

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ECONOMY
7 MARCH 2013**

**EXECUTIVE
19 MARCH 2013**

PRODUCTION OF PROMOTIONAL VIDEO

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek support for the production of a promotional video (also known as a Vodcast) that will appear on Exeter City Council's website and be available in an edited format for personal presentations.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The City Council undertakes a range of marketing activities to promote the city for investment and to continually raise its profile. This is against the background of most growth orientated cities in the UK also promoting themselves proactively and some very effectively with lively imagery and a combination of a range of communication techniques and convincing current presentations.
- 2.2 Exeter City Council's website www.exeter.gov.uk is currently very successful in that the home page receives approximately 18,500 page views each month. It is highly optimised which means that Exeter City Council pages will often come at or near the top of a Google search.
- 2.3 The Business section www.exeter.gov.uk/business is the main point of contact for businesses seeking information about business support available, the Commercial Property Register, other business related issues involving the Council and acts as a key mechanism for promoting investment in the city. The Business Section home page receives approximately 600 page views each day and 19,000 each month, many visitors bypassing the home page to reach the business section direct.
- 2.4 Around 92% of the 1,000+ enquiries received each year related to business sites or accommodation searches arrive via the Exeter City Council business web pages.
- 2.5 It has now been recognised that the business pages of the website in particular are less effective because of changes in the ways people use technology. Attention spans have become shorter. Videos on websites are engaging ways that enable key messages to be better communicated in a 'time poor' culture.
- 2.6 The growing use of videos on websites by partners such as University of Exeter and also our competitors has led to a realisation that the City Council has to embrace this form of presentation in order to achieve the desired impact or be left behind.
- 2.7 Senior officers and directors at Exeter City Council often make presentations to organisations that are considering relocation. Such presentations can be significantly enhanced and greater impact using an effective video-based element embedded within them, bringing the city and its advantages to life.

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 It is recommended that a specialist film production company should be used to create the video and three local companies have been asked to estimate likely costs.
- 3.2 It is possible to get a video made cheaply. However, if Exeter City Council is to maintain its normal standards of excellence, it is strongly advised to use industry specialists and not to be tempted by false economies. Having a weak video would be worse in commercial and reputation terms than having no video at all.
- 3.3 For the stated budget of £18,000, industry specialists would be able to provide a film that would bring their full production acumen to bear. The film would encapsulate the key message of Exeter as a centre of business excellence, demonstrating the benefits of business relocation to the city.

They would generate concepts, storyboards and spend time in research, carefully selecting a series of high-profile interview subjects and developing themes in the production that would generate an effective identity for the city.

The film would benefit from thorough research and development, strong concept options and the greatest possible variety of footage to best promote Exeter. The film would be dynamic and involving and would include set-pieces in and around city landmarks. High-quality graphics and CGI (computer generated imagery) where appropriate would bring the narrative to life and best display the full array of opportunity the city has to offer the individual and the business community.

- 3.4 A 2 minute (approx.) highlight edited version will be produced for use in presentations, trade fairs etc. when the longer format is not necessarily appropriate.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 It is estimated that the cost of this piece of work should be no more than £18,000.
- 4.2 The immediate costs of the project can be funded from the unallocated element of the New Homes Bonus receipts.

5. RECOMMENDATION that:

- 5.1 Scrutiny Committee – Economy agree that a video be produced to promote the advantages of the city for local and relocating businesses.
- 5.2 Executive approve funding of up to £18,000 to produce a 5 minute video to be included on the Exeter City Council website and a shorter edited version to be available for separate presentations.

RICHARD BALL
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ECONOMY

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:

None