EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Festival and Events Working Party

Notes of the virtual meeting held at 1400 on Thursday 21st November 2024 via zoom

Present

Cllr Joy Whipps (Chair)	JW	Exmouth Town Council
Cllr Nick Hookway	NH	Exmouth Town Council
Jess Magill	JM	Exmouth Town Council
Mollie Carey	MC	Exmouth Town Council
Lisa Greenway	LG	Exmouth Town Council

Apologies:

Cllr Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Cllr Aurora Bailey	AB	Exmouth Town Council
Cllr Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Lisa Bowman	LB	Exmouth Town Council
Chetna Jones	CJ	Exmouth Town Council

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

JW welcomed attendees to the meeting.

2. To approve the notes from the meeting on the 24th of October & matters arising

Members approved the notes of the meeting held on the 24th of October and there were no matters arising.

3. To discuss plans for VE Day 80th anniversary on the 8th of May 2025

A summary of the VE celebration proposed for the 8th of May 2025 were circulated to members prior to the meeting.

In LB's absence MC attended the meeting to discuss the plans for the celebration and request approval for the beacon to be positioned at the geo-needle and to hold a short service in the Strand. Plans for the event include a proclamation and tribute read out by the Town Cryer and a VE flag has been ordered in advance to prevent supply issues like those experienced during the Jubilee.

The Strand has been provisionally booked for all 4 of the RBL events that are now organised by the Town Council due to insurance constraints preventing the local RBL from organising events themselves. Members were in agreement that ETC should carry on organising future events on behalf of the local RBL.

There was a suggestion to incorporate a community engagement aspect, such as a party or street event featuring fish and chips, JW was keen to hold a party in the Strand incorporating fish and chips. MC will discuss possible locations with LB and CJ and contact local fish and chip shops to see if they are willing to support the idea.

Members agreed that the beacon should be lit, however safety concerns were raised due to the large crowds that gathered last time at the geo-needle despite warnings not to gather in this

area but watch from the beach. As a result, JW suggested that the service be held in a safer area and the beacon be lit after at the geo-needle with no public attending. JM queried if the beacon lighting is optional, members discussed alternative safer locations for the beacon lighting to avoid safety issues on the cliffs.

MC will inform CJ and LB all feedback from the meeting.

4. To discuss the Winter Festival

JM reminded members that the Winter Festival will take place on the 30th of November, starting at 3pm in the Strand, with the first performance by the East Devon Rock Choir.

In terms of preparations, the premises license has been secured, performers are confirmed, and schedules and promotional materials have been distributed. The lantern parade route will remain the same as last year, with adjustments made to avoid bottlenecks, particularly near the Powder Monkey roundabout.

While there are enough marshals for safety, there is still a shortfall. LG will circulate an additional email to all councillors requesting volunteers for the parade, emphasising that only about an hour of assistance will be required.

The Christmas tree is in situ and banners acknowledging sponsorship by Kings Garden Centre have been displayed around the tree with additional banners featuring “Merry Christmas from Exmouth Town Council.” Generic ETC banners have been purchased that will be used for future events.

A new large lantern featuring a snowy owl in a polar theme has been commissioned, adding to last year’s designs. Community engagement efforts included AB visiting businesses along the Strand and Parade route to encourage local business participation. Positive responses have been received, including from initially hesitant businesses, showing that last year’s success helped drive footfall.

Safety provisions include a first aid gazebo for which staff are security trained even though no formal security is required and a Town Council gazebo.

Weather forecasts suggest milder temperatures with possible strong winds. JM will adapt plans accordingly and is hoping for weather similar to last year.

5. Any other business

Summer Festival 2025

JM is currently waiting for quotes to proceed with planning, decisions are needed to finalise the sites and arrangements for inclusion in the December Arts Council funding application.

Sideshore is being developed into an environmental curiosity garden aligned with sustainability values. As a result, it is no longer available for festivals or large-scale events.

Challenges include a delay in receiving confirmation from EDDC regarding the use of Queen’s Drive space. JM is aware that a production company is interested in managing the site for community and cultural events throughout the summer, however there are concerns about the availability of electricity and coordination with EDDC’s broader plans for the area.

6. Date of next meeting 12th December 2024

The next meeting will at the earlier time of 10am.

The meeting ended at 14.33