

11th March 2019

Minutes of the proceedings of the **ARTS & CULTURE COMMITTEE** meeting held on this day in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, WOKINGHAM** from 19:32 to 21:35.

PRESENT

Chairman: Cllr Mrs G S Hewetson
Councillors: Cllrs M Bishop, Ms S Gurney, C Moore, K Morgan and Mrs S Steatham

IN ATTENDANCE

Arts and Culture Officer

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs M Monk and Mrs A Tebboth.

MEMBERS' INTERESTS (Agenda Item 2)

Cllr Mrs Hewetson stated that she is a trustee of the Cultural Partnership: more arts.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OR PUBLIC (Agenda Item 3)

No questions have been received.

ARTS & CULTURE COMMITTEE MINUTES (Agenda Item 4)

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs Hewetson and seconded by Cllr Bishop and it was

**RESOLVED
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that the Minutes of the Arts & Culture Committee meeting held on 19th November 2018 (pages 15697 to 15700) be received as a true and correct record and that they be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

MONITORING REPORT (Agenda Item 5)

The Monitoring Report dated 1st March was received and considered.

Wokingham Mosaics:

The Chairman reported that the mosaics were on hold at the moment with the first planned designs for the Town Centre completed.

Designs and placements for the Elms Field were underway however the artist won't be ready for when the park is ready so "blanks" will be temporarily installed. A mosaic that commemorates the Electric Cinema has been agreed by the Working Party. A mobile app for the mosaics is being created and will be ready shortly.

Livestreaming and video sharing to Care Homes:

Arts and Culture Officer has contacted the care homes via More Arts contacts for their ongoing art in care homes project. There has been no interest as yet.

The Committee suggested that when the new Committee are in place they might wish to re-engage with the care homes.

It was also noted that many of the videos were already available and could be shared more widely than the Care Homes and more use could be made of the existent Wokingham Town Council Youtube channel.



Resident Feedback Device:

First test at an electronic system occurred at the Children's Book Festival with a tablet based form. Other options still being explored.

It was suggested that when using the tablet that an even shorter single question form could be used.

Fun Day Alternatives to Balloons:

Pinwheels have been costed and will be purchased once in the correct financial year for the event

Potential Board gaming event

Agenda Item 10

ATTENDANCE (Agenda Item 6)

Cllr Morgan's explanation for his absence from three consecutive ordinary meetings of the Committee was received and considered.

Members recognised that his were extraordinary circumstances and it was agreed he should remain a member of the Committee.

Cllr Monk was not available for the meeting and no explanation was received.

COMMITTEE BUDGET (Agenda Item 7)

The Arts and Culture Committee's budget dated to 31st January 2019 was received and noted.

The overspend on the Dressing of the Christmas Tree was noted by the Chairman and was due to a number of logistical difficulties that arose just days before the event. The company who have supplied the stage for a number of years were able to support us and the final quality of the event was notably much better than in previous years.

COMMUNITY PICNIC (Agenda Item 8)

- a) The request from RoughSketch to use Howard Palmer Gardens as a location for a Community Picnic as part of the national "Great Get Together" in June was received and considered.

- b) The Committee were in agreement with the request as long as the group followed reasonable requirements set by the Buildings and Grounds Officer and Arts and Culture Officer including they would be responsible for clearing up after themselves. The Committee also discussed any additional support the Council were able to give and agreed it would be positive if the Mayor could attend and that it be supported on Love Wokingham.

WOKINGHAM LIVING ADVENT CALENDAR (Agenda Item 9)

The report by the Arts and Culture Officer was received and considered.

The Committee were in agreement with the recommendation to continue to support More Arts getting a grant for this event. Cllr Mrs Hewetson did not vote. Further discussion on the event within the context of the full review took place under Agenda Item: 10.

Cllr Ms Gurney joined the meeting.



REVIEW OF COUNCIL TERM (Agenda Item 10)

- a) The report by the Arts and Culture Officer on the work of this Committee over the last four years was received and considered.
- b) The following suggestions and observations were made.

Board Games Event

This event is too new to be considered however it has been noted for the incoming Committee that Eclectic Games are interested in being involved.

Cultural Month

The Committee praised this project that brought events to all households in Wokingham and had no suggestions to alter it.

Sunny Saturdays

It was felt that this event was a positive presence in the Market during the summer and it was noted that the last two seasons of Sunny Saturdays due to the Market Place works had not been indicative of the usual event. The Committee recognised that the new location had challenges regarding setting of suitable volumes for a balanced Market and made the following suggestions.

- Where possible aim the larger and higher volume acts (such as full concert bands) down Denmark Street/away from the bulk of the Market
- Gather as much feedback as possible on the various acts in the next year from Staff, Councillors and Traders to inform on most suitable acts for the future.
- Request the incoming Committee consider using Howard Palmer Gardens, particularly for the acts that while popular are too loud or large for the Market in its new format and potentially for all acts.

Theatre in the Park

It was agreed that in principle this was an excellent event however the average number attending was disappointing. The Committee were keen to hear about 2019's planned plays and had the following suggestions.

- Increase the level of Marketing of the event
- Consider making connections with local cafes that might be able to offer Theatre in the Park offers as it was recognised that people would often bring a picnic with them to this event. It may also be worth looking at branded bags for such a venture.

Fun Day

The Committee were all in agreement that the Fun Day was a fantastic event for the local community and they would not advise making changes to this event.

International Street Concert

The Committee were agreed that this was a really positive event for Wokingham and also brought people into the Town from the surrounding areas. It was noted that 2019 would be the first event that is fully outsourced and the Committee would still encourage Councillors to attend. Seeing the event in person and having the opportunity to gather feedback from the audience is very useful.

Wokingham Children's Book Festival

The Committee agreed that this event had had a very successful first year and were excited about provisional plans for the 2019 event. It was suggested that we could explore partnering with the Wokingham Theatre to have some characters from storybooks around.



Wokingham Living Advent Calendar

The Committee had significant discussions regarding this event. Overall it was agreed while they loved the concept of the event there was some concern that it was not as effective as they would like. It was highlighted that it was a large and complex event to organise with small audiences. The idea to suggest to the incoming Committee to halt the event or change it substantially (for example having a reduction in events or having the events all in one location) was discussed. It was agreed to recommend that the incoming Committee should review this event with full consideration of its strengths and challenges.

Dressing the Christmas Tree

It was agreed that it was a shame that it was no longer possible to have this event in front of the Christmas Tree. However on the whole this is a well-loved event that brings the schools into Town. There were no suggestions for changes to the event however the Committee would stress the need for good quality professional assistance when arranging sound for the choir.

It was noted that a number of years ago there was a concept from Wokingham Lions regarding decorating the tree with lights and notes remembering lost loved ones and the Committee would like to see that explored again.

Mosaics

The Committee were very much in favour of continuing the mosaics project. It was suggested that in the future a treasure trail could be something to encourage residents to explore the mosaics and associated local history.

Virtual Museum

The Virtual Museum is well received and the members felt that it was a good ongoing addition to the town. It was recognised that there were continual areas for improvement and the review offers some initial directions of travel for this.

Busking

There was concern about the comparative admin heavy nature of administrating the buskers however at this time there were not huge numbers of buskers. It was suggested to review as needed.

Events in the Town Hall

The Committee were keen to make sure it was noted for the incoming Committee that acoustics in the Main Hall although excellent for music, can be challenging for speakers.

The Chairman ended the meeting with thanking the Committee for their support over the last four years.

CHAIRMAN

