

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ECONOMY 20 JANUARY 2005

EXETER AUTUMN FESTIVAL 2004

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report on the Autumn Festival in 2004, which took place between 22 October and 5 November 2004.
- 1.2 To seek support for the development of the Autumn Festival in 2005 to take place between 4 and 19 November 2005.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Exeter City Council supports a wide-ranging portfolio of events throughout the year, both directly as producer, and by contributing to project funding. In relation to Festivals, the core Council objectives, as defined in the Exeter Vision, which provide the context for future delivery, are:
 - “a cultural and fun place to be”, to establish Exeter as a major cultural and leisure centre in the region increasing the vitality of the city for the enjoyment of both residents and visitors
 - “a city of strong communities”, to ensure Exeter is a city where every resident is to play a full and active part in its social, economic, political and cultural life
 - “a learning city”, to generate a culture of learning in Exeter, raising the quality of education and training for everyone in order to maximise personal achievement, promote social inclusion and support economic development.
- 2.2 The Autumn Festival is a new festival proposed as part of the enhancement of Exeter Festivals in the report to Scrutiny Committee Economy in November 2003. The agreed aim of the Autumn Festival is:

“To showcase local cultural activity and encourage the growth and development of talent through participation, performance and creativity”
- 2.3 The key characteristics of the Festival as agreed in November 2003 are:
 - a programme of events delivering complementary activities to the summer festival, encompassing arts, food and drink involving local performers, groups and other producers
 - the inclusion of Fringe type events that have been delivered during the festival period in July, providing the voluntary, amateur and semi professional sector with a platform from which to showcase their work
 - facilitating the development of locally produced activities and the main provision of advice to support amateur and voluntary groups in developing and managing cultural projects.

3. AUTUMN FESTIVAL 2004

- 3.1 The programme for the Autumn Festival 2004 involved 60 different voluntary organisations/individuals promoting a mix of amateur, semi-professional and professional events in 33 different venues across the City. They ranged from a 100 capacity venue such as The Guildhall to a 900 capacity venue such as the Lemon Grove. The City Council working in collaboration with the various voluntary organisations, venues and promoters collated the festival brochure and promoted the whole programme.
- 3.2 The programme of 93 events was made up of 48 ticketed and 45 free events. None of the events were directly promoted by the City Council.
- 3.3 In addition to the benefits provided through inclusion in the festival brochure and media publicity for the Autumn Festival, a fund of £3,500 was allocated to provide additional support to help community groups, youth groups, clubs, organisations and individuals who wished to participate by promoting an event or activity but needed help in making it happen.
- 3.4 The criteria for this Award Scheme focused on activities and events that would:
- contribute to the range and quality of events in the festival programme
 - promote the city's creative talents and activities of groups or individuals
 - entertain and interest a public audience
 - benefit the local community.
- 3.5 The scheme attracted 11 applications of which 8 were successful. Awards ranged from £250 for the City of Exeter Pipe Band who performed in various outdoor venues over 4 days of the festival, to £1,000 to Magic Carpet who organised a free creative playday with entertainment, swimming at Riverside Leisure Centre. Other awards went to Ticklemore Folk Club, Opera Glass, The Linley Band, Exeter Philharmonic Choir, The St Davids Ambience Society and Clare Greener to produce a drama for 'Exeter in the 1940s'. These events were very successful and three of the applicants who did not receive awards still went ahead with their event.

4. EVALUATION

- 4.1 The Autumn Festival 2004 attracted 5065 people to ticketed events and some 17072 people to free events. These figures are based on information supplied by event organisers.
- 4.2 Of the 232 organisations that were informed of the opportunity to participate in the festival, 63 submitted applications. This compares with 72 such organisations that took part in the 2003 Summer Festival, prior to the changes made. It is envisaged that participation will increase in the 2005 Autumn Festival as awareness has now grown and planning can take place at a much earlier stage. The organisations involved varied in their membership including some newly formed organisations such as Exeter Local Radio in tandem with long established organisations such as the Exeter Philharmonic Choir

- 4.3 The Autumn Festival contributed to the Council's core objectives by:
- raising the cultural profile of the city by providing a contemporary mix of popular entertainment
 - generating a strong volunteer commitment among those interested in furthering the development of their organisations objectives and those of the festival with support from the Awards scheme.
 - providing education and training opportunities for young people

Programme

- 4.4 As the first festival of this type the programme was both wide-ranging and inclusive. The programme included music, film, dance, theatre opera, workshops and exhibitions, the number of events being as follows:-

Music	53	Education	10	Exhibition	12
Dance	1	Talk	2	Theatre	6
Literary	2	Comedy	2	Film	2
Visual Arts	3				

A breakdown of the events is given at Appendix 1.

Marketing

- 4.5 In order to promote the programme, 30,000 full colour programmes and 10,000 general flyers were distributed throughout the City and neighbouring area. In addition the Exeter Citizen carried a 4 page pull out on the Festival and banners were erected in both the High St and Queen St. The website had 2172 visitors and Exeter Local Radio carried daily features and updates on festival events. The Express and Echo carried various features on highlighted events and printed daily listings on all festival events. As a new festival the brochure mailing list was small and the distribution focused on City and other outlets within a twenty-minute drive.

5.0 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The first Autumn Festival demonstrated both the interest and the capability of organisations in the city in developing and delivering this new major event in the annual programme. It is proposed that the Autumn Festival be repeated in 2005.
- 5.2 In order to focus the City Council resources and maximise the impact of the Festival it is recommended that
- the awards scheme be continued and organisations be invited to apply in May 2005, allowing time for earlier applications and the possible planning of more ambitious events
 - the festival takes place between 4 and 19 November to encompass the new format Christmas Light Switch On
 - consideration be given to the promotion of one or two established acts or high profile events to enhance the image of the Autumn Festival in order to attract more regional exposure
 - an advisory event staging manual be created and distributed to all participating bodies, assisting organisations in the promotion of their events

Autumn Festival 2004**Appendix 1****Breakdown of events**

Event	Participants		Workshop Participants	Genre
	Ticketed	Free		
(*) Number of performances events if more than 1				
Exeter Local Radio				Music
Met Office Stage (18)		6000		Music
Whipton Arts (3)		200	200	Visual Arts
Voices in common	75			Music
Rennie Pilgrim	220			Music
Peter Canter		120		Music
Cygnets (2)		60	49	Theatre
Tickelmore (2)	60			Music
Tickelmore workshop	30		30	Educational
Pipeband (11)		2000		Music
Devon Brass	70			Music
Autumn Festival Dance	190			Dance
Future Exiter	160			Music
Jews and Jazz	90			Talk
Construction Capers (2)	650		650	Educational
Be Proud Of Me	100			Theatre
Mythos (3)	50		50	Educational
Homage To Harpo	45			Music
Oranges and Lemons		80		Literary
Magic Carpet		140	140	Educational
Linley band	53			Music
Plot to plate	41			Talk
1940S (9)	165			Exhibition
1940S		6500		Theatre
Hortus Print Making	25		25	Educational
This and That 4 Seasons (2)		36		Theatre
La Volee	250			Music
Max 10	15			Film
Exeter Comedy Club	240			Comedy
Guitar recital	50			Music
Strange Attractors	26			Comedy
Junior Murvin	350			Music
Ringers	32			Music
Bell walk				Educational
Spooks and broomsticks		500	500	Educational
George Melly	180			Music

Autumn Festival 2004
Breakdown of events

Appendix 1

Event	Participants		Workshop Participants	Genre
	Ticketed	Free		
The Swingcats	189			Music
Requiem for all		200		Music
Horrory for Hoolywood				Talk
Recorder	50			Music
Uzak	60			Film
Live Jazz	50			Music
Poetry at Palace	40			Literary
Ex Philharmonioc	245			Music
Opera glass	124			Music
Dj Craze MC fearless	750			Music
Blowzabella	390			Music
Amparanoia	Cancelled			Music
The way we were		500		Exhibition
Reflection		500		Exhibition
Wildlife Photo		175		Exhibition
Total	5065	17011	1644	

Number of events

93

Total Attendees

22076