

## Agenda Item

**Executive Board**

**15 November 2006**

**06/6007**



## Exmouth Town Management

### Summary

In November 2001, the Economy and Employment Committee agreed funding of £4,000 towards Town Management in Exmouth in period to 31 March 2002. Similar funding, from the Economic Development budget, has been made available in each financial year since that time, to facilitate the employment of a Town Manager and a range of related project activity. Exmouth Town Council under took a review of Town Management earlier this year and concluded that in future, the Town Manager should be employed on a full time basis with the support of a part time assistant. Exmouth Town Council is seeking the support of the Council and Devon County Council in these moves. They ask for an increase in funding from £4,000 per annum to £10,000 and that in future years, this assistance is protected against inflation.

### Recommendation:

**The views of the Executive Board are requested on whether or not it wishes provision for increased funding for Town Management in Exmouth to be included in the Economic Development Budget 2007/08**

#### a) Reasons for Recommendation

To inform the preparation of the 2007/08 Economic Development budget

#### b) Alternative Options

That the Council's contribution to Exmouth Town Management remains the same  
That the Council's contribution to Exmouth Town Management ceases

#### c) Risk Considerations

The Council's contribution to Town Management in Exmouth usefully demonstrates its commitment to partnership working with Exmouth Town Council, Devon County Council and businesses in Exmouth. Were this to cease, this commitment may be called into question.

#### d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

The Council's support for Town Management in Exmouth is consistent with the Corporate Strategy: 'Encourage a flourishing local economy'.

#### e) Date for Review of Decision

The funding of Town Management in Exmouth should be subject to annual review

### 1 Main Body of the Report

- 1.1 The appointment of a Town Manager for Exmouth, by Exmouth Town Council, in June 2000, coincided with the publication of a 'Social and Economic Assessment of Exmouth undertaken by the School of Business and Economics of the University of Exeter. The findings of this study informed the initial meetings of the Exmouth Town Management Forum to whom in November 2001, the Council agreed to offer funding of £4,000 in the period to 31 March 2002. Similar funding has been made available in the years 2002/03 to 2006/07 (from the Economic

Development budget). The amount has remained the same (£4,000 per annum) and continues to reflect the complementary funding agreed by Devon County Council.

- 1.2 The Council's hopes for the Exmouth Town Management Partnership were that it would eventually become a largely independent organisation sustained by local businesses through the Exmouth Chamber of Commerce. The three holders of the post of Exmouth Town Manager have each sought to foster a close working relationship with the town's businesses. However when John Furze resigned to take up a new post earlier this year, it was apparent that the burden of funding and management support was likely to remain with Exmouth Town Council.
- 1.3 Exmouth Town Council has used the time since then to consult widely on the future of Town Management. As a result of this process, it has agreed to appoint a full time Town Manager on a three year contract to 31 March 2010 and following the appointment of the full time Town Manager, a part time assistant is to be recruited to support the delivery of the service. The cost implications of these proposals are reflected in the request that both the Council and Devon County increase their financial support for Town Management to £10,000 per annum.
- 1.4 The Council has no direct officer involvement in the delivery of Town Management in Exmouth. With fewer economic development practitioners employed by the Council, this is no longer practicable. However, the value of collaboration with other stakeholders in promoting improvements to Exmouth's shopping, visitor and its wider employment offer can be in little doubt.

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### **Legal Implications**

The Council have the power to make this grant under the "well-being" provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 and there are no other legal issues requiring comment on this report.

### **Financial Implications**

The financial implications of the decision resulting from this report will be incorporated in the budget submission for 2007/08

### **Consultation on Reports to the Executive**

Exmouth Town Council has consulted widely on the future of Town Management. The views of Devon County Council in relation to this matter are not yet known.

### **Background Papers**

- Letter and attachments from Exmouth Town Council dated 3 October 2006
- Minutes of the Economy and Employment Committee 14 November 2001

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