

Report to: Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group

Date of Meeting 31st July 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release NA

Progress Update on Exmouth Town and Seafront

Report summary:

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a general summary of progress since the last update on 23rd January 2024 with on-the-ground placemaking projects in Exmouth currently being delivered by the Place and Prosperity Team.

There are other placemaking related projects being delivered across Exmouth by other Teams, namely the successful Gate to Plate event earlier this summer, events and other arrangements secured through the Council's Events Team, and of course the sea defence works being delivered by the Council's Engineering Team.

With a new Place Directorate now in existence since June, in this report and moving forward we are including these to PETS. This will provide Members of this Group with a wider awareness of the activities taking place.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That Members of the Group note this update and the successes achieved.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that Members are informed about the on-the-ground placemaking projects being delivered in Exmouth.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Communications and Democracy
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Culture, Leisure, Sport and Culture

Equalities Impact Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk; The report is to note an update on progress since our last meeting

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk; The report is to note an update on progress since our last meeting.

Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

Report in full

1.1 General Update

Queens Drive

- All five food and beverage pitches have now been let for the season.
- Some 'facelift' work was carried out at Queen's Drive from 2023/24 budget. This was mainly the parasols over the tables and some repairs to the seating and painting of the Bar.
- The Events Space at rear of Queen's Drive site was marketed in January by our colleagues in Streetscene in the hope of attracting a reliable operator – we received one proposal that was suitable who was aiming to start operations by the 2nd May Bank Holiday – however the slip and slide equipment was not made in time and therefore cannot be deployed. This part of the site therefore remains vacant.
- Council staff have agreed to work with the traders to facilitate entertainment in the trader's area (around the food pitches). This has included (at the time of writing) proposals for 24 events to take place in the traders area on Queens Drive which we hope will provide a much needed boost (4 have taken place so far). The events consist of low-key music, entertainment eg facepainting for children and bands playing etc– the traders have agreed to bring forward a summary and evaluation in due course in the end of season round up to enable Officers to consider the success of this initiative and to consider learnings for next season.

Events

- The events team have issued 18 fitness licences this year across EDDC with Exmouth having the most.
- Exmouth Beach Rugby and Netball Festival took place at the end of May. A well attended event comprising of Rugby and Netball Tournaments, plus live music including bands & DJs. The Events Team had excellent feedback from those attending the event and the organisers. Again, the organisers have rebooked for 2025.
- Exmouth Pride ran its biggest event to date this year which is a welcome development.

Exmouth Festival

- The Cultural Producer & Climate Change Officers have been working with the Exmouth Town Hall Arts Manager & Climate Change Officer on decarbonising Exmouth Festival, supported through funding from the EDDC Green Team. With support from South West Energy and Environment Group, the carbon footprint of last year's festival has been calculated and recommendations for reducing this and sharing sustainable messaging are being implemented. The dates of the festival are July 19th – 21st 2024. Our goal of this pilot project is to not only make this festival carbon neutral by 2030, but to create a template, measurement tool and guidelines which all East Devon festivals can adopt so that event organisers can run festivals which are carbon reducing and commercially viable. Ultimately, we would like East Devon to be recognised as the home of 'green festivals,' a USP that sets us apart from other areas in the South West.
- Local band performances have started again, including the Exmouth Town Band.. Exmouth Pavilion are also providing free music entertainment throughout the summer every week too.

Exmouth Seawall

- Phase 1 of the seawalls works have been completed with phase 2 planned to be completed by October 2024 to extend the sea walls to the slipway next to Harbour view café. The work is overseen by the Council's engineers.

Beach Management

- Ongoing SWW issues of pollution discharge with heavy rain.
- Exmouth Beach Management Plan is progressing well with a report expected in January of 2025.

Other

- Deep Green energy harvesting proposal at Exmouth Leisure Centre to reduce energy consumption using excess heat for a server farm – required consent from landowner to approach National Grid for supply / capacity data. Provided on 9th July to LED.

1.2 Levelling up Fund Bid – Destination Exmouth/Exmouth Gateway

On the 8th of May 2024 DCC's Cabinet made the following recommendation:

"That the Cabinet be asked to:

note the results of the Consultation and approve the removal of the Exmouth Gateway proposals from the Destination Exmouth Levelling Up Fund (LUF) package".

Senior Officers approached DCC Officers prior to that Cabinet meeting taking place, expressed our concern and disappointment and made alternative suggestions of how this funding could instead be spent on placemaking interventions within the town, to support projects which were shovel ready and deliverable.

Financial implications:

No direct financial implications are identified from the recommendations.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications requiring comment at this time.