

Agenda Item 22

CABINET

09 January 2013

13/1302



Exmouth Town Management Arrangements

Exempt Information

Para 3 Schedule 12A information relating to the finance or business affairs of any particular person

Summary

The Council has actively supported the Exmouth Town Management Partnership from the time of its inception in 2001/02. During 2011/12 efforts were made to develop an arrangement less dependent upon the local authorities and more closely focused on the ideas and priorities of local businesses. Work on the development of an Exmouth Business Improvement District (BID) came to an end in November 2011.

Since that time Exmouth Town Council has sought ways of continuing projects and initiatives to maintain and enhance cultural and commercial activity in the town. This is in line with the findings and recommendations of the Vitality of High Streets and Town Centres Task and Finish Forum (September 2012). The TaFF invites the Council to “work with and stimulate town councils to develop their own vision for the development of shops or activities that might act as a magnet to encourage visitors and shoppers to their town centre”.

Recommendation

- 1. That the Council agrees to support the further progress of Town Management in Exmouth within the structure proposed by Exmouth Town Council and as detailed in Appendix One of this report.**

a) Reasons for Recommendation

To support the further development of Town Management arrangements in Exmouth and to progress the findings of the Vitality of High Streets and Town Centres Task and Finish Forum (September 2012).

b) Alternative Options

To play no active part in the Exmouth Town Management Panel

c) Risk Considerations

There are risks, both financial and reputational but these are small in scale and consistent with collaborative arrangements of this nature.

d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

A funding contribution of £10,000 to assist in the delivery of projects emerging from the work of the Exmouth Town Management Panel is included in the Council's draft economic development budget 2012/13.

e) Date for Review of Decision

It is suggested that the work and outputs of the Exmouth Town Management Panel be made subject to annual review.

1 Main Body of the Report**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Council supported Exmouth Town Management Partnership from its inception in 2001/02. Over the years this voluntary partnership of the three local authorities, Exmouth Chamber of Commerce and others, achieved a great deal. Through the work of the Exmouth Town Manager, the partnership introduced and managed key promotional events in the town, encouraged co-operation between retailers and other commercial interests and successfully promoted Exmouth to the wider public.
- 1.2 At the beginning of 2011, the Town Manager announced his plans to leave the role and advised the Town Management Partnership to use that as an opportunity to review its work and how it might be developed and sustained in the future. The Partnership agreed this suggestion. Accordingly, this Council's funding contribution to Exmouth Town Management in 2011/12 was used to facilitate the appointment of a specialist destination management consultant to carry out a study into the feasibility of developing a Business Improvement District (BID) within the town.
- 1.3 BIDs are used to progress and formalise the ambitions of groups such as the Exmouth Town Management Partnership, under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2003. The conclusions and recommendations of the Exmouth BID feasibility study were published in September 2011. The study suggested that a BID for Exmouth could be viable (within the area researched and recommended). This comprised 630 business premises located within the 53 streets of the town centre.
- 1.4 The findings of the Feasibility Study were reported to a special meeting of Exmouth Town Council and Exmouth Town Management Partnership in October 2011. Both agreed a recommendation to progress the further development of a BID for Exmouth town centre. However, by the time of the Council's Cabinet meeting in November 2011, widely publicised opposition to the BID proposal prevented further progress. Work on the Exmouth BID proposal ceased before it could progress to a formal ballot of business stakeholders.
- 1.5 Exmouth Town Council has continued to support projects and initiatives designed to maintain and enhance cultural and commercial activity in the town. This is consistent with the thinking of the Council's Vitality of High Streets and Town Centres Task and Finish Forum (September 2012). The TaFF invites the Council to "work with and stimulate town councils to develop their own vision for the development of shops or activities that might act as a magnet to encourage visitors and shoppers to their town centre."

1.6 Earlier this year the Town Council resolved to defer employing a Town Manager and instead extended the hours and remit of their Town Management Projects Officer. This approach has recently been translated into a structure considered and approved by a meeting of the Town Council (Appendix One) on 19 November, last. A Town Management Panel of ten members, including a District Councillor, is to replace the Exmouth Town Management Partnership. The Panel will focus on project delivery emerging from fora such as the Exmouth Town Team, Arts Forum, Tourism Team and a Large Business Forum. The Town Council hopes the County and District Council will continue their funding contributions to town management under these arrangements. To that end, a funding contribution of £10,000 is included in the draft economic development budget 2013/14.

Legal Implications

There are no comments from Legal Services on this Report

Financial Implications

A budget of £10,000 is available for the funding of the Exmouth Town Management Partnership for 2013/14.

Consultation on Reports to the Executive

Meeting of 2 November 2011

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Exmouth Town Council 19 November 2012, Agenda Item 13i: Town Management Structure
 - Appendix 2 - Vitality of High Streets and Town Centres Task and Finish Forum, Final Report September 2012.
-

Nigel Harrison
Economic Development Manager

Cabinet
09 January 2012