom

Present

Cllr Joy Whipps (Chair)	JW	Exmouth Town Council
Cllr Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Cllr Nick Hookway	NH	Exmouth Town Council
Cllr Aurora Bailey	AB	Exmouth Town Council
Cllr Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Jess Magill	JM	Exmouth Town Council
Lisa Bowman	LB	Exmouth Town Council
Chetna Jones	CJ	Exmouth Town Council
Lisa Greenway	LG	Exmouth Town Council

Apologies: None

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

JW welcomed attendees to the meeting.

2. To approve the notes from the meeting on the 19th of September & matters arising

Members approved the notes of the meeting held on the 19th of September and there were no matters arising.

3. To discuss the Winter Festival

CJ reaffirmed the decision made in the previous meeting that the Christmas tree will be positioned in the same tree pit as last year and a successful request has been submitted to EDDC for the installation. Kings Garden Centre will provide the tree, which is set to be delivered by the tree farm on November the 13th at the same time as the Rotary tree in the Magnolia Centre.

The lighting technician is scheduled to put up the high street and tree lights between the 11th and 17th of November, the streetlights will be activated once the technician completes the work, and the tree lights will be turned on during the festival on the 30th of November.

CJ updated members that the lantern parade is scheduled to start earlier this year, with the parade leaving the Holy Trinity at 5:10 pm. This change is intended to make it easier for more traders to stay open later, enhancing the overall experience for attendees. JW raised concerns about a local restaurant, requesting a reminder to avoid parking their delivery van on the pavement, as it caused significant inconvenience last year.

CJ confirmed that the lantern making kits have been ordered for five primary schools, Live to Learn and Open Door. JM has extended the invitation to Hello Exmouth for their students to participate, but the Deaf Academy will not be involved this year due to their students being on a home weekend. Kits will be distributed after the half-term break, allowing schools about four weeks to prepare.

CJ called for marshals, emphasising the need for help with road crossings an email will be circulated to request help and to confirm members availability for the event. Plans for singing and dancing sessions around the tree were mentioned to enhance the festive atmosphere.

Concerns about the security of the Christmas tree were raised. LB noted that past vandalism incidents are a concern, and the current CCTV may not provide clear footage at night, so additional measures or checks are needed. The Christmas Market organiser will only have security arrangements in place once the marquee goes up, which is later than the tree installation.

AB suggested including donation buckets, members discussed past practices of collecting donations through buckets at events but ultimately agreed against using them for the Winter Festival.

JM has added a couple of stalls to the event which includes an eco Christmas stall run by the ETC Climate and Ecological officer, the scrap stall based in Exeter will run an activity workshop and the Christmas market organiser is providing a mulled wine stall to make the evening more festive.

JM is finalising promotional flyers and posters for the event, and members were encouraged to help distribute especially those living further out, to ensure posters are placed in community centres and churches to reach a wider audience as well as sharing social media posts.

4. Any other business

Remembrance Day

LB advised that arrangements for Remembrance Sunday are on track, but additional volunteers are still needed for marshalling during the rolling parade. The security and first aid services have been outsourced, the draft of the service sheet is prepared, and social media posts are ready. LB reminded councillors that they are invited to the Town Hall prior to the service. A meeting is scheduled for Monday with various stakeholders, including the parade marshal, town band and RBL to finalise details and logistics.

Jingle and Mingle

LB reminded members that the community showcase event will take place on the Wednesday the 18th of December in the Christmas market marque between 10am and 4pm and can accommodate 90 tables/stalls.

Posters and social media promotion will start going out from today which includes a QR code for local organisations to sign up to participate has been created, it was stressed that the event is not intended as a market for selling goods but rather as a networking opportunity for community groups and town council led initiatives to showcase their offerings. The aim is to foster connections and encourage volunteer sign-ups. There are plans to collect information about participating organisations to potentially create a legacy directory that could serve as a lasting resource for the community.

A local business has been in contact to request a table at the event, members discussed the appropriateness of this. Given the business's role in the community, which involves hosting foreign student’s members recognised that this business contributes positively to the local economy and community, emphasising educational and cultural benefits. There was a consensus

to allow the business a table at the community showcase, although some members expressed concerns about businesses dominating stalls at community events.

Dinosaur Event

As discussed in the previous meeting the dinosaur exhibit volunteer Liz Oram has approached ETC to request a dinosaur event in 2025. JM has preliminary plans looking at dates during the Easter break, but not on Easter weekend itself. It was noted that the Exmouth Pavilion has a dinosaur animatronic show scheduled for Easter Sunday, which complicates plans for a free dinosaur animatronic act in close proximity. However, JM is considering aligning the event with the Pavilion's schedule to create a cohesive experience.

7. Date of next meeting 21st November 2024

The meeting ended 14:45