# Community Panel Meeting

## 10th June 2024 6.00 to 8.00 pm

## Innovation Hub, Dix’s Field, Exeter

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1** | **Welcome and Introductions** |
| **2** | **Minutes and actions from the previous meeting*** No updates on the Minutes from the previous meeting which was also attended by VC, and other CUA leaders
	+ No actions from the previous meeting
* There was one ongoing action from the previous meeting:
	+ RC to review how we reach out to students about the Community Fund – update provided in Agenda item 5
 |
| **3** | **Update on CUA Delivery Progress**The full update can be found in the latest Progress report which was circulated with the Agenda**Mission 1: Support the Sustainable and Inclusive Growth of the City*** The Innovation Hub is increasingly being used by UoE and external teams including Exeter Chamber, Eagle Labs and others
* The Green Futures Solutions consultancy services has started taking on clients and is helping our climate scientists to deliver change with partners

**Mission 2: Innovate towards a sustainable low-carbon economy for the City of Exeter*** Exeter City council has recruited a new member of staff who will lead the coordination of the City’s journey to net zero - they should be in post by August
* An update of Exeter’s Green House Gas Report has been commissioned which will demonstrate how things have changed in the city

**Mission 3: Build a City of Aspiration and Opportunity*** The South West Institute of Technology (SWioT) is being relicensed and we’re currently waiting to see the outcome of this process. There will be a focus on skills escalators (including green skills) which will help map skills needs and provision in the region.
* The University is continuing to co-fund a position with Ted Wragg Trust which is exploring the use of Community Hubs in each of their schools in Exeter and Plymouth.
* The first meeting of the Devon Education Alliance has taken place - there is an interest in expanding the student led-tutoring programme that has been delivered by the Social Mobility Commission

 **Mission 4: Support an ambitious Culture and Tourism offer*** Creative Arc has been working on a range of projects which use different ways of engaging with communities and place building

 **Mission 5: Enhance the Health and Wellbeing of our citizens*** The University and Royal Devon University Hospital (RDUH) have been successful on a number of big collaborative bids including a new Dementia Network and have submitted several other collaborative bids
* Plans to redevelop the St Luke’s Campus as a health campus have been shared in a public consultation
* Ongoing collaboration with the One Eastern Devon Partnership Forum (OEDPF) has led to a summer internship at RDUH, supporting the development of the OEDPF comms strategy, and a second intern who will support the loneliness and isolation sub-group’s mapping of services.

**Discussion*** The recent Low Traffic Neighbourhood debate in Heavitree was a good example of Exeter academics fully engaging with a local issue
* While the data showed it was working, anecdotally members of the community didn't like the changes
* While it was a disappointing outcome for many, it will hopefully be the start of more evidence-based debates in the city
 |
| **4** | [Student Employability and Development](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/departments/seas/ourteams/sed/)Lessons learned from the [EUniverCities Network](https://eunivercitiesnetwork.com/): How can we better align student employability programmes with regional priorities and challenges?* The Head of Student Employability and Academic Success (SEAS), presented on some of the programmes offered by SEAS (presentation circulated).

**Discussion*** Providing place-based opportunities in the locality helps students think about developing a career in the region - they create networks with people outside of the university, and are more likely to want to stay in, or return to the region
* Providing places for students on the board of residents associations would give them similar positions of responsibility and experience that they are looking for
	+ The practicalities of this are difficult as students might only stay around for a year, but it could help change the dynamics and integrate students in the community
* The University has a platform called “My career zone digital” - 95% students have activated their accounts, and this promotes vacencies and opportunities to all students
* International Student visas allow them to participate in all these schemes which can help them integrate in the city
* There is also a dedicated international service which helps international students learn about the city, by providing practical information and giving them an understanding of the heritage and culture of the city
 |
| **5** | **Applications / ideas for the Community Fund**[TheCommunity Fund](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/about/community/communityfund/) offers grants of up to £300 for projects linking students, local residents, community organisations and local agencies. Approximately £2000 of funding is available each year. The four current themes for funding are:1. Increasing biodiversity and enhancing green space
2. Reducing waste on campus and in the city
3. Supporting ideas and solutions that help address the climate crisis
4. Social events that promote student engagement with the city
* Since the last meeting, the panel has approved the second phase of funding for the Mount Pleasant garden
* The Student Guild have an interesting project led by an international student trying to understand the barriers to recycling for international students
* A project supporting the community fridge on campus at the library was almost funded, but received funding from elsewhere. There are currently discussions around replicating this at St Lukes which might request funding
* Following an initial boost of interest, things have recently died down - we will talk to the Guild and Green Consultants about new projects next term - both are keen to talk about the Hoopern Valley project
* Panel Members were asked to share details of the fund with their networks
 |
| **6** | **Lower Hoopern Valley Update**- **Friends of Hoopern Valley Association** (**FoHV**)* This was the idea of one the Panel members as a means of getting more community and student engagement in the Valley now that the university is planning to open it up
* Students have been invovled right from the beginning - An initial call for students had 14 respondents, and a panel comprising 6 students and 6 community members is designing the constitution.
* Places on the board will be ringfenced for students to fit with their academic cycle
* The broad aim is around volunteering and social events -
* A [list of possible activities](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vav0je_8Yrq1BO_QFuuyEamaLXD4p545ajc8OUFtIXY/edit#heading=h.gp88zkiurc63) has been created and shared, including plans for a listening activity in the Autumn to understand what the students want, and how we make it valuable for them
* The university will continue to manage the valley, and the FoHV want to support the university’s plans
* The kick off meeting is next week, and the structure should b in place by autumn
* A similar process has been developed with the Devonshire Place Orchard, which had some student involvement
* It was suggested that students could be asked to organise focus groups with the community – perhaps connect with a student group from drama or life sciences to discuss biodiversity?
* Could also connect with the Arts and Culture team and / or Creative Arc, who have lots of experience in creative ways of engaging, and / or school Green Teams, or College horticultural students
* Could also consider having someone on the board to advocate for nature
* It was noted that students don’t necessarily need to have a role on the board – there are wellbeing benefits through volunteering and reconnecting with nature - They could be offered incentives, such as Ambassador status, to motivate them to engage
* FoHV will seek help from SEAS to understand what attributes students are seeking to help get the language right in the constitution

**Action*** The Regional Engagement Manager to connect FoHV with the Creative Arc
* All to add any additional ideas to the [list of activities](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vav0je_8Yrq1BO_QFuuyEamaLXD4p545ajc8OUFtIXY/edit#heading=h.gp88zkiurc63)
 |
| **7** | **Update on Community Panel ideas and initiatives****Research engagement*** Several panel members have met with the University’s Engaged Research Manager and InExeter about bringing research to public spaces
* This could be a social experiment - people share an idea and see if they can get 10 or 100 others to engage with it and create change e.g. pollinating plants; plants which expand urban biodiversity; bioblitz
* Water companies pay farmers to retain water – could we engage with SWW and see if this could be replicated in residential areas, with the money going back into the community?

**Exeter Podcast Series*** One of the Panel Members is working with the Creative Arc Team and the student Podcast Society to develop a series of podcasts with Exeter people
* The Exeter Stories podcast will involve 'in place' interviews with community leaders, entrepreneurs, artists and activists to highlight the diverse range of voices and efforts contributing to the region’s development.
* Trial interviews will be conducted soon whilst trying to identify a couple of Exeter based bands to use for background music

**Local COP Event** * Suggested by panel members, there are very early plans for an initial event in Autumn 2024 and hope to do a follow up event to coincide with the Climate Conference in July 2025
* Suggested themes include misinformation and how this relates to e.g. the Low Traffic Neighbourhood
* We are keen to include a panel member in the planning of the event
 |
| **8** | **How can we increase ways for the Community Panel to engage with University strategy and decision making?** * Now that the Panel have been in place for 2 years, and we have begun to build the relationship and develop the trust in the process, how can we involve them in more strategy development / decision making?
* Tha Chair asked the Panel to consider what sort of things they might want to get more involved in, and we will revisit this at the next meeting.
 |
| **9** | **AOB*** NoAOB
* Regional Engagement Manager to arrange next meeting
 |
|  | **Close** |