

Decision taken by: **Ward Member for Romney Marsh –  
Councillor Terry Mullard**

Subject: Turn the Tide

**Executive/non-executive decision:** Non-executive

Date decision taken: 19 August 2019

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**Name and address of applicant(s):**

Cas Lawson  
Volunteer fundraiser  
14 Lyndhurst Road  
Dymchurch  
Romney Marsh  
TN29 0TE

**Name and description of project:**

Turn The Tide Festival 2019 –Circus skills performance and workshop

Turn The Tide is a *free*, community-led, festival which aims to positively influence those who attend, broadening horizons and promoting community cohesion. The Festival brings together residents from all walks of life from across the Romney Marsh, celebrating not only our common heritage but also our differences, whilst simultaneously increasing awareness of cultures outside our usual sphere of influence.

The Festival encompasses a wide variety of creative workshops, arts-based performances and sporting activities. Events are selected with all age groups and abilities in mind, and as many as possible encourage audience participation. Past events have included: annual Art competition and exhibition, family pottery and mosaics workshops; Russian Cossack dancers, London Bulgarian Choir, Opera, West African music, classical music; Tai Chi, Pilates, fencing, archery and juggling sessions.

New for this year: we are inviting the community to contribute 20 second film clips of local wildlife to create a fun community film. Taking place in October, the Festival helps to increase footfall and spending in Dymchurch outside the busy holiday season and aims to attract the local population, rather than holiday makers. Events are mainly held in existing indoor venues to make it as 'weather-proof' as possible.

**DECISION:**

**To provide funding of £500 to the above project.**

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**Reason for decision:**

The Romney Marsh communities are geographically insular and sometimes economically distanced from sources of diverse cultural influences. This can limit aspirations and narrow horizons, potentially reducing choices and opportunity. In addition to very little cultural diversity, the area has a higher than average percentage of families on benefits, and lower than average social grade/occupation. Combined with rural isolation these things have a negative impact on community cohesion. Research suggests that low income is synonymous with low aspirations and motivation, whilst culture and artistic influences have been shown to improve academic performance.

The Festival is completely free to attend so financial limitations are not a barrier to those wishing to participate. The venues we use are in the heart of the community, such as the Village Hall, St Peter & St Paul's church, local pubs etc and are easily accessible to all. The Festival provides opportunities for people of all abilities and from different generations to interact in a positive environment.

The positivity generated by the past two festivals has been expressed both verbally and in written form and has prompted more of the local community to volunteer and get involved; local businesses also agreed to continue their support and sponsorship.

**Declarations or disclosable pecuniary interest/any other significant interest:**

None

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**The decision set out above was made by me.**



**Signed:  
Councillor Terry Mullard  
Romney Marsh Ward**

**19 August 2019**